CHAPTER IV

TEXTUAL CRITICISM ON CHAPTERWISE
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Introduction in the commentary by Śaṅkarācārya

अ० नारायणः परोऽविकाद्वपद्वत्रातम्बम्।
अण्डस्यान्तकतिभिः लोकः सप्तधीर च मेदिनी॥

Aum Nārāyaṇa is higher than the unmanifest. The (cosmic) Egg comes out of the unmanifest. All these worlds, including the earth with the seven islands, are in the Egg.

All Sāṅskrit scholars start their work with a prayer to their favourite Lord in order to ward off all the obstacles that they may confront in the act of completing their works. Śaṅkara too has started his Introduction to his commentary on Bhagavadgītā with the above quoted prayer. The Lord who created this universe created Prajāpati’s like Marīci for the sustenance of this universe. They were also forced to accept Dharma which is of the nature of action and that has been instructed through the Vedās. Subsequently He created Sanaka and Sananda too. They were asked to accept dharma of nivṛtti which is characterized by jñāna and vairāgya. Pravṛttidharma which is directed
outward constitutes of actions of the external physical world and \textit{nivṛtti\-dharma} which is directed inward constitutes of actions of the inner spiritual world aimed at liberation. This \textit{Vedic dharma} which is the cause of progress in worldly life and welfare of spiritual life for all living beings continues to be followed by \textit{Brāhmiṇ’s} and others belonging to different castes and stages of life, who aspire after the highest. Here the different castes are \textit{Brāhmiṇ’s}, \textit{Kṣatriyās}, \textit{Vaiśyās} and \textit{Śūdrās} and the different stages of life are that of a student, householder, recluse and enunciate. \textit{Dharma} is that which is performed by them according to their respective culture in order to attain welfare and absolute liberation in life.

The power of discrimination and knowledge declined in them as different desires sprouted though they were supposed to live long performing righteous actions\textsuperscript{3}. Thus \textit{dharma} declined and \textit{adharma} began to rise. At this stage, for the protection of the world, Lord Viśṇu took birth through \textit{Devakī} as the son of \textit{Vasudeva}. \textit{Vedic dharma} is protected through \textit{Brāhmiṇiṣṭva}. The differences in \textit{Varṇa} and \textit{Āśrama} are subjected to it. \textit{Brahman} is described by the ancestors as \textit{Vedās}, \textit{Brahmaṇās} and \textit{Yajñās}. Once \textit{Brahman} and \textit{Brāhmanāya} are properly understood, it would be clear that Śaṅkarācārya has not tried to protect \textit{Brāhmins} of his time through this commentary. Śaṅkarācārya explains
that the objective of the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa was the reinstatement of the declining Vedic dharma.

Further the characteristics of the Lord are explained. The Lord is rich in qualities like knowledge, prosperity, power, strength, vigor and glory. That Lord exists as the God of all beings by attracting His Māyā which is triguṇātmika, mūlaprakṛti and vaiśṇavi. Though he doesn’t have birth or death and is eternal, pure, enlightened and free, he appears to be blessing the world by taking birth in a body through the power of His Māyā. Ācārya points out that it is only His Māyā. He appears to be in a gross body. The real Kṛṣṇa is the innocent Brahman which is behind the gross body. And this cannot be understood through the sense organs or the mind. This is further explained in the eleventh stanza of the ninth chapter of Gītā. It is only ignorant people who consider the Lord as engaging in activities limited by his gross body. They don’t realize the divine power of the Lord who is perfect, true and exists equip solar and supra solar.

The Lord imparted the Vedic dharma to Arjuna, despite no personal benefits, just as a blessing to the whole universe. The Lord has offered this message of dharma for the welfare of dharma as virtuous people would follow this. Ācārya is of the opinion that Arjuna is just a tool for this task. Thus the dharmic advice given by the Lord
has been documented by the great scholar Vedavyāsa in the name of Gītā in 700 stanzas. According to Śaṅkarācārya it is very difficult to understand the science of Gītā which is summarized from the contents of all Vedās. Ācārya briefly explains it for the wisdomised learning since lot of contradictory meanings are gaining popularity among the common people.

Attainment of ultimate liberation is the utility of the science of Gītā. This can be attained by renouncing all thoughts of fruits of actions and by performing dharma based on the knowledge of the self. The Lord says mentioning Gītādharmāsa ‘sa hi dharma....’ The advice given by the Lord while staying with Arjuna in Hastinapura after the Mahābhārata war is called ‘Anugita’. Arjuna requested that some of the Gītādharmā advised during the first moments of the war was forgotten and may be again advised. Since it is advised again, it is known as ‘Anugīta’. Ācārya explains it from the twelfth stanza of the sixteenth chapter of the Mahābhārata, Asvamedhaparvan. May be he is suggesting that Anugīta may also be learned along with Gītā for a complete understanding of Gītā. In Gītā it is said that dharma and adharmas or good and bad or anything will not affect a person who exists silent, without thinking of anything and stationary without motion. Finally the Lord substantiates this by declaring ‘sarvadharmam parityajya........’ (18 - 66).
Pravṛttitilakṣaṇadharmaś are meant for the followers of Varṇāśramadharmaś. Though they are designed for the welfare of material life, they are also conducive for the attainment of heaven. Those who perform them in a spirit of renunciation, without any thought of fruits thereof will attain heaven and purity of mind. Such a person who attains purity of mind will be eligible for jñānaniṣṭa and will achieve knowledge and liberation. It is with this objective in mind that it the Lord says, ‘yogināḥ karma......’(5-11). Since two types of dharma intended to achieve mokṣa is explained in Gītā, the science of Gītā is considered as having special benefits. This principle which is known by the name prabrahman is qualified as the paramardhatattva by Vāsudeva. The preface is concluded by Ācārya by remarking that he intends to explain the Gītā because all the puruṣārdhās can be achieved if the meaning of Bhagavadgītā is properly understood.

Sāṃkhyayoga

The commentary for the first chapter and the first 10 verses of the second chapter has not been done by Ācārya. Scholars have the view that it may have been lost in time. But at the same time it could be logically enquired why only this portion has been lost. The answer for this query can be that the above mentioned portion is only an introduction to Gītā and that the Lord starts the exposition of His philosophy only after that. Exposition of philosophical principles in
the form of dialogue between preceptor and master has been a style followed by most ancient works. It can be seen throughout the *Mahābhārata*. Delusion is a misunderstanding. Delusion is the misapprehension that ātman is body and all these men are one’s own. The portion from ‘aśocyān’(2-11) to ‘mā śucā’(18-66) should be comprehended in the background of the truth that the sorrows caused by illusion can only be warded off by real knowledge of self.

In the first chapter, Arjuna who has been a person of daiva *sampatti* is seen sitting on the chariot affected by akaṛmaṇya, leaving his bow and arrows, dejected due to ignorance. Here what is needed is to empower Arjuna to perform his *svadharma* by avoiding ignorance and its offspring sorrow. Only knowledge can ward off ignorance and its offspring sorrow. Thus the Lord is trying to eliminate the ignorance of Arjuna through *Sāmkhyabdhi* and *Yogabdhi* in this chapter. Existence has only two aspects namely inert matter and consciousness. Among this it is only consciousness that is true. Inert matter is the untrue phenomenon which seems to be there in consciousness. Its nature is to get generated, evolve and then disappear. Here Arjuna is not eligible at that moment for *sannyāsa* and *jñānayoga*. The passion to engage in action is yet to get matured. *Karmayoga* is the *yoga* done by practising *yogabdhi* even when the *karmans* are done without the desire for the fruits thereof as the nature of the result of the *karman* is
not sure. The *karman* done avoiding *yogabudhi* is despicable. Hence Arjuna should try to attain liberation by following the path of *karman* performing *svadharma*. Thus the Lord advises *Sāṃkhyabudhi* to make *Jñānayoga* distinct and clear and *Yogabudhi* to make *Karmayoga* distinct and clear. The Lord warns that a person, who avoids *svadharma* which has been obtained by the grace of the Lord, will annihilate both worldly and other worldly pleasures. Further the Lord advises Arjuna the characteristics of *sthitaprajña* and the ways to attain the state of a *sthitaprajña*. In short, this second chapter can be considered as such to be an authoritative text with perfection in treating the subject and is characterised by *sidhāntah*, *upāyah*, *pariśilanaḥ*, *anubhavaḥ* and *dṛṣṭantaḥ*. This chapter is the essence of the *Gītā*. Yet the chapter is named ‘*Sāṃkhyayoga*’ as the main subject is the explanation of the real object.

The Lord says that it is not proper on the part of Arjuna who is a model to all *kṣatriyās*, to be despondent at the start of the war. But Arjuna finds no attraction in the victory and glory he might get after the war. This is why he sat in a confused state whether to engage himself in the war or not. He lets the Lord know that he is ready to accept any way which does not stray from righteousness. When closely reviewed, it could be understood that it is because of *Māyā* that birth, death and
the intermediate stage of life seems to exist. But in reality there is no
destruction for the ātman. Though the body undergoes change, ātman
is eternal and unchanging. When an individual realizes this truth he
will not undergo any miseries that happen from Māyā. Joy and sorrow
happens depending on the quality of the objects that come into contact
with the sense organs. What is real is sāsvataḥ and what is unreal is
midya. As a person throws away old clothes and takes up new ones,
ātman throws away old body and takes up new one. The Lord advises
jñānayoga and karmayoga to Arjuna in order to wake him up and raise
him from the sorrow he has fallen into. The Lord shows him the way to
reach complete realization through the state of sthitaprajñā. If a person
understands the omnipotent paramātman, he will never be affected by
sorrows. He will easily reach Brahman and enjoy unlimited
brahmānanda.

Śloka Criticism

Śloka - 1

अशोच्यानवशोचस्तवं प्रजावादंश्च भापसे।
गतासुनगतासूङ्ग्व ्ं नामुशोचलति पण्डिताः॥ (2-11)

Thou grievest over those on whom thou shouldst grieve not, and
yet speakest the words of the learned. The wise grieve not over the
dead or the living ⁴.
Knowledge and sorrow will never go hand in hand. If someone is in sorrow it should be inferred that he has not gained ample knowledge. Arjuna proves that his knowledge is imperfect as he is experiencing sorrow. When examined carefully, it could be found that feeling of mine is the root cause of sorrow. Arjuna need not grieve over Bhīṣma or Droṇa because they are persons of virtue and they have transcended death. The Lord says that Arjuna is grieving over them thinking that he has to kill these virtuous men and doubts why he should have power of a country devoid of them. Scholars won’t grieve over people who are either living or dead as ātman is eternal and indestructible. But the body is temporary and destructible. All lives in the world are the spark of the universal life. Hence no life principle comes or leaves. Those who possess this knowledge will not grieve over life and death. Though Arjuna speaks like learned men, he doesn’t seem to possess this basic knowledge of self. There is another knowledge which wipes off sorrow by removing this ignorance. The present level of knowledge in Arjuna should be raised to that level of wisdom. Ācārya holds that wise people will not grieve over living or dead knowing that it is all destinies.

Jñāneśvara starts the commentary on this śloka by comparing Arjuna’s state of knowledge to a blind man running after becoming mad. Though Arjuna seems to talk wisely, the fact is not so. He is trying
to grieve over kauravās without realizing himself. The lord wonders over this misunderstanding of Arjuna and He asks whether Arjuna is the basis of the existence of this universe. The modus operandi of this universe has been designed long back. Jñāneśvara says that there is a Lord of this universe who is most powerful and has created the entire world. The attitude of Arjuna seems to be that he is the force behind birth and death and that he could decide whether these births and deaths could be affected or postponed as per his will. Births and deaths are eternal and it is useless to grieve over them. Wise men will not grieve over these two as they realize that both of them are just illusory stages in life.

Ācārya suggests that the expression ‘prajñāvādān’ refers to those words that rise in the intellect, ‘gatāsūn’ refers to bodies and ‘agatāsūn’ refers to souls. Here the word ‘paṇditah’ is said to possess the special meaning of a person who possesses the knowledge of the self. Those who don’t realize the principle of ātman thinks that he is body. Hence he will experience joy and sorrow along with the dharmās of the body. It is clear that Arjuna is not a man of prudence though he seems to be a man of prudence as he speaks like learned man though in reality he is not. This is the reason why both the commentators opine that indiscretion is the cause of delusion. This śloka should be
considered as the ‘upakrama’ to Gītā as the Lords real message starts from here onwards. To determine the objective (tātparya), upakrama and upasaṃhārā are considered to be key factors (liṅga). The last line of the upasaṃhāra śloka is ‘ma suca’(18-66). Through these verses of upakrama and upasaṃhāra it could be understood that sorrow is caused by delusion and that it could be removed only through the knowledge of the self.

उपक्रमोपसंहाराब्यासोपूर्वता फलम्।
अर्थावलोकनार्थे च लिङ्गं तात्वर्थनिर्णये॥ (श्लोकवर्तिकम्)

Śloka - 2

न जाते स्थिते वा कदाचि-
न्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः॥
अजो नित्यः शास्तितोज्यं पुराणो- 
न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे॥ (2-20)

He is not born, nor does He ever die; after having been, He again ceases not be; nor the reverse. Unborn, eternal, unchangeable and primeval, He is not slain when the body is slain.\(^{10}\)

There is no change in the form of birth for the ātman. Here the Ācārya has negated the ātman the vikāra of destruction. Here for the expression ‘vā’ the meaning is given as ‘ca’. By the expression kādācīt,
the ātman is said to be never undergoing changes like birth or death. This is because the ātman will not assume existence after getting disintegrated. Normally by death the disintegration of something after coming into existence is meant. The ātman does not get disintegrated like this. By birth, something which has not been in the past coming into existence is meant. The ātman is not like that, it is without birth. As it does not undergo disintegration, it is eternal too. As the changes like birth and death are negated in the ātman, the other changes are also negated. By the expression purāṇāḥ, waning which is the opposite meaning of waxing is negated. As the ātman is not without any organ, it is purāṇan too. To avoid the error of punarukti, the expression ‘hanthi’: is used in the sense of ‘vipariṇāma’ by Śaṅkara. Hence it should be understood that the ātman does not undergo any change.

By this śloka it can be noticed that all the six attributes of change is negated in the case of ātman. Hence Śaṅkara describes ātman as that which denies all types of transformation. The 18th śloka of the 2nd śloka of Kaṭopaniṣad echoes the idea of this śloka of Gītā.

Jñāneśvara asks Arjuna not to engage in action with the idea that ātman is same as the body. The things seen in a dream appears to be real only till the dream finishes. Jñāneśvara points out that it is the same with this Māyā which is appearing real for Arjuna. When shadow
is hit, it will not affect the real object. Will sun be affected if a pot full of water is broken and the image of the sun is destroyed, asks Jñāneśvara. The ākāśa found inside a pot in the shape of the pot will get back to its original form once the pot is destroyed. In the same way the form of ātman will not get changed when the body undergoes destruction. Jñāneśvara has pointed this aspect of the ātman with the aid of such examples. On the contrary the existence of ātman is explained by Ācārya by explaining all the stages and giving detailed exposition of each word, through his commentary. Ācārya gives the meaning of the expression śāśvataḥ as one who never undergoes great shortcomings. By the expression purāṇaḥ it is meant that the ātman is one who has been here since the long past. By the śloka ‘yaṁ yenaṁ vети…..’. Bhagavān affirms that ātman is not the subject of the object of the action of killing. The subject is concluded by describing the lack of change in ātman through the śloka ‘न जायते प्रियते वा…….’

Śloka - 3

प्रज्ञातिति यदा कामान्वर्मार्थं ननोम्यते।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टि: स्थितप्रज्ञास्तोच्चते।। (2-55)

The Lord said: When a man, satisfied in the Self alone by himself, completely casts off all the desires of the mind, then is he said to be one of steady knowledge.
One becomes sthitaprajña once he renounces all the desires that arise in one’s heart. One may doubt that the actions of a person who has renounced all his desires and yet the desire for maintaining his body is still there, as the actions of an eccentric. That is why Bhagavan has said ‘atmanye.....thusataha’. It means that sthitaprajña is the one who has renounced his children, wealth and all other worldly pleasures and lives a life of contentment enjoying the ātman. A sthitaprajña finds pleasure not in wishful objects or others but in him. Here the word ātman is used twice. One is the ātman of the universe which is the total entity including the body mind, intellect and individuality and the other is the paramātman which is the source of absolute bliss.

The powerful desires in one’s mind are the main obstacles in experiencing the ātmic bliss. Jñāneśvara calls that person a sthitaprajña who is steadfast in knowledge in any situation. He will always be happy and will stay away from the worldly desires. Bliss will always reign in his mind. He will always be content and full of bliss in all his inner sense organs like mind, citta and intellect and will be disinterested in worldly pleasures. Such a person will always keep away from all limitations and discrimination of the world. He will be a person who has renounced all desires and who fixes his mind on the bliss got through the meditation on ātman.
Here by the word ‘atman’ the meaning cannot be taken as the action of the intellect as there is no relevance when all the actions of the intellect in the consciousness are ceased. Here the bliss experienced is not the effect of the intellect but is the quality of the atman. The reason why the face of a sthitaprajña is always pleasant is that the atman is the source of his experience of bliss. It is thus clear that sthitaprajña is not a person who runs away from the objects of pleasure. Moreover he will not stay away from carrying out his duties too fearing the experience of sorrow. Both the commentators have taken special care in exposing this idea. It is the opinion of Gītā towards the life of action that is exposed here.

**Resume**

Arjuna is pictured in this chapter named Sāṃkhya-yoga as a person who is doubtful of his own mind and as an ignorant. The Lord imparts ātmopadeśa to Arjuna as he is sure that it is only the knowledge of self that will save Arjuna from the ocean of depression. Hence the Lord imparts Sāṃkhya-buddhi, Yogabuddhi and points on svadharmānuṣṭāna to Arjuna. Moreover he describes to Arjuna the nature of a sthitaprajña who has attained complete self realization and also the ways to achieve the state of sthitaprajña. While Ācārya says that the seers of truth have understood the secrets of consciousness and inert object, Jñāneśvara
substantiates it by bringing in the simile of finding the ghee while churning the curd with the force of knowledge. Ācārya explains clearly through this śloka the permanence of ātman and the relation between body and soul. It was already mentioned that Ācārya’s commentary starts with the 11th verse of the second chapter. Ācārya has made it clear in the upodkhaḍa that liberation shall be got only through the knowledge of the self. But such peculiarities cannot be seen in Jñāneśvari. He follows the style of entering directly into the subject. Bhagavan has remarked in this chapter that action mellowed by knowledge is the noblest. Sthitaprajñā can be described as the ideal person of the Gītā. Wise men enjoy bliss with the awareness that all objects of sense are transient and that only ātman is eternal. Both Ācārya and Jñāneśvara exhorts one should always remember that he is the self which is the only thing that will not perish or change even if every other thing perishes. This is the most sublime truth that is declared in the second chapter of Bhagavadgītā. Thus Bhagavadgītā has become a true friend for everyone as a text on the science of yoga. The great saying “एकु शास्त्रं देवकीनुपातितम्” is so meaningful in all the three divisions of time.

**Karmayoga**

Though there are the two paths of Jñānayoga and Karmayoga for a person to reach Brahman, the Lord suggests that the ideal way for
Arjuna is *Karmayoga*. The Lord brings in examples and logic to drive in the point that *Karmayoga* which is ideal for Arjuna is in no way inferior to *Jñānayoga*. Just by avoiding the external actions, it cannot be considered as the *Jñānayoga* of a *sannyāsin*. It is fudge to declare that one is a *sannyāsin* if he just avoids the external actions and cannot constantly be in the thoughts of *Brahman*. *Yajña* is those actions performed without any desire for the fruits thereof. The *devās* like sun and moon too are engaged in *yajña* all the time. Men too should engage in actions with divine thoughts in a spirit of *yajña*. *Sannyāsa* cannot be experienced just by avoiding external actions. On the other hand if actions are done without any attachment and done in a state of equipoise the actions don’t through the body will not cause bondage if he can achieve *Jñānaniṣṭa* in the process. This chapter is named ‘*Karmayoga*’ as it discusses such intricate thoughts regarding *Karmayoga*.

Arjuna asks the Lord why he is forced to engage in war when he understood that in reality there is no *Karman* or the person who engages in *karman*. The Lord supports the principle of *Karmasannyāsa* in this chapter. The Lord advises through this chapter the great truth of *karmayoga* which contains deep meanings. Those who are ready to follow *Karmayoga* are the persons who aspire for liberation. *Karmans*
originate from *triguṇās*. Further the traditional customs of *yajñā* are described. The Lord says that bliss can be achieved by avoiding all desires. The Lord suggests Arjuna to engage in war without any attachment to the body. Ego generates desire and anger and it further destroys man. Hence one should first practise the control of desires and anger. They can be won over only by sense control. *Brahmapada* can be achieved if desire and anger are thus avoided and ātmic bliss can be experienced. This is the secret between the preceptor and disciple and the unity of *jivātman* and *paramātman*.

**Śloka - 4**

व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन वृद्धिं मोहयसीव मे।
तदेवं वद निजिन्त्य थेन श्रीयोङ्गमाणुयाम्।। (3-2)

With an apparently perplexing speech, Thou confuse as it were my understanding. Tell me with certainty that one (way) by which I may attain bliss 19.

The Lord first imparted *Sāṃkhya-buddhi* and then *Yoga-buddhi* to Arjuna. Then He suggested Arjuna to depend fully on intellect. Further he asked him to engage in the ferocious war considering it to be his *svadharma* 20. What is the difference between this *Sāṃkhya-buddhi* and *Yoga-buddhi*? Why should one engage in action if intellect is what bring spiritual wealth? If at all there is a need to engage in action, should
one engage in fierce war itself? As these doubts arose in Arjuna’s mind he asks the Lord to dispel any one of these doubts.

The Lord says that Jñānayoga and Karmayoga are to be followed by different persons and not the same individual. Then Arjuna requests the Lord to clearly mention which path is ideal for him to pursue. Observing the fact that Arjuna could not grasp the messages of the Lord even though He clearly exposed it, one can understand the difficulty in understanding the esoteric thoughts of the knowledge of self and the secret of action as propounded by the Lord. Moreover, if the Lord’s opinion is that though kārman is noble, jñāna is nobler, why should Arjuna ask the Lord to clarify which one is more important? The Lord has not said that He will teach only any one of these two paths. Ācārya concludes this śloka by opining that if it is so, Arjuna could have been asked to seek only about any one of these two paths, knowing that if both of the paths are referred to him it won’t help him.

Jñāneśvara asks how Arjuna could discriminate between what should be followed and not if the Lord’s advice is contradicting. Jñāneśvara brings in a simile which compares the advice of the Lord regarding Kārman and Jñāna and asks how a patient can survive if the physician asks him to follow the restrictions and still administers poison to him as medicine. Arjuna sought the advice of the Lord as he was
not aware of anything and also because he was so frightened and confused about the whole thing. But he is more confused as the Lord speaks about one thing followed by another\(^{23}\). Desperately, Arjuna requests the Lord for more clarification to choose from the two paths. He says that he is not able to comprehend the principles which are just alluded by the Lord. Hence he asks the Lord to explain more about this in ‘Maratha’ language which he is most accustomed to\(^{24}\). Jñāneśvara considers the Lord both as a preceptor and mother. He asks why a person should bridle his desires if he is before kāmadhenu by his good fortune. It is through the penance done over so many births that the Lord has become thus accessible\(^{25}\). Hence Jñāneśvara says that the Lord should have advised Arjuna any one of these paths in order for him to attain spiritual wealth after annihilating his sorrow.

The description for each śloka by Jñāneśvara in the second chapter was very short. But contrary to that, it is a very lengthy discussion that he takes up here in this śloka. The reason for the confusion that arose in Arjuna’s mind was because of the inclusion of the two expressions ‘karmaṇye....’ (2-47) and ‘budhou śaraṇaḥ’ (2-49) in the same context. It is the indecision to select the mode of work that is known as the delusion which is not conducive for action. It is not ideal on the part of the listener to act without understanding what the speaker has propounded. It is natural that anyone can have this doubt. The best way
to escape from the confusion is to ask about this to the perfect speaker who is the Lord Himself. The difficulty to understand spiritual truths and the secrets of *karma* can be inferred from the fact that even though it was Lord Himself who was clearly expounding this to Arjuna, even Arjuna could not grasp the ideas easily. A peculiarity that could be found in *Jñāneśvari* is that Jñāneśvara suggests that Arjuna should be instructed in the ‘*Marātha*’ language whether *Karmayoga* or *Jñānayoga* is nobler. The real sense in suggesting so is that the language in which the Lord instructs these spiritual principles should be an easier one.

**Śloka - 5**

प्रकृते क्रियमाणाति गुणे: कर्माणि सर्वंः।
अहंकारविमूढः तत्त्वमिति मन्यते। (3-27)

Actions are wrought in all cases by the energies of Nature. He whose mind is deluded by egoism thinks ‘I am the doer’.  

*Prakṛti* or pradhāna is the balanced state of the three qualities of nature vis. *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas*. It is by the *guṇās* or the modifications of nature, manifesting them as the body and the senses, that all our actions, conducive to temporal and spiritual ends, are done. In the opinion of Ācārya, *ahaṃkāra* or ego is the identification of body as *ātman*. Such a person whose mind has been deluded by various manner, that is the one who attributes to the self all the
characteristics that the body and the senses possess and identifies oneself with them, regards due to ignorance that all actions are in the self and also thinks with reference to each action, ‘I am the doer’\textsuperscript{28}. Those wise men who understand that all actions spring from ego will eschew ego\textsuperscript{29}. As they are aware that they are different from body, sense organs and intellect, they stay detached from the objects constituted of the triguṇās. They behave like a witness of all the actions that happen through their bodies, sense organs and minds though their ego dwells inside the body\textsuperscript{30}. The above mentioned idea is substantiated through the simile that the actions that happen in the universe will not affect the Sun though by birth itself it has a form. Jñānesvara says that, in the same way the wise men stay away from all bondages of actions.

By the expression ‘\textit{prakrite: gunai}’ Ācārya means the \textit{sattva} like qualities of Māyā or tatvajñāna or the icchaśakti, jñānaśakti and kriyāśakti of paramātman. As the meaning for the expression ‘\textit{karmaṇī}’ he suggests those actions like sādhukarma, miśrakarma and asādhukarma. But in Jñānesvari such special meanings are not seen given.

\textbf{Śloka - 6}

\begin{quote}
श्रेयान्त्वर्धमां विगुणः परधर्ममत्वनुविन्धितात्।

त्वधर्मं निन्धनं श्रेयः परधर्ममः भवावः॥ (3 - 35)
\end{quote}
Better one’s own duty, through devoid of merit, than the duty of another well discharged. Better is death in one’s own duty; the duty of another is productive of danger\textsuperscript{31}.

It is nobler to encounter death while doing one’s own duty rather than living by doing another persons duty. The performance of another person’s duty leads one to hell\textsuperscript{32}. The Lord has pointed out the reasons why man encounter problems through the ślokās, ‘dhyayato’.(2-62) and ‘rāgadveso.....’. (3-34). According to Ācārya, here for Arjuna to fight is svadharma and to renounce is paradharma. Renunciation is meant for that person who has the expertise to live in the discipline of ātman and devoid of desire and anger\textsuperscript{33}. If Arjuna takes up renunciation he will have to live with all desires and anger he is infested with, in the garb of a renunciate. This will lead to his own downfall and also to the downfall of the world by deterring the intellect. That is why the Lord says that doing another’s duty is fraught with fear\textsuperscript{34}. On the other hand if Arjuna engages in his svadharma which is engaging in the war, he may be praised for his desire and anger in warfront\textsuperscript{35}. At the same time he will get ample opportunities to train his mind to attain balance without giving way for desire and anger. There by he could lift the world and himself too. This is the reason why the Lord declared that if it is done for the reason of svadharma, even killing another person will be considered noble.
Jñānesvara opines that it is better to do one’s own dharma even though it is very difficult than doing someone else’s dharma even if it is very attractive. One should not eat sweet delicacies even if he is very poor, if it is unclean and impure. Hence undesirable karman should be avoided. A poor person will not destroy his small hut when he sees the palatial house of a rich person. One’s best friend is one’s own wife even if she is less beautiful than other ladies. In the same way, though it is sour and harder to practise, svadharma alone will confer you happiness in the other world. One should not engage in such karman which are meant for others and not ideal for one. Even if one loses his life while engaging in his own dharma, it will bring virtue in this life and the other, says Jñānesvara.

In his commentary, Śaṅkara treats ‘paradharma’ as Jñānayoga and ‘svadharma’ as Karmayoga. The Lord reminds Arjuna that he will end up in hell if he who is meant for engaging in karmayoga thinks of taking up jñānayoga which is nobler, after giving his svadharma which is to engage in war. It is made clear here that it is desirable for a person to engage in his own dharma only even if it is done in an imperfect way. This very idea is reflected in the 47th verse of the 18th chapter, ‘śreyan......’.


Resume

In this chapter the Karmayoga which is to be practised by those, like Arjuna, who aspire for liberation but still with attachment to the desire to engage in work. The Lord asks Arjuna to engage in his svadharma which is to fight the war. To the doubt why he should engage in the fierce war, Arjuna is instructed by the Lord that he has only the right to engage in action and his svadharma is to engage in war. One will not experience sannyāsa just by renouncing his actions outwardly. On the contrary, for a person who maintains balance of mind through detachment while engaging in karman will not be bound by the karmans which are always done through the body, if he is gradually able to follow the discipline of knowledge? It is this secret of karmayoga that the Lord instructs Arjuna in this chapter.

Jñānakarmasannyāsayoga

It is not enough that a person avoids external actions to attain freedom from karmans, but only Jñāna can lead to that. Karmayoga can lead to the purity of mind which in turn leads to Jñāna. This type of karmayoga which is aimed to achieve freedom from karmans was successfully practiced by great rajaṛṣis following the advice of the Lord from time immemorial. The karma of Jñāni is really brahmayajña. Though there are different types of yajñas, the best among them is Jñānyajña. That Jñāna should be earned from a preceptor who follows
Brahman. One should follow the words of the preceptor with implicit faith. Hence Arjuna should faithfully follow the words of his guru and engage in his svadharma which is waging the war. As internal karmasannyāsa done through Jñāna is dealt in this chapter with great importance, it is named ‘Jñānakarmasannyāsayoga’.

The system of karman was first instructed to Sūrya by the Lord. In order to clear his doubt as to how the Lord has instructed Sūrya who has been here since the beginning of the universe, the Lord reveals to Arjuna, the secret of his birth. Wise men constantly serve the Lord with devotion without letting anger generated in them. Moreover fruits are obtained in this world only through actions and according to the nature of actions they engage in, mankind has been divided into four castes. Further the Lord speaks about the nature of those who have attained liberation through the Path of Karman. The Lord advises Arjuna to engage in action without thinking of the fruits thereof. In the mind of a wise man there is no distinction like ‘this is mine’, ‘this is thine’. All karmans turn into Brahman. Doubt is a great sin. It can be destructed only by knowledge. Hence Jñāneśvara exhorts Arjuna to arise after throwing away his doubts.

Śloka - 7

अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्तः।
कथमेत्वद्विजानीयं त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति॥  (4 - 4)
Later is Thy birth, and prior the birth of Vivasvat; bow am I to understand that Thou taughtest this Yoga in the beginning?\textsuperscript{38}.

Ācārya says that, the Lord has stated that he has instructed this Karmayoga to Sūrya in order to reveal his omnipotence and omniscience to Arjuna, who has been considering the Lord just as a friend. The Lord has been born in the house of Vāsudeva only now. But the birth of Sūrya is at the beginning of creation\textsuperscript{39}. Arjuna asks whether this is contradictory to tell that in the beginning it was instructed by the Lord and now it is instructed to Arjuna by the very same person\textsuperscript{40}. But Ācārya has stated in his commentary that this has been done by the Lord in order to clear the doubt of the foolish men whether the son of Vāsudeva is God and omniscient.

But Jñāneśvara starts his commentary with the help of sublime similes. Jñāneśvara asks as to where would one find love which is nobler than that possessed by a mother towards her child. The Lord is the oasis in the desert of life and mother to the destitute\textsuperscript{41}. It is only the grace of Lord that drives everyone forward. Everyone got their life too only by the grace of the Lord\textsuperscript{42}. Even then Arjuna cannot comprehend anything that the Lord is telling him. Arjuna is not able to come to terms with the Yoga system which is being propounded by the Lord. Even the forefathers of Arjuna were unaware of who Vīvasvān
was. That is why Arjuna expresses his doubt as to how the Lord did instruct this yoga to Vivasvān.

Vivasvān was a person who lived in the remote past. And Lord Kṛṣṇa was born in recent time. That is why such a doubt arises in Arjuna’s mind. Arjuna is unable to understand the secret of the Lord’s life. Hence Jñāneśvara intends to suggest that the Lord should teach Arjuna how and when the Lord instructed this system of Yoga to Vivasvān.

It could be understood that both the commentators have made Arjuna ask this question in order to reveal to him that the Lord is Parabrahman though he already knew that the Lord is Parabrahman. The logic behind Arjuna’s query is that how can the Lord who was born just a few years back able to instruct Vivasvān who was there since the passing of twenty eight caturyugās.

Śloka - 8

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागं: ||
तस्य कर्त्तरमपि मां विद्यकर्त्तरिमवयम् || (4-13)

The fourfold caste has been created by Me according to the distribution of energies and actions; though I am the author thereof, know Me as non-agent and immutable.
All the three different castes have been created by the Lord himself. From the verse ‘brahmaṇosya.......’ in the puruṣasūkta it is clear that brahmaṇās came into being from the face of the Lord. Here the division has been done on the basis of their respective duties and the triguṇās. Among the divisions the karman of the Brahmins who are of the sāttvic guṇās includes śama, dama and tapas. The karman of the Kṣatriya whose dominant guṇa is rajas and satva is dormant, includes saurya and tejus. The karman of vaiśya whose dominant guṇa is rajas and dormant guṇa is tamas, is agriculture. Service is the karman of the śūdra whose dominant guṇa is tamas and the dormant guṇa is rajas. Thus cātuṛvaṇṇya has been created on the basis of qualities and duties.

It is for the reason that cātuṛvaṇṇya is not found among other beings that it is described as mānuṣeloke by Ācārya in his commentary. But it could be asked whether the Lord who created the four castes is bound to the fruits of those karmans which have gone behind that creation. Arjuna expresses his doubt that if it is so, then the Lord is not God who is eternal or ever free. It is because of Māyā that one thinks that he is the doer of those actions of creation. In reality it could be understood that he is not the doer because He is changeless and not subjected to the cycle of births and deaths.

Jñāneśvara’s concept of cātuṛvaṇṇya may be examined. Humankind is divided into four castes according to the nature of their
work. Further their duties are also determined according to their natural disposition. Their characters and works are the norms of the differences. These differences of castes have not occurred due to the Lord. Though the Lord is the source of everything, the prevailing caste system was not created by Him. Those who understand and realize these facts will attain liberation. Hence the Lord says that He is not the cause for the differences in the caste system.

The concept of cātuṛvarṇya is much misunderstood and criticized these days. The Lord’s declaration dispels all confusions. The Lord’s duty is just to fulfill each person’s desire according to their quality and work. Gītā’s declaration is that mankind is divided into four castes according to qualities and nature of work. The Lord negates the stand that the caste difference is determined just on the basis of birth. If at all the determining factor for caste specification included the aspect of birth the expression ‘guṇakarmavibhagasaḥ’ could have been ‘janmakarmavibhāgasaḥ’. Then the concept of caste difference will become just an objective condition based on the working principle of the world. To avoid or accept this either one’s own qualities and work or the Lord who gives the result of those work alone are the determining factors. The Lord has revealed this much through the latter half of the śloka.
The Lord has already made it clear that those who engage in actions in a spirit of sacrifice maintaining the passion towards the pursuit of truth, surrendering to the Lord can change their qualities and avoid all ill aspects in them. Thus one can evolve from the state of a śūdra to that of a Brahmin and fall in the opposite direction and even be a sthitaprajña by altering the structure of the qualities in him in the same life itself. The factors which are the basis for all these are the structure of qualities in a person and the nature of work he is engaged in. It is the Lord who determines to which caste one belongs on the basis of this. This is the reason why it was said that it is the Lord who is behind the creation of the four castes.

It is the Lord Himself who changes the caste when the qualities and nature of work changes in a person and also converts a person to an athivarnāśrami when the qualities and works are avoided as pointed out in the śloka ‘ye yadha mam....’. Hence the Lord can also be considered as the ‘akartāra’. By ‘akartāra’ it is not meant that he is not the doer of the action but His ability to change or annihilate action is meant. The meaning of cātuṣṭvaṇṇya can be the universe with the four main castes. Acārya says that meaning of srṣṭam is not just creation but also encompasses the ideas of maintenance and destruction.

Śloka - 9

कर्मण्यकर्मं यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्मं यः।
स बुद्धिमान्नुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्तकर्मकृत्त॥ (4-18)
He who can see inaction in action, who can also see action in inaction, he is wise among men, he is devout, he is the performer of all action\textsuperscript{51}.

To see \textit{akarman} in \textit{karman} is to perform duties without desiring for the fruits and surrendering the work in a sacrificial spirit in \textit{Brahma}. Infact for an ignorant person something which is not \textit{karman} in this world seems to be \textit{karman}. In the same way \textit{karman} seems to be an \textit{akarman} too for him\textsuperscript{52}. Hence to understand the reality of this, the Lord gives an explanation through this \textit{śloka}. \textit{Ācārya} says that it is only for a wise man that \textit{karman} and \textit{akarman} can be discriminated. The inert principle of \textit{karman} does not affect the \textit{Brahman} the least. This movement of energy is the subtle form of \textit{karman}\textsuperscript{53}. The gross universe as a whole is the creation of this form of \textit{karman}. It is not possible for anyone to comprehend from outside the illusory phenomenon of \textit{karman} and universe. Hence one should try to visualize \textit{Brahman} in everything in the universe and in everything \textit{Brahman} too, following the footsteps of the seers of truth\textsuperscript{54}. As there is an object which is inactive in each step of \textit{karman}, it is in the inactive object that each \textit{karma} happens\textsuperscript{55}. This is known as \textit{karmākarmadarśana}. \textit{Jñāna} is the clear \textit{karmā-karmadarśana}.

As the \textit{karmākarmadarśana} gets consolidated, the truth that moves the individual body and the truth that moves the universe shall be
realized to be the same principle. If one is the basic truth of the universe, one will experience the truth that all the actions of the universe happen in one\textsuperscript{56}. This is the \textit{kṛtsnakarmakritbhāva} of the seer of the truth. Normally men think that ‘I haven’t done that, I am happy’. In this \textit{akarman}, there is the presence of the \textit{karman} of the \textit{ahaṁkāra}. In this \textit{akarman} itself, the prudent will see \textit{karman}. Man avoids virtuous deeds due to indolence or vicious thoughts\textsuperscript{57}. This renunciation generates vice and attachment. Ācārya says that it is only a man of discretion who knows that knowledge comes in the form of \textit{karman} and \textit{karman} comes in the form of \textit{jñāna} too\textsuperscript{58}.

To find \textit{akarman} in \textit{karmadarśana} and to find \textit{karman} in \textit{akarmadarśana} is not an illusory knowledge\textsuperscript{59}. \textit{Pūrvapakṣi} enquires whether this is \textit{gauṇajñāna} caused by the \textit{bhāvabhāva} of the fruits of action. The reply is that the result of \textit{karmākarman} is not even mentioned\textsuperscript{60}. This is because the meaning is clear when the Lord has already declared ‘\textit{karmanye vadhikaraste}’\textsuperscript{(2-47)}\textsuperscript{61}. Moreover if the routine works are avoided one will incur \textit{pratyavāyadoṣa}. It is also defended that from \textit{abhāva}, bhava will not occur. It is to substantiate this point That the lord has said ‘nasathobhavo’.(2-16) and the \textit{śruti} says ‘\textit{kadhamasaha sajyeta}’(Chandogya 6-2-2). Hence sath does not generate from asath. \textit{Śāstra} will not ask to do fruitless actions\textsuperscript{62}. It
cannot be taken that if *karma* is fraught with problems no one will opt to do such a thing deliberately \(^{63}\). Moreover, if hell is the result when routine works are not performed, their doing and not doing should be considered as futile in the eyes of *śāstra*. It will be contradictory if it is said that routine works will confer liberation after describing that it is futile \(^{64}\). Ṛṣṭryāya concludes the commentary on this *śloka* saying that he has conformed to the explanation that has been traditionally handed over till his time on this *śloka*.

In the opinion of Jñāneśvara, one who is wise will believe that he is free from all *karman* even while performing all the *karmans*. He won’t cherish any passion towards the fruits of his actions \(^{65}\). The wise man will perform only those actions which are to be done by him. But he will not think of the results or gifts that will accrue those actions \(^{66}\). This is how a Jñānin stays detached without getting bound to the shackles of *karman*. For the spectators he seems to do all the outward actions rightly. This is compared to a person standing beside a river who is aware that though his shadow is seen in the river he is not standing in water \(^{67}\). The person who understands himself realizing the foolishness of all actions even while engaging in those actions will become a *naiśkarmi* \(^{68}\). To illustrate this, Jñāneśvara brings in the simile of sun, who like the *naiśkarmi*, stands still and detached even
while initiating the processes of rising and setting through his moves. As the sun can see his image in water and yet doesn’t get drowned in it, a naiśkarmi though seems to be a human; human nature does not touch him. He sees the entire universe without looking at it, he does everything without performing anything and enjoys everything without using it. Moreover he reaches everywhere though he stays in the same place. In short he can be considered as the whole universe.

Instead of the word inaction, Jñāneśvara uses the word ‘naiśkarmya’. But Ācārya mentions creation of universe against karman and parabrahman against akarman. The entire creation happens in the presence of parabrahman. Hence in the act of creation parabrahman becomes akarman which is not the creator. Ācārya establishes that a prudent is one who sees the action of creation in Brahman which is akarman.

Resume

This chapter named Jñānakarmasannyaśayoga refers that knowledge paves way for karma. The Lord has advised this karmasannyaśa which brings with it, knowledge, to many since the evolution of the world. According to the saying, sadvidvan...... of Śaṅkarācārya, an aspirant should achieve self knowledge by inculcating in them, śradha and bhakthi and by serving great souls. Knowledge is
attainable only for a person who has faith. Hence the Gītācārya suggests that an aspirant should possess utmost faith in the science, sadguru, God and himself. The śloka, ‘na moksonabhasa’ in Vasiṣṭa Gītā illustrates that liberation can be attained through selfknowledge. In the same way, the Lord opines through the expression, ‘tatsvayam yogasamśidhah’, that knowledge is to be achieved oneself.

The Lord enlightens through this chapter that the purity of mind got through the performance of action done according to the practice of yoga will lead to knowledge and knowledge will lead to karmasannyāsa. The Lord tells Arjuna that karmayoga results either in karmavimukti or sannyāsa. He again suggests that Brahmāpaḍa can be attained only by the attainment of knowledge got through karmavimukti and not through karmatyāga.

**Sannyāsayoga**

Real sannyāsa is described in this chapter in detail. Real sannyāsa is avoiding desires and anger and experiencing non dual reality always. Jñānayoga in the form of constant meditation on reality and karmayoga which gives importance to equipoise, are ways that lead an aspirant to real sannyāsa. But it will be sorrowful, if a person, who has not achieved balance of mind, follows external sannyāsa. If a person who has achieved balance of mind engages in action with his body, he can
experience the truth that he is the self which is not in anyway connected to karman. This experience is real sannyāsa. Actions surrendered to Brahman will not leave vāsana. For a yogin the aim of all actions is purity of mind and attainment of knowledge. When ignorance is warded off by knowledge, the attachment to karmans will also leave. Those who experience jñāna will see the same object in everything and will attain equipoise. A brahmajñāni will not be happy in obtaining any material pleasures or will not grieve in ill experiences. This is the real state of sannyāsa. Real sannyāsin is the one who wins over desires and anger before the end of his journey of life. As this chapter details the nature of real sannyāsa, it is named sannyāsayoga.

Doubt arose in Arjuna’s mind when karmayoga was advised after describing the importance of karmasannyāsa, as to which is better. The Lord utilizes the ślokās in this chapter to clear this doubt and to show which the ultimate aim to be aspired is. Jñāneśvara says that the aim of sannyāsayoga can be achieved through the easier way of karmayoga. A sannyāsin’s mind should be firm as Meru Mountain, free from selfish thoughts and bondage to the world. Even though the action of the sense organs of a yogin who has attained unity with Brahman through yogavidya continues, he will not get bound by the karmans. This is because the separation of sannyāsin’s body and mind is complete.
Moreover, with the grace of the preceptor, a mind devoid of selfishness can also be attained. The faith that one is Brahman gets established when the attitude of the yogin is same towards all objects of the world. The only joy that a yogin experiences when he avoids all thoughts of duality and the joy of the senses is bliss.

Śloka - 10

कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलेरिद्रियेरपि।
योगिनः कर्म बुद्धिन्ति सहभागितान्वित्युक्ते॥ (5 - 11)

By the body, by the mind, by the intellect, by mere sense salso, Yogins perform action, without attachment, for the purification of the self\textsuperscript{69}.

Here by body, actions like bathing, by manas actions like imagination, by intellect actions like meditation and by sense organs actions like kīrtana, śravaṇa, rūpadarśana etc. which are aimed at the purification of mind is meant\textsuperscript{70}. Ācārya states through this śloka that karmayogins perform actions which are devoid of feeling of doership and any thought of the fruits thereon inorder to achieve purity of mind. Karmayogins perform action for attainement of purity of soul just for the sake of the attainment of the Lord\textsuperscript{71}. Here Ācārya uses the word ‘kevalai’ with every expression inorder to make it clear that attachment is avoided in all bodily actions.
Bodily emotions occur due to desires. But the actions of the mind happen without the knowledge of the sense. A mind devoid of selfishness generates no bondages. In the view of Jñāneśvara yogins do the actions with their body like the actions of kids. When the body made of the five elements sleep, just the mind will engage in action like in a dream. But those actions which originate without the knowledge of the sense organs can be named as mental actions.

The yogins who engage in actions veiled in akarman do the same thing.

The Lord tells Arjuna to differentiate between actions of sense organs which are done without knowing its purpose and the actions of the intellect which are done knowingly. Karmayogins perform their actions with their mind controlled by their intellect. Moreover they become pure as they perform their actions without identifying themselves in their intellect or body. This knowledge will not happen without the grace of a great preceptor.

Ācārya gives the meaning, purity of mind to the word ātmaśudhiand the meaning absence of ego for the word ‘kevalai’. This means that there will be no like or dislike towards the work one does or the things one’s sense organs grabs. Whatever the work may be, it will bind the one who desires for the fruits and will release the one who is not concerned about the fruits. This is the secret of karman which the Ācārya means.
Even here birth is overcome by them whose mind rests on equality. Spotless, indeed, and equal is Brahman; wherefore in Brahman they rest. Those equiminded persons who have stilled their ugly thoughts and ideas have conquered death by staying firm in the Brahman which is equal in all beings. No flaws affect the Brahman and three are no signs which show the differences in it too. There is no basis to think that souls are different in each body. Hence Brahman is one and is same in everything. Flaws will not affect the learned as they don’t identify themselves with their body or their senses. When the knowledge dawns that the same Brahman is in everything, all are equal and then there is no need to worship one another. But Ācārya describes why some people are worshipped in his world by others. This happens as there are particular qualities in different individuals. And it is not the soul worshipping another soul. In smṛti, those people who identify themselves with their bodies and senses are referred to as samasamabhyam. In the opinion of Ācārya it is used to describe those who worship and those who are worshipped. In subjects related to
worship and charity, certain special qualities like brahmajñāna, śadaṅgajñāna, caturvedajñāna etc. could be seen included. Thus Ācārya establishes that it is proper to have remarked that they, the learned men, stay in Brahman. Here the expression quoted from the smṛti, ‘samāsamābhyaṁ’ is immediately related to karman. The Lord speaks about karmasannyāsa from the śloka ‘sarva........’(5-13) to the end of the chapter.

Jñāneśvara starts his commentary on this śloka saying that the cardinal point of samesightedness is the complete knowledge that there is only one Brahman and oneself is not different from it. A yogin is a person who does not torture his sense organs, has no desires and connections with sense objects and still perform his actions. But he is not a person who imitates the mistakes and errors that the world commits. Though there are devils but others cannot see it, the yogin does not view the world with his mental eye even though he has all the physical capabilities. Jñāneśvara compares this to the formation of waves when wind blows over the surface of water. Though it is not different from water, it is known by another name, wave. In the same way, though the yogin has name and form, generally he is Brahman itself. The yogin who maintains samabhāvana stays in Brahman itself.

Here by the expression ‘samabhāvana’ Ācārya gives the meaning that it is the same sightedness towards infinite virtuous qualities and
spotlessness. Acarya means that while a person who doesn’t have the knowledge of the self sees everything by comparing one another, yogin, has no interest in them and sees them only in the same attitude. The word ‘sarga’ includes the three aspects of creation, maintenance and dissolution. But a person who has realized that there is only one object and it doesn’t undergo change while viewing it, experiences the fact that creation, maintenance and dissolution do not happen. This experience is known as ‘sri stivijaya’. Those persons whose mind is in a balanced stage will always be in the state of Brahman. The universe for them is like a mind which is always in a state of flux and Brahman is mind which is in a state of equipoise. This is the secret of prapañcabrahmānubhava.

Resume

The Lord through this chapter named ‘Sannyāsayoga’ summarises the concept of real sannyāsa as the realization of the great non dual truth by avoiding likes and dislikes. The paths of jñāna and yoga are ways that lead a person to sannyāsa. This chapter serves as an answer to Arjuna’s query of how karmasannyāsa is possible through karmayoga. The ultimate causative phenomenon that is Brahman pervades the whole universe uniformly. Those who have attained a balanced state of mind reach Brahman. The yogin who has experienced
the self in Samādhi will never lose that experience. In this chapter it is said that a yogin will attain liberation through that.

**Dhyānayoga**

In the 6th chapter, the practice of meditation in loneliness which is equally important to the practice of jñāna-karmayogās and relinquishment of thoughts is explained. The intellect will be firm and fit for meditation only with the relinquishment of the desire of the fruits of action. Both yoga and sannyāsa are really the relinquishment of thoughts. One who aspires for yoga should practice the relinquishment of thoughts while performing svadharma. One who has achieved yoga should always try to maintain the upasama of mind which is the nature of the experience of ātman. One who has achieved yoga is the one who has avoided all thoughts. In the path of yoga one should lift oneself. Ultimate Yoga is perceiving equality always. Practising meditation in loneliness is helpful for the experience of this yoga. Arjuna asks what will be the state of a yogin who leaves his body before he reaches the ultimate state. The Lord replies that the effort put in by a yogin in one birth will never go astray and that he could continue his practice of yoga from where he has stopped in that birth in the next birth. As meditation is detailed in this chapter, this chapter is named ‘Dhyānayoga’.
While speaking about the setting of the story in the preface of the sixth chapter, *Dhyānayoga*, Jñāneśvara speaks about *Gītāśaṭi* too. *Yogis* should perform actions without thinking of the fruits thereof. A *yogin* and a *sannyāsin* should be treated equally. Where sun arrives, light will also accompany. In the same way, anything that appears before a yogin is perceived as *Brahman*. A *yogin* will not differentiate or show discrimination towards a friend or foe, or noble and ignoble. This can be compared to gold which is same in different ornaments. Such evenmindedness towards everything is most important to *yogins*. Then comes the description of the outer spiritual discipline, *āsana*, which is to be practised by a *yogin*. It is impossible to aspire for liberation through the path of devotion without the practice of *yoga*. The sense organs and mind of a *yogin* get dissolved in *Brahman* and the fragrance of virtue will emanate from him like sandalwood. Thus the *yogin* becomes *Parabrahman* treading through different ways. Jñāneśvara winds up this chapter with a conclusion underlining that the path of *yoga* is nobler than the path of *Jñāna-sannyāsa yoga*.

**Śloka - 12**

अनानिन्दः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्मं करोति यः।
स सत्यासी च योगी च न निर्मिन्नं चाक्रिव।। (6 - 1)
He who, without depending on the fruits of action, performs his bounden duty, he is a Sannyāsin and a Yogin: not he who is without fire and without action.\textsuperscript{83}

One who does not depend on the fruits of his actions is known as ‘\textit{anaśritakarmaphalavan}’.\textsuperscript{84} Those that is attached to the fruits of action depends on them. Ācārya states that those who don’t depend on \textit{karma} and do contrary to \textit{kāmyakarman} and those \textit{karmans} which are to be done daily like the \textit{agnihotra} are better than any \textit{akarmis}. It is to describe this that the Lord says he is a \textit{sannyāsin} and \textit{yogin}.

It is the one who renounces that is a \textit{sannyāsin} and \textit{yogin}. Yoga is the balance or peace of mind.\textsuperscript{85} But it should not be taken that if a person renounces just the Agni and who is not doing anything is a \textit{sannyāsin} or \textit{yogin}. Here, that who does the actions to be done is Agni and those who renounce that are \textit{niragni}. Ācārya explains that those who renounces austerity and charity which are not objects of Agni are Niśkriyās.

Those who have left Agni will not become a \textit{sannyāsin}. Those who have left \textit{karmans} will not become a \textit{yogin} either. Or it means that those who have left Agni and \textit{karmans} are not \textit{sannyāsin} or \textit{yogin}. But a \textit{yogin} who does \textit{karman} with out any desire is a \textit{sannyāsin}.

The ways for the attainment of \textit{Brahman}, \textit{sannyāsa} and \textit{yoga} are infact one and the same.\textsuperscript{86} This is like a person who has different names
or like a place which can be reached through two ways. But in the opinion of Jñāneśvara, though yogis perform karmans, they won’t keep desire for the fruits thereof. If a person avoids those dutiful actions which he has to perform, then new karmans which he has to perform will come up. This is like a person who washes away a dirty scar and creates another dirty scar in its place, in the process. Thus a yogin who has to tread an opposite path will have to bear the weight of sannyāsa. Thus Jñāneśvara illustrates that yoga is that which confers the bliss of ātman without avoiding agniseva and without breaking the limits of karmans.

Śaṅkara comments in the perspective of Vedānta and Jñāneśvara comments in the perspective of worldly life for the same śloka. In the commentary by V.V. Śarma, this chapter is seen to have name ‘ātmasaṃyamayogā’. Ācārya states beyond doubt that in reality yoga and sannyāsa are one and the same. But Jñāneśvara too illustrates the unity of these two seemingly different subjects with the help of numerous instances from daily life.

Śloka - 13, 14

शुचो देवे प्रतिष्ठाय त्यस्मात्माश्चतन्त्रात्
नात्युच्छिरं नातिनीचं चैवाजनकुशोत्तरम्।

तत्रेकग्रं मनं कृत्वा यत्चित्तेतिियक्रियः॥

उपविश्यासने युज्यायोगमात्मविशुद्धः॥ (6-11,12)
Having in a cleanly spot established a firm seat, neither too high nor too low, with cloth, skin, and kuśa grass thereon; Making the mind one-pointed, with the actions of the mind and the senses controlled, let him, seated there on the seat, practice Yoga for the purification of the Self.

It is clear that, this system of practice is meant for a person whose desire for karman is not exhausted. This practice of yoga is not impossible for Arjuna. If yoga practice in the loneliness leads to the practice of the experience of ātman, Arjuna will gradually lose the interest in war and he will be eligible for the post of a yogārūḍa. With that he will even get the strength to engage in war as performing a yajñā and worship of God. The step is purity of ātman through the practice of yoga followed by the sense of the real object and the state of yogārūḍa. Thus Ācārya briefly explains the external discipline of āsana.

For the practice of yoga one should find a peaceful and attractive place which is difficult to avoid and which will instill thoughts of detachment. Even an atheist will turn out to be a person who will have strong faith in sannyāsa. If a romantic person reaches there he should feel to stay there leaving his country. There should be trees bearing sweet fruits and streams where pure water flows fully even in
summer. The sunshine should be moderate and cool and the whole place should be silent with the sound of only the breeze. But there should be birds like the *cakravāka*, koil and peacock. In a lonely area there can be a Śiva temple or a hermitage. Jñāneśvara concludes the commentary on this verse saying that a good seat which is neither very high or so low and wrapped with cloth or deer skin or grass should be prepared in that pure place.

In his commentary Jñāneśvara has separately commented on the 11th and 12th verses. Further the practice of yoga with a concentrated mind should be started extolling the greatness of the preceptor. This thought will lessen the hardness of ego, demolish the strength of the senses, and helps the mind to get fixed in the heart. The unity of mind, heart and memory should be strong and incessant. Then, Jñāneśvara speaks in detail about the *mudra* or posture of the body. *Vajrāsana* which rests the whole body on the heels is also described. He suggests that one should sit in this posture and practice yoga comfortably as per the directions of the preceptor.

Generally in the previous chapters, Ācārya follows a style characterized by detailed explanations and Jñāneśvara’s style is characterized by the over flow of similes, examples and simple style. But in the 11th and 12 the verses, Jñāneśvara has resorted to a different
style marked by a detailed and authentic tone which reveals that he was an adept in yogic practices.

**Śloka - 15**

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम्।
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराम्येन च गृह्यते॥ (6 - 35)

Doubless, O mighty-armed, the mind is hard to restrain and restless; but by practice, O son of Kunti, and by indifference it may be restrained⁹⁴.

The Lord agrees with Arjuna’s view that it is difficult to control the wavering mind. But he rubbishes the thought that it is uncontrollable. The Lord advises that the mind can be controlled through *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya*. *Abhyāsa* is the repetition of the task of concentrating the mind towards the self⁹⁵. *Vairāgya* is taming the mind not to be interested in worldly matters. The mind should be detracted from the *viṣayadhyāna* which was previously practiced to *īsvarādhyāna*. It is this retreat that is to be achieved by *vairāgya*. The zenith of *vairāgya* is getting detached from even heavenly pleasures and not just worldly pleasures⁹⁶. On one side the mind should be tried to be taken away from where it has been firmly fixed and on the other side it should be firmly held on truth. If these two ways are followed, the mind will gradually get controlled.
Both vairāgya and abhyāsa strengthens each other and helps the mind to lead it to the gates of liberation. Here when Arjuna is addressed ‘Mahābāho’ it is implied that he is not able to control the mind even though he is a great warrior and the name ‘kaunteya’ implies that kunti the mother of Arjuna was able to control her mind. Ācārya confirms that through abhyāsa and vairāgya, mind can be controlled and yoga which is the experience of the self can be achieved.

Through Jñāneśvari, the Lord says to Arjuna that it is the nature of the mind to be unstable. But it could be made stable if it is forcefully turned towards constant practice through firm vairāgya. Human mind will go towards the place where it gets happiness. Hence man should strive towards self realisation in such a manner that it will bring happiness to him in the process, says Jñāneśvara through this śloka.

Ācārya gives the meaning to ‘abhyāsa’ as the pleasure that happens as the ātman is the form of virtues and for ‘virakti’ the meaning given is the giving up of attachment towards sense objects realizing the fact that they are vicious in nature.

Śloka - 16

योगिनामपि सर्वेऽपि मद्गलनात्मरत्मा।
श्रद्धावान्भजते यो मां स मे युक्तमो मतः।। (6 - 47)
If all Yogins, whose, full of faith, worships Me with his inner self abiding in Me, he is deemed by Me as most devout\textsuperscript{100}.

The Lord describes here the ultimate bhāvana a yogin should keep. The best yogin is one who worships the Lord with faith\textsuperscript{101}. What is śrādha? It is the firm faith in the words of the preceptor and to the findings of the śāstra. Ācārya is of the view that those who fix their mind on Vāsudeva and serve Him with faith is best compared to the devotees of āditya and rudra\textsuperscript{102}.

The Lord is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. The pinnacle of the practice of yoga is performing actions holding tight on this truth. It is to strengthen this thought that abhyāsa and vairāgya are needed\textsuperscript{103}. When this thought becomes established, one will see only God everywhere and experience Him always.

When Ācārya says that a yogin is who worships the Lord with abhyāsa, vairāgya and śrādha, Jñāneśvara is of the opinion that yogin is the God of Gods\textsuperscript{104}. A yogin is all the joy, consciousness, life and bliss of God. But for a yogin, a devotee, devotion and God are all God Himself\textsuperscript{105}. The form and pleasing nature of a yogin and God are indescribable. The relation between the yogin and the Lord is like that of body and soul. Here Jñāneśvara addresses Arjuna as ‘Subadrāpati’. The love between the Lord and the yogin is compared to the love between Arjuna and Subhadrā.
Resume

For Dhyānayoga, karmans provide external help. Ācārya advises that a householder should perform the destined karmas till he is fit for ascension for Dhyānayoga. It is onepointed meditation that helps to achieve balance of mind through karman and consequently brahmānubhava in Samādhi. Through this there is scope for meditating the Lord. This meditation helps the intellect to be still while one engages in action. Such onepointed meditation when the mind is still will lead to enjoy the experience of self through Samādhi. In this world the two things that a mind can meditate on are fruits of actions and the Lord. But through the meditating the Lord the mind loses the thoughts of the fruits of actions. The two indispensable qualities for the practice of dhyānayoga are abhyāsa and vairāgya. This chapter is concluded by saying that the best among yogin’s is the one who stands firm on the truth with the faith in the words of the preceptor that God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent.

Jñānavijñānayoga

The Lord reveals that the eight aspects which include five elements, mind, intellect and ego are his aparāprkṛti and jīva his parāprkṛti. This universe is the conglomeration of these aparāprkṛti and parāprkṛti of the Lord. There is nothing except paramātman here. All are under
illusion unaware of the real object because of the action of Māyā which is triguṇātmik. This Māyā can be won only by the attitude of surrender towards the Lord. The four categories of people who are engaged in the worship of the Lord are ārtaḥ, jijñāsu, ardhārdhi and jñānin. The best among these is jñānin as he is ever free and has one pointed devotion. Jñānin and the Lord are one. The real object becomes clear after the feeling of difference disappears only when purity of mind is achieved by engaging in actions surrendered to the Lord. Perfect realisation is the realization of Brahman with the five qualities of adhyātma, karma, adhibhūtam, adhidaivam and adhiyajñānam. This chapter gets the name jñānavijñānayoga as it mainly deals with jñānavijñāna.

The Lord advises Arjuna certain points on Brahmajñāna and knowledge of the world. This knowledge helps a person to understand brahmajñāna as clear as a shining gem on ones palm. The Māyā which is projected by the multifaceted power of the universe is known as the prakṛti of the Lord. These powers are of eight types. What is perceived everywhere is prakṛti. As rows of gems on a string, the different aspects of the universe are strung on the Lord. In short, the origin of all objects of the universe is from the Lord. Moreover, triguṇās also spring from the Lord. As bubbles of water generate when waves hit the rocks on the shore, human beings take birth and die according to the laws of
birth and death by the working of the evolutionary cycle. Speaking of the qualities of yogīs, Jñāneśvara opines that, the Lord is the dearest yogin. A yogin through his experience realizes that the whole world is just a portion of him. In short, through this chapter it can be understood that, if a yogin worships and surrenders completely to the Lord he will achieve knowledge of the self and equal mindedness.

Śloka - 17

अपरेयमितस्वत्वाय प्रकृतिं विभि में पराम्।
जीवभूतानां महावाहो यथेऽ धार्यते जगत्।  (7 - 5)

This is the inferior (Prakṛti); but as distinct from this know thou My superior Prakṛti, the very life, O mighty-armed, by which this universe is upheld 106.

The meaning of ‘aparā’ is that which is low, degraded etc. and that of ‘parā’ is high, sublime etc. It is the inert universe that is divided into eight. This inert universe is called ‘aparā’ as it is unable to know itself or act on its own. It is because the living universe can know itself and act on its own that it is known as ‘parā’ 107. The life principle and inert mass are always interconnected. If the base that is the inert mass is not there, the image that is the life principle will also disappear 108. If the image like life principle which is to be there to experience the inert mass is absent, then the inert mass will also cease to exist. Inert
mass is the substance which cannot know itself. That is why the Lord says that the life principle is that which knows the inert mass. When this connection with the inert mass is lost, the life principle which is a shadow of the Brahman will lose its image status and will revert to its original status. This is what is named liberation.

Here the inert mass should be taken as conscious universe. This universe which is the inert mass is clothed by the conscious world which is Lakṣmi. This Lakṣmi is known as ‘jīvabhūta’ as she always wears prāṇa and is spread everywhere, says Ācārya.

The balanced state of all these eight factors is the paramapraṇāti of the Lord. Moreover, this state is also known as ‘jīva’ says the Lord. This jīva makes the mind experience sorrow and desire, enlivens the inert matter and activates the consciousness. Prakṛti gives its quality of intellect. It will lead the world to the path of action through the ‘ego’. This self activated principle coordinates different factors of the universe and thus the creation of living beings happens, says Jñānesvara.

Ācārya offers special comments on each word of the śloka. But in the commentary of Jñāneśvara this is not found. Just the meaning of the śloka is given there.
There is naught else higher than I, O Dhanañjayaḥ in Me all this is woven as clusters of gems on a string

There is nothing distinct or different from the paramātman. The Lord is the cause of everything in the universe. What was before creation and what will remain after dissolution is paramātman Himself. Hence the energy that vibrates in between creation and dissolution and the aspects of universe that it projects while doing so are all the different forms of paramātman. That is why the Lord has declared that there is nothing different from paramātman. As gems are strung, everything in this universe is connected by the string that is paramātman. Here the doubt should not arise that the string and the gems are different. What is intended by the simile is that the different aspects of the universe are strung together by paramātman. It is noteworthy that this simile is brought only after mentioning that there is nothing different from the paramātman in the universe.

It is nature that has created everything but the dissolution is brought forth by the Lord. It is like the sun that is real, which is the cause of the mirage which is unsubstantial. It is also said that the Lord
has worn the universe as the string holds all the gems together\(^{116}\). Like the gold wire which strings together golden beads, the Lord wears the universe from both inside and outside. Jñāneśvara concludes by saying that if nature is removed from this universe, nothing except the Lord remains.

Everything that is bound by cause and effect in the universe which is a conglomeration of inert and conscious matter is the Lord’s body. Both the commentators have remarked that the whole universe depends on the Lord who is the soul of everything.

**Śloka - 19**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्विष्ट पार्थ सनातनम्।}
\text{वुब्धिवुद्भितंतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम्॥} (7 - 10)
\end{align*}
\]

Know Me, O Pārtha, as the eternal seed of all beings; I am the intelligence of the intelligent, the bravery of the brave\(^{117}\).

*Paramātman* is the basic cause of everything in the universe. It is in the seed of a fruit that a big tree with all its leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds hides with all its branches. It is in the same manner that the gross world hides inside the subtle truth that is the consciousness and projects itself\(^{118}\). It is revealed through this example that the gross world can hide in the subtle world. But it should not be taken that
paramātman will turn itself to the universe like the seed becomes the tree. The universe is imputed on the Lord by the power of Māyā. That is why the Lord is pictured as the basic cause here. Paramātman can easily be understood by sūkṣmabuddhi. That is why it is said that the intellect of the intellectuals is also the Lord. Moreover those who attain purity of mind through the vision of the self, attain brilliance. Peaceful brilliance is the result of self discipline. Hence the Lord is revealed as the brilliance of the brilliant.

In the beginning nature sprouts and grows into the space. It swallows the sounds of auṃkāra in the end. Thus the seed of the universe which is beginning less is the Lord himself. The Lord hands over that seed of the universe to Arjuna. If the significance of the seed that is handed over is meditated upon, its utility will be understood. The essence of this śloka is that whatever man strives for, be it for material pleasures, or for spiritual progress or for liberation, the basic desire is for the Lord Himself.

The prudence of the prudent and the brilliance of the brilliant is the Lord. Ācārya concludes that it is the Lord who is the reason for the birth, and growth of all living beings. Jñāneśvara too appeals that everybody should think on the merits of the seed which has been handed over to everyone and which is in fact the Lord himself. Thus Jñāneśvara has given some food for thought for everyone.
Of them the wise man, ever steadfast and devoted to the One, excels; for, excessively dear am I do to the wise, and he is dear to Me.

It is pointed out through the verse, ‘catur....’(7-16), that there are four types of individuals namely ‘ārtah’, ‘jigjñāsu’, ‘ardhārdhi’, ‘jñānin’, who depend the Lord. But the noblest among these are the jñānis. Jñānin is ever free and a steadfast devotee. Nityayukta is one who sustains the experience of the self. Āartās and others have not realized the self and hence they can worship the Lord in any form. They are not nityayukta as their consciousness of God differs with the change in thoughts. For a person who has attained the experience of Brahman, everything is Brahman. This is what is known as jñānis ekabhaktitva. As per the Upaniṣads, there is no bliss beyond the bliss of Brahman. The Brahman which can provide bliss will be so dear to a jñānin. That is why it is said that for the Lord a jñānin is very dear and vice versa.

While Ācārya explains as above, Jñāneśvara says that arta worships God for saving him from sorrows, jijñāsu worships for
knowledge and *ardhārthi* worships for acquirement of wealth. The fourth group, *jñānis* don’t have any special aim in worshipping the Lord. That is why they are considered the best among the lot. By the light of their knowledge they dispel the darkness of difference and they get united with the Lord. *Jñānis* don’t have any curiosity like common people who mistakes glass as water. He won’t be allured by any excellence of personality because of his knowledge. By virtue of his deep faith and devotion a *jñānin* himself transforms to God. Still he retains his individuality. As a *jñāni*’s realization that his soul is part and parcel of God’s soul gets strengthened, the Lord will act according to his emotions.

Both the commentators have given almost same meaning to the verse. All others except *jñānin* will continue to be devotees till their wishes are fulfilled. But a *jñānin* will always be at the Lord’s feet. They make it clear that for a *jñānin* the dearest object is nothing but the Lord.

**Resume**

The *ślokās* from the seventh chapter to twelfth chapter are an explanation of the meaning of the word that in the *mahāvākyam*. The Lord advises in this chapter how a seeker of truth should realize through his logic and experience, the complete nature of the truth which
is the basis of this universe by practicing yoga. It will be only one person in a million who will strive for liberation. The nature of the Lord who manifests in the form of the universe has eight factors based on sense perception. The Lord explains further that these eight factors are the apara nature of Brahman and the jīva is the parā nature. The basic causative factor of everything is the Lord and the triguṇās are also generated from the Lord. The ultimate aims of a person are prapatti and attainment of knowledge. Any form of worship serves as a way for the realization of this objective. Moreover, along with the knowledge of self, the expressions of Brahman like adhyātma, karman, adhibhūta, adhidaiva, adhiyajña etc. too can be realized. In short, the Lord concludes this chapter named ‘Jñānavijñānayoga’ by saying that those who aspire for liberation from this world will attain complete Brahman if they tread the path of truth.

Akṣarabrahmayoga

Akṣarabrahmopāsana is the worship of everything in the universe as the manifestation of akṣarabrahman which is the ultimate cause through the qualities of adhyātma, adhibhūta, adhidaiva and adhiyajña. It is for making this way of worship easier that the Lord has described these five aspects separately at the beginning of this chapter. A person who leaves his body remembering Brahman, whose brahmabhāva has
become firm through the worship of Brahman, will attain Brahman itself. Even if an akṣarabrahmopāsaka fails to reach the nirguṇabrahmābhāva he can achieve kramamukti if he can leave his body while engaging in praṇavopāsana. Brahma’s one day is equivalent to thousand divine yugās and another thousand divine yugās his night. Those who know this know day and night. Uttarāyaṇa and dakṣiṇāyana are eternal ways of jīvā of the world. Those who clearly understand this will not be deluded by worldly things. As this chapter describes akṣarabrahman and akṣarabrahmopāsana, it got the name ‘akṣarabrahmayoga’.

This chapter which deals with akṣarabrahman and its worship is named ‘Akṣarabrahmayoga’. Brahman, for whom there will be no signs of ageing, is complete, omnipresent and the principle which occupies even emptiness. Arjuna is reminded that if the Lord is always meditated upon, one can find Him always everywhere. Hence there is no scope for fear in waging war. When the mind transforms to Brahman, all actions cease and thereby bliss is achieved. This summit can be achieved only by those who follow a life based on this system of yoga. One should fix the mind on Brahman by repeating the praṇavamantra through the practice of prāṇāyāma. This divine parabrahman is even beyond Aupākāra. Jñāneśvara explains in a detailed manner all the
ways by which one can reach the Brahman. For those who have attained the Lord, rebirth won’t happen. But a yogin will stay fixed on Brahman even if he is in his body or his body undergoes destruction. Jñāneśvara also describes the way by which a yogin can reach the summit of brahmānanda by treating the heavenly pleasures as stepping stones.

Śloka - 21

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोध्यात्मपुच्छते।
भूतभावद्भवकरो विसर्गः कर्मसमितं। (8 - 3)

The Blessed Lord said: Brahman is the Imperishable (Aksara), the Supreme. The Ego is said to be the individual Self (Adhyātman, He who dwells in the body). The offering which causes the origin of physical being is called Action (Karm).

Brahman is that which is imperishable and the ultimate soul. The basis for this is the Vedic declaration ‘etasya vā aksarasya praśāsane Gārgī’. (Brih Upa, 3-8-9) which means oh Gārgī, it is for the fear of the commands of that imperishable, that the sun and the moon maintain their positions. The meaning of aksara should not be taken as auṃkāra. By the expression, ‘auṃityeṃksaram.........’. (8-13) the meaning is not that auṃkāra is Brahman. But as there is the epithet, ‘paramaṃ’, it should be taken as unsurpassed and imperishable. The same Brahman existing as the Inner Self in the individual body is called adhyātma,
points out the Ācārya\textsuperscript{131}. It is meant that the individual soul is the consciousness which naturally shines in the Brahman.

‘Visarga’ is the oblations like food, powdered grains etc offered to the deities during a yajña. Karma is the yajña done in order to produce material things. Ācārya gives the meaning for visarga as the oblations like milk, ghee etc done in a yajña. The meaning for this visarga that Ācārya gives in his commentary on the Upaniṣads and Brahmasūtra is ‘śakticalana’. Hence karman can be defined as the ‘śakticalana’ which creates the factors of the universe\textsuperscript{132}. It is from this karman that rain and other factors originate in an orderly manner. Ācārya says that it is from this that the seeds of all moveable and immovable objects arise and all living beings originate.

Brahman is omnipresent and is found even in emptiness\textsuperscript{133}. Brahman is inaccessible for material scientific knowledge. Though it is experienced in the body, it does not have birth or death, is independently present and eternal too. This is the ultimate spiritual knowledge in the eyes of Jñāneśvara. The source from which the colorful clouds that are seen in the sky come is not known\textsuperscript{134}. In the same way the myriad forms of the universe starts appearing through the ego which arises from the formless Brahman and from the illusory states of change of the universe. But even though creation is considered to be illusory one finds innumerable individuals there. There is no one
like a creator. The end is also not clear. Still one can perceive a natural growth in between. This is known as karman.

This śloka describes Brahman, adhyātma and karman. Ācārya illustrates this through a Vedāntic perspective by saying that the nature of Brahman is an integrated and solidified form of existence, consciousness and bliss. Jñānesvara compares Brahman to an empty object which never spills but is full of crammed up things. While Ācārya describes adhyātman as the life principle found in every body, Jñānesvara considers it as the consciousness which is naturally inherent in every object. When Ācārya defines karman as the yajñā which is required to produce material things, Jñānesvara calls it the peculiar action which generates from the unclear and subject less shape.

Śloka - 22, 23

Having closed all the gates, having confined mind in the heart, having fixed his lifebreath in the head, engaged in firm Yoga, uttering Brahman, the one-syllabled ‘Auṃ’, thinking of Me, whoso departs, leaving the body, he reaches the Supreme Goal.
Bhagavān describes here the destiny of those worshipping the praṇava for the idealistic realization of things. Praṇavopāsana is the harmonious unification of form and formless modes of worship. This worship gives a qualified solace in the beginning of its utterance and gradually takes one directly to the ātmic state after making the mind attributeless. ‘Aum’ is the conglomeration of three sounds vis. ‘a’, ‘u’ and ‘m’. ‘Aum’ is representative of all the experiential stages of consciousness.

There are four stages of experience for consciousness. The state of jāgrat is that in which the individual soul experiences the world through the sense organs. The first sound of praṇava, ‘a’ is representative of this state. The second state is in which a small universe is created by the self and enjoys it with the sense organs and the mind settled in one self. This is the state of dream and the sound ‘u’ is representative of this state. In the third state of sleep even the state of dream gets settled down and m is representative of this stage. The fourth stage, turīya is the final stage of consciousness where all thoughts and the states of conscious, subconscious and unconscious become nonexistent. This state of turīya can be experienced only by those yogins who have totally controlled and avoided thoughts. The Lord calls this ‘praṇava’ as ‘aumityekāksaram brahma’ as it is a
perfect symbol which will take one directly to Brahman by giving solace for the aspirants’ minds and as it represents all the stages of experience of the mind.

One who leaves the body while meditating on the Lord who is Brahman, uttering aumkāra will reach the ultimate. Here Ācārya has used the expression ‘dehatyāga’ in order to show that ātman will not get destroyed after death. By ‘saradvārāṇi’ Ācārya means all organs of knowledge and by ‘mūrdha’ top of the head or portion between the two brows or ‘brahmarandhra’ and by ‘pramaṇgati’ the way where there is no rebirth or freedom from the world.

While Ācārya describes ‘aum’ which is another name of Brahman in the above mentioned way, Jñāneśvara’s treatment of aum may be further examined. When all the doors of sense controls are closed, the closed mind will be seen resting in the heart. Lord asks Arjuna to meditate on praṇava and bring the prāṇa to the brahmarandhra after controlling the mind in the aforesaid manner. Further with yogabala, prāṇa should be contained until it is almost integrated with akāśa. Then the three mantras in the praṇava mantra will get dissolved in the ardhamantra. Then even aumkārā gets forgotten and the life principle will disappear. The divine prabrahman which remains after that is beyond aumkārā.
Prañavamantra is the name of the Lord and also his ultimate form. Those who leave their body remembering this one-lettered word will attain the Lord with trisudhi. When Lord declared so, Arjuna wonders how a person can remember this mantra at the time of his death\(^{141}\). For those who praise the Lord with real devotion, He will be like their servant. Hence they will get the help of the Lord at their time of death, confirms Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Ācārya who gives a detailed commentary on the worship of praṇava, describes the three states of waking, dreaming and sleeping too in detail. This type of a detailed description cannot be found in Jñāneśvara. On the contrary Jñāneśvara offers some special comment for some words. Jñāneśvara mentions that samyama means the control of the senses and trisudhi means making firm after purifying three times.

Śloka - 24

आत्रहभुवनात्लोका: पुनरावर्तिनोऽज्ञुन।
मामुपेत्य तु कोन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते॥ (8-16)

All worlds including the world of Brahman are subject to returning again, O Arjuna; but, on reaching Me, O son of Kunti, there is no rebirth\(^{142}\).
This universe is the place where all living beings come into existence and live. It is called *Brahmalokā* which means the world of *Brahma*. In the process of emergence of different worlds the first to emerge is *Brahmalokā*. Further other worlds emerge and later this process takes a u turn and all the worlds disappear one by one\(^{143}\). (16)

This process has been continuing without any beginning and end. Here the painter *Paramātman* exhibits his work by folding and unfolding the canvas of the world. If a person identifies himself with the painting, he will have to get folded and unfolded through births and deaths. On the contrary, if he identifies himself with the painter, the whole process will cease to exist. That is why the Lord declares that those who surrender before him will not be reborn.

For the first half of the *śloka*, Ācārya gives the meaning that all the worlds starting from the *Brahmalokā* will emerge again and again. Through the remark starting from the *Brahmalokā*, it could be understood that all the worlds and its inhabitants have rebirth. For those in the *Brahmalokā* there is no rebirth. Ācārya equates the attainment of *Brahmalokā* with the attainment of God Himself. Ācārya states that it is due to the limitation of time that it is said that all the worlds including *Brahmalokā* repeat again.

Jñāneśvara makes it clear that even for those who claim that they have realized *Brahman* there is rebirth but for the devotees of God there
is no return. Even for Brahma, rebirth is there. But those who have surrendered before the Lord will not get immersed in this world like a person who has dreamt of a flood will not get drowned in it after waking up from the dream. He will also leave the body for ever\textsuperscript{144}. In the imagination of Jñāneśvara, Brahmabhuvana is really the head of the body of the universe and the peak of the universal mountain. In short, even Brahma has rebirth, whereas those who surrender at the feet of the Lord will not have rebirth and will attain liberation, asserts Jñāneśvara.

**Resume**

It is the evolutionary stages of liberation that could be attained through the saguṇa worship of akṣarabrahman that the Lord describes in the eighth chapter. This chapter is named ‘akṣarabrahmayoga’ as akṣara which is the imperishable principle of Brahman is clearly defined giving importance to its experience. Ācārya states that total attainment of Brahman is the acquisition of the knowledge that all is Brahman treading the path of knowledge. Jñāneśvara describes that Brahman can be attained by constantly practising praṇāyāma and worshipping the praṇāva. By the expression, ‘sa yati......’, the Lord opines that one who worships pranava will attain the ultimate state of liberation. Hence all aspirants should worship auṃkāra which is the object of liberation
with devotion and realize the \textit{akṣarabrahman} through meditation in this birth itself.

\textbf{Rājavidyārājaguhyayoga}

The subject matter of this chapter is the perfect achievement of Brahman through the way of \textit{jñāna}. The Lord’s declaration is that this vidya is a \textit{Rājavidya} that can be directly experienced by a person. It can be experienced through this \textit{vidya} that though all the factors of the universe can be perceived in the Lord none of them can affect any change in \textit{bhagavadsvarūpā}. The reason for creation and dissolution is nature, which is the power of \textit{Brahman}. The Lord stays just as an indolent witness. Those who can worship the Lord everywhere will achieve progress in both material and spiritual arena. \textit{Viradrūpopāsana} is one way for achieving this. A person who aspires for \textit{Brahman} should turn every act of his as worship of the Lord. The Lord resides in them and they reside in the Lord who has \textit{paramaprema} towards the Lord. Hence one should always engage in actions considering them as worship of Lord with an attitude of constant practice of the absolute principle. This chapter gets the name ‘\textit{rājavidyārājaguhyayoga}’ as it explains the way to achieve perfect realization.

\textit{Jñāneśvara} asks himself whether it is dexterous to challenge sabdabrahman and conquer words to give a commentary on \textit{Gītā} in the
Marathi language. In the village of knowledge, brahmavidya is the preceptor. Once it is achieved, rebirth can be avoided and the Lord will be seen in anything all around. Further it is described how people who worship the Lord through \( \text{jñānayajña} \) reach the ultimate state. \( \text{Ātmanivedana} \) is suggested as the way for accomplishing this. Brahman can be achieved if all actions are surrendered to the Lord after becoming humble by avoiding all ego of learning. Moreover Jñāneśvara describes through this chapter, how peace and happiness can be achieved by becoming a true devotee who has achieved yogasidhi.

**Śloka - 25**

राजविद्या राजगुम्भ पवित्रमिदमुतमम्।
प्रत्यक्षात्वायः धर्मी सुसुखं कर्तृमायम्। (9 - 2)

The Sovereign science, the Sovereign Secret, the Supreme Purifier is this; immediately comprehensible, unopposed to Dharma, very easy to perform, imperishable. The ultimate aim of knowledge is the appeasement of curiosity. If there is a vidya which can completely appease one’s curiosity, it is the king of knowledge. Brahmavidya got the name Vedānta as it completely quells one’s curiosity. The meaning of the word Vedānta is ‘the end of knowledge’. Ācārya says in his commentary that brahmajñāna can completely demolish karmās in the form of dharma and adharma.
accumulated through thousands of births. Jñāneśvara too suggests that the difference between jñāna and vijñāna is same as the difference between right and wrong. Moreover this subject should be treated very skillfully like a celestial swan which separates milk and water\textsuperscript{146}. Jñāneśvara clarifies in his commentary that it is when this difference is comprehended that a person escapes the wheel of birth and death and attains liberation. There will be no rebirth once this knowledge is attained\textsuperscript{147}. When this stage is reached, the consciousness of the unity of jīvātman and paramātman dawns. It will not be lost once it is accomplished. It is imperative for everyone to reach that knowledge which is effulgent, pure, and righteous and which is already inherent in everyone.

Ācārya says that brahmavidya is that knowledge which points out that aim which once reached one attains complete peace and satisfaction. That is why the Lord calls this knowledge as the best. Brahmajñāna is the foundation of righteousness\textsuperscript{148}. By ‘susukham’ Ācārya suggests the meaning that way which can be practised by the needy. Pūrvapakṣi expresses his doubt that it is only through difficult actions that great achievements can be earned and that which is earned easily will be lost quickly too\textsuperscript{149}. For this the Ācārya replies that when the results of the actions done are exhausted,
actions too cease. But ātmajñāna is so remarkable and imperishable. Here ‘dharmyaṁ’ means mokṣasādhana. As He holds the universe, the Lord is the dharma. The knowledge related to the Lord is ‘dharmyam’.

Śloka - 26

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमानश्चितत्म।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमस्थरम्।। (9 - 11)

Fools disregard Me clad in human form, not knowing My higher being as the Great lord of beings.  

In order to concentrate, one should take up one form of one’s dearest godhead for meditation. Even then, it should be borne in mind that this saguṇopāsana is just a way to reach the ultimate cause. If the Lord is considered to be possessing a body, then all the factors of the universe should be considered as the bodies of the Lord. If the Lord is considered to be bodiless, He is Parabrahman who is the embodiment of truth, consciousness and bliss. It is foolish to think that the Lord is limited to any single body. Moreover, wherever the Lord mentions ‘I’ and ‘Me’, it should be taken as He who is the ultimate aspect of the whole universe. The ignorant is unaware of the greatness of the Lord who is the noblest reality and who is in the space and beyond it.

The Lord cannot be perceived by the external eyes, says Jñāneśvara. It is compared to the case of a person who sees the rays of
the moon as yellow when he is affected by jaundice and to the case of a person affected by fever who treats milk as sour as poison. Those who cannot comprehend the greatness of the Lord, who is the master of the universe, will try to belittle Him thinking as limited in a human body. Both the commentators share the same view regarding this. They consider that the nameless has name. They think that the bodiless phenomenon does the actions done by a person having body. They see action in inaction and duality in non-dualism. They say that the phenomenon which eats not eats. Thus they draw real knowledge to the dark by saying that the Lord is just a human limited in a body. This materialistic view draws them away from real knowledge. They become unlucky by this contemptuous attitude towards the Lord.

Śloka - 27

मन्नना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजि मां नमस्कृरु।
मामेवेष्यसि युक्तेवमात्मानं मत्सरायणः।। (9 - 34)

Fix thy mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me. Thus steadied, with Me as thy Supreme Goal, thou shalt reach Myself, the Self.

The two main jobs of the mind are to imagine and doubt. When the mind thinks differently it should be taught that whatever it sees is the same basic phenomenon, which is the paramātman. The
ātmabhāvana training is the establishment of the truth that the basic object in all these imaginations is the one and the same ātmic principle. Another action of the mind is to doubt about the result. Man cannot do anything beyond just carrying out his jobs to the maximum, offering it to the God\textsuperscript{156}. Manmanastvam is the engagement of the mind, which is imaginative and doubtful, on ātmic thoughts. Further to it, madbhakti should be practiced. It is the practice of karmans unconcerned of the results\textsuperscript{157}. Whether it is beneficial or not, it shall be considered as the grace of the Lord. Once the status of manmanastva and madbhakti are established, efforts can be directed towards being madyaji. Madyājitva is the effort to convert any karman to the worship of the Lord whether it is family based, individual based or society based\textsuperscript{158}. Finally comes the stage of matprāṇa where one bows before all natural phenomena considering it as the forms of Brahman. The step by step evolution of ātmabhavana and its experience is thus detailed here. Ācārya clarifies through this śloka that if a person tries to unite his mind with the Lord after annihilating the feeling of difference, his life becomes fulfilled.

Anyone who depends on the Lord will attain the sublime state\textsuperscript{159}. Jñāneśvara admits the truth that those who live in the eternal truth will transcend death. As the absence of light is known as night, the life without devotion is full of miseries. The one who always thinks of the lord will become the Lord Himself. The age, clan, caste, beauty etc are
no obstacles in reaching the Lord. Moreover without devotion to the Lord any other accomplishment is worthless. Jñānesvara reminds the story of Gajendra an elephant who could manage to attain liberation by pure devotion to the Lord even though it was an animal. Hence Arjuna is asked to offer his mind at the lotus feet of the Lord and worship him devotedly. If it is done so, everyone can reach the Lord. This is the message that Jñāneśvara offers through this śloka.

**Resume**

The main subject matter of this chapter is the detailed description of jñāna and vijnāna. The Lord’s advice is that these jñāna and vijnāna are helpful in that attainment of Brahman. Hence this is considered by Śaṅkara and Jñāneśvara as the king of all knowledge and secrets. The aim of life is to attain purity of mind and experience liberation which happens with the realization of the truth. Upāsanās are the ways to achieve this purity of mind. Brahman can be achieved through the worship of akṣara Brahman or praṇava. Those who have lost their passion towards action by this purity of mind can perform virādrūpopāsana which is the worship of the Brahman which is manifested in different forms in the universe as a whole. Moreover Ācārya establishes through this chapter named ‘rājavidyārājaguhya-yoga’ that complete brahmaniṣṭa can be attained in this life itself through jñānamārga.
Jñāneśvara says that by achieving ātmavidya which is the sublime dharma, one will become perfect and will not be reborn. By brahmajñāna, the unification of jīvātma and paramātma happens. The Lord can be attained through this brahmajñāna. The Lord cannot be perceived through the external eyes. The one Lord is seen as many due to ignorance. We will have to experience the fruits of all the actions done by us. But Jñāneśvara reminds that if the actions are done in a spirit of surrender towards the Lord, it will become better and results corresponding to faith will be experienced. The advice that both the commentators give to the society through this chapter is that if actions are performed by surrendering innocently one’s mind and body to the Lord, one will attain the most excellent state.

**Vibhūtiyoga**

‘Vibhūtiyoga’ is engaging in niṣkāmasaguṇopāsana in the form of the dearest godhead or in different forms of the Lord, with the aim of attainment of parabrahman. As the introduction of vibhūtiyoga, the Lord explains the nature of the absolute truth and also the nature of niṣkāmasaguṇopāsana in the beginning of this chapter. He also reveals that niṣakāmabhajana can lead the intellect to the absolute reality. Further Arjuna expresses his desire to know in detail about His vibhūti and vibhūtiyoga. Thus the Lord started explaining His vibhūtis one by
one. At last the Lord tells that what he has explained is just a small portion of His endless vibhūtis. Finally He clarifies that the vibhūtiyoga should not make an aspirant stuck with the vibhūtis but should be used as a first step to realize the paramātman which is imminent inside and outside the whole universe. This chapter is named ‘Vibhūtiyoga’ as it discusses about the different types of vibhūti of the Lord.

As all objects of the world are the form of the Lord, all of them can be considered as the vibhūti of the Lord. But for the convenience of the devotees the Lord points out certain forms through which He has manifested in a special way. Light and darkness originates from the sun. It is because of the karmaphala of living beings that they realize or do not realize God. The one who realizes the truth that, from an ant to Brahma it is only the Lord who is getting manifested, he is truly realized. He who realizes this truth through jñānayoga and meditates on the Lord with total mind reaches the sublime aim. The forms that the Lord takes are innumerable. If a person wishes to understand that, first of all he has to understand the supreme divine bhāva of the Lord. The person, who thinks that everything is full of divinity and understand the divine principle firmly, will never be separate from the Lord. The vibhutis of the Lord have been advised in this chapter as a way to view all powers and all objects as filled with divinity. The gist of this chapter
is that if a devotee could take up any of the myriad vibhūti of the Lord and could maintain desireless devotion to that form, he could attain liberation.

Śloka - 28

तेषां सततवुत्क्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकः।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामप्राणिति तेन।१० - १०

To these, ever devout, worshipping Me with love, I give that devotion of knowledge by which they come to Me\textsuperscript{161}.

Here Ācārya’s view is that from time immemorial itself the truth of Brahman which is proclaimed through the Upaniṣads has been firmly established by many seers. The knowledge of the Lord known as saṃyakdarśana is possible only for those who worship the Lord with a mind fully absorbed in the Lord with devotion and free from the desires related to wealth, progeny and wife\textsuperscript{162}. Ācārya says that the Lord who is the Supreme God can be attained through the jñānayoga known as saṃyakdarśana. Daily practice of budhiyoga gradually leads to niḥvikalpayoga. By the experience of this yoga, the knowledge that everything is Brahman gets firmly established.

The objective of the devotion of the devotees will be realized. According to Jñāneśvara, they will cast away the fear of death through
Like a mother’s care and concern for her dear son, the Lord too will show His caring attitude towards his devotees while they progress through the bhaktimārga. The Lord has shared only His body to Ādiśeṣa and Goddess Lakṣmi, but He has kept apart ātmānanda which has no worldly bondages and is nobler than any other thing, only for His devotees. The Lord doesn’t even wish to discuss with Arjuna, about the Grace He has showered on His devotees.

Ācārya holds the view that the Lord can be attained by jñānayoga through saṃyakdarśana. On the other hand, Jñāneśvara holds that the Lord will save His devotees even from death and gives them absolute bliss through deep devotion.

Śloka - 29

विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूति च जनार्दन।
भूय: कथय तृतियि शुष्कतो नास्ति मेत्मृतम्।। (10-18)

Tell me again in detail, O Janārđana, of Thy power and glory, for there is no satiety for mo in hearing the immortal.

Arjuna implores the Lord to explain in a detailed way how to meditate on His yoga, aśvarya, sakti and vibhūti. Here Ācārya has offered two meanings for the name ‘Janārđana’. ‘Ardana’ means to go. Thus Janārđana could mean the person who sends the asurās
who are the enemies of devas to places like hell. Another meaning given by Ācārya is to beg. The Lord gets the name Janārdana as all persons beg before Him for their puruṣārdhās like śreyah, abhyudayaḥ etc\textsuperscript{167}. Ācārya has suggested the meaning for yoga as omnipotence or the skill for creation and for vibhūti he has suggested the meaning, description of the objects to be meditated upon and for amṛuta he has suggested the meaning as the glorious amṛuta of His feet\textsuperscript{168}.

Arjunas asks the Lord to describe His different types of vibhūti. The aim of this request is to know the Lord and to fix Him in his mind\textsuperscript{169}. The Lord’s discourse is nobler than amṛut. Just by listening to the Lord’s words, even birth and death fades. The bliss obtained in the presence of Lord will stay forever. Moreover this bliss is compared by Jñāneśvara to the wearing of the flowers of sandal tree. Arjuna is very much interested in listening to such descriptions of the Lord’s vibhūti again and again. The Lord is very much pleased on hearing Arjuna’s words.

While Jñāneśvara says that the Lord’s vibhūti should be described through the nectarine words of the Lord Himself, Ācārya discusses the different meanings of the word, ‘Janārdana’in the commentary on this śloka. Jñāneśvara while describing the vibhūti asserts through several similes that His words are musical.
Śloka - 30

Ahamatma Guḍākeśa sarvaḥmatriśvasthitā
Ahamadishch mabhyaḥ ch bhūtāṇamnaṇaḥ eva ch 11  (10 - 20)

I am the Self, O Guḍākeśa, seated in the heart of all beings; I am the beginning and the middle, as also the end, of all beings 170.

This śloka is the Lord’s reply on Arjuna’s queries as to the manner in which the Lord is to be meditated upon by a person who should practice vibhūtiyoga and in which all forms. The answer to the first query is that the Lord should be meditated upon as having the form of all aspects of the universe. That is, a person who accepts Lord Kṛṣṇa’s vibhūtis should meditate on the Lord as Kṛṣṇa principle which pervades the whole universe. An aspirant of truth should always try to affirm in his thoughts that the phenomena of birth, growth and death found in the different aspects of the universe are all the play of vibhūti of the Lord whom he as accepted 171. This will improve the concentration towards the form of the aspirant’s dearest godhead. The prominent thought that should rule one’s mind is that the Lord who is found pervading the universe is the godhead who has been chosen by the aspirant, as the self effulgent principle found in everything is the Lord Himself 172. Through this śloka, Ācārya teaches that the principle behind all the vibhūtis can be understood if the endless vibḥtis are constantly meditated upon.
Jñāneśvara commences with the statement that one who understands the important forms of the Lord will understand the whole universe. As it is said that the Lord encompasses even the wide sky, it could be inferred that He is limitless. The Lord is the soul, heart and the skin which covers everything. The Lord is the beginning, middle and end of everything like the sky which is at the top, bottom, inside and outside of the clouds. It is remarkable that Jñāneśvara has picturised this in a beautiful manner. It should be understood that this type of expansiveness and variety are the yoga of the Lord’s own vibhūti. In his commentary, Jñāneśvara addresses Arjuna as ‘Subhadrāpati’ and asks him to listen attentively to the vibhūti of the Lord. The message is that we should approach the vibhūti of the Lord with faith.

The commentators have expressed the meaning of idea of vibhūti in two different ways. Both the commentators provide the idea that a devotee will achieve liberation if he worships any of the vibhūtis of the Lord of the universe.

Resume

‘Vibhūtiyoga’ can be classified as a quest for God based on any of the vibhūtis of the Lord. Through the ślokas ‘āditya’. (10: 21-38) it is suggested that a devotee can take up any form of the Lord as the Lord has infinite vibhūtis. Both Ācārya and Jñānesvara remind that
whichever vibhūti is followed by a devotee, the aim should be desireless worship of the dearest godhead. Ācārya strictly says that if this yoga is to lead to the ultimate aim, it should be practised with a sense of truth and in a desireless manner. For this the nature of truth and the form of desireless worship are given as an introduction to the vibhūtiyoga. For this a niŗguṇopāsaka should accept the saguṇabhāvās and a saguṇopāsaka should not forget that his aim should be niŗguṇa Brahman. The Lord has advised all the disciplines (sādhanamārgas) to Arjuna with the relative dependence of these disciplines in His mind. The main point of discussion of Gītā is how to follow any discipline one chooses with an aim to reach the absolute. Both the commentators conclude the chapter saying that the attainment of Brahman will be achieved by the practice characterized by theoretical sense of truth.

Viśvarūpadarśanayoga

Arjuna’s query is whether he can experience the principle which is spread throughout the universe. The Lord offers Arjuna divine eyes to perceive His manifold manifestations in His own body. Consequently Arjuna perceives the viśvarūpa of the Lord. Thus Arjuna got it clearly understood that the Lord is the only protector of dharma. After that Arjuna felt that the Lord assumed a fierce form. He asks the Lord who is in that fierce form and what is the significance of such an action of
showing this fierce form. The Lord’s reply was that He was the *kālasvarūpa* who has come to destroy the world. He reveals that everything is in His control and that He is the *kālarūpa* who is going to kill Bhīṣma and Dṛṇa. Hence He asks Arjuna to perform his duty well and gain His Love and fame and enjoy the country. Arjuna realizes that the Lord is his father, mother and preceptor. If there is *ananyabhakti* towards the Lord, then one can see and realise the Lord in that form and become one with Him. This chapter is named ‘*viśvarūpadarśanayoga*’ as the Lord shows his divine form to Arjuna in this chapter.

Jñāneśvara starts this chapter, *Viśvarūpadarśanayoga*, with a preface which serves as a prelude. Here he considers *Gītā* as a ‘*triveni*’. This chapter which conjoins the *Śānta* and *Adbhuta* rasas serves as a gate which opens to the path of liberation. Jñāneśvara deems Kṛṣṇa as the incarnation of love and Arjuna as a person intoxicated in that love. Listening to the esoteric principles described by the Lord which evade expression through words, Arjuna wishes to visualize His divine form. Agreeing to his wish, the Lord consents to show His Cosmic form which embraced all His myriad forms. While beholding that Cosmic form of the Lord, enabled by the special ability of vision imparted by the Lord, Arjuna felt that the Absolute Power of the universe was embellishing itself. He felt that the eternal Lord was the substratum for everything in existence and that it transcended even the monosyllabic *auṃkāra*
which is symbolic of the whole universe itself. In that dreadful cosmic form, one could envisage the indescribable destructive power which frightened even fear. By showing Arjuna his cosmic form, Lord Kṛṣṇa intended to annihilate the illusion to which Arjuna had fallen prey. Thus He suggested him to perform ones duties with discrimination. He could attain fame if he could carry out his duties with this objective in his mind. By doing so, Arjuna’s valour would be praised by all and he would earn a place in the annals of history too. Further, the Lord instructs him the different paths of real devotion. One can have the vision of the cosmic form of the Lord in one’s own heart only if one has unflinching devotion towards the Lord. Those devotees who surrender all their deeds unto Him will get united with the Lord.

Śloka - 31

एवमेतयथात्य त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर।

इद्रतुमिच्छामि ते रूपमेश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम।। (11 - 3)

As thou hast declared Thyself to be, O supreme Lord, so it is. (Yet) I desire to see Thy divine form, Purusottama।।

The Paramātman has four forms, viz. sudhacit, antāryāmi, hiraṇyagarbha and virātpuruṣa. Sudhacit is that form of pure consciousness of the paramātman which has not even a slight trace of the universe adulterating it. Antāryāmi is that form of the paramātman
which has taken up the veil of māyā for the process of creation. When this antaryāmi gets infused with prāṇa and subtle imaginations it turns to be the hiraṇyagarbha. When the subtle imaginations get materialized into its gross forms, animated and interspersed with prāṇa, it gets transformed into virātpuruṣa. It is the vision of this virātpuruṣa that Arjuna longs to behold. A preceptor who is rooted in the discipline of Brahman can impart this vision to a disciple who is qualified for that vision for a few moments, as happened between Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahāṃsa and Svāmī Vivekānanda. The relevance of God is only till there is a universe to be saved. Here, by aīśvaryarūpa, the form of God which is related to the universe is meant. This itself is the experience of viratrūpa in the state of prāṇapratyakṣa. By Divyasvarūpa, Ācārya implies the form of Viṣṇu with the qualities of Jñāna, Aīśvarya, Bala, Śakti, Vīrya and Tejus.

According to Jñāneśvara, Bhagavān is one who takes different forms from the Primordial nature and after which gets dissolved back to the same. He is the one who has shone through the incarnations of matsya and kūrma. Arjuna wishes to see that cosmic form which he has listened to have extolled in the Upaniṣads, into whose heart all yogins intend to enter and on which Sanakādi risis have firmly held their faith and devotion. He even doubts whether he is qualified to have the vision of that divine form.
While Ācārya speaks about the different forms of soul, Jñāneśvara speaks of the different incarnations of the Lord. Jñāneśvara shows his implicit faith that the Lord knows to do what is ideal for Arjuna, like a mother knows the needs of her child.

Śloka - 32

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशेषस्य सहस्स:।

नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतिनि च।। (11 - 5)

Behold My forms, O Pārtha, by hundreds and thousands, of different kinds, divine and of different hues and shapes.

After listening to the grandeur and power of the Lord, he wishes to envisage the Cosmic form of the Lord. He loses his sense of pride and gets the good fortune of seeing the divine vision got only through the grace of the preceptor though for a short period of time only. The words, ‘mohoyaṃ......’(11:1) vouchsafes the fact that he is qualified for receiving that vision.

In this verse, the Lord is going to show the real vision of the innumerable universes whose rhythms and melodies are harmoniously integrated. By ‘nānāvidya’, Ācārya implies the inner differences and by ‘nānāvarṇaṇaśaktitvam’ he implies the outer differences of the qualities. As prāṇa unwinds itself, at first hundreds and later thousands
of forms get manifested. At first the manifestations take place in a slow pace and later would appear and disappear in a very fast pace. Those who know the mode of springing up and developing stages of *kuṇḍalini prānayoga* understand this well.

The Lord asks Arjuna to perceive his myriad forms when Arjuna asked only for one. All forms of the Lord are unique. When one is short the other is tall, when one is peaceful the other is fierce and when one is calm the other is noisy. Thus the forms of the Lord as described by Jñāneśvara are different in form and substance. Even the colours are different. When one is golden the other has the colour of copper. The difference is noticeable in the shapes too. When some forms are attractive as Cupid, others are fat, lean and cruel. Thus Jñāneśvara pictures the Lord in different forms. This world is also seen included along its boundaries. While Ācārya speaks about the basic characteristics of Universe, Jñāneśvara speaks about the different forms of the Lord.

**Śloka - 33**

आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्रुपोः
नमोज्जु ते देववर प्रसीद।
श्वादुमिख्यामि भक्तमार्गः
न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रकृतिम्॥ (11 - 31)
Tell me who Thou art so terrible in form. To Thee I bow, O God Supreme, have mercy. I wish to know Thee, the Primal One. Indeed I know not Thy working 180.

Arjuna is convinced that he has found the master and owner of the whole universe. In the verse, lelihyase grasamanah (11-30), the Lord is pictured as having a fearsome fierce figure. Arjuna is inquisitive to know who this is, with such ferocious form. Arjuna bows to the Lord calling Him the Lord of the devas and implore Him to show mercy on him. He expresses his wish to see the glory of the Lord and to know more about the Primordial Being.

Lord Viṣṇu is characterized as a pleasant, gracious and consoling deity dominated by sattva quality and at the same time omnipotent and Supreme organizer and supporter of life, evolution and dharma 181. The reason why the Lord presented himself as a fearsome force is given in the verses to follow. The basic error in Arjuna’s perception was his thought that he is responsible for the act of killing his relatives and destroying the family values and also the consequences involving caste mixing which is detrimental to the social fabric. The Lord corrects him saying that it is He who has willed whatever is going to happen. He is the destroyer and annihilator of all who are going to die in the battle field. The destruction of Bhīṣma, Dṛṇa and others has already been done through His will. What Arjuna had to do is to be an instrument to
carry out God’s will and thereby enjoy the glory of winning the war and the kingdom. Thus Arjuna is relieved by the Lord of his misconceived responsibility which had blocked him from taking up the fight against unrighteousness. Thus he could rise up and fight the enemies without any guilt feeling.

Jñāneśvara commences the commentary on this verse saying that the Lord, who is revealed through the Vedās, who is the beginning of all these worlds and praised by everyone, accedes to Arjuna’s prayers. The ‘vīrā’ bows his head at the Lotus feet of the Lord. Here Arjuna is addressed as vira by Jñāneśvara unlike Ācārya. In Jñāneśvari too, Arjuna is described to be showing his inquisitiveness to know who the Lord in reality is, when he appears in that fearsome figure. Jñāneśvara describes that the Lord by magnifying himself shrinks even the sky. In the view of Jñāneśvara, the Lord is described like this to compete with the Lord of Death.

Śloka - 33

मत्कर्मण्यमपरमो मद्भक्तः सद्गवर्जितः।
निक्षेरः सर्वभूतेषु य: स मामेति पाण्डव। (11 - 55)

He who does work for me, whose supreme goal I am, who is devoted to Me, who is free from attachment, who is without hatred towards any being, he comes to Me, Oh! Pāṇḍava.
One who does all the work for God is known as ‘\textit{mat-karma-kṛt}’.\footnote{184} Moreover, such a person ultimately gets united with him and thus attains the ultimate stage. Such a person is also known as \textit{matparaḥ}. Ācārya calls such a person \textit{madbhaktaḥ}, who is devoted to God whole heartedly with total enthusiasm. He calls that person \textit{\textit{saṅga-varjitaḥ}} who has detached himself from even his wife and children. He calls that person who has no trace of malice even towards his enemies as \textit{\textit{niṛvairah}}.\footnote{185} These devotees of the Lord consider only the Lord as their sole refuge. Thus they attain the Lord Himself. This is the advice that the Lord pleasingly passes on to Arjuna.

When glimpsed through the commentary of Śaṅkara, one can find that Ācārya has described this verse as a very important one from the \textit{Gītā}. This is because the essence of all the scriptures is condensed here. He has revealed all the four paths of action, devotion, meditation and knowledge here. Moreover, compassion towards fellow beings which is a key factor for all these four paths is also included here. In one verse itself, the Lord reveals the path of action when he says to do actions, path of meditation when he asks to be interested in Him, the path of devotion when he asks to develop devotion, the path of knowledge when he asks not to be attached to the sense objects and also about compassion towards every being when he asks not to be inimical to any living being.\footnote{186}
Ācārya has revealed the importance of this quality of compassion towards all living beings which is necessary for all paths, all actions and all yogic ways. If all the paths of action, meditation, devotion and knowledge are medicines, the compassion is the diet rule. If someone doesn’t have this compassion, then even though he follows any path devotedly, he will be like a patient who takes a medicine and ignores the diet rules and thus remains unsuccessful in getting cured\textsuperscript{187}. This is why in Gītā, charity and compassion are highlighted in detail in many places. All living beings are forms of the Lord and part of His cosmic form. This truth is revealed in the yoga of cosmic vision. Hence those who are interested in self realization should practice this compassion towards fellow beings and serve them. This is the noblest advice of the Lord.

Universal Love happens naturally to those who have understood the principle of vision of cosmic form. Moreover this helps them to achieve virtue and strong faith in the divinity. Some great commentators have opined that this chapter contains so many mantric verses with spiritually potent sounds. In other chapters of the Gītā, the form of the Lord is described. But in this chapter the form is shown along with the description. Hence one should study this wonderful chapter with faith and attain the experience of Brahman like Arjuna. These are the ideas as revealed through the commentary of the Ācārya.
For those who perform every action surrendering to God for the Lord, nothing will be more attractive as the Lord himself. This is what Jñānesvara reveals through this verse. All actions and its fruits should be surrendered to the Lord. The only aim in this world and the other should be the Lord alone. Moreover the sole aim of life should be God realization. True devotees forget themselves and see only God in every other being. Thus they cultivate equal mindedness and see only Him in every being. They avoid enmity towards others and adore everything as God. Jñānesvara says that such devotees when they leave their mortal coil constituted of the three principles of ‘vāta’, ‘pitta’ and ‘kapha’, will merge with the Lord.

Resume

Arjuna’s ignorance gets warded off with the verse, ‘madanugrahāya paramam’ (11:1) itself. But most experts on Gītā are of the opinion that it is only after listening to the eighteen chapters and that when he says ‘naṣto mohaḥ’ (18:73), Arjuna escapes from his ignorance. Infact even after listening to the ten chapters, Arjuna’s worries and illusions get dissolved. Attaining the knowledge of the self, he wishes to have the vision of the Lord’s cosmic form. Arjuna is qualified for this vision too. The Lord Himself has opined that ‘iṣtosi me dṛḍamiti’. Arjuna envisages the Cosmic form of the Lord with the divine eyes bestowed upon him by the Lord.
As blind men are unable to see the light of the Sun, persons devoid of knowledge cannot see the Lord. Divine eyes are to be achieved by oneself through spiritual disciplines. Through the verse, ‘bhaktyā tvananya’ (11:54) the Lord affirms that not only Arjuna but anyone who is faithfully devoted to the Lord can achieve the vision of divinity. Thus, those who have understood the principle behind the cosmic form will never commit any sin and will treat every being with compassion. Thus both Ācārya and Jñāneśvara proclaim that true knowledge is acquiring the vision of unity in diversity. It is only through undivided devotion that one gets the vision of the Lord. This chapter named the Vision of the Cosmic Form is concluded proclaiming that through such devotion, the knowledge of God, the vision of the Lord and unity with God can be achieved.

**Bhaktiyoga**

To Arjuna’s query whether saguṇopāsaka or niḥguṇopāsaka is better, the Lord replies that the difference in the form of worship should not be a concern. Those who maintain equipoise everywhere and follow niḥguṇopāsana will directly attain Brahman. But this niḥguṇopāsana is very difficult to follow. The dearest godhead will save one from all the bondages of worldly life who perform all actions as acts of worship towards Him. Jñāna is better than abhyāsa. Concentration will improve
with this *jñāna*. When concentration improves the relinquishment of desire for fruits of action too will become easier. With the relinquishment of desires for the fruits of actions, peace in the form of the experience of ātman will ensue. He is dearest to the Lord who maintains equipoise and who worships the Lord seeing Him in everything, everywhere and always. This chapter is named ‘Bhaktiyoga’ as *bhaktisādhanamārga* is systematically explained here.

Arjuna who got frightened on seeing the Cosmic form of the Lord, doubts whether the vision was real or it was just done playfully by the Lord. He expresses his desire to know who is nobler, a steadfast devotee or a yogin who is meditative on the formless. Those who regularly meditate on the Lord through devotion will find their faith and trust growing strong whereas those who endeavour for the attainment of knowledge are part of the formless absolute. But severe discipline is required for the realization of *Brahman* for those pursuing it through knowledge. Jñānesvara describes in detail in this chapter, the different limbs of *yoga* for those following the path of *yoga*. But he opines that those who have sense of body and whose ego is not annihilated, it would be impossible to attain realization. Above all, performing one’s duties without the expectation of the fruits thereof is the greatest *yoga*. This type of renunciation of fruits while engaging in action will avoid the
possibility of rebirth. Further the characteristics of devotees are explained. Like the seeds which will sprout when sowed in a fertile land, the life of a devotee will be smooth and successful. Thus, as this chapter deals with the description of the ideal path of devotion, the name ‘bhaktiyoga’ which is given to it is quite appropriate.

Śloka - 34

मथ्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते।
श्रद्धा परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्तमा मला:। (12 - 2)

They who fixing their minds on Me, ever steadfast and devout, endowed with Supreme faith, these in My opinion are the most perfect in Yoga.¹⁹⁰

Through this śloka, Ācārya targets the devotees of God with attributes. For ‘mayi’ Ācārya gives the meaning, ‘visvarūpe sarveśvare’¹⁹¹. Thus it could be seen that this verse pertains to any devotee who considers any form of the Lord and worship Him through that form. Through the expression, ‘śradhaya parayopeta’¹⁹² it is meant that the worldly minded men cannot attain this. But through the word ‘yuktatamaḥ’, it is meant that attainment of yoga is immediate for them¹⁹³. What matters is how the devotees worship the form and not which form he chooses¹⁹⁴. The Lord speaks about the modes of worship in the verses that follow.
First, it is said that a devotee should have utmost faith. By such faith it is meant the determination to realize the objective of life by knowing the nature of that object to be attained. After attaining this faith, the next step is ‘nityayukta upāsana’ by which meditating on the Godhead one chooses and surrendering all activities unto Him is meant. If this is satisfied, the Lord Himself will help the devotee to get united with him. That is why the Lord calls that devotee ‘yuktatamaḥ’, who has fixed his mind on the Godhead he chooses and worships Him with utmost faith. In the last chapter of Bhaktyāśṭaka named bhaktiyoga, the Ācārya summarises it like this, first the devotee maintains the feeling ‘dāsoham’ and later realizes the truth that he is Lord Himself, ‘Soham’.

Those who worship the Lord daily, their faith and belief will increase constantly. Jñāneśvara compares this to the speed and width of water in a stream during rainy season. As the sunrays travel with the moon which has come near the mountain while the sun sets, the devotion of those who think constantly of Him and follows incessantly whether it is day or night, will only increase. Moreover the sole aim of such devotees is to fix Him in their heart. Jñāneśvara considers them as supreme devotees.

In essence, Ācārya makes clear how a devotee should be and what are the hurdles that a devotee has to cross to be a perfect devotee. But
Jñāneśvara opines that like the water in a stream during the rainy season, devotees' faith also get increased as they continue their worship.

Śloka - 35

ये त्वक्षरमनिदेश्यमच्छ वर्युपासते।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्यं च कौस्त्यमचले ध्रुवम्। (12 - 3)

Those who ever worship the Imperishable, the Undefinable, the Unmanifested, the All-pervading, the Unthinkable, the Immutable, the Unmoving, the Constant.

Ācārya describes through this verse what Attributeless Brahman is and how to worship and follow it. The indescribable state of experiencing Brahman cannot be comprehended by human intellect. By the expression, ‘ye tu akṣaraṁ anirdeśyaṁ’, Ācārya means that it is impossible to explain which it is, as it is unclear. By no authority (pramāṇa) can He be made manifest. Hence He is unmanifested and is worshipped in all manners.

To approach an object of worship in the manner laid down in the śāstrās and to dwell in it for a long time continuously without a break, even as the oil flows with the thread of the flow not being broken, ‘tailadhārāvat’ is what is called upāsana. Hence upāsana means to dwell in the immediate presence of the object of worship. The meaning of
'sarvatraga' is given as that which is presents everywhere. It is wonderful that still it is inexperienceable. This is because it is veiled by 'kūṭasvarūpiṇi' which has the power to veil the real and project the unreal. Hence it is 'kūṭastha'. The term 'kūṭam' is generally used to denote a thing which is good in appearance but evil inside. So, here it refers to the seed of saṁsāra (avidya) and like which is evil inside, in as many terms as Māyā, Avyakta etc. as sung in the 'Svetāsvataropanisād', 'māyaṁ tu prakṛtiṁ vidyat māyinaṁ tu maheśvaram' (sve:upa: 4:10) and in the Gītā 'mama māyā duratyaya' (7:14)²⁰³.

The meaning given to the term 'acalam' is -itself unmoving and for druvaṁ it is -immovable by any other thing²⁰⁴. But all these qualifications establish the eternal aspect of the soul principle. By 'paryupāsanaṁ' what Ācārya means is the identification with the soul principle got through the process of concentration, meditation and even mindedness with the grace of the preceptor through purity in mind and action²⁰⁵. By identifying with the original state, identifying with the soul principle is meant.

As the main theme of Gītā is self realization, this verse can be determined to be that which deals with the accomplishment of the aim or 'sādhyapradipādanaparaṁ'. Hence the Attributeless Brahman is
dealt with. The quality of the *yuktatamattva* may be spared in the aspirant if spiritual practices are religiously pursued.

While Ācārya explains this verse in detail, how Jñāneśvara treats it, may be examined. Those sublime devotees get the ability to attain God. They try to achieve supreme knowledge also. But all their efforts are carried out with the realization that they have no other aim than the Attributeless *Brahman*.

*Brahman* cannot be easily grasped or meditated upon by the mind or known subtly by the intellect. *Brahman* is not something which has happened or something which will happen, it is not real or unreal, it is not moving or unmoving, nor does it have a beginning or an end. So if such a phenomenon is realized, then the thought process will cease. Jñāneśvara expresses his doubt how such a principle could be realized through sense organs. He himself gives an answer. It could be reached only by those who pursue knowledge and undergo strict disciplinary practices for that.

Ācārya describes each word of the verse on the basis of high *Vedāntic* principles. On the contrary, Jñāneśvara approaches each verse with an ease shown in reciting a poem. No particular word is treated specially by him.
Better indeed is knowledge than the practice (of concentration) and meditation is better than knowledge; better than meditation is the renunciation of the fruits of actions; from renunciation (proceeds) peace at once.

Knowledge is indeed better than indiscriminate practice of concentration. Better, even than knowledge, is meditation coupled with knowledge. Renunciation of fruits of actions is better than meditation coupled with knowledge. Here the knowledge meant by Ācārya is the knowledge of the object got by the study of śāstrās directly from the preceptor. Both intellect and logic have understood that there is only one real object. Thus for the persons who attain this knowledge of the object, whether he is a devotee of God with attributes or Attributeless Brahman will realize that the universe is the manifested form of the Lord. The actions of such a person will always be rooted in the knowledge of the real object and fixed on God. That is why Ācārya says that through knowledge, meditation gets more sublime. The essence is that one should try to realize this principle in the śāstrās taught by the preceptor, through concentrated meditation. Here
knowledge is sādhyāḥ and meditation is sādhanaḥ. But when knowledge is nobler than practice, then it is quite the reverse.

Ignoring the ordinary thought of enjoying the fruits of one’s actions is what Ācārya means by renunciation of the fruits of one’s actions. This renunciation is the noblest. Ācārya holds that if knowledge, meditation and renunciation of desire for results of actions act in combination, then Brahmaniṣṭāḥ could be easily achieved. This is what Ācārya has made clear through the word ‘santi’ in this verse. Those who cannot combine these three in their practice, they should practice meditation even if they lack the knowledge of the object.

By the use of the word ‘śreyāḥ’ in this verse it could be understood that knowledge is nobler than practice. ‘Jñānat dhyānāṃ viśiṣyate’ means that knowledge can make meditation more sublime. Here the expression ‘viśiṣyate’ is noteworthy. ‘Dhyānāt karmaphalatyāgaḥ’ means that such a meditative character would lead to the renunciation of the fruits of actions.

Better indeed is knowledge than scriptural study; better than knowledge is meditation; better than meditation is renunciation of the fruits of actions; from renunciation results instantaneous peace.

Jñāneśvara says that knowledge is more profound than scriptural study and meditation is still more incomprehensible than knowledge.
Moreover renunciation of the fruits of actions is nobler than meditation. Jñāneśvara says that through renunciation of fruits of action peace and joy could be achieved. Renunciation of fruits of action is more difficult than meditation. But the one who has reached this state will reach the abode of peace. Jñāneśvara exhorts to do one’s duty without ignoring the nobility and pride\(^\text{218}\). Jñāneśvara reiterates that one who follows these aforesaid steps will attain peace.

In the commentary of Ācārya each word in the verse is given special attention. But in Jñāneśvari, peace is considered as a joy by Jñāneśvara. Ācārya describes in detail the ways to achieve peace of soul which is the ultimate aim of everyone in life. Jñāneśvara concludes the commentary on this verse in a simple style and diction and to the point.

**Resume**

In several portions of Gītā, the Lord has exhorted to resort to both nirākāra and sakāra types of devotion. Both of these methods are ways to reach God. But everyone should remember that devotion towards God is an undeniable discipline to be followed irrespective of any discipline. In the beginning of the commentary by Śaṅkara, Arjuna asks the Lord which type of devotion is better- sakāra or nirākāra. The Lord replies that anyone who depends on Him and constantly meditates upon
Him with utmost faith is the best. Through this chapter it could be gathered that it is nothing other than faithful devotion that is most important in the matter of devotion. Ācārya tells that sense control, even mindedness, compassion towards all, practice of virtues and faithful devotion are essential for all devotees.

In this chapter Jñānesvara extols the compassionate glances of the Lord in the form of Goddess. The poet prays to the Goddess to command him to comment on the text. Jñānesvara compares the composition of Gītā to the ways a mother cares and brings up her child. Thus, after all the requests of the poet, the goddess asks him, to enter into the creative process of Gītā. The Lord who is Pure, Compassionate and endowed with Incomparable strength Himself tells and the lucky devotee, Arjuna, listens.

Ācārya gives special consideration to the words ‘śradhaya parayopetāḥ’, ‘yuktatamaḥ’in the verse ‘mayyāveśya’ (12:2). Devotion is having so much love towards God. When devotion is spoken of, it is natural that action related to worship comes in the mind. But Lord Kṛṣṇa doesn’t speak of such rituals related to worship while speaking of devotion in this chapter. Moreover, it is about mind control and good conduct that he speaks about here. ‘advēṣṭa sravabhūtānaṁ.................. sā me prītaḥ’ (12: 13, 14) deals about the
26 virtuous qualities. So what is referred to in this type of devotion is to be understood as qualified devotion and not devotion in the general terms.

Along with this qualified devotion, one should also follow the yoga of practice in order to be in a meditative state. Thus after revealing the discipline to be followed for realizing God, the Lord reveals the characteristics of a true devotee. Thus in the Path of Devotion, the devotee surrenders before the Lord in a selfish mode as pointed out through the verse-

anyathā śaraṇam nāsti
tvameva śaraṇam mama.

Thus by arousing the thoughts of God in his mind and purifying it, he attains self realization.

The heart of Bhagavadgītā is attainment of virtues. Where there is purity of heart, there Paramātman gets illumined. Purity of mind is the chief characteristic of a true devotee. Only he achieves God realization. This is the secret which is revealed in this chapter. Hence every aspirant should toil hard to eschew vices from his heart through devotion and follow the disciplines which lead to liberation and enjoy immortality.
The body is ‘kṣetra’ and the principle that knows the body is ‘kṣetrajñā’. Thirty one principles beginning with the mahābhūtās and ending with dhṛti constitute the body. Knowledge is the power to discriminate between kṣetra and kṣetrajñā. One should discriminate and experience the kṣetrajñā oneself with the help of jñānopāyās like amānitva. This is the vision of the Lord. Consequently, the nirapekṣa form of the ultimate truth that is Brahman will be manifest. Thus one can unite with it and be Brahman. Thus all that is found as kṣetra can be understood as the projections of nature. Liberation is the experiencing of oneness of Brahman in everything. The cause of ākāśa which is consciousness is as singular and non passionate as ākāśa itself.

Like sun, it illumines all other things and lends the feeling of existence. Those who differentiate between kṣetra and kṣetrajñā and realize the nature of kṣetrajñā take the form of truth and get liberated. Starting with the differentiation of kṣetra and kṣetrajñā and ending with the prominence of realizing the kṣetrajñā, this chapter gets the name ‘kṣetrakṣetrajñayoga’.

The detailed description of ‘Kṣetra’ and ‘Kṣetrajñā’ is the main subject matter of this chapter. Jñāneśvara starts with the origin of the body. The sense of ownership of body is so prominent in everyone.
But Jñāneśvara points out that it was because of a wrong notion of his body that Śaṅkara had to leave heaven and forced to live in a burial ground. This chapter also deals with the discussion of saints from ancient times regarding kṣetṛās. It can also be understood from this chapter how the five elements and five sense organs are related to the life principle and body.

The spiritual prosperity of man depends upon his actions. Later Jñāneśvara discusses about the qualities a wise man should possess. When a person attains knowledge, he will realize that he and Brahman are one. Though Brahman pervades the whole universe, the universe is not Brahman. What should be known is Brahman. Thus Jñāneśvara discusses in detail kṣetra, kṣetrajñā, ignorance and the thing to be known.

Even without this, these principles could be understood elsewhere from the general description of Puruṣa and Prakṛti as done in the philosophy of Sāṃkhya. As the grain is formed from a seed with bran, so is prakṛti and puruṣa united. Prakṛti is that which is meant by the aforesaid kṣetra and puruṣa is the kṣetrajñā. Puruṣa is the person which is imperishable. But prakṛti is related to all actions. Thus prakṛti is that which lends the transitional phases for the transitionless Brahman. Later, Jñāneśvara relates the bond between body and soul to the water
which is the same though the rains are different. A wise man sees the same soul in all. Finally, Jñāneśvara observes that those persons who realize that the body which is made up of five elements and created by nature is not soul, attain self realization.

Śloka - 37

क्षेत्रजं चापि मां विद्वि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारतः
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रजयोज्यनं वत्तज्ञानं मते मम। (13 - 2)

And do thou also know Me as kṣetrajñā in all kṣetrās, O Bhārata. The knowledge of kṣetra and kṣetrajñā is deemed by Me as the knowledge.

The Lord already has remarked that the body is kṣetra and the one who knows the kṣetra is the kṣetrajñā, through the verse ‘idaṁ sarīraṁ kaunteya’(13:1). The last six chapters of the Gītā is an explanation of the ‘Asi’ part of the mahāvākya, ‘Tattvamasi’. ‘Asi’ means the union of Individual soul and Supreme soul. Knowledge has no other subject than knowing kṣetra and kṣetrajñā. Here Ācārya tells that the Lord says Saṁyakjñāna is that knowledge which happens to know kṣetra and kṣetrajñā. The commentator doubts that if the one God is the resident of all the bodies and if he is the enjoyer of all the experiences, then he would be said to be engaged in action involving everything in the universe. By the wonderful nature of the universe
one can see that this world is the cause for joy and sorrow resulting from good and bad actions. This cannot happen if soul and God are the same. But this is not so. When one realizes that knowledge and ignorance are different, one can come to terms with it. The subject of *vidyā* is spiritual prosperity and that of *avidyā* is material prosperity. While one confers liberation, the other confers material pleasures. *Śruti* and *Smṛti* tell everyone to destroy ignorance through knowledge. The following quotes from *Śruti* are testimony to this. ‘*iha yedeve*.....’

Knowledge is veiled by ignorance. But even minded people transcend birth and death. The ignorant mistakes the body to be soul. The one who has abandoned likes and dislikes knows the soul different from the body and hence will not engage in good or bad actions. Such a person attains liberation. Ācārya proclaims that, according to the Lord real knowledge is the discriminative knowledge which distinguishes between *kṣetra* and *kṣetrajñā* and body and soul. For the learned, the fruits of action and the reason for it are different from God. Moreover, to relate God to cause and effect is not proper too. Results are related to sense organs. By the expression, ‘*kṣetrajñāṃ cāpi māṃ vidhi*’, the *kṣetrajñā* is said to be the one *Paramātman* in all *kṣetra*. *Kṣetrajñā* is an expansive consciousness which is self effulgent. *Kṣetrajñā* is imperishable as it is not constituted of any perishable elements.
The Lord has spoken of two types of Prakṛtīs in the 7th chapter, Parāprakṛti and Aparāprakṛti. Parāprakṛti is the kṣetrajñā in this chapter and aparāprakṛti is the kṣetra. Moreover, by the word ‘kṣetra’, every body of the tiny insects to the mighty Brahman is encompassed\(^{228}\). It is only through knowledge of self that ignorance gets annihilated. So Ācārya concludes that the only way to escape from the inevitable sorrows of life is acquirement of the knowledge of self.

While Ācārya describes this verse in great detail, Jñāneśvara restricts his commentary to just two simple lines. According to Jñāneśvara, knowledge is God Himself\(^{229}\). It is said so because He is the one who protects all bodies. Jñāneśvara thinks that knowing kṣetra and kṣetrajñā without any doubt is real knowledge. If subtle knowledge is gained then complete knowledge of kṣetrajñā could be gained. Only this much is said about kṣetra and kṣetrajñā by Jñāneśvara and that too in a simple manner.

In my view, the commentary done by Ācārya is a sheer wonder. Every query of pūrvapakṣa is offered a samādhān in the Vedāntic perspective by the Ācārya. Be it the difference between jñāna and ajñāna, vidyā and avidyā or sukha and dukha, Ācārya describes everything in detail. From the line, ‘tathā na kṣetrajñānaṃ iśvaraikatve sati.........’ it can be gathered that Ācārya had good knowledge of
Science too. Ācārya exhorts that when the union of kṣetrajña with God happens, after that there is no use of śāstra. In the total experience of kṣetrajña, kṣetra is just a mirage seen in the duo of kṣetra- kṣetrajña. Ācārya concludes by saying that for the one who has achieved satyajñāna, he will get the subtle knowledge of them.

Śloka - 38 - 42

अमानित्वमदभित्वमहिंसा क्षानितराजवम्।
आचार्यापासं शौचं स्वर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः॥

इन्द्रियार्थं वैराग्यमनहङ्कार एवं च।
जन्ममृत्युजनराज्याधिकुं खदोपानुदर्शनम्॥

असकतरनभिष्क्ष्यं: पुत्रदारामहादिः।
नित्यं च समविचित्रत्वमित्तानिन्दोपपतिः॥

मयं चानन्योगोन भक्तिरवभिचारिणी।
विविक्तदेशके सत्त्वमरतित्तजनससंदिः॥

अध्यात्मजाननित्यं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम्।
एत्त्वानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदनोस्थः॥ (13 - 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)

Humility, modesty, innocence, patience, uprightness, service of the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self control, absence of attachment for objects of the senses and also absence of egoism, perception of evil in birth, death and old age, in sickness and pain, Unattachment, absence
of affection for son, wife, home and the like and constant equanimity on the attainment of the desirable and the undesirable, unflinching devotion to Me, in *Yoga* of non-separation, resort to solitary places, distaste for the society of men, constancy in self knowledge, perception of the end of the knowledge and what is opposed to it is ignorance.\(^2\)

Throughout the *Bhagavadgītā*, the Lord has spoken in detail about the object to be realized while he has treated *sādhanā* or spiritual practice. In this chapter, he has highlighted *sādhanā* with *jñānaguṇa*. The twenty characteristics mentioned above are together known as *jñānaguṇa*. Everything opposed to it is ignorance.\(^3\) Hence a person with the power of discrimination should practice and acquire all those qualities.

Self praise is known as ‘*amānitva*’. Not expressing one’s qualities is known as ‘*adāṁbitva*’\(^4\). Not injuring any being is known as *ahīṁsā*. ‘*Kṣānti*’ is forgiving unconditionally the wrong doings done to one by others. ‘*Ārjava*’ is absence of crookedness. Serving the preceptor who shows the way to liberation is known as ‘*ācāryopāsana*’\(^5\). ‘*Śoucaḥ*’ is cleansing the body off impurities with water or soil. Ācārya tells that impurities like desires in the mind should be avoided using thoughts or imagination opposed to them.

The Lord asks Arjuna to be detached towards objects of sensory pleasures, ‘*indriyartheṣu vairāgyam*’\(^6\). Among the twenty
characteristics, this detachment is of utmost importance. To have no craving towards objects of pleasure which has been experienced or yet to be experienced is known as vairāgya. Egolessness is ‘anahāṅkāra’. ‘Jñāna’ is that which shows the way to the object to be known (jñeyya), which is Paramātman\textsuperscript{235}.

The importance of disinterestedness towards objects in order to attain liberation need not be stressed again. The Lord has remarked that if this quality is there, then the mind could be controlled ‘abhyāsena tu kouṃteyā vairāgyena ca gṛhyate’,\textsuperscript{236} By the expression, ‘janmamṛtyu-jaraVyādhisūdhadōṣānudārśanā’ it should be understood that each body is infested with the sorrows of birth, death, decay and disease\textsuperscript{237}.

Absence of sakti is ‘āsakti’. ‘Sakti’ is that which connects kṣetra with kṣetrajñā.\textsuperscript{238} The strong expression of sakti is abhisvaṅga towards wife, child and home. That is to say abhiṣvaṅga is love for several connected things. To be devoid of such attachment is anabhiṣvaṅga. ‘Samacittatva’ is to be achieved through āsakti and anabhiṣvaṅga\textsuperscript{239}. The balanced state of chitta is yoga. This is what Arjuna is asked to practise by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the second chapter itself. These are to be practiced by a spiritual aspirant. But for a siddha, these are all part of his character. After samacitta, Ācārya speaks of the evolutionary stages of devotion and solitude as the disciplines which lead to knowledge.
Devotion is the loving surrender towards the soul and considering Lord Vāsudeva as the only real phenomenon and sole refuge. Monitoring this bhakti and letting it not to slip from the love towards God is known as ‘jñāna’. Ananyayogā is needed to attain this jñāna. To see Lord in whatever one sees is known ‘ananyayogā’. When devotion develops through this, continuous experience of the self could be enjoyed. A spiritual aspirant should continuously practice devotion and solitude. ‘Adhyātmajñānanityattva’ is the attitude of maintaining continuous attention towards matters related to the self.

‘Tattvajñāna’ is the matured feeling that amānitva and other qualities are the cause of the attainment of knowledge. From atmajñāna begins the efforts to get freedom from the bondages of worldly life. This is also jñāna. Everything opposed to the above mentioned qualities is ignorance. The object which is the subject of knowledge can be known through knowledge itself. Even if one subject is known the other may still be unknown. For example if a pot is known through knowledge, the fire need not be known. It helps to know that though. Ācārya replies that they always stay along with knowledge.

When the above mentioned jñānopāyās are practised and the experience of it is full, then kṣetra will disappear totally and kṣetrajñā will get completely liberated. This is mukti or liberation. Through
these verses, Ācārya has given a comprehensive description of jñāna. It is indescribable how helpful Ācārya has been to the world of spiritual aspirants with his instructions on the priceless qualities of character. Revealing the techniques for the purification of inner senses is the hallmark of Gītā. Bhagavan has advised that immortality could be attained by way of listening, through the verse ‘anye tvevamajñānata’ (13:25).

While Ācārya describes the virtues of knowledge, Jñāneśvara circumbulates in a simple style. It is through intellect that man understands the advantages and disadvantages of sensory experiences. This intellect is caused by the power of jñāna. Jñāneśvara is of the opinion that a jñānin will not get immersed in one subject. A jñānin gets perturbed like a deer which happens to be before a tiger when he is praised for his qualities and his nobility appreciated. Jñānin and air are in union. He likes to converse with ākāśa. Intellect resides in that direction where life principle and jñāna meet. Sattva quality develops through the actions of intellect.

Jñāneśvara tells that a complete description of jñāna is not possible. When knowledge dawns in one’s mind, which could be seen reflected in his bodily actions too. As camphor can be traced through the fragrance it emanates, knowledge residing inside gives external
indications of that. Sensory pleasures have no more bearings upon the mind of person in whom knowledge dawns.

Jñāneśvara speaks about the quality of \textit{adāmbhittva}\textsuperscript{248}. Like a miser who will not expose the money he has collected even if he is threatened to be killed, a man of humility will keep the charitable deeds he has done as a secret. Same is with kiridi here. Jñāneśvara opines that he will not express it in words about his good deeds even if he is in utter sorrow\textsuperscript{249}. Clouds seem to be very small and they move with the wind. But it is wonderful to think of heavy rain. In the same manner the sight of a divine soul who has attained self realization gives great joy to the onlooker even though he may look trivial and unclean.

Now Jñāneśvara speaks about the nature of \textit{ahiṃsā}. ‘Ahiṃsā’ is thought about in the \textit{Upaniṣads} like the branches of a tree being cut down and a tree is fenced in order to protect it\textsuperscript{250}. This is same as engaging in \textit{hiṃsā} while doing \textit{ahiṃsā}. When there is no rain, people conduct so many \textit{yajñās} for rain. The root of all these sacrifices is killing of animals\textsuperscript{251}. Jñāneśvara doubts how one can reach the other shore if this is the case. Can anyone reap \textit{ahiṃsā} by sowing \textit{hiṃsā}? To know the quality of gold it is rubbed on a touch stone. In the same way real \textit{ahiṃsā} is to be found in actions. When knowledge springs in the mind \textit{ahiṃsā} too happens. The bee which comes to drink the honey
from a flower sits softly on it with the fear of harming the flower. In the same way a *jñānin* is compassionate. It is that person who treads softly with the conviction that in every atom there is a life which contains a mighty message who could be said to be a person who practices real *ahiṃsā*.

Jñāneśvara further speaks about ‘*kṣama*’ which is a noble quality of a *jñānin*. It should be inferred that there is *jñāna* where there is *kṣama*. *Kṣama* grows in a *jñānin* like lotus in a deep pond or like wealth of a lucky person. His mind remains the same in both joy and sorrow. He welcomes everything that happens to the body. The person who has *kṣama* without even a tinge of ego can be considered to be a real *jñānin*.

Ākāśa pervades the whole universe without any change. In the same way the attitude of a *jñānin* is even. He doesn’t have the difference of mine and thine. The qualities of a person who has *ārjava* are agreements with everyone, humility like water, no doubt in the mind etc. A lotus cannot cover up its fragrance when it blooms. The mind of a *jñānin* is like that. It moves ahead of the senses. His mind will always be pure. The emotions of the heart flows incessantly like nectar. It is in those persons who are possessed with all these qualities that the quality of *ārjava* and knowledge sustain.

Next Jñāneśvara discusses about ‘*gurubhakti*’. Arjuna starts by addressing ‘*caturanādha*’. *Gurubhakti* is the basis for all prosperity.
Because _gurubhakti_ enables a person to surmount all hurdles and get united with _Brahman_. It is like the river _Ganges_ which gives away all its water to the ocean and like a chaste wife who surrenders her life and body to her husband. Such a _jñānin_ intelligently serves his _guru_ with enthusiasm. He does his _gurubhakti_ by serving his guru every day. A person who has this type of _gurubhakti_ in him is a warehouse of knowledge.

_Jñāneśvara_ speaks of the quality of ‘śucitvam’ now. One who has śucitvam will glow like the sun inside and outside. A _jñānin_ keeps his body clean like a washer man who washes the clothes. He keeps his mind glowing with knowledge. If the inner senses are not pure the outward actions will also be impure. The outward actions have no value. So, one should possess knowledge inside. When a lady hugs her husband and son, she will not be having any lust while hugging her son. In the same way a pure _jñānin_ will not harbor any doubt or hopes in his mind, as he has already discriminated good and bad. It should be inferred that in whom these qualities of inner purity is there, in him _jñānasidhi_ has happened.

_Jñāneśvara_ now speaks of the quality of ‘sthairya’. The person who has steadfastness in him is the lifespan of knowledge. A person of steadfastness will be interested in concentrating on the attainment
of his aim. Even if his body is engaged in the common actions he will not be interested in the objects of senses. Even if the sky falls or earth gets melted, the attitude of a man of steadfastness will not change. Such a man should be understood to have achieved self realization.

Now the specialities of ‘ātmavinigraha’ may be examined. A person who has self control will not allow his mind to be a watcher at the portals of senses. He arranges two watchmen at the temple of pratyāhāra which is at the entrance of mind. He ties the mūlā, uddeyāna and jalandharam and installs intellect at the middle portion of ida and piṅgala. By connecting dhyāna with the bed of Samādhi, he tries tirelessly to merge his intellect to consciousness. It is this stage of mind that is known as ātmavinigraha.

For a jñānin the detachment towards senses is established. One who dislikes the news related to sense objects will not allow anything to enter through his sense organs. For such persons there will be both sense control and self control. The sensual pleasures will be like a crown of thorns for him. No one will try to make a pillar out of a coiled snake. It is a sign of attainment of jñāna that one could give up the desire for such sensory pleasures. This qualifies one for the attainment of Brahmaṇa. A person who has thus given up the joys of this world and the other world will be a warehouse of knowledge.
When nirah₃kāra is considered, a jñānin will not allow ego to enter in him while doing sacrifices or while engaging in other holy acts. Moreover, a jñānin is not interested in the fruits of his actions. Like the beads of a garland fall down when the string is untied, at the loss of the ego feeling, mind, actions and words will also get lost. His actions and he will be like clouds and sky. For a man devoid of ego, he will not have a feeling of mine towards anything. Where this feeling is full there it should be inferred that knowledge is full.

A jñānin will never forget the difficulties in life such as birth, death, old age, disease or sorrows. He will not forsake the actions which will avoid rebirth as he is always alert to the chance of death occurring in his life at anytime. A jñānin will project all the difficulties he will have to face in old age in his youth itself and will concentrate in the pure spiritual knowledge.

A jñānin will have attachment towards his home only like a wayfarer having attachment towards the inn like under the shadow of a tree for a traveler. He will consider himself as caged inside Vedāntic principles like a caged parrot. He will not be having any attachment towards wife or home or any sense of loss or gain. His heart will be alike towards joy and sorrow. Such a state of equal mindedness is indicative of knowledge. He has the strong faith that nothing is
imperishable like God in this universe\textsuperscript{273}. The one who single mindedly follows God and surrenders everything to him is a \textit{jñānin}. Moreover, as his intellect blooms with knowledge he is said to have embraced \textit{Brahman}.

The Lord described in detail what knowledge, to Arjuna is. Now he describes what ignorance is. According to \textit{Jñāneśvara}, everything opposed to knowledge and the specialties of knowledge is ignorance. Such a person, who is interested in fame and respect and possessed with mountainous ego, is full of ignorance\textsuperscript{274}. Such an ignorant person is careless in performing the ordained acts. As he is full of doubts regarding anything, he could be compared to a useless well. He will be impure inside and outside. His heart will wander here and there without any control. His cravings for sensory pleasure will not cease even if he is dead. He will be engaged in sensory pleasures and will stay immersed in them. He will consider body as soul and will try to engage in so many atrocious deeds. For a \textit{jñānin}, faith or trust will not be there towards knowledge which will lead to \textit{Brahman}.

\textbf{Resume}

\textit{Jñānakāṇḍa} starts with this chapter which highlights experiencing of unity. In order to clarify the unity of Individual soul and \textit{Supreme Soul}, the Lord differentiates \textit{kṣetra} and \textit{kṣetrajña}. The knowledge of \textit{kṣetrajña} itself is the clear knowledge of the real object. The persons
devoid of the eye of knowledge can see only the perishable beauty which is illusory. The experience of the vision of beauty does not happen to them. The Lord who knows this tries to impart spiritual knowledge and elevate them by providing them the eyes of wisdom in this chapter.

The Lord says that the two *prakṛtis* of Paramātman, the *parā* and *aparā* are *kṣetrajña* and *kṣetra* respectively. He advises, ‘*kṣetrajña.....*’. with a view that Paramātman may not be differentiated from *pratyagātman* through the term ‘*kṣetrajña*’. Through the use of the term in the singular and plural number, it is suggested that the one *kṣetrajña* is residing in all the apparently different *kṣetrās*. It is clear that the *pratyagātman* residing in all *kṣetrās* is the Paramātman itself.

Though *Bhagavadgītā* contains 700 verses, in some texts there is an additional verse-

अर्जुन उवाच
प्रकृति पुरुष चेत क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रमेव च।
एतद् वेदितुमिच्छामि जानं जेयं च केशव॥

This verse is not found in the commentary of Ācārya. But in *Jñāneśvari*, the verse is marked with the digit ‘0’. Hence it can be inferred that Jñāneśvara supported it. In the commentary of Dr. S. Rādhakṛṣṇan too, this verse is included without assigning a number.
Through the verse ‘*tat kṣetram yaccha...*’ (13:3) the conditions and power of *kṣetra* and their realities are dealt with, by the Ācārya. The Lord advises that he is pleased when someone realizes the true principle of *kṣetrajña*. That is to say the subject of knowledge is the illusory nature of *kṣetra* and the reality of *Paramātman*. Though knowledge is intrinsic, it is veiled by so many covers. In that case, knowledge will not be revealed. Hence in order to unveil them, Ācārya and Jñānesvara summarize them as jñānaguṇās. Ācārya points out it as ‘*amānitvam...*’. But here Jñāneśvara points out that a wise man does not relish such praise, as a deer is before a tiger or like a man who gets into a whirl pool. A *jñānin* should have attained control of senses.

From birth to death humans suffer a lot. The problems occurring due to *adhyātma* and *ādibhaতutik* shortcomings are also there. A *jñānin* can attain knowledge only if he surmounts all these problems. While Ācārya describes this, according to Jñāneśvara a person who does not like the news of worldly pleasure will not allow anything enter through his senses as if a person detests hugging a corpse or stay away from living in a cave where a tiger lives. The sense that body is one’s self cannot be avoided in a trice or after a long time. That is why the Lord has described it as ‘*anudarśanam*’. Jñāneśvara opines that as there is not three suns for morning, noon and evening, a *jñānin* will treat his wife, child and home alike.
Through the verse ‘mayi ca\(n\)ya yogena’ both the commentators share the view that only a j\(\tilde{n}\)\(\tilde{n}\)\(\tilde{n}\)in can maintain the faith that Lord V\(\tilde{a}\)sudeva is the only refuge. Param\(\tilde{a}\)tman can be known only through knowledge. A j\(\tilde{n}\)\(\tilde{n}\)\(\tilde{n}\)in should keep aside mind and intellect and direct himself to the knowledge of the self. Param\(\tilde{a}\)tman which is the object to be known is omnipresent and endless. In fact Param\(\tilde{a}\)tman is not an object with a single form or staying in one place. That is why \(\tilde{A}\)c\(\tilde{A}\)rya has remarked ‘sarvata\(\tilde{h}\) p\(\tilde{\i}\)nip\(\tilde{\i}\)da\(\tilde{m}\) tat sarvatok\(\tilde{\i}\)\(\tilde{\i}\)si\(\tilde{\i}\)romukha\(\tilde{m}\)’. This is the actual form of the Lord. It is the Param\(\tilde{a}\)tman which is spread throughout the universe and in every atom in a subtle manner. That is described by the term j\(\tilde{\i}\)\(\tilde{\i}\)\(\tilde{\i}\)\(\tilde{\i}\)\(\tilde{\i}\)ya\(\tilde{h}\). Some persons realize the Param\(\tilde{a}\)tman in them through meditation. Others realize it through the S\(\tilde{\i}\)\(\tilde{\i}\)\(\tilde{\i}\)khayayoga or through Karmayoga.

In spiritual disciplines, ears are more important the eyes. That which is seen, perishes. But that which is listened to, leads to the experience of the self through the process of concentrated thinking. The Lord advises that immortality can be achieved through listening.

In this way, the Lord has imparted the knowledge of self in a favorable manner suiting all types of aspirants. He leads people from untruth to truth. One should know one’s own self through diligent practice of devotion, detachment and philosophical reasoning, by
freeing oneself from all bondages. One should always remember that one is not a kṣetra but a kṣetrajñā and thus attain divine experience. This is the great message that the Lord has given through this chapter.

**Guṇatrayavibhāgayoga**

To know the kṣetra properly, one should understand the structure of its component factors. The qualities of prakṛti are sattva, rajas and tamas. Sattva is the quality of light, rajas that of action and tamas that of delusion. When all the openings of the sense organs are full of light, it should be inferred that one has got prominence in sattvaguṇa. Where there is greed and passion, rajas predominates. Where there is memory loss and delusion the dominant guṇa is tamas. If a person dies while sattva is dominant, he will get a rebirth conducive for the realization of truth. A person who dies with rajas dominant in him, he will be reborn among those who work passionately for worldly wealth. For the person in whom tamas is dominant when he dies, the rebirth will be as bird, animals or immovable beings. The result of sattvaguṇa is purity due to virtue and that of rajas is sorrow and that of tamas is deep darkness. For a person who knows that he has no sense of doership in his actions and that he is the truth beyond the gunas, he has no birth or rebirth and he enjoys brahmānanda. The Lord says that guṇātīta is the one who has reached parābhaktibhāva and has attained equal mindedness and achieved brahmasvarūpa. This chapter is named
‘guṇatrayavibhāgayoga’ as it explains the three guṇās, the knowledge of which is conducive for the vision of truth.

As the name ‘Guṇatrayavibhāgayoga’ suggests, this chapter deals with the triguṇās. In this chapter, how is the entire universe formed by the combination of kṣetra and kṣetrajñā, which are the guṇās and what is the system involved behind the combination, all are discussed. How can one get freedom from bondage, what are the characteristics of a liberated soul, and these things are also discussed. The noblest knowledge is the knowledge of the self. It is like fire. While Māyā is thus described, Šāmkhya calls it prakṛti and Vedānta calls it Māyā. For those who are united with Brahmaṇ, joy and sorrow are alike. For him there is no satisfaction or dissatisfaction. This is the characteristic of a guṇātīta. Further Jñāneśvara describes the way to become a guṇātīta. The guṇās can be transcended by those who have lost the feeling of duality and have devotion towards the Lord. The Ganges will reach only the ocean even if it rushes in any manner. In the same way the equipoise got through knowledge and devotion towards the Lord will take a person to the proximity of the Lord only. This is known as liberation.

Śloka - 43

सत्वं रजस्तं इति गुणं प्रकृतिसम्भवः ||
निवच्छन्ति महावाहं देहे देहिनमवध्यम् || (14 - 5)
Sattva, Rajas and Tamas- modes such as these are born of Prakṛti, O mighty armed, bind fast in the body the indestructible indweller in the body.²⁷⁵

Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are the modes or qualities. Form, colour or taste dependent on other objects is not what is meant by the term qualities. It is used in a qualified sense. But Ācārya doesn’t consider the term quality and the possessor of qualities as different. He has not taken qualities to be qualified nature as considered by the Sāṁkhya.²⁷⁶ For the term guṇa there is a connotation of rope too. Dehi or Kṣetrajña is the one different from the body.²⁷⁷ Kṣetrajña is verily Brahman itself. Thus binding the kṣetrajña is tantamount to binding Brahman. That is to say, it appears that the three qualities which have manifested from the illusory nature of God have bound the indestructible God to the body.²⁷⁸ Both Prakṛti and Īśvarā are without beginning. That is why here a sense of illusion is created by the usage ‘mahābāhu’ it is already mentioned that there is no attachment for the dehi with the deha in which it resides (13:31). Still, here it is said to be bound.²⁷⁹ The use of the word ‘iva’ is to address this apparent discrepancy. In fact, here it is clear that it just seems to have been bound.

Śrīdevi, Bhūdevi and Durga, the deities of pride, who represent the three qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas bind the beings to joy,
sorrow, illusion etc. In other words, Śrīdevi who is dominated by the quality of *Sattva* binds Gods, *Rajas* dominated Bhūdevi binds humans and *Tamas* dominated Durga binds birds and animals\(^{280}\). Description of *triguṇās* in such a manner could be found only in one book. The three qualities are beautifully linked with three goddesses.

Jñāneśvara starts this *śloka* with a small heading- *Gุมās-Sattva, Rajas, Tamas*. Jñāneśvara holds that the breeding ground of these three qualities is *Prakṛti*\(^{281}\). *‘Sattva’* is best and ideal, *‘Rajas’* is middle placed and *‘Tamas’* is meanest and despicable. Like the body which passes through the different stages of childhood, youth and old age, these three modes also generate from the intellect. They refer to different states of mind. When the modifications of mind are supported and fed by ignorance even the *sattva* and *rajo guṇās* will get demoralized into *tamas*.

The *sattvaguṇa* imparts happiness and knowledge to the *jīvaḥ* and with the acquirement of knowledge the *jīvaḥ* enjoys more happiness. A person always feels from birth to death that he is the body and as a result he experiences the joy and sorrow springing from the basic nature of body\(^{282}\). He enjoys every circumstance he confronts in different stages of his life. In the process, this joy and knowledge bind the soul.

The *Gītācārya* explains *tamas* as darkness (*tamastvajñānanam viddhī*) in his explanation of the three different modes. It is compared
to black color. None should embrace indolence which is the result of tamas. By the word ‘prakṛtisamābavah’ the guṇās should be understood to be born of indiscretion. These modes are not free. Moreover they are always dominated by the Kṣetrajña. But due to ignorance it seems that the kṣetrajña is bound by the triguṇās. That is to say Brahman itself seems to be attached to the body.

Ācārya instructs that Brahman should be understood to be bound. Having misconceived the cause and effects of the three modes sprung from ignorance, the unattached soul considers itself to be bound. When these three stages conjoin in a body, Jñāneśvara tells that, as gold gains weight when adulterated, the splendor of the touchstone will reduce to one-fifth. Thus the bound soul keeps on endeavoring for its release. But in reality this bondage and release has never happened, is not existent nor will it happen. This is the basic truth one should learn.

Śloka - 44, 45

(14 - 24, 25)

He who views pain and pleasure alike, who dwells in the Self, to whom a lump of earth, a stone, a piece of gold are alike, who is the
same amidst things pleasant and unpleasant, who is wise, to whom censure and praise are alike, he who is the same in honor and dishonor and the same to friends and foes and who has given up all undertaking—he is said to have risen above the modes.\(^{284}\)

The ‘*samadukhasukhakṣami*’ will not get perturbed as he knows that joy or sorrow do not affect the soul.\(^{285}\) The word *svaśtha* indicates that such a person will treat son, friends and birth, death etc alike.\(^{286}\) A *guṇātīta* will not view objects as attainable and non-attainable. He will treat gold, sand and stone alike. This has been already explained by the Lord in the 8\(^{th}\) sloka of the 6\(^{th}\) chapter. ‘*Samalostasmakāṅcanah*’ implies that one who has transcended the modes should remain even minded always. He doesn’t have likes and dislikes.\(^{287}\) By the expression, ‘*tulyapriyāpriya*’ that Ācārya uses in the 19\(^{th}\) sloka of the 12\(^{th}\) chapter he notes that the only thing which interests him is the soul. To be even minded towards everything, one should possess great valor.\(^{288}\) The *guṇātīta* will not get perturbed in the face of praise and blame or honor and dishonor. They are not subjects to the soul. Their subjects are body; mind etc. he who treats friends and foes alike is also considered to be one who has transcended the modes.\(^{289}\)

All worlds including the earth and heaven are born out of these three qualities. The sense of doer-ship is based on ego. So a *guṇātīta*
would never be the doer. One who is not the doer cannot perform any action. Initiating actions which are perceivable or unperceivable is known as ‘āraṁbha’. ‘Sarvāraṁbhaparityāgī’ is the one who does not initiate any action or one who does only those actions necessary to sustain the body and avoids all other actions. Thus when Śaṅkara gives the picture of an ideal guṇātīta, what Jñānesvara gives may be examined now.

A recluse realizes that this universe itself is God. For Him joy and sorrow are alike as the love of God is alike to devotees and non-devotees. As fishes are found naturally in water, joy and sorrow are natural in one’s life. Those who are attuned to the ātmic nature transcend joy and sorrow as seeds are sorted out from plants. As is day and night same for a pillar, so is the dual of joy and sorrow for the body. For a recluse, cow dung and gold make no difference. For him there is no difference as a lamp or sun makes no difference for darkness. There is no threat for a recluse’s equanimity and this could be compared to space which doesn’t get affected by climatic changes. He never has any attachment to the fruits of his actions as his actions are devoid of any desire to be fulfilled. His desires have got reduced to ashes in the fire of wisdom. He accepts everything that comes naturally. This is the attitude of a person who has transcended the three modes in Jñāneśvara’s view.
Resume

In all the kṣetrajñās the three modes are there in different proportions. The Lord clarifies this because when the kṣetrajña knows the intricacies of the working principles of Prakṛti, which is the power of Brahman and also the details of the permutations and combinations of the three modes, he could keep away from the kṣetra. This chapter is named ‘Guṇatrayavibhāgayoga’ as it analyses the three modes in detail. Though the two Ācāryas have commented on the three modes in distinct fashions, both are interesting with their distinctive styles. The Lord once again speaks on Jñāna as Jñāna is the noblest of all knowledge in the realization of the Absolute.

The effulgent Ātman is veiled by the three modes of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. When this veil is removed, the soul will shine in its self effulgence. In a Sattva dominated mind the Rajas and Tamas will be dormant and in a Tamas dominated mind the Sattva and Rajas will be dormant. Each individual should endeavour to make Sattva dominant in him after proper self retrospection. Later he should cast away the sāttvic quality and transcend himself to the state of a guṇātīta. In such a state, the mind will glow in the atomic splendor in all its purity. This indeed is liberation. This state is known as turiya. Each mode, each character, the ways to transcend them, the experiences that persons
with equanimity meet with; everything is detailed in this chapter. This chapter is very useful for all spiritual aspirants, knowledge seekers and psychologists.

One should go beyond the three modes through constant practice in a step by step manner, nurturing the qualities of devotion in the heart to win the Lord’s grace. One who has gone beyond the guṇās will be as firm as a rock amidst all the preoccupations of worldly life in this world. He should maintain equanimity in honor and disgrace, friendly and unfriendly nature and praise or blame. No one can tamper with the equanimity of an even minded person who has transcended the guṇās as is a mountain unaffected by storm or like an unpierceable arrow.

Ācārya potently proclaims the greatness of a guṇātīta and the guṇās in the heights of vedāntic principles. On the contrary, Jñāneśvara lucidly explains the characteristics with the help of numerous examples palatable to the common man. The śloka ‘samadukhasukhah svasthah’(14: 24) points out the four gigantic waves which tosses man in the ups and downs of joy and sorrow. Good and bad experiences, belongings which come and leave, likes and dislikes and praise and blame always follow us in this worldly life. All the deeds involving the three modes are carried out by nature. The soul shines above them all as a witness.
'gunebhya ca paraṁ vetti.....'(14:19) says the Acārya. One should remain as a witnessing soul, after getting detached from the guṇās with the help of virtuous thoughts and through constant practice. The objective of all in life should be the attainment of self realization. Everyone should strive for the state of transcending the modes through one-pointed devotion. Only such knowledge and practice of undivided devotion can help a person to be above the guṇās and sustain the state of godliness. Thus after detailing the three modes and their insignificance and by advising everyone to practice discrimination to attain enduring bliss by transcending the guṇās, the Lord concludes the chapter.

**Puruṣottamayoga**

It is revealed here that the universe which is a spread all over like a big banyan tree is a manifestation from the main root that is Brahman. The roots of this tree are at the top and the branches are at the bottom. None can perceive it in its entirety from outside. Those who eschew duality can reach that state of indestructibility. It is the self effulgent truth. Jīvaḥ is the portion of truth which recognizes all the six senses including the mind. The jīvaḥ is called kṣarapurusah as it loses its life once the senses disappear from it. Akṣara puruṣaḥ is the part of Brahman which is found as the image in bodies that forms the basis of
jīvapratibimbah. Uttama puruṣaḥ is the paramātma puruṣaḥ which shines as the non-dual reality that encompasses jīvāḥ and akṣarapuruṣaḥ. The one who knows this uttama puruṣaḥ is the wise and realized soul. This chapter is named ‘Puruṣottamayoga’ as it reveals the nature of puruṣottamaḥ.

Jñāneśvara compares the saṃsāra of life to the Aṣvatthaḥ tree. This tree emerged from the seed of māyā. Māyā is the root of this world from which the well spreaded tree of universe composed of trīguṇās, citta catuṣṭaya, pañcabhūtās and dehendriyās sprouted up. Like the clouds which change its colours constantly, this aṣvatthaḥ tree changes with every moment. In this world, what exists is kṣaraḥ and akṣarapuruṣaḥ. The middle stage of advaita and dvaita is what is known as kṣāraḥ. Akṣaraḥ is the deep sleep which is neither the dream state nor the conscious state. Paramātman is the non-dual, self effulgent principle. The nature of paramātman will be understood only to those who have attained real knowledge. As the Ganges provides pure water to everybody, this Gītopadeśa will provide knowledge to everyone. This advice is something which takes a person beyond kṣaraḥ and akṣaraḥ. As the search of something ends with its finding, with the dawn of self realization, all the vāsanās of a person will reach its end. Thus the acquisition of knowledge becomes the most important karman and the final action.
Śloka - 46

With roots above and branches below stands the imperishable Āsvatthāḥ, they say. Its leaves are the Vedās. He who knows this is the knower of the Vedās. 295

‘नथः अपि स्थिता इति अथावः.’ means, that which will not endure till tomorrow. How could the Pipal tree which lives for centuries and outlives other trees be considered as so short lived? Each day this tree sheds its leaves and fruits and the tissues of the trunk and its branches get renewed. Thus it appears to be freshly existent every day. Brahman is called ‘ūrdhva’ as it is subtler than time, as it is the cause of everything and as it is eternal and great. 296 Having endowed with the unmanifest illusory power, it is considered as the root of the ‘tree of life’. Normally the roots of a tree grow deeper down the ground. On the contrary, this tree has its roots growing upward. This shows the power of illusion. Based on the declaration of Kaṭopaniṣad, ūrthvamula. (kaṭa:6:1.1) the tree of life has its roots upwards and its branches downwards. This grows downwards expansively with intellect, ego and molecules at its branches. 297
As leaves nourish the tree, actions nourish life. That is why those portions which deal with actions in Vedās are considered as leaves.

Through the śloka

पञ्चैमानि महाबाहो कारणानि निवोधमे॥

........................................................

न्याय्यं वा विपरीतं वा पञ्चैते तस्य हेतुवः॥ (18 - 13, 14)

*Bhagavan* expounds that for every action to be performed, there should be five factors. As leaves protect the tree from the heat of sunlight, Vedās protect humans by explaining virtues and vices, by which happiness could be gained and sorrows avoided. Thus a person who understands the tree of life in this way realizes the meaning of Vedās too. Here so many similarities are cited between the tree of life and the Pipal tree. Ācārya opines that this *saṃsāra* is endless as it has been in force from time immemorial.

Even though the sun strays away, still the rays of sunlight fall on earth. Jñāneśvara tells that it is same in the case of the tree of life whose roots grow upwards and the branches downwards. This tree of life embraces everything in this universe. It is compared to a banyan tree which grows indefinitely. The top portion of this tree is considered as Brahman. *Brahman* is the seat of pristine knowledge. *Brahman* is
seen in Brahman itself. It is neither single nor diverse. This Brahman is invisible too. This grand tree sprouted from the seed of illusion. This illusion enlightens all knowledge except the knowledge of the absolute. The illusion which has the form of ignorance is associated with Brahman.

The stage of pure ignorance is between dream and deep sleep. Dream and sleep are the effects of ignorance. The water from the sea rises upwards and forms the clouds. It further reaches the rivers after getting converted to rain. The water from the rivers reach ultimately back to the ocean. Hence the level of water in the ocean is always the same. In the same way, the birth and death of the tree is so rapid to be ascertained distinctively. Thus it is said to possess the quality of indestructibility.

A top which spins on the floor seems to be fixed there. Same is the case with the tree of life. Even though birth and death occurs incessantly, the ignorant thinks that the world is stable. Jñāneśvara proclaims that those who realize this fact will realize the unstable nature of this world too. On the contrary those who realize that this tree is nonexistent and just an illusion are truly the wise. Jñāneśvara declares that only these people command respect and attain the ultimate aim of yoga.
It is to teach Arjuna and make him detached that the Lord imposes the universe on the banyan tree and explains the universe. The root of this tree is *Brahman* and *mahat tattvaḥ, ahaṃkāra tattvaḥ*, the five elements, the five objects of senses etc are described as its branches. As illusion is endless, the illusory world also flows without any beginning or end\(^308\). Ācārya describes the tree of life in yet another way also. As the sprouts, leaves and branches draw nutrients from the space and nourish the tree, *Vedās* too nourish the tree of life by describing the ethical and non-ethical actions which are the fruits of the *Vedic* actions\(^309\). This tree of life could be known only by those who realize the meaning of *Vedās*. Thus the commentary on this śloka is concluded by the Ācārya with two explanations.

The Lord says that *Brahman* is the cause of this universe and is also the cause of the upper part of the tree of life. The branches (*adhaśākhā*) in the lower portion are representative if humans, animals, birds, worms etc *Vedās* are the leaves. One who knows this tree knows *Vedās* too. Ācārya describes this tree with Viṣṇu as the root and the entire universe as its branches. The term ‘avyaya’ means endless flow\(^310\). *Vedās* are compared to leaves. Fruits occur only after the appearance of leaves. In the same way the results of virtues and vices happen according to *Vedās*. As earth is the basis for the tree of nature,
Lord Viṣṇu is the basis of the tree of life. Vedās which are like leaves appear and disappear continuously. That person is wise who knows the tree as a whole and not just the leaves. This knowledge itself is the nature of the Puruṣaḥ.

Śloka - 47

द्वाविंशोऽपूर्वोऽऽक्षरश्चाक्षर एव च।
क्षरं सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्योऽक्षर उच्यते॥ (15 - 16)

There are two kinds of Puruṣā’s in the world, the perishable and the imperishable. The perishable is all these beings and the immutable is called the imperishable

In this universe there are two kinds of puruṣā’s - the puruṣaḥ who ceases to exist (kṣarapuruṣaḥ) and the puruṣaḥ who never ceases to exist (akṣarapuruṣaḥ). Matter, power and beings are all included in kṣarapuruṣaḥ. Jīvaḥ is the part of Brahman which gets reflected in the intellect. The Jīvaḥ will cease to exist once the intellect ceases to exist. Though all the elements will not become puruṣaḥ, all humans and insects consider what has been created as soul or puruṣaḥ. That is why kṣaraḥ is considered as puruṣaḥ by the Lord here. As per the science of Vedānta, God is jīvaḥ, who is the reflection of illusion. Kṣarapuruṣaḥ is known as jīvaḥ in individual body and as God in the universal body.
The Lord has declared through the śloka, जीवभूतां महावाहो यवेदं धार्यते जगत्। (7:5) that it is the jīvah that holds the universe. Without attachment with the body there is no jīvah and without attachment with jīvah there is no body. So kṣarapurusah is the jīvah which gets attached to the body. On the other hand, kūṭasthaḥ or akṣarapurusah is the part of absolute soul which seems to be existent inside the body as an object for the image of kṣarapurusah. It is defined as ‘kūṭamiva.......’. ‘Kūṭasthaḥ’ is that part of pure consciousness which gets differentiated in the gross and subtle bodies. The meaning of akṣaraḥ is suggested to be indestructible. The illusory power of God is the seed behind the origin of kṣarapurusah and the force behind the impulses from which actions of numerous beings spring forth. The kṣaraḥ and akṣarapurusah cannot be considered as God as they are not eternal. The Ācārya describes the life principle and the physical aspects to which it identifies itself with as nonexistent entities resulting from ignorance.

Jñānesvara gets into the commentary so naturally. There are two lips but only one speech, two legs are there, but walking is one. While the unqualified Brahman is extolled as having so many qualities, the avoidance of these qualities will leave the pure spotless Brahman. Only two persons exist in this universe. One is kṣaraḥ or finite and the other...
is *akṣaraḥ* or infinite. A blade of grass to the ever expanding *Brahman* could be categorized under *kṣaraḥ*. Though this appears to be soul, yet it is just a reflection of the real soul. As is the reflection of a lion in a lake, the two seems to exist though in reality there is only one. The life principle which roams the universe forgetting its real nature is also *kṣaraḥ*. When the water is moving, the reflection of the moon on it also seems to be in motion. Similarly the changes which are happening to the body seem to be happening with the soul also. But if there is no water, the reflection cannot exist. When the *guṇās* are not active, the soul also seems to be non-existent.

*Akṣaraḥ* like the *Meru* Mountain is alike in heaven, earth and nether world and also in the state of knowledge and ignorance and in the world of duality caused by ignorance. A ball of sand is neither sand nor a vessel. It is in a middle stage. When ocean dries up there will neither be water nor waves. Likewise the formless *akṣaraḥ* is a deep sleep state where it is neither waking state nor dream state. *Akṣaraḥ* is a state of perfect void where the universe has disappeared and the rise of knowledge of self has not happened. This is beyond the state of knowledge and ignorance. It is the intermediate stage of duality and non duality. But *kṣaraḥ* is either in waking or in dream state.
Jñāneśvara compare akṣaraḥ also to the tree of universe referred to in the beginning of the chapter. But when the form of universe is viewed it is like a person in sleep. It is the real form of Paramātman which happens in between when ignorance gets dispelled and knowledge happens. In the Vedā, Brahman is described as Paramātman and Sasvataḥ. Thus Jñāneśvara calls the cause behind all lives Akṣarapurusaḥ which is consciousness that has the characteristics of being related to illusion.

Resume

In this universe there are three entities, viz. kṣarapurusaḥ akṣarapurusaḥ and puruṣottamaḥ. The life of the life principle will stay till it attains liberation. Hence even though it leaves the body it will stay in the subtle form as akṣarapurusaḥ. But there is another pure form of consciousness which is unbound with the body. This is Parabrahman. This is verily the Puruṣottamaḥ referred to in this chapter. This chapter bears the name ‘Puruṣottamayoga’ as it describes how a puruṣaḥ can attain the incomparable divine state of puruṣottamaḥ and is quite apt.

Here the life is described as a Pipal tree- ‘taṁ ūrdhvamūlaṁ’. Both Ācārya and Jñāneśvara picturises the tree of life as an upside down tree whose branches grow downwards and the roots row upwards. Kaṭopaniṣad too has described life in this way. The Lord has told earlier
that those who worship God with undivided devotion will realize the
Brahman through knowledge. Those who have no devotion and
knowledge will never attain detachment. So the Lord introduces the
picture of this tree to Arjuna just to make him realize the importance
of detachment.

Brahman is the height of the tree. One without the second is the
quality of it, according to Jñāneśvara. The root at the top is compared
to ignorance. The buds at the bottom are considered as ego with the
attributes of sattvaḥ, rajas and tamaḥ. The branches which sprout from
the tap root are compared to the cittacatuṣṭaya (intellect, mind, ego
and logic). Later another branch constituted of the five elements and
ears, creepers similar to body and buds are formed. Branches in the
form of tongues and noses also arise.

Jñāneśvara tells that more branches of five elements, mahat, ego,
mind etc starts growing in this tree. Such an explanation is not there in
the commentary of the Ācārya. Thus both the commentators give
different explanations for this tree. When description of the tree is done
by Jñāneśvara, one feels that he is describing the body of a man. For
certain words, Ācārya gives special interpretations. For example words
like aśvatthaḥ, avyayaḥ, chandāṃsi, vedavid, loke, aksaraḥ, kṣaraḥ,
kūṭastaḥ, puruṣaḥ etc. But in the commentary of Jñāneśvara, this
peculiarity cannot be seen.
By the expression ‘jīvabhūta sanātana’ (15:17) it is suggested that life principle is a part of the Lord’s form. Hence aspirants should lead a life of purity. The Lord calls Paramātman as Puruṣottamaḥ in this chapter. This is because it is different from kṣaraḥ or akṣaraḥ. One should discriminate Paramātman from everything else and with that strength all misunderstanding should end. The chapter is concluded by advising that God should be worshipped always with thought, word and deed and the principle of Paramātman and the need to cultivate detachment and the result of it are also described. Everyone should endeavour to lead a life of purity through good company, good conduct and rectitude without abandoning the right to be good. Moreover one should not be satisfied with the status of a puruṣaḥ and should endeavour to reach the state of Puruṣotamaḥ. If that ideal is realized life would be fulfilled - ‘budhimān syāt krutakrutyasca bhārata’.

**Daivāsurasaṃpattvibhāgayoga**

In this chapter all living beings are classified into two groups, the devavarga and asuravarga. The different ways to differentiate these two groups are also discussed in detail in this chapter. The characteristics of those belonging to the devavarga are twenty six in number starting with ‘abhaya’. The characteristics of asuravarga are six in number starting with ‘daṃbha’. Daivisaṃpad is conducive for
liberation and āsuri sampad leads to bondage. The Lord confirms that the pāṇḍavās are of daivīsampad. Those of the asuravarga are not aware of what pravr̥tti and nivr̥tti is. They don’t accept God. They will have to fall in asurayoni and experience eternal hell. The three main gates of hell are kāma, krodha and lobha (desire, anger and greed). One who avoids these three will attain the glory of ātman. The one who despises śāstraḥ which are words of the seers of truth cannot attain the objective of life. Hence śāstraḥ should be considered as the pramāṇa of karmamārga. This chapter is named ‘Daivāsurasampattvibhāgayoga’ as it explains and differentiates daivīsampad and asurasampad.

‘Adhyatmajñana’ is the best way to achieve Brahman. The Lord details the twenty six characteristics starting with abhaya. The āsuri sampads which include daṃbha are strong and dangerous. It is like an innocent person being attacked by dacoits. ‘Daivi sampad’ is like the rise of liberation and ‘āsuri sampad’ is like an iron chain of Māyā. But one should not fear them because sun does not fear day or night. Those with āsuri sampad because of the bad deeds done by them will be thrown into baser levels again and again. Kāmaḥ, krodhaḥ and lobhaḥ are the three main gates to hell. The seers have advised all to despise them. One who as avoided these three vices will enjoy happiness. The company of the virtuous and scientific advice is the
things that help to get freedom from the birth and rebirth. Jñānesvara concludes this chapter by telling that a person, who aspires to achieve the purṣārdhās, should accept the rules put forward by śāśtraḥ.

In this chapter named ‘Daivāsurasampaṭṭivibhāgayoga’, it is explained in detail that two basic natures of human beings. Through godly qualities one can escape bondage. Hence one should try to acquire it. The demoniac qualities bind. Hence one should try to get detached from them. In the first to 18th verses, 26 Godly qualities starting with ‘abhaya’ and the demoniac qualities are described. The Lord makes it clear through these verses the experience one gets by cultivating these qualities, the dire consequences of lack of discrimination, the world view of those with demoniac qualities and the destiny of those with demoniac qualities of pride, ego and haughtiness.

Śloka - 48

आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि।
मामप्राप्ययेव कौन्तेय ततो यात्यथर्मां गतिम्। (16 - 20)

Fallen into the demoniac wombs, these deluded beings from birth to birth, without ever attaining to Me, O Kaunteya, go down to a state still lower than that.326.

The ignorant indiscriminate go on taking birth amidst the demoniac groups. They come again in similar vicious circumstances
and as a result do not attain god realization. Hence they fail to attain liberation and stay as worst individuals. The demoniac traits intensifies ego through attachment. Consequently, such people meet with downfall. Such demoniac souls should be struck with strong disappointment in life so that they should realize the insignificance of such life. Only then there will be a way out from that wretched life. ‘Māṁ aprīpyam eva’ according to Ācārya means those worst individuals won’t attain liberation or they won’t attain the noble path shown by the Lord.

Jñāneśvara states that through demoniac traits one will attain only descent. Even among the animals there are regular intervals of rest and peace. But these worst souls are deprived of that forever. Their sins go on accumulating and they get doomed to a state of darkness. There even rest is denied rest; filth gets dirtier by them. Even fear trembles on hearing their name. Inauspiciousness becomes more inauspicious. Thus, those with demoniac traits will have to undergo the most difficult and worst experiences in life. Just thinking of their ill experiences will suffocate one’s mind. This is due to the demoniac traits. Hence the Lord urges Arjuna to avoid such evil qualities. Moreover, he warns Arjuna to stay away from those with such bad traits. The Lord is advising the whole world and not just Arjuna. Evil actions are carried out by people with demoniac traits. This is leading our society and our
nation at large to great danger. Because of this, atrocities are on the rise and human values are getting disintegrated. The Lord indirectly exhorts everyone to be virtuous by keeping company with the virtuous.

It is unfavorable for a person to be born in a demoniac womb. The Lord states that such souls will be denied liberation and will enter eternal hell. Jñānestvara gives the same idea through this verse. Even sin despises those with demoniac traits. They would be considered untouchable by untouchability. Jñānestvara’s special advice is to stay away from people of such vices and asks to avoid the six demoniac traits including pride. It is the God in each of us that guides us. The doors of liberation are control of mind and sense organs, good company and constant meditation on the Self. In order to avoid the demoniac qualities one should pursue these virtuous principles. There is no doubt that one who aspires for liberation can improve a lot by cultivating these divine qualities.

Śloka - 49

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्स्वाय वर्तते कामकारतः।
न स सिद्धिमवापनोति न मुखं न परां गतिम्॥ (16 - 23)

He, who casts aside the scriptural injunctions and acts as prompted by his desires, attains neither perfection nor happiness nor the highest goal.
Śāstraḥ is that which teaches us about things which cannot be known by pratyakṣaḥ and logic. Some call this Vedā. The ultimate aim of Vedā is to know Paramātman as the object of the aim of life which is liberation. Liberation is freedom from bondage. It is common knowledge that when the real knowledge of a thing happens, the illusion regarding it will disappear. Similarly the real knowledge of the self dispels the ignorance that soul is related to body. This knowledge of the self annihilates the false knowledge of self and the suffering and bondage related to it.

The ultimate aim of Śāstraḥ is to make one conscious of the soul in this way. This cannot be accomplished by sense organs or logic. It is self knowing. According to the precept that there will not be any achievement without discipline, the achievement of self realization should be achieved through the spiritual disciplines prescribed for it. All the disciplines and modes of action are prescribed in the Vedās. Such objects which are not conducive for the attainment of knowledge of the self should be avoided. Thus realization would be possible with the grace of the preceptor and purity of mind obtained by abandoning vices and acquiring virtues.

The aphorism ‘Prajñānam Brahmaḥ’ in the Śrutis illumines the fact that Paramātman is the experiential knowledge got by meditating
on the advice of the preceptor. That is why Ācārya says that those who disregard the rules of Śāstrās and live according to their own wishes are not qualified for Puruṣārdhaḥ. It is firmly said that such persons will not attain happiness, heaven or liberation.

Company of the virtuous and advices of the Śāstrās are conducive for the escape from this world and it will lead to the acquirement of the grace of the preceptor and bliss\textsuperscript{337}. It also helps to acquire pure devotion and vision of Paramātman. It will destroy all types of sufferings. Hence, Jñānesvara advises everyone to abandon desire, greed and anger. Those who don’t follow the instructions are defying the Veda\textsuperscript{338}. Those who disrespect the Vedic injunctions and neglect their own well being and go after sensual pleasures will never escape from the sufferings ensuing it\textsuperscript{339}. Thus they lose heaven and the other world. They will not get the opportunity for liberation also. Jñānesvara concludes the commentary on this verse by exhorting everyone not to go along with the strength of desire and the other vices.

**Resume**

The Lord speaks in this chapter about the basic principles a person aspiring for the unified experience of Jīvaḥ and Brahman should know. In the chapter named ‘Daivāsurasampattvibhāgagayoga’, human beings are classified into the groups of Devaḥ and Asuraḥ. The term ‘Devaḥ’
means light and ‘Asurah’ denotes cruelty, hardness etc. Light symbolizes discrimination and hardness symbolizes ignorance. These contradictory factors points to the two ends of the evolution of life. The Lord gives tips to perform self analysis, self correction and self establishment of virtues in this chapter.

It is because of the influence of ignorance gathered through different births that demoniac forces affect the inner domain of the life principle. Hence indiscrimination caused by ignorance which veils the inner space will be unable to control the vicious tendencies of desire, lust and greed. That is why the Lord says that persons who take birth with demoniac qualities will wander away from divine qualities in each birth and will be unsuccessful to get united with God without achieving liberation.

Here by the word ‘asurayoni’ the Lord means birth unfavourable towards God, Jñāneśvara uses the term ‘tamasayoni’. It is said that those who take birth in ‘tamasayoni’ will have to undergo all the base and horrible experiences of life. In Jñāneśvari it is proclaimed that it is by eschewing uncivilized traits and embracing virtuous qualities that human life achieves meaning. Hence the aim of life should be to cast away illusion which takes the form of impulses and achieve liberation through the glory of the Self. For this, people should faithfully engage in thoughts of God.
Those who ignore Vedās and act according to their whims and fancies will not achieve liberation. Here Ācārya suggests the meaning of the term ‘Śāstravidhi’ as the Vedic order of God, for ‘Sidhiḥ’, he gives the meaning qualification for puruṣārdhaḥ and for ‘Sukhaḥ’ he suggests worldly pleasure. But Jñāneśvara does not give special meaning to any of the terms. According to Jñāneśvara, it is the basic injunction and advices of the Vedās that provide knowledge of self. Man’s duty is to realize the greatness of the power of God which illumines the entire universe which is inert. Man of discrimination should know that those who know the self will not be attracted to the inert material objects.

Man should be determined to acquire Godly qualities and experience divine bliss in this life itself. The Lord has utilized the whole chapter to expose the ways to attain purity of mind which leads to liberation. In order to ease one’s way through the path of liberation one should accept the treasure of divine qualities. Spiritual wealth is mightier than worldly wealth. Hence great men should be satisfied with the material gifts that God has given him and try to achieve more prosperity through spiritual disciplines.

Śraddhātrayavibhāgayoga

Arjuna’s query was what will be the condition of a person who stays in the karmaraṅga without the knowledge of the rules of śāstraḥ.
As an answer to this, the Lord describes the three natural types of śraddhā which are based on the three guṇās. Śraddhā is one’s implicit faith. Śraddhā is of three types, sāttvik, rājasic and tāmasic. Those who have sāttvic śraddhā worship Gods in whom sāttvic quality is predominant. The penance done by torturing the mind and body is āsuric. Food, sacrifice, penance and charity are divided into sāttvic, rājasic and tāmasic according to the quality of śraddhā. There are three types of austerities namely śārīrika, mānasikā and vāṅgmayā. These three types of austerities take sāttvic bhāva.

If ego and desire creeps in, austerity will get degraded to rājasic and tāmasic. Same is the case with charity too. One can rise into sāttvic śraddhā if he recites the mantra ‘aum tat sat’ always and maintains brahmabhāva while performing actions. The basic factor of righteousness is sāttvic śraddhā. Anything done without it is asat. Asat karma is not beneficial either in this world or the other. Hence those who like to get nearer to truth should always live with sāttvic śraddhā and lead a life of righteousness. As śraddhā is divided into three and described in detail in this chapter, it gets the name ‘Śraddhātraya-vibhāgayoga’.

Arjuna asks what the state of the person who performs worship of the Lord with śraddhā though he is not aware of the rules of the śāstraḥ
is and also which is the quality among the *triguṇās* that they depend on while they perform these actions. For the attainment of liberation, just *śraddhā* will not do. Men act on the influence of the nature of the *triguṇās*. Mind is shaped according to their nature.

The Lord has already opined that the power to do *karmaḥ* is given only to man. Among the three *śraddhās*, only the *sāttvic śraddhā* is to be accepted and the other two should be avoided. Further the Lord speaks about the destiny of those persons who disrespect the rules of the *śāstrās* and those ignorant people with *asuric* qualities. Sacrifice, charity and austerity are also influenced by *triguṇās* as it influences the food. Jñāneśvara says that liberation is not far for those who perform *sāttvic dharma* and if the name ‘*aum tat sat*’ is recited

**Śloka - 50**

ये शास्त्रविधिमुन्त्र्य यजन्ते श्रव्याण्विताः।
तेषां निष्टा तु का कृष्ण सत्वमाहो रजस्तत्म।। (17 - 1)

Those who, neglecting the ordinance of the scripture, sacrifice endowed with faith what exactly is there state, O Kṛṣṇa? Is it one of *Sāttva, Rajas* or *Tamas*?345.

Śraddhā is unflinching faith. The Lord declared that Śāstraḥ could be considered as an authority as it helps Śraddhā to be Sāttvic whether
one knows Śāstraḥ or not. If Śraddhā is not able to take one to Sāttvic levels, it cannot be deemed to be a tool to achieve liberation. In the third chapter, the Lord has differentiated three types of faith namely Sāttvic, Rājasic and Tāmasic.

Arjuna enquires about the level of qualitative achievement of a person who performs duties with faith, though he is ignorant of śāstrās. Here it is not just sacrificial rite that is meant by the term ‘yajñā’. The objective of the query is to ascertain the level of attainment of a person who sacrifices all the actions of his life for the sake of his strong faith. Such individuals adore the Gods with faith forsaking all the injunctions of Śrutis and Śmṛtis. The Lord had advised Arjuna on discipline in the 3rd verse of the 3rd chapter.

Here it is theistic belief which is meant by Śraddhā. (Theistic belief is the strong belief in the existence of God and in the authenticity of Vedās). For those who are aware of the injunctions of the śāstrās, Śraddhā does not happen towards different modes of ritualistic devotion which do not fall in line with the śāstrās. Hence this is not a question pertaining to them. On the other hand, this is a query concerned with those who perform ritualistic worship handed over through generations without endeavoring to study the śāstrās either because of their incompetence or lack of necessity. The query is
whether their action is Sāttvic, Rājasic and Tāmasic. If it is sāttvic, he is competent to be called a Jñāni or person of wisdom. If it is \textit{sattvic}, he is competent to be called a Jñāni or person of wisdom. \cite{349}

Jñānesvara starts his commentary on the chapter, \textit{Śradhātrayavibhāgayoga} with the caption ‘The Practice of Śāstra’. Arjuna addresses Kṛṣṇa as \textit{tamālaśyāmā} (tamāla is cinnamon) and also as \textit{Brahman} which is perceivable to the senses. He tells the Lord that He has told him that liberation is not attainable without the knowledge of the śāstrās. The opportunity for education is not easily available to all. Without the grace of the ancestors it is not apprehensible for the intellect too. Most of the areas of the subjects of science are ignored by conjectures. The reason that Jñānesvara gives to this is the lack of proper authority. \cite{351}

The practice of science should be under a qualified preceptor. And it is quite difficult to obtain such a well qualified preceptor. Even though such a qualified person is at hand, the facilities may be inadequate. Even if all the conditions are satisfied, it is difficult to understand the different levels of intellect of different people. Each of the pieces of advice from a preceptor should be discussed in detail. Everyone may not be competent for this task. Hence ordinary people place their faith in learned men whom they consider as a model preceptor. This is like a blind man who follows a person whom he meets.
In the same way they faithfully follow the ways of such people of authority who are proficient in all the sastras. Further they adore the Gods like Śiva and perform sacrifice and charity with faith. Arjuna implores the Lord to tell him how individuals are classified under Sattva, Rajas and Tamas in this respect.

In humans, faith happens in accordance with qualities. Culture develops in tune with faith. Action happens in accordance with culture. That is why the Lord says that unless man’s faith changes, the quality of man does not change - ‘māyoyam puruṣah’ (17:3). Without changing faith, culture will not change. Action will not alter unless culture is altered. Hence a person of discrimination should elevate his qualities from Rajas and Tamas to Sattva. After that one should reach the state which transcends all attributes. This should be the ultimate aim according to Ācārya.

It is difficult to act according to the śāstras. Moreover one cannot accomplish all the things in a single life itself. Jñāneśvara says that one should ignore conjectures and follow the śāstras religiously for liberation. Jñāneśvara compares this to students practising writing alphabets under those letters printed on the text book. Some people follow the actions and customs of those preceptors who are well versed in the śāstras. Thus they faithfully adhere to charities and worships involving land, cows etc. and austerities like Agnihotra. Jñāneśvara
deals with the destiny of such people in this śloka. Arjuna’s enquiry here is to which category of Sattva, Rajas or Tamas these people belong.

Later Jñāneśvara extols Lord Kṛṣṇa as the pollen grain in the lotus flower that is Vedā, the Lord of Vaikuṇṭa, the Sole principle of Mystery and the wealth of bliss.357 Jñāneśvara compares Lord Kṛṣṇa’s body to the sky. Through this commentary, Ācārya makes it explicit that even food is consumed in order to fulfill one’s faith. Those who know śāstrās perform actions contrary to it and adhering to one’s own faith. Arjuna now asks what would be the constitution of the inner organs of the ego of those who perform their actions in these two ways.

Arjuna should be viewed as the representative of the whole of humanity. It is for everyone that Arjuna asks the Lord about the three aspects, Sattva Rajas and Tamas. The true nature of humans is to attain God. For that everyone should act with faith understanding its greatness and attain liberation.

Śloka - 51

ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्माणस्विनिघः स्मृतः ।
ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिताः पुरा ॥ (17 - 23)

‘Aum Tat Sat’- this has been considered to be the three fold designation of Brahman. By that were ordained of old the Brahman, the Vedās of sacrifice.358
Auṃ is considered as the name of *Parabrahman* in many portions of the *Upaṇiṣads*. *Parabrahman* is called ‘*Tat*’ as it is the cause of the universe and envisaged by the wise. ‘*Sat*’ is that principle which is real, good and noble. It is based on these names that *Prajāpati* has created *Vaṃśas* like *Brahmaṇās*, *Vedās* and sacrifice in the beginning of creation. *Brahman* is the cause behind even the creation of *Prajāpati*. This *Brahmamantra* has the potency to convert all actions to *Brahmakarma*. The Lord has made it clear the nature of *Brahmajñāḥ* through the verse *Brahmaṁpaṇaḥ* (4:24). The Ācārya has insisted that the term ‘*Yajña*’ should be understood as charity and austerity which are the limbs of *Yajña*. The word ‘*Vihīta*’ is explained as what is purified.

*Jñānesvara* explains at the outset that the supreme soul which is beyond the differences of caste and religion, which does not have any name or form and is eternal, is the one which has got diversified into the three aspects of *Auṃ*, *Tat* and *Sat*. When a child is born it does not have a name. But to recognize it a name is given. When that name is called, the child will respond to the call. Similarly to identify God the Holy Scriptures has assigned a name. *Brahman* does not address anyone and does not get addressed too. But in order to speak about it and to get united with it, *Vedās* found *mantrās*. 
Jñāneśvara is of the opinion that if these *mantrās* are properly used according to the rules, *Brahman* can be realized. It is for their fulfillment that aspirants should be in the plateau of *Veda*s, seated on *Upaniṣads* close to *Brahman*. When *Brahma* was perturbed and disillusioned and could not do anything, he repeated these *mantrās* to gain energy and enthusiasm. These *mantrās* have the magical power to dispose the silence of *Brahman* and unite duality with non duality. That is to say it can unite the Individual soul with the Supreme soul. Thus it is this form of the *mantrā* which made *Brahma* great that is going to be explained by Jñāneśvara.

Jñāneśvara explains the first word, ‘*Prāṇava*’ as the king of all *mantrās*. But he speaks about *Tat* and *Sat* as only ‘the second’ and ‘the third’. According to Jñāneśvara too, these three are the names of *Brahman*. But it is affirmed that these *mantrās* should be used only according to the rules of the *śastra*s. This is because a child can only starve before its food as it does not know to eat it. Thus even if there is the name of the *Brahman* in the tongue and *Sattva* quality in the hands, the action will be futile if its application is not known. Hence Jñāneśvara explains the application of the three colored *Parabrahman* for the sake of aspirants.

**Resume**

*Auṃkāra* is the description of *Brahman* based on the vibratory actions which are the basic principles of creation, maintenance and
destruction. *Tat* is the *Puruṣottama* or force which is integrated and balanced whereas *Sat* is the indestructible essence which is the core of the whole universe. The holistic experience of this is ‘sadeva’\(^{367}\). It is those words of the famous *mantrā* ‘*Tattvamasi*’ of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* that is explained here. If ‘*Aum Tat Sat*’ is considered as a sentence then the meaning could be *Brahman* is existence which is the ultimate cause. That is, ‘*Tat*’ which exists in ‘*Sat*’ should be known through ‘*Aumkar*’.

The Lord explains in this chapter ‘Śraddhātrayavibhāgayoga’, the basic principles that an aspirant who longs for the liberating experience gained through the unification of Individual Soul and Ultimate Soul, should follow. The Lord says that the Śāstrās should be considered as an authority as the knowledge of the Śāstrās could lend faith to the Sattva level whether one knows Śāstrās or not.

Ācārya gives the meaning of the expression ‘*Sastravidhi.....*’ as one who does sacrifice with faith, without following the rules of the Śāstrās. But Ācārya does not mean this as persons who defy the Śāstrās after knowing them. He makes it clear that he was speaking about those persons who do the sacrifice without knowing the Śāstrās but follow them as done by elder ones. But there is a discrepancy when he once speaks about the ignorant worshipping the Gods according to the rules
of the Śāstraś for lack of faith and later about worshipping with faith. So what he means really is about those who do sacrifice with faith abandoning the rules given in the Śāstraś.

Moreover aspirants take the actions and customs of those adept in all śāstraś as authority and follow them with faith. Jñāneśvara asks in which category those aspirants will come among the Sāttva, Rajas and Tamas. When compared to the commentary of Ācārya, no particular word is given special consideration and interpretation by Jñāneśvara. Ācārya has opined that in the beginning of creation, Brahmaṇās, Vedās and sacrifices were created with the help of the three names Auṃ, Tat and Sat. The basis of all things is the pure phenomenon, Brahman. Any evil action done thinking of this Brahman will be converted to a good action. Hence everyone should perform all actions with that ultimate name in mind.

The meaning of the word ‘Brahman’ can be taken as the existence which is the ultimate cause. Ācārya opines that if the Rājasic and Tāmasic aspects of the sacrifices done with thought, word and deed will get converted to Sāttvic if the names of Brahman, Auṃ, Tat and Sat are recited at the end of it. Moreover, when it is said that the beginning less and endless Vedās are created, it just means that Vedās are illumined by the creator in the beginning of each cycle of creation. This is what is known as the process of a creation.
While Ācārya discusses thus about the stages of Brahman, Jñāneśvara says that Brahman has no name or caste. But Śruti gave it a name to identify it from Avidyā. This technique nullifies the silence of the Brahman. Moreover, Brahman also facilitates the unification of Individual Soul and Universal Soul. Jñāneśvara compares the mantra to father. The proper utilization of this mantra according to the rules confers God Realization. The threefold name of Brahman is the largest flower of Upaniṣads.

Jñāneśvara says that liberation can be attained if one engages in Sāttvic, Rājasic and Tāmasic action and recitate this mantra. The Gītācārya’s view is that all actions bear fruits. But it is suggested that one should not be inquisitive towards those fruits. Sacrifice or action should be performed for the welfare of all. Faith is the tool to avoid development of Rajas and Tamas in man.

Renunciation is the abandonment of the fruits of the prescribed actions. This renunciation opens the door to liberation. An aspirant should realize which are the right and noble actions and should discriminate which fruits should be renounced. Thus it could be understood that worldly and spiritual ways of life have integrated entirely. Let the Parabrahman denoted by the threefold name ‘Aum Tat Sat’ illumine the pure heart of aspirants. The Gītācārya instructs
through this chapter that it is the duty of all to generate favorable circumstances in their heart, as realization of Parabrahman is the ultimate aim.

**Mokṣasannyāsayoga**

The eighteenth chapter is the conclusion of the ‘Jñānakāṇḍa’ which describes the unity of jīvā and Brahman. Continuing from the seventeenth chater, in the eighteenth chapter also basic principles an aspirant ought to know are discussed. Sannyāsa is relinquishment of desire for the fruits of actions. Relinquishment of desire for fruits of action is tyāga. All the actions of the world are controlled by five reasons namely basis, doer, tool, different gestures and god. Hence those who consider that they are the only doers, are foolish. ‘Jñāna’, ‘Jñeya’ and ‘parijñāta’ are the three motivators of karman. The division of four castes are based on qualities of persons and nature of their work. Those who worship the all pervasive truth with their actions can gradually reach the state of liberation. Parābhakti is experiencing Brahman always. This itself is naiṣkarmasidhi. The Lord concludes the Gītā by declaring that the way to alleviate sorrow is surrendering before the Lord through sarvadharmaparityāga. Sañjaya also concludes the Gītā by declaring the unchanging truth that where budhi, īśvara and karman unite there life becomes successful and fulfilled. This chapter
gets the name ‘Mokṣasanyāsāyoga’ as it describes liberation which is naiṣkarmasidhi and the reality of the way to it which is ‘sannyāsa’.

Arjuna tells the Lord that he is curious to differentiate between sannyāsa related to sāṃkhya-yoga and tyāga of karmayoga. It is with this in mind that the Lord advises the whole chapter. The relinquishment of kāmyakarman is ‘Sannayāsa’. The Lord clarifies which are the nityanaimittikakarmans and their results. One who aspires to get liberated from the miseries of life should understand the real nature of tyāga and should be alert in his karmans. Sāttvic knowledge is the knowledge which reveals the one truth behind all the bhūtās.

The Lord advises Arjuna about the system of the three types of guṇās namely sattva, rajas and tamas. Men are classified into four castes. Each caste has separate duties. An aspirant will reach the ultimate state through the grace of his preceptor. Jñāneśvara describes in detail the need of a yogin to practise yoga after training his mind to concentrate on one thing. Any karman should be done depending on the Lord. If it is done so, the Lord will always shine in his mind clearly. As a result he will attain the imperishable ultimate state. This discussion of the Lord and Arjuna will help to achieve any aim.

After advising the Gītā, the Lord asks whether the message has entered Arjuna’s heart. Arjuna replies that he has escaped from the
darkness of Māyā. The Lord has advised this knowledge which is
difficult to achieve in a very detailed manner. Arjuna earned the
knowledge of self through that advice too. Thus an aspirant should
follow the principles explained by the Lord through the process of
avoiding the triguṇās and purifying the citta through meditation and
get involved in the attainment of Brahman.

Śloka - 52

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यायं सत्यांसं कवयो विदुः।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्र्यां विचक्षणः। (18 - 2)

The learned ones know sannyāsa to be the giving up of actions
done with a desire for reward. The adepts call the abandonment of the
results of all works as tyāga.\textsuperscript{368}

The noble souls which have attained self realization opine that
sannayāsa is the renunciation of all the Vedic actions like agnihotra
which are prescribed in the śāstrās.\textsuperscript{369} Tyāga is the surrendering of
the fruits of those actions which are ordained in the śāstrās, realizing
that they are not to be aimed at.\textsuperscript{370} Through the words ‘prāhuḥ
kathayanti, vicakṣaṇaḥ vadanti’, Lord intends that, the meaning of those
two terms ‘sannyāsa’ and ‘tyāga’, which are referred to here and also
in the śāstrās, should be taken in the same sense. They cannot be treated
as two distinct words like pot and dress.\textsuperscript{371} Though Lord tells that those
actions which are desirous should be renounced, it is meant that the
desire for fruits and not the actions themselves is that which should be
renounced. By the word ‘sarva karma phalatya’ga’ this meaning is made
clear here. The adjective used for all the actions here is ‘kāmya’.

*Nityakarman* are those *karman* like ‘sandhyavandan’, ‘Upāsana’,
agnihotra and *jyotistomā*372. Pūrvaapakṣa enquires whether it is foolish
to remark that if these *nityakarmans* have no effect and how can one
renounce the fruits of those *karmans*? It is like remarking that a barren
woman should renounce her son373. The defence for this is that this is
not right and Lord tells that there is result for all *nityakarmans*. The
total renunciation has no connection with the results of his actions but
they won’t stop pursuing him374.

By the expression ‘*sannyāsastu mahābāho’*(5: 6), *Karmayoga*
which is based on sacrifice is said to be *sādhana* and *sannyāsa* the
*sādhyā*. Both these *sādhyā* and *sādhana* are distinct and never become
one. Though Lord has formerly remarked that *sādhana* will become
*sādhyā* in the *nivṛttimārga*, here it is to be understood that the results
of *yoga* and *sannyāsa* shall be different. This question is asked by the
same Arjuna who was given the answer of a similar question which he
asked formerly through the *śloka* ‘*sannyāsam karmaṇāṁ kṛṣṇa’*. Arjuna here demands that he needs to be properly educated about the
principles of *sannyāsā* and *karmayoga* in a more distinctive manner. This question is asked again in the concluding chapter through Arjuna inorder to reiterate this subject before putting an end to the discussion on the whole subject of *Gītā*.

According to Jñāneśvara the meaning of both *tyāga* and *sannyāsā* is total giving up. In his opinion if at all there is any difference between these two terms, it could be taken that *sannyāsā* is the renunciation of *kamyakarman* and *tyāga* is the renunciation of the results of all fruits of actions. Further it is described which all actions should be given up and which all fruits of actions should be renounced.

A stream flows all on its own whereas a well should be drilled. In the same way *niyata karmans* and those *karmans* with particular aims are quite natural. But some actions which are done with an aim of attaining certain desires spring from those desires. The fundamental reason of performing actions lies in the intense desire to perform *yajñās*. Jñāneśvara tells that the main reason behind the actions like drilling wells, constructing cities, performing religious rites is desire itself. Like a deal which gets closed only when a person repay the whole amount which has been borrowed, one should experience the results corresponding to the desires one cherishes. Hence those who aspire for liberation should not engage in such actions even as a recreation,
warns Jñāneśvara. If at all one has to engage in such an action, he should do it in such a manner one spits out food which he realizes to be poisoned once he eats it. Jñāneśvara suggests the name ‘sannyāsā’ for such a tyāgā.

Those karmans which are done on occasions like solar eclipse, lūṇār eclipse or sradha and treats offered to guests are called aupacārika (formal) karmans. The aupacarika karmans are done in those particular occasions in life. Hence they are known as naimittika karmans. But as eyesight does not improve just by way of more usage, as light is always present in a lamp these actions are similar to natural karmans. Those karmans which are performed daily like this are known as nityakarman. These nityā and naimittikā karmans are to be performed by everyone.

By the performance of these actions purity of mind is achieved and also excellence is achieved here and hereafter. In sannyāsā there is no influence of desire. One qualifies for self realization once he becomes adept in tyāgā and sannyāsā. If he does not master this and performs tyāgā as he pleases he will not only be renouncing anything but will also be enmeshed in more bondage. This is similar to taking medicines without identifying the malady. Hence one should not renounce that which is not to be renounced and there should not be
greed for unnecessary things. Jñāneśvara concludes the commentary on this śloka by remarking that if the proper logic of tyāgā is not apprehended, it will be a burden even if everything is renounced.

Both Ācārya and Jñāneśvara have given meanings of both sannyāsā and tyāgā in the same line. Both of them have meant the renunciation of the results of nityā and naimittika karmans by the term ‘sarvakarma phalatyaṅga’. Tyāgā is the renunciation of all actions except those done to please the Lord. What is got from these two commentaries is the manifestation of different pictures of the same idea. One can attain liberation by simply following the words of the Lord. Hence they can also renounce the desire for liberation (mokṣasaṅkalapatyaṅga).

Among the sādhanās which induce the experience of liberation, tyāgā is considered to be the foremost\(^{381}\). One cannot attain anything without renouncing something else. This is the rule of life. Without renouncing the sensory pleasures one cannot achieve the bliss of the ātman. Hence an aspirant of liberation should always follow renunciation.

Śloka - 53, 54, 55

बुद्ध्या विगुज्जया युक्तो धृत्यात्मानं नियम्यं च।
शब्दादीनिपियांस्त्यक्तां रागद्विगुं बुद्ध्यं च॥
Being endowed with a pure intellect, and controlling oneself with fortitude, rejecting the objects- beginning from sound and eliminating attachment and hatred, one who resorts to solitude, eats sparingly, has speech, mind and body under control, to whom meditation and concentration are ever the highest duty and who is possessed of dispassion, that person, having discarded egotism, force, pride, desire, anger and superfluous possessions, free from the idea of possession and serene, is fit for becoming *Brahman*. 

Lord summarizes all the important messages he wanted to deliver to the whole world in these three *ślokās* and conveys through his disciple Arjuna, realizing that the time is imminent for the commencement of war. These three *ślokās* in the last chapter named *Mokṣasannyāśayoga* shine as a crown for *Bhagavadgītā*. Through these three *ślokās*, Lord summarizes the nature of the ultimate *brahmaniṣṭāḥ*. 

Lord has already told that through the practice of worshipping the Lord, one will attain the result of purification of mind. This purification of mind is here referred to as pure intellect. Only such an intellect
which has become pure by avoiding the sense of duality through the
enquiry of truth can experience *Samādhi*. Pure intellect can eschew
binding thoughts by concentrating the mind and direct it towards soul.
Self control or *sattvic dhṛti* can be attained only by that person who
possesses such an intellect. Because of this self control the objects
of senses won’t come closer to the person possessing this *sattvic dhṛti*.
This is said to be the renunciation of the objects of senses. Thus when
the objects of senses move away and likes and dislikes decline, a clear
experience of *Brahman* will happen in the stage of *Samādhi*.

Ācārya gives meanings like the place where there is no scope for
experiencing the sense objects, forests, caves and holy places where
there is no threat of any wild animals or as a secluded place for the
term ‘*viviktatā*’. By the use of the term ‘*lakhvāśi*’, Lord has already
mentioned that one qualifies for *dhyānayoga* only if he maintains
moderate food, sleep and work.

The steps to achieve the spirit of real *tyāga* are leading solitary
life, eating sparingly, controlling mind, speech and body incessantly,
meditating constantly on *Brahman*, staying away from worldly
pleasures. With these qualifications one becomes fit for
*Brahmaniṣṭāḥ* or *jīvanmukti*. Here by the term ‘*nityaṁ*’ it could be
inferred that it is the mental state of a person whose mind, speech or
body has not engaged in other matters. Moreover he is to be a person who is always interested in spiritual matters and detached from everything related to this world and the other. Consequently by the ślokaā ‘ahaṁkāraḥ, balaṁ darpaṁ’ (18: 53) a clear exposition of the inner nature of the complete experience of the bliss of ātman is expressed. The cause of ego is the sense organs.

Strength is the proficiency got through desire and attachment. A person with so much of happiness will possess the bhāvā known as pride. As a result he will have a tendency to bypass righteousness, says Āpasthaṁbasūtra (1.13.4). For jīvanmuktā there will not be the sense of ego in the inert objects like the body. It is impossible for the dehātmabudhīs to relinquish the six vices such as egotism, strength, pride, desire, anger and covetousness. It is for this reason that the Lord has advised to cultivate the quality of detachment before giving up these vices. Such a person will stay away from all kinds of objects of senses realizing the nature of unattachment of ātman. This is what the Lord has classified as the qualities of selflessness and serenity. The meaning of these three ślokās is that one who has attained this state through the different stages is qualified to be Brahman itself.

Jñāneśvara says that initially an aspirant should follow the instructions of his guru and get his intellect purified in any holy stream.
Such a purified intellect will reach the real Brahman. Like the moon who has escaped the grasp of rāhu is again embraced in the glory of light, intellect which is purified will eschew the sense of duality and will engage in Brahmadhyānā. Thus a yogin will disengage all his thoughts from the sense objects, controlling his passion towards them. An aspirant will perform penances which purify the inner sense organs and after further purifying them with valour will lead his mind through the path of yoga. He will awaken the kundalini through the practice of yoga. This kuṇḍalini will enter the Brahmārandhra after scaling the different stages right from the basic centre of mūlādhāra. Thus he becomes yogārūḍa. He would have already attained detachment and discrimination which are essential for the attainment of Brahmajñāna without blocking his yogasiddhi. He will attain the state of Brahman if he is alert in the path of liberation with the help of the quality of detachment. Thus if the thoughts of a person who is engaged in the attainment of liberation is immersed in Brahman, there would not be any obstructions, if he has proper detachment. Hence those persons are lucky who practise jñāna along with detachment. Thus, such an aspirant who has worn the diamond armour of detachment will mount the horse of Rājayoga for the attainment of ‘vijayaśrī’ which is mokṣa.
Jñāneśvara says the first among the qualities of mokṣavairi’s is ‘ahaṃkārā’ or body related ego. The next one which is ‘bala’ will multiply four times in the name of viṣaya. If ‘desire’ is annihilated, ‘anger’ will follow suit. Jñāneśvara considers ‘covetousness’ as an enemy who springs in the heart of man 398. When this covetousness meets a person who is fully detached it will enter his inner being and the thought that ‘this is mine’ enters his mind 399. In other words, even a naked recluse will come under the influence of this covetousness. That person who wins over covetousness after getting out of the bondage of delusion will attain calmness and comfort.

Like the river Ganges loses its momentum once it enters the ocean, the aspirant will give up all the qualities required for the attainment of self realization once he reaches the state of realization. One who is totally detached, firm in dhyāna and has attained yogasiddhi is qualified for the attainment of Brahman 400. The difference between Brahman and a person who has reached the state of Brahman is so slight like full moon and the moon of the 14th night, says Jñāneśvara. It is the firm belief that ‘I am Brahman’ which qualifies him for the attainment of the state of Brahman.

The one who attains the state of Brahman is that person who is pure in intellect and who has valiantly controlled the mind, given up
the objects of senses, relinquished desire and anger, stays secluded eating sparingly, controlled mind, speech and action, always interested in dhyānayoga, acquired disinterestedness and avoided those vices like desire, anger, pride, strength, ego and covetousness and attained calmness and serenity. This is the way to cross the ocean of worldly life. This is why Ācārya and Jñāneśvara strongly proclaim, ‘brahmabhūyāḥ kalpate’. Hence all the aspirants should bear this truth in their mind. The effort for the attainment for Brahman should be carried out only on the advice of the guru, opines Jñāneśvara. Moreover, he suggests that in order to purify his inner sense organs; an aspirant should take up the practice of Yoga too. The reverberations of the thoughts of Yoga in the mind of Jñāneśvara can be perceived in these lines.

Samādhi is total inner peace. It experiences pure consciousness after casting away the feeling of separateness through enquiry of self. For self realization, detachment should be strong enough. An aspirant should understand that he should give up desire and anger totally. If total detachment is not practiced towards the objects of sight, attachment towards self won’t happen. Hence every aspirant should give up attachment towards the objects of sight and depend totally on detachment and should contemplate inwardly and meditate on one’s own self. This is the opinion of both Ācārya and Jñāneśvara.
Abandoning all forms of rights and duties, take refuge in Me alone. I shall free you from all sins. Therefore do not grieve 401.

The meaning of ‘dharma’ is that which holds or sustains. It is to be understood as the belief which is based on understanding. The first among the puruṣārddha is also dharma. Here the meaning of the word dharma includes all adharmās too, in the opinion of Ācārya 402.

The actions that should be performed without any desire for the results thereof is referred to here. Hence Ācārya says that one should surrender before the Lord realizing that He is imminent in everything in this universe in the form of guru, Īśvara and one who has transcended old age 403. This Lord will free us from all the vicious shackles of dharma and adharma by illuminating Himself as our own self 404. It is already suggested through the sloka ‘nāśayāmi’(10: 11) that the Lord will destroy all the darkness by virtue of the light of knowledge by staying as the ātman in everyone. Hence the Lord tells that there is no need for a person to worry on that score.

By the expression ‘sarvadharma’ , all the routine and occasional works that are carried out by a person is meant. Ācārya gives the
meaning for ‘\textit{pāpebhyaha}’ as the sin caused due to the relinquishment of all actions and for ‘\textit{mā śucā}’ as there is no need to worry due to the fear of worldly life\footnote{405}. In this śloka it is made clear that total surrender before the Lord is far better than all the disciplines of \textit{karmayoga}. Thus through this śloka, total knowledge gained through the discipline of \textit{karmayoga} and that gained as the essence of all \textit{Vedic} knowledge, is proclaimed by Ācārya.

\textit{Jñāneśvara} says that desire begets sorrow and disrespect begets sins\footnote{406}. Only the entry of knowledge will annihilate \textit{avidyā} or ignorance in a person. Later when ignorance is lost ‘I’ will be left alone\footnote{407}. The belief that what exists is only \textit{Bhagavan} and that nothing is different from \textit{Bhagavan}, will help a devotee to attain the Lord\footnote{408}. This is like a person who sees a dream in his sleep and finds everything in the dream except the entity which enjoyed both the sleep and the dream, to be nonexistent\footnote{409}. In this way, real devotion towards the Lord happens when ego disappears and a sense of unity with the Lord gets established.

\textit{Jñāneśvara} describes it as an act of arrogance to sustain the relation with the personal soul even after attaining this unity with the Lord. Hence one should accept knowledge on one’s own hands and after getting united with the Lord one should serve the Lord in a sense of
identical entity. This is compared to the inability of butter to change its form to the curd from which it was churned out, even when it is again mixed with buttermilk, says Jñāneśvara. In the same way dharma and adharma won’t affect a person who has surrendered to the principles of nonduality as advised by the Lord.

It is impossible for Sun to visualize darkness. In the same way a person who has got united with the Lord can never see anything except the form of the Lord all around. Hence all the sins and signs of attachment that get generated through duality will cease to exist once the thought that everything is the Lord gets into the mind. Just like the salt which is put into water will dissolve into it, the Lord will take up that devotee who tries and wins in merging with him with total devotion.

The Lord commences Gītopadesa by dealing with the ways to avoid sorrow in the 11th verse of the second chapter of Gītā. He concludes this advice with the 66th verse of the 18th chapter. It would be interesting to observe that the commentary of Śaṅkarācārya was begun with a philosophical explanation of ‘śoka’. That grief developed in Arjuna, as the Lord Himself had pointed out in the 11th śloka of the second chapter. Curiously enough, the last sentence which immediately precedes Ācārya’s summing-up too borders on ‘śoka’ as could be seen
from ‘mokṣayiśyāmi mā śuca’. Exactly this is the message of the Ācārya to the misery-worn and misfortune world\textsuperscript{411}.

\begin{verse}
सकृदेव प्रपन्नाय तवास्मीति क याचते।
अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो ददाम्येतद्द्रतं मम।।
\end{verse}

The ultimate aim is to escape from the shackles of sorrows and this verily is liberation. Through this śloka the Lord has revealed the greatness of total surrender. The Lord will save anyone who has surrendered before him totally. One śloka in The ‘Rāmāyaṇa’ of Vālmīki echoes the same idea.

(If a person surrenders before Me saying at least once, ‘Lord, I am Yours’, I will take care of him in every respect. This is my assurance.)\textsuperscript{412}.

This śloka comes as the assurance given by Lord ‘Rāma’ when some people suspected the good intentions of ‘Vibhīṣaṇa’ taking refuge in the Lord.

For those who have surrendered before the objects of senses, peace will be afar. But those who have surrendered before the Lord will attain enduring peace. Hence that person is blessed who has the good fortune of consuming the butter of Paramātman which is the primordial cause got from the churning of the curd that is the universe. Both the
commentators proclaim that such souls will shine in the world as spotless and fearless.

The first half of this (18: 66) śloka starts with the expression, ‘sarvadharmān’ which denotes the duty of the individual and the expression ‘ahaṁ tvā’ denotes the action of the Lord in a clearer manner. The teaching of the main principles of the Lord through the Gītā is summed up and concluded with the expression ‘mā śuca’. (You should not worry) 413. From this it could be inferred that the main objective of Gītā is the escape from sorrow. Hence everyone should try to escape from sorrow by avoiding darkness and negation of God. The solution for sin is engaging in virtuous deeds. Though the act of sin is despicable, the sinner will not remain always a sinner and will get back to the state of a virtuous person. What Bhagavadgītā does is console the sinner by patting on his shoulders. It also teaches him step by step to follow righteousness. This is one important reason for the universal appeal of Bhagavadgītā.

While Ācārya quotes from Śruti and Smṛti frequently in his commentary, Jñāneśvara culls out instances from daily life to instruct the importance of surrendering before the Lord. Ācārya suggests the meaning of ‘sarvadharmān’ as all actions excluding sādhanacatuṣṭaya. On the other hand Jñāneśvara describes it as the ignorance of delusion springing up from dharmādharma 414.
Through the expression ‘māmekam sarāṇam vraja’ Jñāneśvara beautifully sums up the idea that like the space in the pot merges with the space outside it when the pot breaks up, the devotee who has surrendered before the Lord will merge with Him. Here Jñāneśvara has transformed the dualistic thought in the original text that one should surrender before Him only, to non-dualistic thought. Through this explanation, it could be seen that Jñāneśvara has come to terms with the non-dualism of Ācārya. Both the commentators exhort everyone to surrender before the Lord and to be like the salt which is dropped in water which dissolves in it.

**Summary of Gītā**

Which is the sādhana that is prescribed in the Gītā as the ideal one for the attainment of spiritual wealth that leads to liberation? Is it knowledge or action or both together? In the science of Gītā there are ślokās like ‘which hold that the means to liberation is knowledge. But the ślokās like’..uphold the view that it is imperative to engage in action. Thus as there are references to suggest that it is knowledge, action or even both that leads to liberation, one may get confused to arrive at a conclusion. Hence an aspirant should decide as to which path he should follow before he embarks upon the journey to liberation.

Knowledge dispels all feelings of differences and leads one to liberation. As one darkness cannot dispel darkness, absolute action
will not dispel *bheda buddhi* and *avidya*. As darkness disappears with the rise of sun, the *bheda buddhi* which is the cause of *karman* will disappear with the acquirement of knowledge. Hence the idea that there is connection between knowledge and action is absurd. It is only through the knowledge of self that one can get liberated from ignorance.

The awareness that dispels the thought that ‘I am the doer’ and ‘this is mine’, and brings realization that ‘I am inactive’ and ‘I don’t engage in any action that accrues results’ is the knowledge of self. When such awareness dawns in a person, he will escape from the *bheda budhi* which is the cause of action. Liberation is not a thing of any effect that could be attained by way of any action or mixture of action and knowledge. Hence it is not logical to think that it could be obtained through some actions.

One could mistake rope to a snake in the absence of light. But with the dawn of light, truth gets revealed. In the same way the light of knowledge dispels the darkness of ignorance. Thus the Lord suggests that one can cast away the darkness of ignorance and attain the state of liberation. Action is not a cause for the attainment of liberation, which is the noblest objective. For an aspirant of liberation, action is quite unnecessary.

The difficulties involved in the daily actions could be seen reflected in the experiences resulting from them too. This could
also be considered as atonement for the wrong doings of the past. But
purvakṣi asks whether the fruits of action will exhaust by
experiencing them. The reply is that even if no action is done afresh,
liberation can be achieved without any effort. But this too is not correct.
This is because by the śruti which says ‘tameva viditva.......’ (śve 2. 3.
8) it is clear that liberation cannot be possible other than through the
way of knowledge. It is equal to the act of folding the sky to say
that an ajñani will attain liberation. In the purāṇās and smṛtis it is said
that liberation can be achieved by knowledge. It cannot be said that
the fruits of virtuous deeds will wane when they are experienced.
It cannot be said that the fruits of vicious deeds also wane without
experiencing it.

One should experience the fruits of all actions. They won’t wane
otherwise. It is not agreeable that the trouble and pain involved in the
observance of the nityakarman is the result of the sinful deeds done in
the past. Moreover, if suffering is the result of the nityakarman ordained
by the Vedās, there are suffering and trouble in performing them.
But the fruits of actions like exercise are readily enjoyable. So it is not
logical to think that the sufferings and pains involved in nityakarmans
are the results of other vicious deeds.

The actions which are not ordained or not despised have only
temporary results. The actions despised by the śāstrās will not get
temporary results. The actions done by ignorance are destroyed by knowledge. The basic reasons for all actions are ignorance and desire. The subject of the ignorant is karman and that of the wise is the jñānaniṣṭa which is sarvakarmasannyāsa. All the verses like ‘उभो तौ न विज्ञानीत’ (2 -19), ‘बेदविनाशिनं नित्यं’ (2 - 21), ‘जानयोगेन सांख्यानं कर्मयोगेनवयोगिनां’ (3 - 3), ‘अज्ञानं कर्मसंगिनां’ (3 - 26), ‘तत्वविनं तु महावाहो, गुणं गुणेपु वर्ततं इति मत्वा न सज्जने’ (3 - 28), ‘सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते’ (5 -13), ‘नेव किरित्वम करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्वविल’ (5 : 8) say that karmans are done by the ignorant. By the verse, ‘जानी तु आत्मा एव मे मतम्’ (7 -18), it is clear that the wise is the ātman itself of the Lord. The ignorant cannot reach the Lord with just actions. But the verse ‘ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं चेन मां उपयान्ति तेन’ (10 - 10) makes it clear that they reach the Lord as jñānā is conferred on them by the Lord. Some perform actions for the Lord even after the attainment of yoga. They avoid vicious fruits and reach sarvakarmatyaṅga. Those who worship the imperishable Brahman perform the sādhanās pointed out in ‘adveṣṭa...’ (12:13-20), in the ślokās 7-11, 14, 22-26 of the 13th chapter and in ślokās 3,4 and 5 of the 15th chapter. Those sannyāsins who have renounced all the actions caused by the five reasons starting from adhiṣṭāna as referred to in the verse ‘adhiṣṭānam’. (18-14) and those who have surrendered before the ātman which is bhagavadsvarūpa, won’t experience the fruits
of actions like īśta, anīśta and the mixture of both\textsuperscript{433}. But the fruits of actions come to those who work because of ignorance and those who are not sannyāsins. This is the division of subjects related to duty and non duty described in the Bhagavadgītā, says Ācārya.

It is not ideal for a person who does not realize that ātman and anātman are two, to engage in nityakarmans\textsuperscript{434}. But a thing which is not ātman thinks that I am doing, while the body is moving. But some say that it is because of the reasons of karman like previous memory, desire and the actions carried out for its completion that ātman performs karman\textsuperscript{435}. But Ācārya says that this too is not correct. It is because of their illusion that the previous memory, desire and actions generated by the karmans caused by previous births work\textsuperscript{436}. Moreover, saṁsārā will cease to exist for them when all actions are renounced and they stay in jñānaniśta. They won’t have the thought of body too, as they get free from the dehabodhā caused by ignorance. Hence they have no saṁsārā too\textsuperscript{437}. It is only because of illusion that ātman which has no passion thinks that it is connected to the body. When such thought sustains, it will think that the body is ātman and when it leaves then it will realize it is not so. There is the ātmabodha in the body for the imprudent. But with the dawn of discrimination one will realize that the ātman is different from body\textsuperscript{438}. 
In the opinion of Ācārya, the Vedās are considered to be the authority for svargaprāpti, agnihotra and such results which cannot be seen. But Vedās need not be considered as authority for results which can be seen. It cannot be considered even as gauṇa that the ātman is the body which is perceivable or non perceivable\(^439\). The king and commander in chief of an army don’t directly engage in war. Still the victory or defeat is theirs. Even though their ātman do not engage in action, the ātman can be considered as the main doer as it activates their bodies.

It is the ‘priest’ (purohita) who performs the yāgā. But the main priest or yajamānā is considered to be performing the yāgā. In the same way, though fruits of the actions done by the body falls on the ātman, as the ātman is connected to both the actions and their results, the ātman can be said to perform the actions.

The ātman can be said to be the doer like the magnet that attracts iron with its power of attraction\(^440\). But when action is thrust on something which is not involved in any action, gauṇakaṛtṛtva falls on it. The king, commander in chief, magnet and iron are all examples for this. As the actions happen in their presence and under them, the main doership also falls on them. Hence this doership is gauṇā.

It is not ideal for a person who cannot differentiate between the permanent and the temporal to engage in the routine works. But it is
not so, as it is seen from experience that in an act of the nature of motion which is done by the non-self, such as the body, there is the thought ‘I do’.

The result got from *gaṇṇakarman* and the relation with it is just formal. The most important thing is not executed also. Hence the actions are done by body and other aspects. Yet the argument that ātman which is inactive is performing the action and enjoying the results, does not stand. But all these thoughts occur due to delusion. The sense of doership and the status of the entity that enjoys, as in sleep and *Samādhi*, will become meaningless once all the misapprehensions which happen due to the delusion that body and senses constitute ātman are avoided.

In short, it is because of the seeming delusion that this world exists and once complete vision is achieved, freedom from this world happens, says Ācārya. Ācārya has given this summary as a conclusion of the *Gītā*. Reading this *Gītāsārā* daily gives the same result as reading the whole *Gītā*. Ācārya has treated this *Gītāsārā* with that much importance.

Jñāneśvara starts his summary of *Gītā* with the instance of the Lord embracing the king of devotees with his arms ornated with bangles. Jñāneśvara describes *Bhagavadgītā* as an exposition by Lord
Kṛṣṇa of the divine rules that form the basic tenets of even the Vedās. For those who are doubtful of the claim that Gītā is the basis for even the Vedās, it should be noted that this has been vouchsafed by the very entity from whose breath Vedās sprang up.²⁴³

The commentator holds that Gītā is the seed of even Vedās as Gītā encapsulates all the three kāṇḍās of the māntric world of the Vedās. All the three sections of the Vedās are made clear in the Gītā. Jñāneśvara points out where these three sections of the Vedās are treated in the Gītā.

In the first chapter of Gītā, an introduction to the science of Gītā is given. In the second ‘sūtra’ the sadbhava of Sāṃkhyayoga is explained.²⁴⁴ Here by ‘sūtra’, the word chapter is intended. The preliminary steps to attain liberation for those who are in bondage due to ignorance are referred to in the third chapter. Moreover the Lord explains in this chapter how one should renounce those actions which are prompted by sensual desires and take up properly those actions which are prescribed by the śāśtrās.²⁴⁵ This is described as ‘Karmakāṇḍa’ by Jñāneśvara. The Lord imparts the Brahmārpaṇākriya which will free those people who are engaged in the daily routine of binding actions. Moreover he advises that one should engage in actions with thought speech and body after surrendering them before the Lord.
This *karmayoga* is included by Jñāneśvara in the fourth chapter along with praising of lord through songs and stories.

Jñāneśvara opines that one should worship the Lord through good actions. Jñāneśvara includes the eight chapters from the fourth to the eleventh under the title ‘*devatākāṇḍa*’. *Devatākāṇḍa* is a synonym of ‘*upāsanākāṇḍa*’\(^446\). From the twelfth to the fifteenth chapter *jñānapralasidhi* is discussed and thus Jñāneśvara has ascribed these four chapters to *jñānakāṇḍa*. In the sixteenth chapter Jñāneśvara discusses about the *ajñānavarga* which forms the enemy of *jñāna* which leads to liberation.

In the seventeenth chapter he has included the scientific instructions by which one can win one’s war against his enemies\(^447\). Thus from the first chapter till the seventeenth chapter the Lord has described ‘*ātmanisvāsa*’\(^448\). Here by ‘*ātmanisvāsa*’ Jñāneśvara alludes to the *Vedās* which came out from the breath of Lord Viṣṇu. All the meanings and implications of these seventeen chapters are treated in the eighteenth chapter.

Thus it should be understood that this *Gītā* which is the essence of the ocean of all *Sāṃkhya* principles should be considered as another concrete form of *Vedā*. It should be deemed as a garden which provides the bliss of staying in the space, sitting on earth under the sunlight.
Here Lord Kṛṣṇa advises the son of Pāṇḍu to consider Gītā as the epitome of servitude towards the Vedās. Jñāneśvara makes it very clear that though this teaching seems to be imparted just for Arjuna, Lord intends this message for the entire humanity.

Lord Kṛṣṇa points out to Arjuna that to get treasure one need to be lucky but to enjoy it one should acquire the grace of God. To illustrate this he brings in the reference of the ‘Churning of Palāzhi’. Here Arjuna got the good fortune to be a part of the science of Bhagavadgītā. Hence one should follow the tradition of this science and comply with the instructions given in this science after comprehending its meaning and significance. Or else one will confront with the unlucky experience which the asurās met with after the churning of palāzhi. Even if one gets a very productive cow, it cannot be utilized properly without milking it efficiently. Thus Jñāneśvara concludes this summary of Gītā by exhorting everyone to listen to the great tradition laid down in the Gītā with due respect.

Resume

This chapter named ‘Mokṣasannyāsayoga’ is the final chapter of the great work, Bhagavadgītā. The kurukṣetrā war is about to commence. Hence there is no more time left for discussion between
the preceptor and the disciple. All the principles discussed till now is summarized by the Lord and advised to Arjuna. Finally He concludes it by imparting the essence of *Gītā* and sings the customary *maṅgalā* to mark the end of it.

It is my opinion that this chapter could be named as ‘The concise *Gītā*’ as it has so much importance. *Sannyāsa* is renunciation. There is no need of any further thoughts about the attainment of *Mokṣa* as it is confirmed that it could be achieved by following the *sādhanās* which are explained by the Lord. Hence aspirants of liberation can perform the renunciation of the thought of liberation too. This is one meaning of the term ‘*mokṣasannyāsa*’. Another meaning of *mokṣasannyāsa* is to attain liberation based on *tyāgā* or *sannyāsa*. *Tyāgā* holds prime position in the list of *sādhanās* which lead to the experience of liberation. The aim of any person is the emancipation from sorrow.

*Bhagavadgītā* is the science which is prescribed for this freedom from sorrow. The science of *Gītā* which starts with the 11th verse of the second chapter gets concluded with the 66th verse of the 18th chapter. The way to escape from sorrow is renouncing all *dharmās* after surrendering before the *Brahman* which is *advaya*. Thus it becomes established through the *Gītāślokā*. ‘अहमात्मा गुदाकेष सर्वभूताशयस्यत:’ (10 - 20), and the *Upaniṣadic Śloka* ‘उपद्वानुमन्त्वता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः’
(13 - 22) that this whole universe is sustained through the glorious power of Śrīkṛṣṇa Paramātman.

It is to educate everyone this principle that Sage Vyāsā has stringed the Bhagavadgītā in Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus those who intend to get merged with their source which is the Paramātman will enjoin themselves with the eternal bliss as suggested in the verse, 'तेषां सुखं शास्त्रं नेत्रेषाम्' Hence every living being should offer oneself and surrender before Lord Kṛṣṇa by reducing all other activities as suggested in the expression, ‘मामेकं शरणं ब्रज’. If it is so, there is little doubt that one will achieve freedom from all bondages and will enjoy the bliss of Brahmānanda in this life itself if he depends on ātman with all his mind speech and body.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. PTB - P. 5
2. BVG - P. 3
3. SOBG - P. 4
4. BHG - P. 73 - 74
5. SOBG - P. 39 - 40
6. GE - P. 6
7. JI - P. 45
8. SOBG - P. 53
9. BHG - P. 86
10. SOBG - P. 92 - 93
11. BSM - P. 114
12. BHG - P. 123
13. BGA - P. 69
14. GE - P. 17
15. JI - P. 49
16. Ibid - P. 50
17. SOBG - P. 110
18. BG - P. 70
19. SOBG - P. 119
20. BG - P. 73  
21. GE - P. 23  
22. Ibid - P. 24  
23. JI - P. 68  
24. GE - P. 24  
25. JI - P. 69  
26. SOBG - P. 127  
27. GE - P. 27  
28. Ibid - P. 28  
29. BG - P. 78  
30. SOBG - P. 142  
31. Ibid - P. 143  
32. PTB - P. 179  
33. GE - P. 33  
34. Ibid - P. 34  
35. SOBG - P. 148  
36. BG - P. 98  
37. KM - P. 177  
38. BSM - P. 156  
39. SOBG - P. 160  
40. BSM - P. 194  
41. KM - P. 188
42. GE - P. 40
43. JI - P. 88
44. Ibid - P. 89
45. GE - P. 41
46. SOBG - P. 167
47. KM - P. 195
48. Ibid - P. 195
49. JI - P. 91
50. GE - P. 43
51. Ibid - P. 44
52. SOBG - P. 172
53. Ibid - P. 173
54. BSM - P. 210
55. Ibid - P. 211
56. SOBG - P. 174
57. KM - P. 199
58. BG - P. 119
59. KM - P. 200
60. SOBG - P. 175
61. BSM - P. 212
62. BG - P. 120
63. KM - P. 203 - 204
64. SOBG - P. 178 - 179
65. Ibid - P. 180
66. KM - P. 222 - 223
67. BSM - P. 230 - 231
68. SOBG - P. 227
69. BSM - P. 252 - 253
70. KM - P. 244 - 245
71. SOBG - P. 227
72. BSM - P. 264
73. GE - P. 53
74. JI - P. 105
75. Ibid - P. 106
76. SOBG - P. 235 - 236
77. BSM - P. 262
78. BG - P. 156
79. BSM - P. 262 - 263
80. KM - P. 252
81. SOBG - P. 237
82. JI - P. 110
83. SOBG - P. 251 - 252
84. Ibid - P. 252
85. BG - P. 157
86. JI - P. 118
87. GE - P. 61 - 62
88. Ibid - P. 63
89. KM - P. 275 - 276
90. BSM - P. 287 - 288
91. GE - P. 67
92. JI - P. 126 - 127
93. Ibid - P. 95
94. SOBG - P. 280
95. BG - P. 175
96. KM - P. 290
97. BSM - P. 312
98. GE - P. 73
99. JI - P. 140
100. SOBG - P. 287
101. BG - P. 183
102. BSM - P. 326 - 327
103. KM - P. 298
104. Ibid - P. 105
105. JI - P. 145
106. SOBG - P. 292 - 293
107. BSM - P. 337 - 238
108. JI - P. 148
109. GE - P. 78
110. BSM - P. 339
111. SOBG - P. 294
112. KM - P. 304
113. JI - P. 149
114. Ibid - P. 106
115. SOBG - P. 296
116. BG - P. 189
117. KM - P. 306 - 307
118. JI - P. 150
119. SOBG - P. 300
120. JI - P. 154
121. GE - P. 84 - 85
122. BVG - P. 129
123. PTB - P. 117
124. BSM - P. 341
125. Ibid - P. 342
126. BG - P. 128
127. JI - P. 122
128. Ibid - P. 123
129. BVG - P. 133
130. Ibid - P. 134
131. KM - P. 326
132. SOBG - P. 312
133. BSM - P. 374
134. JI - P. 163
135. GE - P. 91
136. BG - P. 209
137. KM - P. 334
138. SOBG - P. 320 - 321
139. BSM - P. 384 - 386
140. SOBG - P. 321
141. Ibid - P. 321
142. JI - P. 168
143. Ibid - P. 169
144. GE - P. 95 - 96
145. BG - P. 220
146. JI - P. 181 - 182
147. SOBG - P. 335
148. KM - P. 351
149. SOBG - P. 344
150. Ibid - P. 356
151. BG - P. 235
152. Ibid - P. 144
153. SOBG - P. 360
154. BG - P. 238
155. BSM - P. 454 - 455
156. KM - P. 381
157. JI - P. 209 - 210
158. GE - P. 134 - 137
159. Ibid - P. 137
160. JI - P. 211
161. SOBG - P. 369 - 370
162. Ibid - P. 370
163. JI - P. 219
164. GE - P. 144 - 145
165. KM - P. 395
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167. SOBG - P. 374 - 375
168. BSM - P. 481
169. Ibid - P. 482
170. GE - P. 149
171. JI - P. 223 - 224
172. SOBG - P. 375 - 376
173. BG - P. 250
196. Ibid - P. 455
197. GE - P. 181
198. JI - P. 279
199. GE - P. 182
200. PTB - P. 542
201. GH - P. 253
202. PTB - P. 543
203. BVG - P. 305
204. BSM - P. 566
205. BG - P. 295
206. GE - P. 182
207. JI - P. 279
208. Ibid - P. 180
209. PTB - P. 549
210. Ibid - P. 549
211. BGA - P. 366
212. Ibid - P. 367
213. KM - P. 464
214. SOBG - P. 437
215. BG - P. 298
216. PTB - P. 552
217. BSM - P. 576 - 578
218. JI - P. 284
219. BCS - P. 318
220. GH - P. 280
221. BGA - P. 378
222. SOBG - P. 462
223. BSM - P. 591
224. PTB - P. 553
225. GD - P. 369
226. BG - P. 306
227. BCS - P. 334
228. KM - P. 483
229. BCS - P. 339 - 342
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233. SOBG - P. 474
234. PTB - P. 595
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237. BCS - P. 334
238. BSM - P. 602
239. GD - P. 374
240. SOBG - P. 452
241. SOBG - P. 477
242. Ibid - P. 478
243. BGA - P. 385
244. KM - P. 498
245. BG - P. 310
246. GE - P. 185
247. Ibid - P. 200
248. JI - P. 300
249. Ibid - P. 301
250. Ibid - P. 301
251. GE - P. 205
252. Ibid - P. 205
253. JI - P. 191
254. Ibid - P. 192
255. GE - P. 211
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257. JI - P. 308
258. Ibid - P. 195
259. BG - P. 215
260. Ibid - P. 196
261. BG - P. 217
262. Ibid - P. 218
263. JI - P. 313
264. BG - P. 219
265. Ibid - P. 204
266. JI - P. 314
267. BCS - P. 345
268. GH - P. 289
269. JI - P. 315
270. Ibid - P. 315
271. SOBG - P. 480
272. Ibid - P. 481
273. GE - P. 213
274. Ibid - P. 214
275. PTB - P. 649
276. SOBG - P. 525
277. BGA - P. 413
278. GH - P. 319
279. KM - P. 540
280. Ibid - P. 540 - 541
281. BG - P. 332
282. JI - P. 354
283. Ibid - P. 355
284. Ibid - P. 356
285. JI - P. 354
286. PTB - P. 664 - 665
287. BG - P. 345
288. BGA - P. 426
289. GD - P. 424
290. BG - P. 346
291. JI - P. 366
292. Ibid - P. 367
293. GE - P. 268
294. Ibid - P. 269
295. PTB - P. 670
296. SOBG - P. 546
297. GD - P. 431
298. BG - P. 348
299. BSM - P. 682
300. GE - P. 272
301. Ibid - P. 273
302. JI - P. 272
303. GE - P. 282
304. Ibid - P. 282
305. JI - P. 375
306. GE - P. 276
307. GH - P. 282
308. BSM - P. 683
309. SOBG - P. 309
310. KM - P. 561
311. PTB - P. 687
312. BGA - P. 451
313. PTB - P. 704
314. KM - P. 579
315. BGA - P. 705
316. BG - P. 364 - 365
317. GE - P. 290
318. JI - P. 393
319. GE - P. 244
320. Ibid - P. 245
321. JI - P. 292
322. Ibid - P. 394
323. Ibid - P. 245
324. GE - P. 293
325. Ibid - P. 395
326. PTB - P. 709
327. KM - P. 601
328. BSM - P. 730
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330. GE - P. 316
331. JI - P. 423
332. PTB - P. 711
333. SOBG - P. 584
334. BSM - P. 734 - 735
335. BG - P. 383
336. BSM - P. 735
337. GH - P. 373
338. GE - P. 317
339. JI - P. 425
340. GD - P. 471
341. KM - P. 598
342. JI - P. 424
343. BSM - P. 730
344. SOBG - P. 584
345. Ibid - P. 585
346. PTB - P. 713
347. KM - P. 605
348. BG - P. 384
349. SOBG - P. 588
350. BSM - P. 740
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352. BGA - P. 486 - 487
353. JI - P. 429
354. GE - P. 318
355. Ibid - P. 318
356. BSM - P. 740
357. JI - P. 429
358. Ibid - P. 429
359. SOBG - P. 602
360. BG - P. 399
361. JI - P. 446
362. GE - P. 330
363. Ibid - P. 331
364. JI - P. 447
365. GE - P. 331
366. BSM - P. 767
367. SOBG - P. 604
368. JI - P. 364
369. BVG - P. 657 - 658
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371. SOBG - P. 609
372. KM - P. 625
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374. BG - P. 404 - 405
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376. BGA - P. 511 - 512
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378. JI - P. 457
379. GE - P. 336
380. Ibid - P. 336 - 337
381. JI - P. 457 - 458
382. BVG - P. 724 - 726
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384. GH - P. 412
385. BGA - P. 576
386. BSM - P. 831
387. BG - P. 445
388. SOBG - P. 673
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390. KM - P. 681
391. Ibid - P. 682
392. GD - P. 560 - 561
393. GE - P. 396
394. Ibid - P. 396
395. JI - P. 506
396. Ibid - P. 506 - 507
397. GE - P. 397
398. Ibid - P. 397
399. JI - P. 507 - 508
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401. JI - P. 509 - 510
402. BVG - P. 739
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404. SOBG - P. 685
405. BG - P. 456 - 457
406. KM - P. 694
407. BGA - P. 591
408. SOBG - P. 686
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410. Ibid - P. 417
411. JI - P. 525
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413. KM - P. 694 - 695
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417. BVG - P. 740
418. Ibid - P. 740
419. SOBG - P. 687
420. Ibid - P. 688
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424. BVG - P. 742
425. SOBG - P. 690
426. KM - P. 697
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428. BVG - P. 743
429. SOBG - P. 692
430. KM - P. 699
431. Ibid - P. 700
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433. BVG - P. 744
434. SOBG - P. 699
435. BVG - P. 745
436. KM - P. 701 - 702
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439. BVG - P. 747 - 752
440. KM - P. 703 - 706
441. SOBG - P. 706 - 708
442. KM - P. 707 - 708
443. JI - P. 526
444. Ibid - P. 527
445. GE - P. 418
446. Ibid - P. 419
447. JI - P. 528
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