

Subhashitam - Geeta

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Introduction to Bhagawad Gita

Bhagawad Gita is rightly characterized as Upanishad of Upanishads. The Upanishads have culled out their philosophical conclusions from the Vedas. These findings relate to the relations between Brahma and the Soul, the Soul and the Jiva, and the Jiva and the nature and also as regards aims and objects of human life and also relating the science and art of living. These basic concepts are scattered over various places of Upanishads and it was the need of the day to codify and put in a systematic manner the various concepts underling the Vedic religion and philosophy. It goes to the credit of the Bhagawad Gita that it has carried out the task of codifying and analyzing them in a most magnificent manner. No doubt, Brahma Sutras did the same job of codifying these principles, but we find there is an absence of analysis or elaborate discussion about these principles by Brahma Sutras. In fact, to follow the Brahma Sutras will be as difficult as following the Upanishads themselves. At a time when Bhagawad Gita was profounded or to be more exact it was written, the Vedanta philosophy and Vedic way of life and religion were foreign to the common man, as if they were preserved in a treasure house meant for selected few. To the credit of Bhagawad Gita, that while codifying and analyzing these concepts, it has used simple language which could be understood by common man. It analyses the various concepts which were profounded by the Upanishads. Undoubtedly, Bhagad Gita does not claim any originality and it proposes to comment on these various doctrines. However, it must be accepted that under the guise of analyzing these concepts of Upanishads from different

angles, it has left its own stamp on the subject by throwing new light on these basic issues. To follow the Upanishads, while they dealt with these very concepts, it was difficult to comprehend because they were cryptic and many times they were in the form of euphorisms and they lacked detailed discussion. It could be understood because analysis of these principles was meant for the students who were otherwise well trained and with higher level of understanding and they were not meant for public at large. It must go to the credit of Bhagad Gita that it realized that these golden principles which basically dealt with science and art of life should be made available to the common man. And now because of Bhagawad Gita this Atma Vidya/Self knowledge which is enunciated in the Upanishads, is available for all genuine seekers of truth. As such, the treasury of Vedanta philosophy was thrown open to the public for their use by Bhagawad Gita.

Constitution of Bhagawad Gita

As the author of Bhagawad Gita, whether it is Lord Krishna or Ved Vyas or some other person, it is not of much consequence, as he meant the discussion or analysis of these doctrines for the common man, he intentionally used a simple poetical language which could be read and understood by a common man. That is why it is rightly said that the Vedas are forest, Upanishads are cows and Lord Krishna milked these cows in the form of Bhagawat Gita to give the milk to the seekers of truth to drink. This comparison is very figurative and it aptly describes the role played by Bhagawad Gita in respect of interpretation and analysis of the principles of Vedanta philosophy as enunciated by the Upanishads. It has two aspects, one while codifying all these principles at one place and it simplified and made them easy

to understand by using simple and lucid language, and secondly, they were thrown open to the general public.

Another great contribution of the Bhagawad Gita is its emphasis on the ethical and social aspects of the various principles enunciated by Vedanta. Of course some glimpses of these ethical, moral and social aspects of Vedanta philosophy was found in Upanishads but they were overshadowed by spiritual aspects of the subject. It goes to the credit of the author of Bhagawad Gita that he realized and emphasized that unless the spiritual structure is based on the sound foundation of ethics and morality, it will collapse. As per Bhagawad Gita, spirituality by itself will not be of much significance unless it takes into account the ethical and moral aspect. Therefore, Bhagawad Gita puts great emphasis on Karma Yoga, rather than Gynana Yoga. In Karma Yoga the service of fellow beings is emphasized. It points out that, as an individual is living in a society, he has to carry out his social obligations, and not run away from the society.

Undoubtedly, the Upanishads also did indicate that to reach one's goal of life, one need not go out of the society and one may, while living an ordinary life in the society can achieve the goal of life, the attainment of ultimate divinity. However, Bhagawad Gita emphasizes this aspect more, almost to this extent that to attain the real salvation and liberation one has to live in the society and carry out regular social duties and activities as a member of the society. In a way, the whole Karma Yoga as elaborated by the author of Bhagawad Gita, which is based on a few mantras contained in the Isa Upanishad, is essentially based on the obligation to perform the social, moral and ethical duties of an individual, as a member of the society.

Another important aspect of the contribution made by this great work is that it does not reject or criticize any of the various philosophies then prevailing in ancient India. Apparently these philosophies sometimes were contradictory to one another and each claiming superiority over the other. Rather, there was a competition between various theories and philosophies prevailing at that time. The beauty of bhagawad Gita is that it does not reject any of these philosophies, whether it is Sankhya philosophy or Vedanta philosophy, and it brought a perfect synthesis among these various philosophies prevailing at that time. It goes to the credit of Bhagawad Gita that it picks up the best out of all these philosophies and synthesizes them into one universal philosophy of life. Therefore, all these philosophies, find place in Bhagawad Gita, and they are co-ordinating rather than competing with each other.

Another important characteristic of Bhagawad Gita is that of its universality. There is absolutely no sectarianism in any of the discussions in Bhagawad Gita. It was not meant for any specific section of the public or for a particular religion. It was meant for all people who wanted guidance in their search for truth. The teachings are meant for all human beings, irrespective of their faith and belief and the aim of the discussion was to see that the practice of these principles will lead to the welfare of the community as a whole and not a section of it. This universality of outlook is evident in all the ancient works of India, but more so in the case of Bhagawad Gita. If we consider any discussion in any part of the Bhagawad Gita, it would clearly be found that its teachings are addressed to all humanity and to all human beings who are struggling to realize the higher expression

of the soul, the real goal of all philosophies and religion. This aspect of Bhagawad Gita treatment of the subject is emphasized by the direct dialogue between the creator and its best creation, the human being represented by Lord Krishna and Arjun. Arjun here is representing the whole humanity and Lord Krishna, the Divinity. The whole discussion takes the form of the direct dialogue between the Divinity and the human being.

From many angles, Bhagawad Gita holds a very prominent place in the entire spiritual and philosophical literature of the world. The popularity and the prominence of Bhagawad Gita as a classic is basically because of its rationality and its universality. Undoubtedly, the Upanishads contain the sublime statement of Indian thought. Max Muller refers to the boldness in thinking in ancient India, the build up of might edifice or philosophy led by the love of truth and reason and undeterred by any fear or blame or lure of fame. This tradition was well maintained by Bhagawad Gita.

Backdrop of Bhagawad Gita

The background or the backdrop in which the teachings of Bhagawad Gita are delivered in the form of dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjun, is not only dramatic but it has great philosophical value. One need not wait to test whether factually it was delivered on the battle field or whether it was the real dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjun, because the ancient Indian literatures is full of these instances where historical facts are used in allegorical or symbolic manner to convey certain principles of philosophy and religion. What makes the picturesque backdrop of Bhagawad Gita very

interesting is its aptness. If one uncovers this historical backdrop one would realize that what the author of Bhagawad Gita meant was it was a direct dialogue between the God and the human being. What the author really conveys is that every human being is fighting daily the war of Mahabharat. Every human body is Dharmshetra and Kurukshetra. In every human being there are demonic and divine qualities. As long as a person is a human being, he is not fully divine or fully animal and demoniac and every human being is a mixture of these two qualities of divine and demoniac and between these two forces in every human being, between divine and demoniac forces, a constant war is waged at every moment of a human life. The struggle goes on till the ultimate victory of divine forces is achieved, the reason being ultimately a human being now or later on, will have to merge with the ultimate Divinity and once that is achieved the war comes to an end. A constant struggle of Mahabharat is fought, may be without realizing it, in the body of every human being without exception. This human body is just like a country and the two ambitious kings are trying to conquer this country. One of these two kings is Emperor Soul, who has an army of Divine qualities led by General Buddhi. (There is no word in English which conveys the meaning of `Buddhi'. It can be loosely translated as discriminating intellect). As against that, the other king Ego who has in his armed force all demoniac qualities led by Gen. Mind and these two opposing forces led by two Generals are trying to occupy the land in the form of a human body. As such, ultimately, till the war is over, these battles are fought. Sometimes, the King Soul has an upper hand, but many times the king Ego has an upper hand, but many times the king Ego has an upper hand, in this eternal struggle. As such the comparison of human body to a battle field and the two kinds of qualities the divine and the

demoniac as two forces fighting the war in Kurukshetra and Dharmashetra, the human body is very apt. These human bodies are compared to Dharmashetra and Kurukshetra because through this human body one is carrying on the activities and ultimately these activities are to be carried on in the rightful manner. As such, it is both Dharmashetra and Kurukshetra. This symbolic treatment of human body, as a battle field of Kurukshetra, where Kauravas and Pandavas fought the battle is very significant from another angle. Historically, the Kauravas by deceitful ways ousted the pandavas from their rightful kingdom and banished them to the forest. Similarly, in most of the human beings, they are unaware of Soul, as the demoniac qualities by deceitful way have ousted the King Soul, from his kingdom the human body and like Pandavas, the King Soul has to fight the battle to win back his kingdom of human body and like Pandavas, the King Soul has to fight the battle to win back his kingdom of human body. As Pandavas in their struggle to regain their lost kingdom, had to take shelter in Lord Krishna, and therefore, were always guided by Him, the King Soul to over power the army of King Ego has to go seek shelter and guidance of Paramatma who is present everywhere and who resides in every human body. It may be pointed out here that, before Lord Krishna started his discourse, Arjuna completely surrenders himself and seeks his guidance. "Shishyah Te Aham Sadhimam Twam Prapannam." I am your disciple, please guide me) totally surrender to you. Similarly, if we have to struggle to regain our own Divinity like Arjun, we have to surrender and act under the guidance of Paramatma, who is dwelling in our body.

Status of Bhagawad Gita

Before we start with the contents of Bhagawad Gita, let us consider the status of the Bhagawad Gita in the Hindu philosophy and religion. Bhagawad Gita along with Upanishads and Brahmasutras has been recognized as an ultimate authority on all issues and controversies of Hindu religions. These three are known as Prasthanatreya.

Most important aspect of the authority of Bhagawad Gita is that all later religious, philosophical, books, treatises and movements swear by the Bhagawad Gita and claim that they are rooted essentially on the principles enunciated by the Bhagawad Gita. In short, all these movements are inspired by the teachings of Bhagawad Gita. May be, for their own convenience, they might have picked up one more teaching from here and there from the Bhagawad Gita, but for their origin and survival, most of these religious and philosophical movements, the Bhagawad Gita is the source and authority for them. As such, it may be safely accepted that Bhagawad Gita in religion and philosophy not only in ancient India, but also in the medieval and modern India, has a prominent role to play. The most interesting aspect of it is that, whether it is philosophical movement dominated by Gynana or whether it is devotional movement of Bhakti cult led by great saints or various social evolution and revolutions that have taken place in India, the common source of all these movements is undoubtedly the Bhagawad Gita. Even the modern great social reformers like Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi and the other religious reformers of modern India have been greatly inspired by the teachings of Bhagawad Gita. As such, the role played by Bhagwad Gita in the religious and social movements in India, is unique. It may be rather unusual but it is a fact that the Bhagawad Gita is not only a

favourite with most scholars and intellectuals, but equally popular among the common people and if there is one philosophy and religion which is universally accepted and respected by all sections of Indian people, it is the **BHAGAWAD GITA**.

Mahabharat and Bhagawad Gita

Mahabharata is rightly characterized as Fifth Veda. It does deserve that status. It is great book on human sociology. It discusses all kinds of social, political, spiritual, religious issues facing human society. Like in an individual, in a society as a whole, there is great struggle always going on between good and evil forces. This is true in all walks of human society, a struggle between right and wrong. This great struggle in human society is very well brought out in this great epic Mahabharata. It is rightly known as mine of all knowledges. It is well said that there is no facet or issue relating to human life or the society, which is not touched by this great epic. As stated above, this great epic is known as Fifth Veda. Now, as we have seen, Vedas have three parts, the last part is "Gnana Kand", the parting of knowledge, which part is better known as Upanishads. In Mahabharata, which is known as fifth Veda, Bhagawad Gita, plays the role of Upanishad. Just like Upanishad is knowledge part, Bhagawad Gita is Gnanakand of Mahabharat. From his elaborate discussion relating to all issues touching human as an Individual and the human society as a whole is the story part of Mahabharata. Veda Vyas, the author of Mahabharata epic from the epic culls out the essential and basic truths and principles, and deals with them philosophically and spiritually in the Bhagawad Gita. In fact, the lessons and the conclusions are drawn in the Gita from the elaborate picturisations of all the issues in the

Mahabharata. If Bhagawad Gita is a book on philosophy and religion, containing the basic and fundamental principles, Mahabharat becomes an illustration to these principles. If Mahabharat is book on sociology, Gita culls from it the essential, spiritual, and social basic truths and principles from Mahabharata. From this point of view, Mahabharat and Gita are like Veda and Upanishad, both essential parts of this great treatise on sociology.

Whoever may be the author of Bhagawad Gita whether, Veda Vyas or some one else, he must have deep knowledge of Indian scripture and must have a great concern for Indian society. He must have noticed that the real principles enunciated by Upanishads were either given a bye or were twisted by the ruling class, the priesthood and the ruling kings to suit their own selfish ends. In the name of religion, the common people were exploited by the priest class and the ruling chiefs. By these two dominant classes, there was a total exploitation and that too in the name of religion. They declared that Dharmashastra are not for the common man, but they are the property of the priest class. Even the religious rites like 'Yagna' were used and recommended for the purpose of acquiring wealth and property. They were performed to attain pleasures like heaven. The teaching of Upanishads were totally forgotten. This prevailing religious and social atmosphere has been dealt by Bhagawad Gita in stanzas 42 to 44 of the second chapter. The author of Bhagawad Gita witnessing the prevailing social and religious anarchy decided to bring back the spirit of Upanishad by making the Upanishad teaching available to the masses, by putting teachings of Upanishads, in simple language and by declaring that Yogashastra is available to all who desire to take spiritual line of living. However, he very well knew that if he were to

write treatise in his own name, nobody would recognize it. So he very cleverly put the whole Bhagawad Gita as coming from the divine mouth of Lord Krishna. What a clever move ! If the backdrop of Mahabharata had not been used and if it were not in the form of dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjun, perhaps the authority of Bhagawad Gita, would not have been so easily accepted. We, Indians or all people of the world readily accept it if it is alleged that it has divine origin.

Bhagawat Gita and Modern Indians

Unfortunately, though it is a great classic there is deep divide between the modern educated Indians and this classic ancient Indian literature. This is true in respect of all ancient Indian writings. Unfortunately, ancient Indian literature is mainly in Sanskrit language, and the tragedy is that almost all Indians are foreign to this language – of course most of these are available in modern Indian languages. But again, the very unfortunate part of modern India is nowadays the English educated Indians are even foreign to their own Mother tongue and literature.

As far as English language is concerned, no doubt, there are English translation of these books. However, the fact is with all its richness in English language, we cannot bring the spirit of this literature, particularly this is true in respect of spiritual and religious treatises like Bhagawad Gita.

Apart from this, another difficulty is a lack of correct impression about our ancient Shastras; among the most of the Indians. In this

respect modern Indians can be classified into three classes. One class, though small one, believe that these Shastras have directly come from God and they have to be just worshipped and revered and their contents are not to be challenged. Many of them just recite Bhagawad Gita, without even knowing the meaning of what they are reciting. They think that by only reciting like a parrot, they will earn lot of Punya. Of course, some of them recite with great devotion, but most of them recite just like a parrot. Some rich people conduct Gita saptaha (Gita week) where some Pandit comes and talks on Bhagawad Gita, without getting into the spirit of it. I have noticed most of the pujaris in our temple so listlessly without any feeling or devotion just reciting the Mantras. This class also is not aware that Bhagawad Gita principles are to be followed and adhered to in one's day to day life.

But the second class is more ignorant and more stupid. To this great class, we the so-called educated Indians belong. Most unfortunate part of it is that the more we get educated the more we go away from Indian way of life, Indian literature, Indian religion, Indian spiritual literature and scriptures. We have a wrong impression about our scriptures including the Upanishads and Bhagawad Gita. We think (God alone knows why and that too without caring to read them, how unfair it is), that these contain outdated religious rites and they are not meant for day to day conduct of human beings. We also think that they are very illogical and make no sense in the term modern value and in modern circumstances. We also think that they are relevant for life after death. But the truth is other way. These scriptures are very logical, scientific and meant for day to day individual and social life. They not only deal with science of life but

they provide guidelines to live a useful social life. In fact, these principles contained in Upanishads and Bhagawad Gita are so profound, so scientific and so relevant for day to day life of an Indian and for the Society's welfare, that one can safely conclude that by imbibing these tenets in daily, individual and social life, most of the individual and social problems can be easily solved. My only request to my Indian educated brothers and sisters is, come to any conclusion, you have every right to have your own opinion. But come to your conclusion only in fairness after reading them, if not after studying them. I am an Advocate and as such, I had always a logical and analytical approach, and therefore, after some kind of study of these scriptures, I have found that they are all very logical, scientific and very very useful in conducting one's individual and social affairs. If we have to live a fruitful, useful, happy and peaceful life we have just to follow the tenets and guidelines given in these scriptures.

Another impression about our scriptures prevailing in our educated Indians is that these scriptures take one away from our daily life and they tend to make an individual disinterested in his day to day affairs and make it passive. They think that these scriptures try to take one away from temporal life. These Indians think that one can either live a spiritual life or temporal life and therefore one cannot be spiritual and at the same time carry on one's normal daily activities and therefore our scriptures stressing to live a spiritual life take one away from day-to-day life. In fact, before the advent of Bhagawad Gita, many ancient Indians thought in that way Bhagawad Gita preached them the theory of Karma Yoga, wherein Bhagawad Gita showed the way to bring spirituality in one's daily life and that one's real salvation is in carrying on as duty, one's day to day activities,

both individual and social. Our scriptures, not only ask us not to run away from social duties, but insist on doing our social duties, in more constructive and beneficial ways. I am sure a person living a Bhagawad Gita way of life, not only becomes personally a perfect person, but also a great social human being. Not only he becomes a sage, but also a saint serving the fellow human being with great love and affection. The charge that these scriptures take one away from social life is absolutely baseless. If any proof is required, the great Indians, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi and Vinobha Bhave, to name some, all great followers of Bhagawad Gita way of life, did more social service than all the total service rendered by all of us taken together.

At the end, I may narrate an episode from the life of Swami Vivekananda. In London, Swamiji and the great German Philosopher became friends. When Swamiji was to return to his motherland, his friend asked him to send some gift which would really represent best of the Indian culture. When Swamiji came back, he sent him a copy of Bhagawad Gita. Yes Swamiji, thought that the Bhagawad Gita represents the best of Indian culture.

Human body and life – A battle field

In further elaboration of the symbolic and allegorical significance of the backdrop of the Mahabharata war, one could notice that the Bhagavad Gita itself later on compares this body to a field. It is Kshetra and the person who has the knowledge of this body is called Kshetragna. From all angles it could be considered that this body is a real battle field. It is Dharmakshetra as well as Kurukshetra. The forces which represent Kurus and those which represent Pandavas; i.e., the material and the spiritual nature and the qualities relating to them are constantly fighting the battle royal for the purpose of taking over the kingdom of the body.

It must be noted that the Pandavas who are representing the divine qualities are of divine origin, as, it may be recollected that they were offsprings of Divinities like Dharmaraj, Indra etc. As against that the Kauravas are children of the blind king. As such, demonic qualities like desires, anger, lust, envy, selfishness etc. are the children of mind and senses, which are blind in nature. It is significant that in Mahabharata by deceit, the Pandavas were deprived of their legitimate kingdom by the deceitful Kauravas. This is very significant because normally a human being is born with Divine qualities, and these Divine qualities are ousted and they are deprived of their legitimate abode of the body, by the material qualities which take over the body and not only they are occupying the body illegally but also they banish the Divine qualities by throwing the Divine qualities out of

the body. The number of Pandavas is five and the number of Kauravas is hundred. This is also very significant because the Divine qualities are numbered and not many. As against that, the desires and its offsprings which represent the devilish qualities are many. Even the banishment of Pandavas for twelve years and Adnatavas for one year is also significant as one forgets one's true self, the Divine nature for long time. However, after some time or the other, one has to realize the real true nature and the significance of Divine qualities and therefore, with meditation etc. that is represented by the thirteenth year of Adnatavas, one's Divine qualities would be in a position to come back and fight to regain the legitimate kingdom belonging to them; i.e., the human body and that is what the Pandavas did in the Mahabharata epic. The most significant aspect of the Mahabharata was the role of Lord Krishna in the war. The presence of Lord Krishna in the battlefield and the role he played is highly significant. The significant aspect is the presence of Lord Krishna who was the incarnation of God in the battlefield. It may be noted that though Lord Krishna was present in the battlefield, he did not take an active role in the fighting as he had undertaken that he will not use any war weapon or take an active part in the war. Similarly, the Divine force resides in each and every body, in the form of Isha. The Divine force is not only present everywhere but is also present in every human body, but it must be noted that the Divine force which is residing in every human body does not play an active role in the day-to-day affairs of a human being. Being present in the body, it acts as a spectator, but really, though it is a source and the guide of all human activities. The Divine force which is present in the body is just like a director of a play. If the human life is compared to a play or a drama, the Divine force present in the body plays the role

of a director. This Divine force does not act itself but directs the actors to act, like a director directs the play. As such, just like a Divine force which is present in the body not actually taking part but only guiding the activities, Lord Krishna though present in the battle field, he does not involve himself in the actual warfare. At the same time he was controlling the battle affairs. Again through the instrument of Pandavas, he fulfils the object of destroying the evil forces for the purpose of which he has come into this world by incarnation. The fact is that Lord Krishna in whatever capacity he was acting was acting on behalf of the Pandavas. This is also significant because the Divine forces present in the body will always take the side of the Divine forces and guide the Divine forces to fight the fierce battle which goes on between the two forces, Divine and Demonic.

As far as the body is concerned, this body, the field of activity and consciousness is actually divided into three parts, according to manifestation of the three Gunas, the influencing qualities inherent in Prakriti or Cosmic Nature. The three Gunas are: (1) Sattva (2) rajas and (3) tamas. Sattva, the positive attribute, influences towards good – truth, spirituality. Tamas, the negative attribute, influences towards darkness or evil – untruth. Inertia, ignorance. Rajas, as such, is a neutral attribute, is the activating quality; working on sattva to suppress tamas or on tamas to suppress sattva side and it creates constant activity and motion. As such, the Rajas will take the side of Tamas or Sattva depending on who is stronger. If a human being controls his mind and senses and acts, then all the activities will be governed by Sattva, and these activities tend to be good and divine. Here, the rajas quality is driven by Sattva attributes. As against that, if the mind and senses dominate, then all the activities will be

governed by this Tamas qualities and, as such, they will be destructive or bad acts damaging the individual as well as the society.

The first portion of the three divisions of the bodily field consists of the periphery of the body and includes the five senses of knowledge and the five senses of action – Jnanendriyas and Karmendrias. The outer surface of the human body is the scene of continuous sensory activities. As such, this part can be called Kurukshetra, the field of external activities where all the activities of the outer world are accomplished. This place or this part of the body is a place of rajas and tamas qualities – predominantly rajas, being the negative and dark quality of nature. Tamas is responsible for concealing the true subtle essence of matter under the cover of grossness and that is the cause of ignorance in men. This part of the body is the abode of all rajas and tamas – predominantly rajas qualities. The predominance of rajas, the activating quality, in this field of Kurukshetra is evidenced in the restlessly active nature of man.

The second portion of the bodily field of action is the cerebrospinal axis with its six subtle centres of life and consciousness and its two magnetic poles of mind and intelligence. If pulled towards the grossness of mind (manas), the subtle faculties in these centres emerge outwardly keeping the sensory faculties active in the human body. As against that, if they are pulled by buddhi, i.e. by discriminatory intelligence, the subtle faculties are absorbed in the cerebral region and become merged into one soul consciousness. This field is Dharmakshetra, that is why this part of the body will play the role of Kurukshetra or Dharmakshetra depending upon the dominance

of the senses and the mind or the discriminating intelligence i.e. the Buddhi, as the case may be.

The third portion of the bodily field is in the brain. This place is real Dharmakshetra and is a place of spiritual life and is a place of the thousand petaled lotus and state of Divine consciousness.

The battle of Kurukshetra described in the Gita is therefore the effort required to win the battles on all the three portions of the bodily field to divinize all these portions.

- (1) The material and moral struggle between good and evil, right and wrong actions on the sensory plain of Kurukshetra.
- (2) The psychological war waged on the plain of Dharmakshetra and Kurukshetra between the mental tendencies and inclinations of manas pulling the life and consciousness outward towards matter and, the pure discriminative tendencies of Buddhi, intelligence drawing the life and consciousness inward toward the soul and accepts life as it is.
- (3) The third battle is the spiritual field. This battle is fought in the plain of Dharmakshetra to overcome the lower state of consciousness and dissolve all equity and sense of separation from God in Samadhi. The ultimate union of soul and spirit in cosmos is consciousness that is in Brahma (taken from the Bhagavad Gita by Paramhansa Yogananda).

Every man joins the battle of life in the manner most consonant with those qualities which dominate his nature; i.e., as a rule every human being has all the three qualities of satvas, rajas and tamas. However, depending upon the individual one or other quality dominates "A person may be dominated by the satva quality. As against that, "B" may be dominated by rajas quality and "C" may be dominated by the satva quality. As against that, "B" may be dominated by rajas quality and "C" may be dominated by tamas quality. As such, to start with, every human being would join the battle of life which he has to fight in the way in which his nature dominates. If he is dominated by tamas quality, his life is dominated by tamas and similar is the case of satvas and rajas. A person dominated by tamas does not so much meet the rush and normally succumbs to the forces around him and is overborne by them. He accepts life as it is or he wants to run away from it. His dominating idea is to somehow survives avoiding all conflict and is dominated by inertia. He will not fight against his own evil or evils in the society. He is, as a rule very inactive and accepts life as it is. I may add, most of we Indians unfortunately belong to this class.

A person dominated by rajas is an active man. He takes an active part in the battle inside the body and outside the body and as a man of action tries to dominate by egoistic quality and for his self benefit would fight, conquer, dominate and wants to enjoy with his acquisition. Here, as we have seen rajas quality normally being positive, but it is active by nature. The nature of the activity of the rajastic man depends upon whether these activities are driven by satwik qualities or tamas qualities. If it is driven and governed by tamas qualities, then the man will be selfish and whatever he does,

will be for his own benefit and self enjoyment and acquisition or sensual pleasures and he will be governed by passions and particularly governed by devilish qualities. However, if a person with rajastic qualities is driven by satwik qualities, his activities are more for the benefit of others and he wants to go higher and he is not governed by his senses and mind, but his activities are governed by discriminating intellect and by divine nature. As against that, the purely satwik man tends to seek this within, whether for himself alone or with an impulse to communicate it; i.e. inwards. The rajastic man wants to be governed by satwik tendencies and tries to achieve the same in the outside world. The satwik man would look inwards rather than outwards, detached from the outer world, but this detachment is not out of tamas quality, but voluntarily acquired towards the higher divine plain inside. However, satwik mind also accepts partly the rajas principles. As such, he would not only be satisfied with poise, peace and bliss, he wants to enjoy himself. He wants to spread that and would act for the victory of peace, love and harmony. All the attitudes adopted by the human mind towards the problems of life either derive from the domination of one or the other of these qualities or else from an attempt at balance and harmony between them. As such, as long as a person as a human being is not a realized soul with all the three qualities and as a human being, is classified into different categories depending upon the dominance of one or the other of three natures of satva, rajas and tamas, a Satwik person, a Rajastic person or a Tamastic person.

The study of Bhagvad Gita

Before we come to the analysis and teachings of Bhagavad Gita, we must keep in mind certain factors. However great a particular scripture or a book on philosophy etc. may be, the fact remains that it is a product of a particular society at a particular time.

As such, the social atmosphere and the ideas and values prevailing in the society at that part of time certainly will have their own influence on the topics and subjects dealt by the book in question. As such, while studying a treatise or work, whether on philosophy or on religion or on spiritual subject, one will have to take into account the role of the ideas and values at the time the book was authored. As such, generally in any scripture there are certain discussions relating to the ideas and values of the period and the society in which it was written, Bhagavad Gita is not an exception, but it goes to the credit of Bhagavad Gita that there is very little which has local element. Bhagavad Gita basically deals with issues which are of permanent truth and which will go beyond the time and space. They are universal in nature. As such, they are not peculiar to any section of the public or a particular religion or a particular nation or society, or to a particular age. As the discussion in Bhagavad Gita basically deals with universal truth and not merely influenced by the prevailing social atmosphere in a particular part of the society, it retains its popularity and its everlasting influence because of this aspect of the discussion on the topics dealt with in Bhagavad Gita. As seen above, in the Bhagavad Gita there is very little regarding local issues and its spirit is so large, profound and universal, so much so, that even the local

element represented by society can be universalized by giving a broader meaning or interpretation of certain local concepts which have crept in the Bhagavad Gita. To illustrate, the concept of Yagna which is peculiar to the ancient Indian society, but if it is interpreted broadly, it means selfless service by sacrifice and surrender; i.e., Yagna means doing selfless work without attachment and dominated by sacrifice of oneself belonging and one's self, that is what, as per Bhagavad Gita is. The concept of Yagna way of life, Yagna way of living as interpreted by Bhagavad Gita will have universal appeal and will not be have a time or local element. It would be an eternal everlasting universal truth. Similarly, the classification of society in the ancient Indian society of human beings into four categories – Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras, if a broader concept is given to these classifications; i.e., such classification is not by birth but one's nature and aptitude, that is, by nature and capacity one could be a Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya or a Sudra. Though this division of the society in four categories is ancient one, it is based on very logical and practical considerations. No man is equal to the other. All have different kind of nature and different kind of attitudes and capacities which may be necessary for peaceful co-existence in the society. A person may be contemplative with inward look and drawn by intuition. These people can be called Brahmins who look after the higher aspect of society, of teaching and other intellectual activities which are necessary for the proper development and progress of the society by converting ordinary human beings into ideal citizens by developing their finer qualities. This kind of work may be given to that class of society which is dominated by the intellectual qualities. As against that, there are people who are actively outward looking and rajastic in nature. They always want to do something or the other. They could be treated as

Kshatriyas and given the role of administration and looking after law and order in the society. They may also protect the society and the State from outside attack; i.e., basically they are given the role of administering law and order in the society and of the protection of the society. However, the society requires production. One has to be involved in the production and manufacturing of articles or things which are required for the welfare of the society. There are people with tendencies to create something materially. Like scientists, technicians, mechanics etc. They could be given the work of producing articles or things which are required for the sustenance of the society. They can be classified as Vaishyas. At the same time, various kinds of services are to be rendered manually and physically and there are some people who are not governed by intellectual qualities, but they are governed by bodily activities. They could be persons who may be given the task of serving the society by maintaining the essential services. The original idea of such classification was excellent and very logical and over all for the proper development of the Society. However, by wrongly interpreting the same alter on, this classification became by birth rather than by nature. Afterward the people were classified as Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya or Sudra and not by nature because of his birth. Again the original idea was that, all these activities are essentially important and all were equally respected. It was not that the work of the Brahmin was superior to the work of the Vaishyas or vice versa. Even the service activities of the Sudras were also considered equal and very important and very honourable like other activities of other classes; i.e., equality of the treatment of the work done by all the classes. However, later on this concept of all services and classes treated as equal, unfortunately disappeared. One class began to think that it is superior to the other. Particularly, the

two classes – the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas thought that they are superior to the other classes. Therefore, this division which was really meant for the proper maintenance of the society and proper work of the society, later on, it had just the reverse effect. They became the source of conflict and the source of exploitation and, as such, the whole object of classification was completely forgotten and this classification which was logically conceived for a lofty purpose, classification became a source of conflict and divided the Indian society, which had its own disastrous consequences. It played a reverse role of dividing the society and leading to utter exploitation of one section of the society by the other section. Whatever may be the later version of this classification, one has to accept this kind of classification depending upon the nature and aptitude of the members of the society from logical, practical and useful point of view, was correct one but unfortunately instead of playing its original planned role of all round progress, it played a devilish role of exploitation and destruction. It may be noted that Bhagavad Gita expressly provides that this classification is based on the nature and the aptitude of the persons and that all services are honourable.

A person who is studying such old scriptures like Bhagavad Gita must approach it to find out those elements which would deal with universal and leading messages that is in the scriptures which humanity has to seize for perfection and higher spiritual welfare. If one approaches Bhagavad Gita in this spirit, one would find lot of useful and superlative material, which would be very useful and beneficial for guiding a person for attaining his spiritual welfare and for the society to achieve its harmonious progress.

Firstly, one would find in the real study of Bhagavad Gita, particularly the treatises written on it, that Bhagavad Gita deals with various aspects which spreads to the entire field of spiritual sphere and in all these aspects, it has its own refreshingly, progressive outlook. From this angle, one can easily conclude that Bhagavad Gita laid a base for a great spiritual and social revolution. The author of Bhagavad Gita was a great reformist and in own imitable style brought a silent and effective revolution, affecting all aspects of human life, spiritual, ethical, moral and social. In all these fields, Bhagavad Gita's contribution is very significant. The discussion in Gita on all aspects of spiritual sphere is so comprehensive that it led Mahatma Gandhi to remark, that there is no aspect of spiritual thought, which is not dealt by Bhagavad Gita. Secondly, Bhagavad Gita while dealing with the various ways of practices and various concepts underlining such practices does not prefer one to the other. For example, while discussing the Sankya and Yoga way of practice and in yoga way of practice also while dealing with three dominant sub classifications of yoga, Gnyana, Bhakti and Karma, Bhagavad Gita does not prefer one to the other. In fact, it tries to bring in synthesis in various otherwise different ways to achieve the common goal of union of human spirit with the universal Divine force. While discussing various ways and practices of spirituality, it does not reject any nor does it prefer one to the other. However, every author dealing with the interpretation of the discussion contained in the Bhagavad Gita has left his own interpretation and depending on his likes and dislikes he tries to conclude that Bhagavad Gita gives preference to one or other way of practice towards the ultimate goal like preference to sanyas or yoga or yoga to sanyas or yoga to karma, Gnana or Bhakti, depending on how the author tends to look at this treatise. As such, depending upon his

own preference to Sankya, Yoga, Bhakti, Karma or Gnyan he interpreted that Bhagavad Gita is a gospel of renunciation or a gospel of yoga or gospel of devotion or of work or of knowledge. Original commentators like Shankaracharya interpreted that Bhagavad Gita prefers sankya way of life and therefore it is an authority of Gnyan or on the road of renunciation. The later authors and commntatotrs particularly those belonging to devotion cult tend to interpret the teachings of Bhagavad Gita as essentially a recommended devotional surrender as a basis and the means for achieving the goal of life. Later on, by the modern author, prominence was tried to be given to the Karma Yoga; i.e., of selfless activity without attachment, that is, Bhagavad Gita is a gospel of work. It only reminds one of the story of five blind men describing an elephant in different ways according to their own perception, but none of them describing the elephant in its real form. As such, while studying Bhagavad Gita, one has not to be influenced by one author or the other. One has to study it in its original form without any preconceived ideas, as essentially Bhagavad Gita deals with the various ways of achieving the same goal without preferring one to the other. In fact, it brings complete harmony among all these ways. If one studies this treatise without any preconceived notion and ideas, one would find as per Bhagavad Gita, all these ways of spiritual practices are necessary and they are complimentary to one another in reaching the final goal of spiritual living and union with the Divinity.

The approach of various commentators of the past and present, putting their own separate interpretation, as regards the real teachings of Gita remind us of the story narrated in Upanishad. In that story,

Devas, Danavas and Manavas (Gods, demons and human beings), all went together to Prajapati for guidance. Prajapati, just uttered " " .

Devas interpreted that we are pleasure seekers, without any restraints and therefore by uttering " " they were advised to practice " " that is restraint. The Demons by " " understood that as we Danavas, are cruel and therefore, they were advised by Prajapati to cultivate " " Kindness. The Manavas on the other hand understood that as human beings are greedy, Prajapati advised them to do " " Charity. When Prajapati asked them as to what was his advise, all the three gave their own understanding by advice of " " by Prajapati. Prajapati told them that they all have rightly understood his advice. Similarly Bhagavad Gita's teachings are understood by various commentators, according to their outlook, as mainly dealing with sanyas the Gnana yoga, Karma yoga or Bhakti yoga, according to their own preference. As in fact, as Gita deals with these issues and in a way, we may say that all these commentators in their own way are right, but none of them are fully right as Gita could be described as an encyclopedia of spiritual science dealing with all these topics without giving preference to one or the other practice.

In my own view, all these yogas including sanyas are not only complimentary to each other, but in fact, they are not complete by themselves without the combination with others. All together really constitute one complete yoga, and each of them without the other cannot lead to ultimate union with Divinity, the ultimate object, purpose or goal of human life, the reason being to achieve the

ultimate goal of merging with Divinity, requires divinizing all parts of human being and life. All parts of the human self and all his activities must be totally Divinised and after divinizing in all aspects, will have to live in Divinity. Therefore, one has to Divinise all his activities, internal and external which is possible by following Karma Yoga. One has to Divinise all his thoughts and intellect which is possible by preaching Jnana Yoga. One has to divinize all his feelings and heart. This is possible through Bhakti yoga. One has to control, and Divinise one's mind and senses which is possible by practice of Raja yoga. One has to renounce all desires and longing for worldly pleasures, which is possible by sanyas. As such, only by practicing all these yogas one can completely Divinise oneself for the purpose of ultimate union with the Divinity. As such, all these ways together constitute one indivisible yoga.

Choice of Characters and the situation:

The choice of character and situation, if one considers the allegorical and symbolic significance of Mahabharata backdrop to the teachings of Bhagavad Gita, one would really admire the apt choice of the characters and the situation in which the discourses are given by the author of Gita.

First of all, let us take the character of Lord Krishna. It is well believed and accepted that Lord Krishna is avatar of Lord Vishnu and he is believed to be poorna avatar and as he represents God himself, there could be no better person than Him, to give a discourse on the spiritual aspects covered by the Bhagavad Gita. One may appreciate that throughout his life, Lord Krishna was a complete yogi, a

Stitapradnya and if one has to point out a person who is every inch a person who led the Bhagavad Gita way of life it would be Lord Krishna. It is as if Lord Krishna has drawn the essential principles of higher sphere of human life from his own life. Though essentially throughout his life he fought one evil or the other he was always calm, collected and did everything as a duty without any attachment or caring for its fruits. As such, he was a model Gynana Yogi and Karma Yogi of Bhagavad Gita. As such, as a person who was every inch a Gynana Yogi and Karma Yogi, he would be a right person to deal with various spiritual facets of human life. As such, Lord Krishna was an excellent choice of the author of Bhagavad Gita to give discourses on the science and art of human life and living, the prime subject matter of Bhagavad Gita.

Now, coming to the person who receives discourse, Arjun is also an excellent choice. A few interesting aspects of Arjun's life and nature have to be noted here. Arjun was a very active person, a leader in his right and he was a real specimen of an active person, a person living an active and honourable life. He had rajastik qualities which were in abundance which were tempered with satwik or Divine qualities and not by Tamas qualities. He had imbibed all the best of ethical and moral values and was living a model life. Pausing here, for a moment, Bhagavad Gita is really meant for a person like Arjun; i.e., a person who is highly ethical and moral and who one day faces a crisis which makes him to think over what is the purpose and object of human life and seeks guidance. Bhagavad Gita is not meant for a person with Tamasik qualities and lower side of rajastik qualities, but it is meant for an active rajastik person pulled by Satwik qualities; i.e., one who is highly ethical and moral and in every sense is leading an

ideal human life on ethical and spiritual level. Now again it is interesting to know why the author has chosen Arjun as a person to receive the discourses and not the other Pandavas. As far as Dharmaraj is concerned, the eldest one, he was otherwise highly spiritual and he was very much advanced on spiritual side and as such in all circumstances he always kept his peace of mind. He was governed by the Satvik qualities and not Rajastic qualities. Such persons are not in need of discourses contained in the Bhagavad Gita because such people already know about such spiritual side of human life and are leading such life. So possibly, that was the reason for why Dharmaraj was not selected to receive the discourses.

Coming to the second one, Bhima, Bhima unlike Arjun or Dharmaraj was not a sensitive or agitated person like Arjun nor absolutely satvik like his elder brother Dharmaraj. He was not a person who gets confused and as such he believed in action based on his passion. Even such persons do not require discourses on spiritual aspect of the human life. In essence, Bhagavad Gita is meant for a predominantly rajastic person and not for predominantly satwik or predominantly tamasic persons. It is meant for a person who is very active with rajastic approach, who is torn between the pulls of tamasic and satvik qualities and who is a real representative of a good human being or who has positive signs of an ideal human being. Such person requires the teachings contained in the Bhagavad Gita. Arjun was such a person and a person who is otherwise a very good person and an ideal human being who faced the crisis of his life and, as such, was in need of such guidance. As such, it may be noted that all good human beings who are following the moral and ethical way of life, one day or the other will meet cross roads like Arjun from where they have

to choose the right way and are in need of a proper guidance to proceed further and for such human beings, the Bhagavad Gita is an ideal book which would throw light on the right way that such person has to follow. Coming back to the topic under discussion, it is very significant that Lord Krishna was a very close friend of Arjun and he was his guide. This is also significant as to a good human being. God is always a close companion and a competent guide. As per Indian philosophy, in every human body, the Divinity resides who is a close friend and guide of the human being.

Now, coming to the situation or circumstances in which the discourses contained in Bhagavad Gita are delivered, a very apt situation is adopted for the subject if the allegorical and symbolic aspect is kept in mind. However, good a human being may be, and however good life he may be leading a moment of crisis and confusion will crop in, when he starts thinking as to what is the purpose and object of a human life, what is the ideal way one should follow? These issues trouble each and every human being at one time or the other and one will have to face this crisis in life and as a representative, a good human being Arjun facing such situation has become an ideal backdrop for delivery of the discourses contained in Bhagavad Gita. It may also be noted that Arjun asked as to what was the right course of action for him on the battle front. He really did not ask for the wholesale discussion on various finer aspects of human and spiritual life, but he only asked, what was the right course of action in the situation which he has faced at the time of the war. Should he fight or should he turn away from the battle field? He had just asked what is the right course of action, then and asked Lord Krishna to guide him in that context, but seizing the said opportunity, Lord Krishna, apart from

answering the query raised by Arjun as to the right course of action, he also elaborately discussed all the finer aspects of human life, the purpose and object of it, the goal of it and the way in which a person should live and what is the ultimate goal and how it could be achieved?

The nature and characteristics of Arjun are also significant. Arjun, like his name suggests was a straightforward person. Arjun was really one who was simple and true to himself and then he totally surrendered to Lord Krishna. While seeking his guidance he says "I am your disciple. I totally surrender to you and please guide me as to which is the right course and which I should follow? As such, the seeker of guidance for spiritual knowledge from any person as his guru requires, these two requisites which Arjun had, they are:

(1) To be simple clean and pure person like Arjun and

(2) One must readily surrender totally to the person from whom he seeks guidance; i.e., a total faith in surrender to the guru. These are the requisites for getting the spiritual knowledge and enlightenment from the guru. Lord Krishna represents an enlightened guru and Arjun represents an ideal disciple. The close and friendly relationship between Lord Krishna and Arjun also points out to the factor as to what kind of close relationship there should be between an ideal guru and an ideal shishya.

The Parting Prayer

My writing under this column had started suddenly without the same being pre-planned. When dear Shiv. (K. Shivaram) became the President of All India Tax Practitioners' Association, I wanted to do something during his tenure as a President. Then I put before him the idea of my writing regularly in the magazine of the Federation. As it is usual for Shiv straightaway without thinking over it he said "Yes Sir, go ahead" and from then onwards I started to contribute to this magazine. While thinking over what I should write, I decided that I must write something which is not on the subject of tax and at the same time something that would be useful to the readers. That is how Subhashitam was started. Then when my friend Mahendrabhai (Mr. Gami) became the Editor of the magazine, he asked me to write something about ancient Indian spiritual literature. He wanted me to write particularly on the Upanishad. That is how I started to write on the Upanishads and Bhagawad Gita, being the Upanishads of Upanishads. I had no other alternative, than to end my discussion on the Upanishads by commenting on the Bhagawad Gita; but here also I did not visualize that the time at my disposal was short; i.e., once Shiv's Presidentship and Mahendrabhai's editorship come to an end, the very basis of my contribution to the magazine would come to an end. Because of this change I will have to cease to contribute to the magazine under "Subhashitam" and, as such, this will be my last part of Subhashitam.

Now, the issue that faced me was, under one part how can I discuss and analyse Bhagawad Gita as a whole? Then, I thought as it is just not possible to deal with Bhagawad Gita in detail, I would better deal only with two aspects of Bhagawad Gita; i.e., its teachings and the relevancy of its teachings today.

Bhagawad Gita can be said to be a dictionary of encyclopaedia on the subject of spirituality. The Gita specifically deals broadly with Brahmavidya; i.e., knowledge of God and Yoga Shastra; i.e., the art and way of achieving the Union of Atma with Paramatma. The essence of its teachings can be summarized as under:

As per Bhagawad Gita, its message to all human beings is "Know Thyself". You must know your true self and live as per your true self. As such the search of your true self, the realization of true self and the fulfillment of your true self is the object and purpose of your life as a human being. What is your true self will be known through the practice of Gnana Yoga. Realising your true self could be achieved by practice of Karma Yoga and fulfillment of your true self is through Bhakti Yoga. As such, the object and purpose of one's living in this world is to find out and live according to ones true self. The truth is not what you believe to be. You believe that you are a separate human being and that you are living your own separate life. You believe that you are living through your body, senses and mind and, as such, living in a lower self by treating yourself as a separate self; i.e., you imagine and live yur own separate existence, with all your likes and dislikes, with all your desires and by all your emotions and passions, imagine to live a separate human existence, having your own separate identity. As against the others, one believes because of

his ego that he is a person with separate existence of his own, with all the qualities of nature; i.e., one is living as one's lower self, as a jeeva, but as per the Bhagawad Gita, what you believe as yourself, is not at all your self. It is only your imagination, your thinking and your understanding for the time being, but your real self is not this body but your real soul (the Atma). Your true self is that you are the soul (the atma) and as a true self, you are a part and parcel of all pervasive Divinity. You have no separate existence of your own and you take birth and live and ultimately go back as a part of one whole Divinity. There is one Supreme power known as Paramatma or Brahma and each one of us is a part of that Paramatma, the real Divinity and our true self with all the qualities of the true Divinity of Brahma or Paramatma. The Supreme self; i.e., the Brahma is the cause of the Atma coming into this world in the form of jeeva and apparently though not in reality, living a separate existence by mingling with nature and by acquiring the qualities of nature one would apparently acquire a separate form as jeeva, apparently, having a separate existence. As a product of nature, jeeva has all the qualities known as Gunas which are three-fold, Tamas, rajas and Satvik. As such, Atma taking the form of jeeva in this world, is a product of these qualities of nature and every human being is a mixture of these three qualities of nature. Depending upon the proportion in which these qualities are present in a human being, he is classified as a good or bad person. As long as one is a human being, may be in a different proportion has all these qualities. In reality, everything in this universe is a reflection of the Supreme Self and everything is of Him because of Him and in Him. As Gita puts it

i.e., everything is the abode of Iswar, the Sakar Brahma. Therefore, the first thing that we have to know is that our true self is

different from what we think to be. We are not the body, We are the Atma (soul). It is an illusion, if, we think that we are the body and that we have a separate existence of our own, when in reality we are not the body. In fact, we have no separate existence of our-own and we are part and parcel of the universal whole, that is, of all pervasive. Supreme Divinity and as a part of Divinity, we have all the qualities of Divinity i.e. apart from the qualities that we have acquired by nature i.e. Gunas as a part of Divinity, we have all the three Divine qualities of Sat, Chit and Anand. The Supreme Self has all the qualities of Sat, Chit and Anand and your true self being a part of the Supreme Divinity, you have the Divine qualities of Sat, Chit and Anand. As such, Gnana Yoga teaches us that there exists one universal all pervasive Divinity which is a cause of all the existence of universe and its movements. We are a part of that Supreme Self and that is our true existence and there is no separate existence, separate from the Supreme Self. We are nothing but a reflection of that Supreme Self. The Supreme Self is all pervasive and everything occurs and moves as per the Will of the Supreme Self. After knowing your true self and that you have no separate existence and you are a part and parcel of the Supreme Self and the Supreme Self is all Supreme and you are just a reflection of that Supreme Self and everything in this world is because of that Supreme Self, as such, one has to live as per one's true Self and that one is a part of that universal Supreme Self having no separate existence of your own and ultimately the goal and purpose of human existence is the ultimate unity with the Supreme Self. Therefore, Gnana Yoga makes us realize the true nature of Supreme Self and of our own true nature and of the object and the purpose of human existence.

However, the mere knowledge will not suffice to achieve the ultimate goal of life. One has to live as per ones true Self. Now, how to live, how to act and how to work according to one's true self is the subject matter of Karma Yoga. Mere knowledge is not sufficient, one has to act according to that knowledge, to realize the ultimate goal of one's existence. As such, how to live according to one's true self, how one should work in this world according to ones real self is the subject matter of the teachings of Karma Yoga.

Now, according to Karma Yoga, the nature of a human being as such is that one cannot do without doing any work. Work is a MUST. One cannot run away from the work. As such, as per Bhagawad Gita, one cannot abandon the work itself and take shelter in a forest, by abandoning the universe itself. According to Bhagawad Gita, it is highly impossible for anybody to live even one moment without doing one work or the other. To do work is a part of one's nature as a human being. As such, you cannot abandon the work and one has to work. As such, Bhagawad Gita ordains that one has to do his work and one cannot run away from his work. If one has to do work which is a MUST according to Bhagawad Gita, what work should one do, Bhagawad Gita does not specifically deal with what work one has to do. It only teaches the art of doing work. It is not what you do, but how you do a particular work is relevant. One can do any work, but the work must be done as per the dictates of Bhagawad Gita. One has to do whateer work one has to do without any attachment and without any expectation for the fruits of the work that one is doing. The twin requisites of doing Karma as per Karma Yoga are non attachment to the work and not expecting any fruit for that particular work. That in short is dealt by Bhagawad Gita in the famous Sloka 47 which says

"Karmanyeva Adhikaraste Ma Phalesu Kadachana Ma Karma Phalaheturbhuh Matus Sangats Karmani" meaning thereby, it is not your right, but duty to do work and you have no right to expect any fruits for the work you are doing. Do not have any expectations for the fruits of your work and you should work and not refrain from doing work. As such, Bhagawad Gita ordains that one has to work but work as a duty. One has no right either in the work or the fruits for the work done. As such, the art of doing work as per Karma Yoga is that one has to do the work as a duty and while doing this work as a duty and while doing this work as a duty, should have no attachment to the work and no expectation of the results of such work. If these two characteristics are kept in mind while doing the work, what work you do is immaterial; i.e., each and every work that you are doing must be qualified by non attachment to the work and non expectation for the results of the work. Work for works sake and not for the results of the work. Now, for the work you are doing, results will follow, whether you expect them or not and then what is to be done to the results of the work. As per Karma Yoga of Bhagawad Gita, the fruits of the work you are doing must be surrendered by way of sacrifice to the Supreme Self. They should be offered to the Supreme Self. It is not just not expecting the fruits of the work, but positively the fruits are to be surrendered at the feet of the God. As such, to start with, one has to do selfless work by way of service, without any attachment to that work and not only not expecting the results of such work but the fruits of such work, one has to offer at the feet of the God.

Thus non attached selfless service without expectation of fruits and offer of the fruits to the Supreme Self is the essence of art of doing Karma as per Karma Yoga.

Bhagawad Gita does deal with certain consequences that would follow, the doing of a work, and normally a work done by a person will lead him to more and more bondage. To this universal rule that doing work will lead him to further bondage, Bhagawad Gita puts a very important exception to this Karma theory that any work done for Yagna purposes will not only not lead to bondage, but it will aid one to achieve the real goal of ones life; i.e., to ultimately attain the union with the Supreme Self. Therefore, according to Bhagawad Gita, any work done in the Yagna spirit, will not lead to bondage, but it will help one self to get away from the bondage. According to Bhagawad Gita, this institution of Yagna was born with the birth of human being and therefore, every human being is born with this quality of doing work in Yagna spirit, the doing of selfless service and of sacrifice the fruits and surrender these fruits at the feet of the Supreme Self. As such, any work done selflessly without attachment and with the spirit of surrendering these fruits to the Almighty is a work done in the spirit of Yagna.

As one progresses in the path of Karma Yoga, he would realize that what work one is doing is not, at his own instance, but the instance, at the command and as per the wishes of the Supreme Self. As such, whatever one is doing, one is doing as an agent of the Supreme Self. Here, one realizes that all human beings and oneself are doing work at the instance of the Supreme Self and, as such, all the work is to be done for the Supreme Self and the same is to be offered to the Supreme Self. As such, not only the fruits, but the work itself is to be offered to the Supreme Self. To start with, one has to start with offering the fruits and later on in the spirit of offering the

fruits, one realizes that one has to offer the work itself and, as such, one has to realize as a real Karma Yogi that the work itself is of the Supreme Self and one is doing only his work. As such, in the advanced stage of Karma Yoga one would be doing the work of, work for and work with the Divinity. While doing the work of the Divinity in the spirit of Yagna, one has to always remember God, and act under his guidance and inspiration. That is what Bhagawad Gita says "At all times, remember me and work." As such, not only the work has to be Divine, but also the work to be done is for the Divine. One has to surrender the work itself and do the work as ordained by the Supreme Self. Then, comes the third stage where one gives up the authorship of the work. At this developed stage of doing the work as per Karma Yoga, one would not be claiming even the authorship of doing the work. One realizes that the real work is done not by the individual but the work itself is done by the Supreme Self. Thus, one becomes the instrument or a medium through which the Universal Self works. One ceases to have the claim to the authorship of the work i.e. one is not doing the work at all. One is being used by the Universal Self as an instrument and as a medium through which the Universal Self works. Then, as per Karma Yoga, one has to realize that one is not doing anything and that one cannot do anything without the Universal Self, but in the real sense one has become only an instrument in the hands of the Supreme Self. First one has to surrender the fruits of the work and then the work itself and lastly to surrender the authorship of the work itself, is the sum and substance of living as per Karma Yoga dictates, i.e. in short, one has to live without any attachment to the work one has to do and do the work as a duty in the spirit of sacrifice and one has to not only not expect any fruits, but surrender the fruits of the work to the Universal Self and then give away the authorship of

the work itself, realizing that one is nothing but an instrument in the hands of the Lord, and therefore, one surrenders the authorship of the work to the Divine Self and he ceases to do any work and just becoming an instrument in the hands of the Lord for the work to be done by Him. Then onwards, it is the Divine Self which works through him and he will cease do to any work by becoming an instrument in the hands of the Supreme Self. At the end of the Karma Yoga when it reaches its zenith, it results in one's sacrificing one's self and one surrendering one's separate existence. At the end, one sacrifices oneself to God. The sacrifice of the self 'Ahankar' is the ultimate sacrifice that one has to make while following Karma Yoga and with such supreme sacrifice of one's self, one would achieve the goal of self of merging with the Universal Self, the Supreme Self. At that stage, one ceases to have any mind. One ceases to have any thoughts and one ceases to have any feelings and desires. In fact, one ceases to have any separate existence of one's own. One is perfectly united with the Universal Self and the original self being part of the Universal Self, such perfect union is the object and purpose of human existence.

With Gnana Yoga and Karma Yoga there must be a Yoga of devotion – Bhakti Yoga, Gnana Yoga teaches us the art of knowing oneself. Karma Yoga teaches us the art of living, but the ultimate crowning glory is the art of loving, the subject matter of Bhakti Yoga. As we have seen, there are three qualities of Universal Supreme Self. One acquires the quality of 'Sat' by Gnana Yoga and the qualities of Chit by Karma Yoga and the last quality of Anand by Bhakti Yoga, the true fulfillment of ones existence can be acquired only by Bhakti Yoga. The art of loving and the art of devotion to the Almighty will make the art of living and the art of doing work more fruitful and comparatively

easier and enjoyable. To put it in a different way, by Gnana Yoga, one would acquire the quality of Divinity in respect of one's intellect and one's senses, one's mind and one's work, but in addition to intellect, mind and senses there is a third aspect of the human being i.e. feeling which is governed by the heart. With intellect and senses, one has also to divinize one's heart. As such, divinizing one's heart is a part and parcel of the total divinizing of one's self before one achieves one's object in life of ultimate union with the Divinity. Divinising one's heart, is the subject matter of Bhakti Yoga, the way of devotion which is the total devotion to the Supreme Self through the art of total unqualified love and devotion to the Universal Self. With Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga becomes not only very fruitful but very enjoyable, also Bhakti Yoga not only makes the following of Karma Yoga easier, but it makes it more purposeful and more enjoyable and more fruitful. In Bhakti Yoga, in the total devotion to the creator one always remembers and does everything for God in the spirit of love. A real Bhakta cannot live a single moment without his devotion to God. The total selfless love towards the Universal Self is the crowning glory of the human existence and it is a crown of Gnana and Karma. As such, the total divinizing of oneself and living in ones true self is possible only if one adopts all the three yogas, Gnana, Karma and Bhakti to divinize oneself completely in all aspects and living totally in the spirit of Divinity and to achieve ultimate goal of complete union with the Universal Self. A stage will come when one has to go beyond oneself and beyond one's nature beyond gunas. Even one would abandon the satvik qualities; i.e., Divine qualities. That is what Lord Krishna ordained when he say (Sarva Dharman Parityajya Mam Ekan Sharanam Vraja) i.e., abandon all your nature, even your good works, good living and take complete shelter

in me i.e. the total surrender of oneself to God is the ultimate message of Bhagawad Gita to achieve the perfect union with God.

It may be noted that Bhagawad Gita starts with the word "Dharma." The first verse starts with Dharma Kshetre and the Bhagawad Gita ends with the word "Mama". In essence Bhagawad Gita teaches what is Dharma of Mine. Mama Dharma means my Dharma; i.e., what is right to me. It deals with Brahma Vidya, the knowledge of Brahma and Yoga Shastra, the science and art of uniting with God. The art of living the art and science of human existence in essence is the subject matter of Bhagawad Gita. Therefore, the message of Bhagawad Gita is "Know Thyself". Know your own true nature and come out of your false impression that you have a separate existence of your own. Realise that you are a part and parcel of the Universal Self. You are not jeeva but you are atma and as atma you are a part and parcel of the Universal Self which is all pervasive and all powerful and everything in the universe is a reflection of the universal Supreme Self and your whole existence is a part and parcel of the Universal Self and after realizing one's true nature, the object and purpose of your existence one should live to one's true self doing Karma, as per your true self and offer one's total devotion to the Universal Self and ultimately offer your everything including yourself at the altar of the Supreme Self and – achieve the ultimate purpose of your existence; i.e., union with the Supreme Self.

Relevancy of Bhagawad Gita's teachings

If we go through the background of Bhagawad Gita, it was delivered when there was total crisis in the society in all facets of

political, social and religious fields and as a matter of fact there was total anarchy and crisis in all walks of human life. Religion itself was misused. Even the institution of Yagna was used for selfish purposes. All actions, forgetting the original teachings of Vedanta were self oriented and when there was suppression and oppression in all walks of life and at that stage to bring a total silent revolution in all walks of life, Bhagawad Gita was born. It was more than the spiritual need, a social need of such teachings contained in the Bhagawad Gita and it was the total anarchy in all walks of life which caused the birth of Bhagawad Gita. Its teachings were by way of medicine to all these evils. Now, coming to the present times, if one considers the total chaos and total anarchy and all round crisis in the human society in all walks of life, one would realize the Bhagawad Gita's teachings are not only relevant, but they are more than relevant in today's atmosphere. The crisis faced by the society today is hundred times more serious than one which was faced by the society when Bhagawad Gita was delivered. In short, today the human being has ceased to be a human being. He has become worse than animal. In fact, as I always say, today to compare a human being with the animal, would be a great insult to the animal. Undoubtedly, in the present day, the human being is more intelligent, more capable, more daring and more active and capable of achieving anything. In fact, by his sheer capacity, he has almost conquered the entire nature. Today, man has all sorts of comforts and luxuries, the whole science is at his feet, to make his life more comfortable and more luxurious, but man today is not at all happy with all the comforts. Tension rules everywhere. It is an age of tension. In human life there is tension everywhere. Everybody is seeking for pleasures, possession and power. Everything is price based and not value based. All things are measured in the terms of

money, in the terms price and values in life are at terrible discount. Man has become terribly selfish. He cares only for himself and none else, not even for his near relatives. The motto and purpose of life, is to acquired more and more wealth, more and more power and position to have more individual pleasures. Life is nothing but for the so-called enjoyment. To have the three deadly P's, Pleasure, Profit and Power or Position is the aim and object of one's living. While trying to acquire these, we mercilessly suppress and exploit others. Acquisition of wealth at any cost is a rule, and the means of its acquisition have become irrelevant. To acquire more and more wealth has become the mantra of today. The whole world is fast rushing towards total disaster. Concern for others, concern for society or social service, have practically disappeared.

Due to the total absence of sense of duty, sense of selfless work, sense of service and concern for others. In the present world the basic teachings of Bhagawad Gita is a real medicine to the various ills prevailing in the society. To do everything as a duty and duty is to be done in the spirit of sacrifice. You have no right but only obligation. Whatever you have to do, you have to as a duty and not as a right – still less with a desire for fruits of such work. Life itself is duty based and not right based. The message of Bhagawad Gita could be used to solve most of the problems facing us. At this stage, I recollect an episode from the life of Mahatma Gandhi. When he was sent a copy of Charter of Human Rights proposed to be adopted, Mahatma Gandhi remarked "there is no need of universal human rights, but what is the need of today is universal charter of human duties. This is what you can expect from this great follower of Bhagawad Gita. Doing everything as a duty in the spirit of love, sacrifice and universal love,

characterized the life of Mahatma Gandhi. Once, in a typical American style, a press reporter from USA asked Mahatma Gandhi a question as to what was the secret of his success that may be expressed briefly. Gandhiji as per the requirement of the reporter just uttered three words by quoting from the Upanishads i.e., renounce and enjoy. That is the sum and substance of the entire teachings of the Bhagawad Gita. In my opinion, the essence of Bhagawad Gita teachings regarding the art of living, is to do everything as a duty. You are here to serve. Life is for service and sacrifice and whatever you do, do it in the spirit of sacrifice. Give everything to the society by way of sacrifice. Nothing belongs to you. Live in this world with detachment, live the life of sacrifice and surrender. Bhagawad Gita teaches that we have to see ourselves in others and others in ourselves. This is one great and simple principle of one's living. It is the very basis of total harmony in society. If one considers that others are like oneself and oneself like others, what a great revolution it can bring. Instead of living for oneself, one should live for others. If I have a right to live, others also have equal right to live. It is the medicine which is prescribed by Bhagawad Gita and it is more relevant and more required in the present world which is governed by total selfishness, total exploitation, total suppression and total inequality if this one medicine suggested by Bhagawad Gita is adopted i.e. one has to see oneself in others and others in oneself and, as such, one has to live a life of sacrifice and service, it will completely transform the society. If this one principle is followed, it will solve all the problems which the society is facing today. As such, in my opinion, not only the teachings of Bhagawad Gita are relevant today, but they are most essential and they would go to solve all the problems facing the society today. Today, we require the real followers of Bhagawad Gita

to have great individuals like Mahatma Gandhi, Maharshi Arabindo, Swami Vivekananda, Gautam Buddha and Vinobha Bhave who in every sense lived as per the teachings of Bhagawad Gita and who were real Karma Yogas. We require more and more Karma Yogis of this model to save the present society from the crisis which it is facing today.

As far as we ourselves individually are concerned, if we follow Bhagawad Gita way of life, we may not achieve the great heights of these great souls like Gandhiji but if we can make true efforts to imbibe the teachings of Bhagawad Gita, we may make our lives worth living. Let us try to live in the spirit of selfless sacrifice for the benefit of the society and of our own. If one has to really live a life of fulfillments, one has to follow the teachings of Bhagawad Gita to live a life of selfless service and sacrifice coupled with universal love.

Let us live at the higher Divine level. Let our actions, thoughts, words and feelings, be divine, full of love, compassion, service and sacrifice. Let us be governed by the spirit of universal love, selfless service and let us sacrifice. Let our lives not be governed by the three P's, Pleasure, Power and Profit. Let it be governed by three Ss Sharing, Service and Sacrifice.

If at least one of my readers is attracted to the teachings of Bhagawad Gita and he makes an effort to live a Gita way of life, the object of my writing this article is more than fulfilled.

At the end, while saying "Good-bye" to all my readers, let me wish all of them a Happy New Year which may be more fruitful and I wish that all my readers will make an effort to live a Gita way of life.

At the end, I pray to Lord Krishna, the author of Bhagawad Gita, to grant us the divine sense to live a Premamaya, Sevamaya, Devamaya and Geetamaya way of living. Sarvam Krishnarpanam Astu. Aum Shanti, Shanti, Shantihi.

Thy right is to work only; but never to the fruits thereof. Be thou not the producer of the fruits of (thy) actions; neither let thy attachment be towards inaction. II-47

Verily none can ever rest for even an instant, without performing action; for all are made to act, helplessly indeed, by the Gunas born of Prakrti. III-5

Do thou perform obligatory action; for action is superior to inaction; and even the bare maintenance of the body would not be possible if thou art inactive. III-8

The world is bound by actions other than those performed for the sake of Yajna; do thou, therefore, O son of Kunti, perform action for Yajna alone, devoid of attachment. III-9

The good, eating the remnants of Yajna, are freed from all sins: but who cook food (only) for themselves, those sinful ones eat sin. III-13

Therefore, do thou always perform actions which are obligatory, without attachment; by performing action without attachment, one attains to the highest. III-19

With the heart concentrated by Yoga, with the eye of evenness for all things, he beholds the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self. VII-29

He who sees Me in all things and sees all things in Me, he never becomes separated from Me, nor do I become separated from him.

VI-30

He who being established in unity, worships me, who am dwelling in all beings, whatever his mode of life, that Yogi abides in Me.

VI-31

Therefore, at all times, constantly remember Me, and fight. With mind and intellect absorbed in Me, thou shalt doubtless come to Me.

VIII-7

Whoever with devotion offers Me a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, that I accept – the devout gift of the pure-minded.

IX-26

Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest in sacrifice, whatever thou givest away, whatever austerity thou practisest, O son of Kunti, do that as an offering unto Me.

IX-27

Fill they mind with Me, be My devotee, sacrifice unto Me, bow down to Me; thus having made thy heart steadfast in Me.

IX-34

From whom is the evolution of all beings, by whom all this is pervaded, worshipping Him with his own duty, a man attains perfection.

XVIII-46

Take refuge in Him with all thy heart, O Bharata; by His grace shalt thou attain supreme peace (and) the eternal abode.

XVIII-62

Occupy thy mind with Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me. Thou shalt reach Myself; truly do I promise unto thee, (for) thou art dear to Me. XVIII-65

Relinquishing all Dharmas take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate thee from all sins; grieve not. XVIII-66

GEETA WAY OF LIFE

My readers may recollect that I stated in my last month's contribution that, that would be my last contribution, and they might have felt that it is good riddance. But just as I had to start this column accidentally, I have to continue for some reason with the column, it was because dear Shiv became President. On his ceasing to be President, I thought I was relieved. However, he has only changed the roles from President to Chief Editor of this magazine. As Shiv is continuing in another capacity, I have no other alternative, but to continue. That is the reason, I have to continue with the column.

If I am asked, what is the real message of Bhagawad Gita, I may say that the message of Bhagawad Gita to all human beings through Arjuna is Yoga Bhava; i.e., "You become a Yogi."

Once, Shri Ramakrishna Paramhansa was asked as to what is the message of Bhagawad Gita according to him? The great saint replied "It is just the reverse of Gita; i.e., Tyagi (renunciation)". The message of Lord Krishna is that "you become yogi" means one united with God. Yoga in Sanskrit means "union." Therefore, a person who is united with the Supreme Self is a yogi. Now, to become a yogi, one has to live a yogi way of life; i.e., there should be Divine living on Divine plane. Unless one lives a Divine life and divinizes himself in all aspects of his being, it is not possible to become a yogi; i.e., to seek

union with God. To become Yogi one has to be a Tyagi, as advised by Ramakrishna Paramhanansa.

Now, before we consider the Gita way of living, one has to consider what is the object and purpose of human life? The real purpose of human life is to discover oneself and to know and realize and fulfil one's real self. Now, every human being is essentially Divine in nature and in one's true and real sense one is Divine. To know, realize and fulfil one's original self, that is Divine Self and to live in one's real self Divine is the sole object of a human life.

Today, as it is, at the highest we are living a life of a human being as a human. We are living on the lower plane, - of body plane and we are living as a jeeva with our own created self imagining and living in our own independent universe. We are living the life with our own ego; i.e., our little self with "I" concept and followed by the concept of "my" and "mine". Now, raising oneself from the present state of living as a separate self which is not the real nature of ourselves and raising our living to the height of Divine state, is all that is required of us while living in this universe.

Once we come to the conclusion that Bhagawad Gita's mandate is that one should live a Divine life, to fulfil one's true self and ultimate union with the Supreme Self, one has to consider as to what are the basic requisites, the foundation and fundamentals of this Divine living. First of all, if one has to live a Divine way of life, it may be a contradiction in term, to say that one has to kill oneself. One has to die to live. Today, we have our own small egos with the concept of a separate existence from others and separate from the Supreme Self;

that must be completely erased and unless the "I" concept and "My" concept are completely erased, it is just not possible to live a Divine life. As such, one has to die or kill oneself to be qualified to live a true Divine life, change over to Divine living; i.e., transformation from that which is base and gross into that which is sublime, subtle, refined and pure.

Of course, it is by gradual process, one can attain or one can ultimately succeed in living a real Divine life, undoubtedly, it is a slow process. It has to be gradually developed from stage to stage.

The basic requisite to achieve the Divine status is first of all, one should have full faith in oneself and in God, what is known in Sanskrit as 'Shraddha'. Shraddha is the basic foundation on which the entire structure or spiritual or Divine life is built. Without firm and full belief in ones true nature; i.e., one is Atma and not Body and as Atma, one is a part or portion of the Supreme Self and as a part and being originated from the Supreme Self, one has really all the qualities of the Supreme Self. The basic qualities of Supreme Self and each Atma being a part of the Supreme Self are 'Sat', 'Chit' & 'Anand'; i.e., the real existence, consciousness and bliss. So, Atma being a part of Paramatma has essentially these qualities of Sat Chit & Anand. Therefore, one should have full faith in oneself, that one being Atma is a part of the Supreme Self with all the Divine qualities of the Supreme Self of Sat Chit Anand. In addition to Shraddha in oneself, one should have unqualified Shraddha in the Supreme Self; i.e., God. One should firmly believe that God who is the cause of this entire universe, the Supreme Self, apart from being Sat Chit Anand is omnipresent, omniscience and omnipotent. Everything in this universe including

each one of us is sent here by the Supreme Self-God to perform a particular duty which is assigned to each one of us, as his agent. As such, the Supreme belief and unqualified dependence on the Supreme Self is the other aspect of Shraddha. As such, Shraddha on oneself and the Supreme Self which are the basic requirements of the beginning of change in one's way of life from the present plane to Divine plane.

Coupled with unqualified Shraddha, a firm determination, unwavering absolute and firm determination to achieve the goal of living on Divine plane is the next qualification required of a person who wants to follow the dictates of Bhagawad Gita – Yogi Bhava. Unless one has a strong will to achieve this chosen goal, it is not possible to reach the stage of the Divine plane of living. As such, in addition to Shraddha, one should have firm determination of achieving the goal of living a Divine way of life.

The next requisite on the path of achieving the goal of living a Divine life is self mastery or self control which is known as Satyam. Unless one masters oneself by having achieved control of one's senses and one's mind, one cannot think of living on a Divine plane. Today, as it is, we are servants of our senses and our mind. We do what our mind and senses prompt us to do. As such, our mind and senses always look outward and always harp on pleasures and acquisitions. To enjoy oneself is the essential quality of mind and senses and normally all human beings are guided by ones own senses and mind, ones own desires, ones own feelings, and ones own likes and dislikes, but this process must be reversed. The mind and senses which always look outward must be controlled and then mastered.

Now, if we want to live a Divine way of life, our minds and senses must be absolutely under our control and they must do what we command. Therefore, by gradual process one has to gradually control and master ones basic self which is governed by the mind and senses. Because of the dominance of the mind and senses we are living on a lower plane of sensual living, that must be given a goodbye and that can be done only if one takes an absolute about turn and instead of being guided by our senses and mind, we must be guided by our Viveka and by our inner voice. The senses and mind must be made to change the direction. They must be drawn inwards and seek the real pleasures inwards and not outwards. Any pleasure which one acquires from the outside world is temporary and which ultimately leads to grief. The real happiness; i.e., Akand Anand (the bliss) is inside. Therefore, we have to look inside and firmly establish ourselves inside to live a Divine way of life.

After one realizes that one has to cease to live on a lower plane, body plane, senses and mind plane and determined to climb up and to live on a Divine plane, one will have to change one's entire day-to-day life. As a human being day-to-day we come in contract with three elements. One is the outer world, the universe and the other human beings. Therefore, as a human being, first of all, we come into contact with nature, we come into contact with human beings and secondly, we come in constant contact with ourself, our own ideas, our own desires and our own thinking. As such, one is constantly in touch with oneself. The third element is one's contact with the Supreme Self; i.e., God. Are we living a basic way of life or are we living a Divine life, depends upon our relationship and our behaviour with the world;

i.e., the universe and other human beings, our behaviour or relationship with oneself and our attitude and belief in the Supreme Self.

The essential difference between the Divine way of life and the ordinary way of life, it depends upon the centre of gravity. In the normal human way of life "I" and "Mine" is centred. In the normal human way of life "I" and "Mine" dominate – myself, my property, my acquisition, my desire, my ideas, my will, my word and my reputation, all dominate. As one lives an ordinary way of life, it essentially originates and it spreads through our own ego and our own world dominated by "I" and "Mine". It is essentially "I" based with all our relations or contacts with the three, with ourselves, with the universe and with the Supreme Self. How much beneficial it is to us is the outlook. It is essentially self-centred. On the Divine way of living it is just the reverse. Everything is "You" based, whether it is a human being or nature or the Supreme Self. A person who is living a Divine way of life always believes, thinks and acts for others and for the Supreme Self. In this way of living, everything is "You" based. He tries to erase his separate ego, his own selfish desires, motives and possessions. He erases his separate existence from others and from Supreme Self, and essentially lives for others on moral and ethical plane and lives for God on a spiritual plane. Thy need is Supreme is his attitude. On the moral ethical plane, one tries to serve others, to see that others are happy and one believes in loving and serving others. As such, the first step towards attaining the perfect Divine way of life is to imbibe all ethical and moral principles in ones living, loving and serving others.

It must be noted that no person can live a real Spiritual or Divine life, unless he is absolutely moral and ethical. One could live a moral or ethical life without living a spiritual way of living, but one cannot live a spiritual life unless one lives a moral and ethical way of life. As such, imbibing of moral and ethical values is a **MUST** or perhaps the starting point of raising oneself to the level of Spiritual or Divine way of living. As such, first of all, one has to live a moral and ethical life before one aspires to live a real Spiritual and Divine life.

In trying to reach the stage of real Divine way of life, one has to have negative and positive qualities which one has to imbibe. Negatively, one has to master oneself. One has to manage oneself and one has to control oneself. One has to win over oneself, one has to control the senses, subdue all passions and control the mind. One has to be in actual control and charge of one's mind and should not allow the mind, desires, thoughts, emotions, sentiments and imagination to take charge. One cannot dance at their bidding. One has to control and direct the mind and senses and they must dance at one's direction and at one's command by absolutely subjugating and suppressing all these elements. One has to control them, train them, direct them and by taking them inwards they must be raised to the Divine plane of life. As long as one has not reached the ultimate goal of absolute union with the Supreme Self, one has to divert all these individual elements to higher level; i.e., all these must be directed towards serving others and must be directed towards the Supreme Self. To be self managed, self controlled and self mastered is the negative aspect of achieving the stage of living a Divine life. The negative aspect is basically governed by the principle of renunciation; i.e., the renunciation of one's selfish desires, ideas, feelings plus the

renunciation of worldly possessions, worldly pleasures and this is the stepping stone to climb the rung of a ladder, taking us to the Divine plane of living. One has to renounce one's separate identity, the process should start with renunciation of material possessions. A rich man can never be a spiritual man, as renunciation is the very basis and the very foundation of spiritualism. When self abrogation, self denial is the foundation of spiritual life, how a rich man can lead a spiritual life continue to cling to his riches? Renunciation is the stepping stone, to the goal of total surrender which is the final step to the ultimate goal of union with the Super Self. Renunciation of "I" and "Mine" will slowly lead to the renunciation of Self itself. Self denial, Self surrender, Self abrogation and total wipe out of the Self is a **MUST** for living a real spiritual life, to be one with the Universe and to be one with the Super Self.

The real happiness is in giving and not in taking. Giving is not only very enjoyable, but also very beneficial. It is well said "Give all. Gain all." Giving is a great pleasure and it brings great satisfaction.

If renunciation, is negative requisite, selfless service is the positive step towards the attainment of true Divine level of living. Not only serving others is necessary, but it is an absolute duty. All of us are debtors. The world does not owe anything to us. So, if we get any opportunity to serve others, we must think that we are very privileged to get an opportunity to serve others, so that we may slowly get rid of the debt obligation we owe to the society. In real sense, by serving others, we are not obliging anybody. On the other hand, we must be obliged to the person who gives an opportunity to serve him.

In real sense, we cannot help anybody, we can only serve. By serving others we are really helping ourselves.

Service becomes very positive and very fruitful and enjoyable if it is backed by love. It is well said "Service is expression of love." Love itself is an eternal endless sacrifice. The real fulfillment of life lies in universal love and selfless service. There is nothing in this world which cannot be won over by love. There is nothing in the world which is more powerful than love. True love seeks no reward, no return and no expectation. It does not even expect gratitude. Love is for love's sake. Love is an end in itself, and it is not a means to an end. True love is total bliss. Love is the greatest force to bring unity. Love is a highest Divine quality. Love is the real manifestation of Divine. Love is God. God is love. Love is so powerful that it can bind anybody. God himself. Love and service, being always "you" based and not "I" based have great divinizing effect and they surely take us to the highest state of real and Divine living. Love is a primary Divine quality. It is the Mother, Compassion, kindness, service, peace and happiness, all are its children. True love is universal, it knows no bonds, it knows no discrimination, it sees no evil and it knows no faults. The real Universal love coupled with selfless service would totally divinize one's entire life, in all its aspects. True love ends in selfless service. It finds its end and its fulfillment in selfless service.

Once we have determined to live a Divine life, the first thing that we have to do is self analysis. We have to draw our balance sheet to find out what are our plus and minus points. To find out at what level now we are living. We have to ask a plain and simple question to ourselves. Where exactly do we now stand? Are we self-centred

persons, mainly living for ourselves, with our own likes and dislikes which are our shortcomings? Essentially, are we self indulged persons, or a self-centred selfless persons? What motivates our actions? Are they self-centred? In short, are we living for ourselves or for others? We must remember, to serve ourselves, even this body is not ours. But, if we have to serve others, the whole Universe is ours. Are we critical of ourselves or critical of others? Do we admit our mistakes and try to improve or always tend to justify our actions? While in case of doubt, do we listen to our conscience or ignore it? We must remember that we can cheat anybody, but not our own conscience. After taking an honest and correct stock of ourselves, we have to start with a firm determination that henceforward we will live a Divine life. Let us take an about turn. Let us say "Till now we have lived for ourselves and we have served ourselves enough. Let us now live on a higher plane, on a Divine plane and live for others". On an honest and proper analysis of ourselves, if we come to the conclusion, that we are predominantly self-centred persons, we have to take an about turn, and decide to live not a self-centred life, but for others. If we come to the conclusion that we have are to some extent, selfless, let us determine to become fully and absolutely selfless. With this firm determination, let us march ahead. Let us see that everyday we become more and more Divine persons and better persons, than yesterday. Let us take a daily stock of our actions during the day and analyse to what extent we have lived to our determination. Let us be very critical of ourselves. We have to be very strict with ourselves. Everyday we must become a better and better person, more and more Divine, more and more pure, more and more selfless, more and more service minded, love and serve more and more persons, be more controlled, more and more calm, more and more peaceful and less and

less self-centred. As we have seen above, ethical perfection is a stepping stone to spiritual perfection. Life is a means, for rising from beyond normal imperfection, human life and perfect Divine life. As such, one has to constantly watch oneself, to see that one is going towards perfection. The touchstone is "Are you becoming a better person?" There should be a gradual perfection in our thoughts, in our feelings, in our words and in our actions and deeds. Are we becoming more moral, more ethical and more spiritual. As we develop in these areas, we would develop in our Divinity and with it, our Divine qualities with progress. We have to see that we are progressing steadily in Divinising totally our life, in all its aspects, so that we think Divine, we feel Divine, our motives are Divine, our actions and words are Divine and the whole life in all aspects, becoming totally Divine. While Divinising, we become one with the whole Universe, others sorrows are our sorrows, other joys are our joys, others pains are our pains and we become Universal men. We consider the entire mankind as our family, we fill the universe with pure love and care, our pure love becomes limitless and our identity with the universe becomes so complete, that we lose our separate identity with our own. A Hindi poet, has put it so poetically or picturesquely, the quality of Divine nature thus – "What is the difference between the softest thing known to a man and a saint?" The poet goes on to answer the question" The softest thing known to man is butter. It is so soft, so vulnerable, that with a little heat, it becomes softer and starts to melt. But softer than butter is the heart of a saintly spiritual person because his heart melts not when he is afflicted by heat but when he sees others being afflicted by heat. When others are afflicted by heat, he cannot bear it. That is the difference." With renunciation, one becomes a sage and with love one becomes a Saint. A Divinised man is both a Saint and a Sage.

Thus, a Divine man being a Sage and a Saint, he lives on this earth and he is ever ready to run, help and serve those who are in distress and to relieve the suffering of those who are suffering. As that great St. Francis puts it.

“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love, where there is injury, pardon, where there is doubt, faith, where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; To be understood, as to understand; to be loved as to love; For it is in giving that we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned; It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

He is an angel of mercy, the ocean love, a fountain of kindness and compassion, a lake of selfless service. He would always say:

“Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
To al the people you can
As long as you can.”

KARMA YOGA OF BHAGAWAD GITA

We have already seen that Geeta deals with both Science and art of living. After dealing with the science of life, dealing with the real nature of "Atma" and the purpose and object of human life. Lord Srikrishna deals with Yoga Shastra, which can be considered as art of living. After dealing with "Sankhya" and dealing with fundamentals relating to Atma. Parmatma and the nature and the relations between them after concluding that to attain one's real Divine nature is the goal of human life. Geeta goes on to deal with the modes and the ways of attaining the object of the human life. This, he calls Yoga Shastra as against Sankhya Shastra dealing with science of human existence. The Art of living which is the subject matter of Yoga Shastra starts with Karma Yoga. Yoga itself means union with one's original nature, thereby union with God. The subject dealing with the means and ways of attaining this union, the real object of all human existence is Yoga Shastra, the art of living.

To start with, Geeta deals with much debated subject matter, as to whether one should work or should not work, thus, whether one should live in the society and do the work allotted to him or abandoning the work, one takes 'Sanyas', and do only meditation etc. by taking refuge in the forest. Lord Krishna, instead of directly answering the question, goes on to say that it is practically impossible to live without doing any work. As a rule everybody, by very human nature cannot live without doing any work and one should not abandon work and one has to do the work allotted to him.

Then Geeta, deals with another understanding that was popularly prevailing at that time. The belief was that all works lead to bondage and therefore, if one seeks freedom from this bondage, the bondage with life, bondage with "saunsar" one has to abandon all work, whether good or bad and sanyas is the only way to attain freedom from this bondage "Mukti" and one cannot continue to live in the society doing work if one desires mukti, the liberation. This view relating to work. Geeta firmly rejects and declares that all works do not lead to bondage, and only those works done with desire with attachment and with selfish motives lead to further bondage and any work done in the spirit of Yajna not only does not lead to further bondage but it will lead the way for liberation from the bondage. Geeta in no uncertain terms decries the fashion of abandoning the work without abandoning the desires, attachments, calling such persons hypocrites. It goes on to declare that one has to do the work allotted to him. The prescribed work must be performed. By doing the work prescribe, not only one helps himself to get liberation, but it would also be very useful to the society. As such, one has to live in the society and continue to do the allotted works.

Geeta goes on to discuss, how by nature one is compelled to do one work or other, and by very nature human beings are compelled to do work and by very nature, one cannot live without doing any work for even a moment. By nature every human being is a mixture of three qualities "Gunas" of nature. "Tamas" "Rajas" and "Satwa". Every human has all these qualities in some portion or other. By dominance of one or other of these qualities one is known to be of that nature "Tamasic" that indolent or inactive man. This kind of person

tries to turn his back to the challenges of life, and tries to run away from the work he has to do. He tries to run away from the society, for one reason or other. He is normally a coward, lazy evasive and tends to accept the life as it comes resigning himself to the fate of life. He chooses, to swim with the current, rather than swimming against the current. Such person is known as "Tamasic".

As against Tamasic person a Rajasic person is very active. He boldly accepts the challenges of life. However, his actions are dominated by selfless motives and desires. He wants to dominate by acquiring power, wealth and position. He is never satisfied with what he has got. He always fights to get more and more. Because of this ever increasing desires and passions, he is always restless, unhappy and miserable. He normally tends to be destructive and as he is governed by selfish motives, he does not care for other's welfare and/or other's requirements.

As against Rajasic man, a Satwik, though he is also active, his motives and purposes of doing work are just opposite to that of a Rajasic man. He does work and only those works which are good and which are for the benefit of others and to the Society with selfless motive. He considers doing good work for the benefit of others and to the benefit of the Society is his duty and he does these works in the spirit of service, in the spirit of sacrifice, in the spirit of love. Work and life are duty to him. As Satwik person is doing the work in the spirit of service, he enjoys doing his work, he is always at peace and not restless or unhappy like a Rajasic man, does constructive work and in the interest of the society. Satwik man differs from the Tamasic in the sense he does not run away from the work or from his duties and

he believes in doing work as a service and as a duty. He differs from the Rajasic man, in the spirit of doing and in the object of doing work. Both are doing work, but the nature of work, the spirit of doing and the purpose of doing the work are vastly different. One does the work selfishly for ones own benefit, even at the cost of others. The other does the work selflessly in the spirit of duty, service and sacrifice for the benefit of others and for the benefit of the Society.

It is noteworthy that while Geeta ordains that everybody should do work and one should not run away from doing work, it does not direct or discuss as to what kind of works one should do or what kind of work one should not do. It does not even apply the standards of ethics or of morality normally applied, to decide which works are good and which works are bad. Geeta, only ordains, in what spirit and for what purpose one should do work. As per Geeta, any work done in proper spirit and for proper purpose, would be good enough. The reason for this avoidance is simple. Geeta as such, is not a book on ethics or on morality. It is basically a spiritual scripture. As such, according to Geeta any work done which leads to spiritual expansion spiritual development and welfare of the doer is the right action and that should be done. As per Geeta, prescribed works should be done in the spirit of Yajna selflessly in the spirit of service and sacrifice without any attachment and without expecting any fruits of such work, is the work done as per Karma Yoga which will definitely lead to spiritual progress, spiritual emancipation. As divinising of human existence is the very goal of all spirit for Divinising the life of human being, is all that is prescribed by Karma Yoga. In the words of Maharshi Autobindo "To attain the Divine birth, a Divinising new birth of the soul into a higher consciousness – and to do Divine works is

both a means towards that before it is attained and as its expression of it, when it has attained, and the Karma Yoga of the Geeta.

Geeta after ordaining that one should do work and should not abandon works, discusses the spirit in which the work should be done, which not only does not lead to any bondage, but it liberates one from the bondage which leads to Mukti. In short, it says "any work done as Yajna and in the spirit to Yajna would be the right action done in the right spirit and in the spirit of Karma Yoga."

As per Geeta, following are the prerequisites or essentials of the work done in the spirit of Karma Yoga.

- (i) The work is done without any desire, for the satisfaction of any of doer's desires or passions.
- (ii) There is no attachment to the work to be done.
- (iii) The work should be done in spirit of duty, in the spirit of selfless service.
- (iv) The work should be done without any expectation of the fruits of such work done.
- (v) The work should be done in the spirit of equality in the same quiet spirit having same attitude towards success or failure towards happiness or unhappiness.

- (vi) In equanimity, in total peace of mind undisturbed, accept the success or the failure, the joy and the sorrow. One is not elated because of the success or one is not depressed because of the failure. Both happiness sorrow are accepted in the same spirit.
- (vii) The work is done in the spirit of duty in the spirit of service, in the spirit of selflessness and in the spirit of sacrifice.
- (viii) The work is done in the spirit of Yajna.
- (ix) All the fruits of the work and the work itself are offered at the feet of the Lord. The total surrender of the fruits of the work and the work itself to the Lord.
- (x) Done in (Akarta Bhava). One is surrendering the right of doership. In advanced stage of following Karma Yoga one realizes that one is really not doing any work by himself, but the Lord is doing the work through him. He realizes and becomes only as an instrument in the hands of the Lord and the Lord does all the work through him. As such, he does not claim the authorship of the work done by him. He becomes only a
- (xi) Total surrender of himself to God in all aspects (Sarvabhavana) He totally surrenders to God.

Ego and egocentric actions, are real road blocks in spiritual development of a human being. Ego is an arch enemy of bliss in life. If one has to live Divine life and do Divine works, the little "I" must

disappear. The ego is cause of desires and egocentric desires are cause of all unhappiness, sorrow and disappointment. Desire is root cause of all unhappiness. As such, such sanvas is not abandonment of work, but it is the renunciation of desire. Desire leads to attachment and attachment leads to bondage. As such, renunciation of egocentric desire, is a prime requisite of a person who desires to do Divine work and who wants to live Divine life. Only when the centre of ego, the little "I" disappears, the gates of eternal bliss open. As such, the first requisite of Divine work, the real work is doing the same without any personal desire. As such, freedom from desire, where there is not a personal egoism of the doer, desire becomes impossible. Desire dies out of starvation. As such, to get rid of desire, one has to get rid of the little "I" the ego.

If desire disappears and one is not prompted to do work due to personal desire and for personal gain, it automatically follows that there is no desire for the fruits of one's actions. Expectation for fruits of the work is entirely due to personal egocentric desires. If ego disappears, desires disappear. If desires disappear, the expectation of fruits of the work disappear. As such, the root cause of all bondage arising out of doing work, the egocentric desire, has to be uprooted, and if that is removed. All other road blocks in the way of doing Divine work, of Divine living will automatically get cleared. All the Divine work is to be done impersonally, devoid of any personal desires, devoid of any personal ego.

Another requisite of Divine work is non-attachment. The work is to be done as a duty, without any attachment. "I" and "My" should not touch the works one is doing. The work so to be done. He does

whatever work that comes in his way, whatever is allotted to him, with a sense of Vairagva, non attachment. Whatever work comes to him he accepts, whether he likes the work or dislikes the work. Though he is doing the work perfectly, there is no personal involvement in it and no personal attachment. Everything is done as a duty or as a service. Whatever work that comes to him, he takes it as the work allotted to him by the Divine, and, as such, his work is carried out as the ordained work, and therefore, there is total absence of attachment either to the work itself or to the fruits of the work. True renunciation. Vairagva is renunciation of attachment to the work and to the fruits of the work.

As the Divine worker is doing the work in the spirit of desireless, egoless, non attached work, he does with the sense of equality. The results of the work, whether successful or unsuccessful, he takes it in the same spirit, not overjoyed with success or disappointed by the failure. Success or failure are the same to him and, as such, happiness or sorrow are accepted by him with perfect poise. He who does work without desires, without attachment, does such work with all equanimity and poise. Such works are done in perfect poise and the results of such work are also accepted with perfect poise.

The real work done by a Divine worker, that is a person doing Divine work in Divine spirit has to be done in the spirit of Yajana, in the spirit of service, in the spirit of sacrifice. Geeta says only those works done as Yajna, are to be done, to attain liberation. All other work, not done in the spirit of Yajna will lead to bondage. Here the word "Yajna" is used by Geeta in a broader or in a symbolic sense. In ancient India, Yajna was performed where oblations of ghee and grains

were given by way of sacrifice to the sacred fire. Here also, sacred fire, the ghee and the grains are all symbolic. Sacred fire always represents, the Supreme Divine. To this Supreme Divine, offering ghee means all the good works we have done and whatever good in us, we offer to the Divine, symbolized by sacred fire. As regards grain offering, it represents all our base qualities. Whatever is undivine, we renounce them which is witnessed by Divine in the form of sacred fire. Thus, Yajna in a real sense, represents, offering all the good we have, to the Lord and renounce whatever base elements we have in us, in the presence of the Lord.

Broader meaning is given by Geeta to the concept of Yajna. As per Geeta, whatever is done without desire and attachment in the spirit of selfless service and sacrifice is Yajna. As such, anything done as a duty without any attachment or personal desire, and without any expectation, in spirit of selfless service and sacrifice qualifies as a work done as Yajna.

The concept of Yajna and its importance is very poetically narrated in Geeta in its third Chapter dealing with Karma Yoga. Geeta says that the institution of Yajna is created along with the creation of human being. As per Geeta, Prajapati who created the universe along with nature and human beings at the command of the Supreme Divine, created the institution of Yajna and ordained that all human beings must live and prosper, living in the spirit of Yajna. Here, the Creator has ordained that all human beings **MUST** work and live in the spirit of Yajna and in that spirit prosper, that is, human being are born to live and work in the spirit of Yajna, that is in the spirit of sacrifice, in the spirit of selfless service and in the spirit of total co-operation, that

is, each one is living for others, serving others, sharing with others, thus totally co-operating with each other, in the spirit of love, affection, service and sacrifice and then they will progress. What a matchless concept ! Collectively living and serving others in the spirit of sacrifice and society and individuals living collectively in that spirit will progress in such a way that, society based on such concept will give and supply to every one whatever one desires, like the Divine cow who is known to give everybody whatever one desires. Geeta uses the word "Devas". Here, we can take it as the powerful force, hidden in the collective works of individuals in the society, done in the spirit of selfless sacrifice, will lead to wonders. The whole society will be happy and will live in perfect harmony without any conflict or tension. The Society will really be a Divine Society. The kingdom of God as dreamt by Jesus Christ, or Ramarajya as visualized by Mahatma Gandhi.

Geeta goes further to tell us how an individual must live in the society. It ordains that, one has to share everything what one has got with others and after distributing whatever one has got and whatever remains after such distribution, what Geeta says and Yajnashtika () remnants of Yajna he eats, he eats Amrit () Whoever cooks for himself and eats without serving food to others, he really eats sins. **Whoever**, Geeta goes on to say "keeps anything without distribution is really a thief."

In short, while dealing with Art of doing Divine work or doing right work in the society, all should live in the spirit of service and sacrifice and collectively produce whatever is required and collectively shares and enjoy these produces. Everyone will share whatever he

has got and everyone will work and live for others. Thus, the society based on selfless service and sacrifice and co-operation and sharing would prosper beyond beyond one's imagination and everywhere there will be peace and happiness.

Now, compare today's society anywhere in the world and compare it with the society as contemplated by Geeta, a society based on selfless serving others, sharing with others, sacrificing for others. I need not comment on this. Sometimes silence is more eloquent than words.

Really the society as contemplated by Geeta is just not Ethopian. If one becomes aware of one's real nature and he would realize that, if all live to their true self, such society will really come into existence.

We, human beings, as we know, are products of five elements of nature, ether (Akash), fire (Agni), earth (Bhoomi) Air (Vaju) and water (neer). Now, watch all these five elements of the nature. All these are doing work selflessly in the spirit of sacrifice. They exist and work for others and not for themselves. They are all real Karma Yogis. Watch, Sun, Moon, Wind. Fire, Rivers, Trees. All of them are really Karma Yogis, believing in selfless puts it poetically "Lord himself being the product of these five elements is to insert a real Karma Yogi

= - (Earth)- - (Ethic) - - (Air) - - (EFire) - -
(Water).

As such, the Lord himself is product of these five great elements of nature and therefore, he is great Karma Yogi. Yes, in Geeta itself,

Lord Krishna narrates, how he works ceaselessly every moment, when he has nothing to gain by such work, but he works. When he has nothing to gain by such work, but he works for work's sake which is the essence of Karma Yoga.

Now, all of us are made of all these five elements of nature. Otherwise also, all of us are of Divine origin, Divine creations – And if we are of Divine origin and creatures of these five elements which all believe in selfless service, is it not natural for us, to do selfless service and live a life of service and sacrifice? All of us are naturally suited to live as Karma Yogis, doing Divine work with Divine spirit by working and living a life of selfless service as a sacrifice. We have models before us. Lord Krishna was himself an ideal Karma Yogi. Gautam Buddha was a great Karma Yogi So also Lord Jesus Christ. In the recent times, we have great Karma Yogis in the lives of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi.

Till now, whatever we have considered, as essentials or characteristics of Karma Yoga, are also essentials for all ethical and moral living. A person who ideally lives a moral and ethical life has to be selfless and do work as service and sacrifice and has to live for others. Upto this stage, these elements are common for both ethical and spiritual living. Though a spiritual man is necessarily an ethical and moral man, he is something more than ethical, that is all spiritual men are ethical. However, all ethical men may not be spiritual. The next two elements of Karma Yoga, which we are going to discuss are additional essentials of spiritual work, which may not be present in ethical work and in ethical living.

Now, whether we desire or not, whether we expect or not, certain results, certain fruits follow doing of such work. Now, if we do not desire or keep the results or the rewards, we renounce the fruits of such work. What we should do with the rewards we get for doing such work Karma Yoga ordains – “Do not just renounce the rewards you get. Offer these results, these rewards to the Lord Himself. Karma Yoga tells us that results which follow, which we get from doing selfless service, should be offered by way of sacrifice.” So it is ordained that the fruits we get by doing any Divine work, are to be offered at the sacred feet of the Lord.

While dealing with Raja Vidya in the 9th Chapter, Geeta goes a step further and says “Not only you offer the work itself to me. Whatever you do, you do it in my name and whatever you do, offer that for me.” Thus, Geeta ordains that not only we have to offer the fruits of the work, but the work itself must be offered at the feet of God. That is from the beginning, the work has to be done for God in his name, and the work and results of the work are to be offered at the feet of the Lord. Geeta, in Chapter 9 goes further to say that not only the work and/or its results are to be offered to the Lord, but whatever we have got we have to offer to him.” Whatever little things we may have, we have to offer and that is lovingly accepted by the Lord. As per Geeta, it may just be a flower, or a leaf or a fruit, if offered in the spirit of sacrifice, the Lord will accept. Thus in advanced stages of Karma Yoga, we are not only offering the fruits of the work at the feet of the Lord, we are doing all the work in the name of God and offering that work itself along with its fruits to the Lord. Yes, here there is Divine union of Yogas, Karma and Bhakti which become part of the great Samarpan Yoga. Yes, not only doing selfless work, without

any attachment in the spirit of sacrifice and without expecting any results, and offering the same to the Lord, the Karma Yoga working along with Bhakti Yoga, makes us to do this Karma Yoga work to be done for God in the name of God and finally total surrender of these works and their fruits to the Lord. One can imagine all selfless work done in the name of God, for God, as a work of God and to be sacrificed to God, all works done in this spirit, how pure they would be, how fruitful they would be! It would certainly take us a long way in our ultimate goal of total surrender to the Lord. As Lord Krishna ordains finally, we will have to achieve a final goal of our lives to totally surrender to him in all aspects Karma Yoga purifies our work and our living and divinizes our senses. Bhakti Yoga purifies and divinizes our heart and Raja Yoga our senses and mind and Jnana Yoga purifies and divinizes our intellect. Thus, by divinizing ourselves in all aspects, we will qualify ourselves for the total surrender to the Lord, as a final step to be united with Him.

The last characteristic or a step towards doing work as per Karma Yoga, is the surrender of the authorship of the work. As we advance in the path of spiritual life, we realize that we are not really doing anything and all the works we are doing, is not really done by us. It is really done by the Lord through us. In the advance stage of Karma Yoga we realize this fact, that really we are not doing anything, but the work is really we are not doing anything, but the work is really done by the Lord. We are the instrument through which work is done by the Lord. As Geeta puts it, we are only machines, and he is the Engineer who works through us. Thus, at the end completely purifying ourselves, we have to totally surrender ourselves to the Lord and allow the Lord to do whatever he wants through our instrumentality.

After such realization and total surrender of ourselves, in all aspects, one realizes that the Divine motives inspires and determines our entire action; the human soul impersonal in the Lord is the pure and silent channel of his works and of his power. We become an instrument through which the Divine acts. One should just become a flute in the hands of Lord Krishna and let him play on it, whatever notes he wants. As ordained, by Geeta for-saking all Dharma, all Karma, one should totally surrender to the Lord. The Divine worker totally surrenders himself just to become a vehicle, an instrument in the hands of the Lord enabling Him to use the same in the way He wishes.

The follower of Karma Yoga, gradually progresses from doing good work to doing God's work. He starts with good works. He starts with doing work with love, to help others who are in need of his help. He treats everybody as his own, as equal to him and starts helping others with love. The work becomes . At this stage, he treats everybody as his equal and loves everybody. He wants to help those who are in need of help. Negatively, he will not do anything which is hurtful to others. With thoughts, words and deeds he avoids doing anything which would hurt anybody. Doing good and avoiding any bad deed, is the first step in the way leading to Karma Yoga.

Then, he slowly begins to realize that he should not have anything which is not for meeting his necessities and starts doing work led by , (renunciation). He believes in renunciation and he

gives away to the needy whatever he has got. The work from _____ ,
develops into _____ .

Then, the follower of Karma Yoga realizes that he is a humble servant of God and he has come here to serve all other human beings who are children of God. Thus, he starts to serve others with all humility, in the spirit of serving the children of the Lord. At this stage, his works become _____ , Thus, his work becomes _____ , _____ and

As he progresses in practice, the Divine worker realizes that God is in every body and all human beings represent Him and he is dwelling in all human beings and he is everywhere and begins to serve people as God. Thus, his work develops into _____ . He begins to do all work as worship of his Lord. He sees God everywhere and begins to do all his activities as worship of God. He begins to work in the spirit of _____ (Yad. Yad, Karomi Shambho Tad Tad Tawa Aradhanam (Adya Shankaracharya). Thus, his works, thoughts, words and deeds all become Pooja Maya. Thus all his works become _____ ,

Then comes the climax. The Divine worker realizes that what he is doing, he is not doing and that all works he is supposed to be doing is really work done by the Lord. He is only an instrument through whom the Lord is really working. He is only a Nimitta, an instrument in the hands of God. Thus completely purifying, divinizing himself, he totally surrenders himself to the Lord. He attains complete fulfillment by becoming an instrument in the hands of the Lord, so that the Lord

can work through him. Thus, his work becomes Devamaya (). Thus, the Divine worker progresses from doing from the beginning of work and ending with doing work. Doing all work in such spirit will enable him to achieve the final goal of union with the Lord.

In all yogas, Karma Yoga is not an exception. The real stumbling block in the spiritual development and progress is that little **"I"** and its progeny **"My and Mine"**, unless that is controlled. Suppressed and ultimately totally removed, one cannot reach the common goal of all years, the ultimate liberation and union with the Supreme Self. The real Karmayogi would free himself from all selfishness, and he breaks all the shackles of **"I"**, **"My and Mine"** and filled with love and detachment, with total service and sacrifice reaches the ultimate goal of total liberation. To start with he becomes more and more ethical. Without ethical perfection, spiritual development is not possible. The touchstone of your spiritual progress, for you becoming better and better person daily. Are you becoming less and less egocentred, **"I"** and **"Mine"** and more and more of **Thou and Thine**? The good nature should develop and then it will be developed into God nature. As long as **"I"** and **"Mine"** are there, there is no question of reaching the goal of spiritual practices. We have Divine spark in us. That spark should be developed into flood, to wash away the **"I"** and **"My"**. It is our privilege to become God like and it is our great fortune, a great chance, to live a God like life. Let us seize it with both hands and progress slowly but surely on the golden path of liberation to regain our Divine nature, so that we become eligible for Union with the Supreme Self. For that purpose, one has to work and live like Divine. Let us live Divine life, doing

Divine work, loving the Divine and totally surrendering to the Supreme Divinity.
