

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

Introduction

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

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

Awe Unfounded

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

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

The public or private discourses on the Gita relatively fare better for they enthrall the audience by the eloquence of the speaker besides the interest the interspersed anecdotes

elicit. However, amidst all this verbiage, the profundity of Krishna's message would seldom register in the minds of those who try to seek it. Of course, the commentary-discourse route misses on the essential ingredient of understanding - contemplation. After all, Krishna himself recommends to Arjuna at the end of his talk, s63, ch.18, '*That thee heard of this wisdom / For task on hand now apply mind*'.

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

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

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

The stage chosen for unfolding the grand philosophy is in itself reflective of the brilliance of the Gita. Nothing ever surpasses the drama of war in the realms of life and so is the case with the accompanying debate about its rights and wrongs. At the threshold of the epic battle of Mahabharata, on the sacred grounds of Kurukshetra, Arjuna, the Pandava Prince, suffers from qualms at the prospect of killing kith and kin in the Kaurava camp besides all those whom he adores therein. It has always been in the nature of man to worry about the prospect of his death besides that of his near and dear. Thus Lord Krishna, a friend of the Pandavas who happened to be Arjuna's charioteer, opens this classic discourse in s11, ch.2 by chiding his disciple and setting its trend as well, '*Averring as knowing / Worried over trivia! / Reckon never wise / Dead and alive both*'.

What follows in the best part of the remaining 643 verses spread over 17 chapters can be summarized thus: The Supreme Spirit through Nature causes the birth of all beings. Thus, the indwelling spirit in the beings is a divisible part of the same Indivisible Supreme Spirit. The spirit lying within beings is subject in degrees to virtue, passion and delusion, the three attributes of Nature. It should remain the human endeavour to free the indwelling spirit from these nature-induced influences. This, however, is not possible for any in a single birth, and indeed, it would take the sustained effort of lot many births for that. Thus, in the end, the soul could be tended towards that state of purity, which matches with that of the Supreme Spirit. As and when this happens, the indwelling spirit merges with the Supreme Spirit which is nothing but moksha. Understandably, from that

state of unison with the Supreme, man never returns to be born again. This is about the spiritual goal of man in this world. In short, it's in the nature of the Supreme Spirit to separate the wheat from the chaff by bringing beings for dalliance in the domain of the Nature. While a pass ensures merger with the Supreme Spirit, failure keeps man ever in limbo. It is thus left for man to reach the Supreme, and the Gita shows him the way.

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

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

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

And consider this. Arjuna was an educated prince and an exemplary warrior but with no specialized knowledge or training in theology. Yet he found no difficulty in grasping the centrality of Krishna's advice that helped dispel his doubts. After all, it could be expected that Krishna who knew his friend's limitations on that count would have fashioned his discourse suitably. And won't that bring the Gita into the orbit of average human understanding? More so, Krishna's discourse was intended to be a ready reckoner for Arjuna and not an assignment in spirituality to be attended to as homework, with reference books and all, leaving the battlefield for the day.

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

Well, didn't Vyasa place the Gita in proper perspective with 'the end of the chapter averment that it is the quintessence of the Upanishads and the Brahmasutras'. Yet this futile exercise of backward integration of the Gita with the Upanishads and others

continues, giving rise to myriad interpretations to what is essentially a simple and straightforward message that Krishna intended for average human comprehension. In modern parlance, Bhagvad-Gita is like the Board Note, and it does not behoove the board members to pore over the relevant files.

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

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

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

Last but not the least is the sectarian twist some interpolations give to the Gita to the hurt of the majority of the Hindus. Understandably, the offended sections view this secular text with suspicion, and thus keep away from it altogether, missing so much as a consequence of the same. In 'All About Interpolations' that follows, this aberration is sought to be corrected, and it is hoped that for the general good of the Hindus this aspect of the Gita would be set right for all times to come.

All about Interpolations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

However, no exercise of this kind would be complete unless the four pairs of *slokas* that have the same first lines are scrutinized. With the common first line, *sreyaan svadharmo vigunah*, s35, ch.3 and s47, ch.18, seek to perpetuate caste oriented duties by discouraging any switch over, and thus are clear interpolations. S15 and s 28 of ch.6 both open with *yunjann evam sadaatmaanam* and the message too remains more or less the same though contextually different. Yet it appears that the former could be an interpolation. S34, ch.9 and s65, ch.18 not only start with *man-manaa bhava mad-bhakto* but also mean same thing. In the ninth chapter as discussed in the introduction therein, s32 and s33 are clear interpolations. It also need be noted that s31 has the chapter closing character about it. Now follows this repetitive chapter-concluding *sloka* after two interpolations, s32 and s33. Logically speaking s34 is but an interpolation to help a proper chapter closure by slightly altering s65, ch.18. S7, ch.16 and s30, ch.18 both start with *pravruttim cha nivruttim cha* line but are contextually different and thus remain above suspicion.

Identified here in this third edition are 110 *slokas* of deviant nature in the entire text that could be taken as interpolations with reasonable certainty. However, so as not to besmirch the general tenor of the discourse in this Treatise of Self-help, the same are interpreted in a broader perspective, but not in their narrow sense intended by the interpolators. Be that as it may, there naturally arises a hypothetical question - What if the priestly interests of yore had seen to it that the said philosophy defining *slokas* of the second chapter that are inimical to their creed were omitted altogether? In that case we would have been left with no option but to take the perplexing interpolations with a pinch of salt in the absence of any clue to negate them as such.

Chapter – 1: Arjuna's Dilemma

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

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

human nature that so prominently figures in Lord Krishna's discourse in the coming chapters.

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

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

1

Thus spoke Dhritarashtra:

Appraise Sanjay as my sons
Gathered at the battleground
Face the sons of my sibling
Eager for the war on hand..

2

Thus spoke Sanjaya:

Eyeing Pandavs there lined up
So to assess relative strengths
Reached Duryodhan, Dron in time.

3

Find *acharya*, said the Prince,
Pandav force thus there arrayed
None other than by Drushtadyumn
Whom thou taught all tricks of war.

4

Virat 'n Drupad, so Yuyudhaana
With Bhim 'n Arjun they stand out.

5

Dhrushtaket, the one to dread
King of Kashi and Purujit
Kuntibhoj 'n Saibya too
Chekitan, their force augment.

6

Uttamouj 'n Yudhamanyu
Abhimanyu so Vikranta
Draupadi's offspring not to speak
Five-star generals all no less.

7

For thy feel of our own strength
Roll-call heroes of ours O, revered.

8

Thou with Bhishm, Karn 'n Kripa
Make all four our Field Marshals,
Bhurisrav, Aswatham 'n Vikarn
Our Marshals, near Field Marshals.

9

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

10

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

11

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

12

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

13

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

14

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

15

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

16

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

17

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

18

Drupada as well Draupadi's progeny
With their hero Abhimanyu
Blew, O monarch, at one go

Conchs of theirs to deafening sound.

19

Tumult that ensued shook the ground

Bewildered Kauravs, as skies roared.

20

When came time to join lines

So it happened O my Lord

With his Gandiv in harness

Hanumaan's ensign in flutter

Arjun stared at Kauravs hard

And thus spoke to Lord Krishna.

21/22

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Pray posit chariot ours upfront

So that I can have a look

At those itching for this war.

23

Time I discern those backing

Duryodhan the evil minded.

24

Thus spoke Sanjaya:

Upfront Krishna took Arjun

In their chariot drawn by four.

25

Beseeched Krishna then Arjun

That he behold Bhishm 'n Dron

As well all those there gathered.

26

Espied Arjun his clansmen

Grandads, uncles, brothers and all

Teachers as well friends of note.

27

At the site of

His kinsmen,

He in distress

Spoke worried.

28

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Disturb kinsfolk here gathered

Feel I parched, it nauseates too.

29

Horrify no end prospects war

Un-grips Gandiv, looks I'm sick.

30

Looks like it's an illusion

Lord I envision bad omens all.

31

Crave I not for power or pelf
What's it worth to kill Kauravs?

32

Know not avails what empire
What sort pleasures it entails!

33

Whom all we wish well in life
Here they face us risking same.

34

Us they oppose
Dads, grandads
Sons, grandsons, so uncles
Brothers-in-law 'n teachers too!

35

Were the stakes be sky high like
Ruling earth 'n heaven as well
Let those Kauravs itch for fight
I won't have this war on hand.

36

Go as they on sinful path
Why earn sin by killing them.

37

See I no gain by their end
Why then kill our kith 'n kin?

38

Blinded by greed, bent on deceit
Fail they foresee, war ruins the race.

39

Wiser for the woes of wars
Why not Lord we rescind now.

40

Die aged en masse dharma's votaries
Won't that let go youth ours haywire?

41

Sex ratio adverse that war ensues
Turns women soft on caste barriers.

42

Fallen women all go to hell
What is more their bastards rob
Posthumous rites of forebearers.

43

Liaisons low of women wanton
Set our race on ruinous course.

44

Is it not said, O My Lord

Fail who dharma are hell bound.

45

What urge killing kith and kin,
Why should we sin lusting crown?

46

Disarm I now on my own
Let them harm me if they deem.

47

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Thus O Raja
Despaired Arjun
Arms he threw
And sat distressed.

Ends thus

Arjuna's Dilemma,
The First Chapter
Of Bhagvad-Gita
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter -2: All about Life

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

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

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

1

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
In pity Krishna
Addressed Arjuna,
Bogged in sorrow
With tears profuse.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:
Oh, what affliction
At this juncture!
Wholly un-Aryan
Unholy as well!!

3

Mind-set impotent that unnerves
Strengthen thou for fight on hand.

4

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Adore as I, how dare I
Make Bhishma 'n Dron target?

5

Better I go with begging bowl
Than earn disgrace slaying them,
What doth glitter have sceptre
In the bloodstained hands of mine?

6

Those us oppose
We hate hurting,
What use war
Who victors are?

7

About my duty I'm in doubt
Tell me kindly what is right.

8

Beset by doubts,
Saddled by grief
Would I be joyous
Were I the king?

9

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Bent to rescind
Arjun had no more to speak.

10

Make I privy O my Lord
Speaks as Krishna to Arjun
Stood who there in confusion.

11

Thus spoke the Lord:
Averting as knowing
Worried over trivia!
Reckon never wise
Dead and alive both.

12

You and Me
As well these,
Have had past
Future as well.

13

Wise all realize
Embodies selfsame spirit in one
From birth to death, in every birth.

14

Sensual feelings, grief 'n joy
Transient are like, heat and cold.

15

Weigh who pain 'n pleasure equal
Such are those on path freedom.

16

What's not real, it's never been
And that's true, it's ever there
That's how wise all came to see.

17

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

18

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

19

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

20

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

21

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

22

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

23

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

24

Unalterable 'n Eternal
Immovable but pervades all

Permanent 'n so Everlasting
Spirit thus none can ever destruct.

25

Can sans form Spirit get bound?
Get right answer thou won't burn.

26

Prima facie if thou feel
Subject Spirit is to rebirths
Why grieve over end of frame?

27

Dies as one
For like rebirth,
Why feel sad
Of what's cyclic.

28

Isn't thy lament over that
Un-manifested to start with
Gets manifested just as guest
And bids adieu in due course.

29

Seen in wonder, spoken in awe
Spirit none knows that lies in him.

30

Dies not Spirit as die beings
What for man then tends to grieve!

31

Being a warrior dharma thine
That thee fight with all thy might.

32

For martyrs of unsought wars
Ever open are heavenly gates.

33

If thee back out from duty
Imperil thou thy own dharma
And that earns thee infamy.

34

What for lead a dishonoured life
Why leave legend dubious behind!

35

Amiss be taken thine intent
Treat thee coward thy friends 'n foes.

36

Count on thou thy detractors
Besmirch they thy character,
Damned be thine obituary
By their campaign of slander.

37

If slain, heaven; alive, it's reign
Resolve to fight with right intent.

38

Shed thy sentiment, guilt unhinge
Eye not gain as wage thou war.

39

It's this knowledge that liberates
And helps thee act, with no restraint.

40

Goes not waste
Effort thine ever,
Zeal for action
Frees from fear.

41

In their resolve
Succeed firm,
Mind as wavers
Lose infirm.

42

Unwise use all enticing
Flowery language to further
Rituals Vedic in their scores
Not the knowledge of Vedas.

43

Eyeing heaven with mind mundane
Go for ceremonies such in hope
Of having best of both the worlds.

44

Pursue if thou wants with zeal
Instincts then would spin thy mind.

45

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

46

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

47

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

48

It's but yoga
If thou strive

Wants without
Emotions bereft.

49

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

50

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

51

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

52

Clears if reason one's illusion
Bothers he not to what's over
Or for what might lie in store.

53

Stands as firm mind thy clear
Steer thou clear of path rituals.

54

Thus spoke Arjuna:
How to spot the yogi true
Were he there ever in the crowd?

55

Thus spoke the Lord:
Blessed are strong with blissful self
Helps them that slight all that tempts.

56

Oblivious of misfortune
Not the one to crave for fun
Sways not ever by his feelings
Stays thus yogi ever even.

57

Unfettered by attachment
Compliments to indifferent
Adversity by unshaken
Wisdom thus is personified.

58

Stimuli those of organs sensory
Tortoise like wise draw into shell.

59

Senses reined
Who so abstains,
Sans he longing
Turns he godly.

60

Senses as may tend them rash

Wise as well stray, from right path.

61

Rein in senses, hone thine effort
Rely on Supreme, that's true wisdom.

62

Leans man on
Lends what charm,
Brings that want
And that's fault.

63

Despair is what clouds reason
Brings that ruin through deeds mindless.

64

Yield to senses sans craving
Cap as thou thy wants dubious.

65

Calm that offsets woes of life
And that equable makes thy mind.

66

Lacks mind focus as it strays
Robs that peace 'n joy thereby.

67

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

68

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

69

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

70

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

71

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

72

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

Ends thus:

All about Life,
The Second Chapter
Of Bhagvad-Gita
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter -3: Theory of Action

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

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

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

To appreciate the background for these interpolations, one might refer to '*All about Interpolations*' of this book. Such interpolative *slokas* in this and other chapters of the text bear asterisks for ready identification. In what could be a fascinating experience for the readers, these earmarked verses, wherever they crop up, would bring them face to face with the logical disconnect in the discourse. In the end, bypassing these would tend them on the path of sequential thinking outlined by the Lord for the enlightenment of man.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Capping wants, if betters action
How come Thou then push for war!

2

Find I hard to grasp all this
Thou be forthright, what is right.

3

Thus spoke the Lord:
Apply knowledge 'n be freed
Or thou make tango, with forgo
Precepts these yore, I fashioned.

4

Work-shy being, is no freedom
Dormant being, makes no living.

5

None like for man, non-action
Keeps him nature ever engaged.

6

Refrains if one, ever craving
Restraint it's but misleading.

7

Reins as carnal, tucked in mind
Strive who doth in deeds excel.

8

Lest thee should stake survival
Turn thy back not on thy work

19

Ever thee act at par duty
Let that be thy goal of life.

20

Lead mankind in Janaka's route
To moksha en route deeds selfless.

21

As and when thou prove thy worth
Emulates world then acts all thine.

22

Left with none to gain or prove
Keep I Myself ever engaged.

23

Were I to fail to self-exert
Man might follow suit as well.

25

Strive as wise to act freely
Get bound unwise ever restrained.

26

Waste not breath, ill-informed with
Wise show ways through their own deeds.

27

Gloat as egotists of their deeds
Sourced are acts in one's nature.

28

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

29

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

30

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

31

Whoso takes, this advice
Feels no burden ever engaged.

32

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

33

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

34

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

36

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

37

Thus spoke the Lord:
Well, it's passion, lust 'n wrath
Drag that man on path painful.

38

Flame 'n mirror as shrouded
Without let by smoke 'n dust
As well embryo in the womb
Wisdom is by wants clouded.

39

Wise all tend to cap all wants
Which like fire all burn to core.

40

Veiled off wisdom sees not man
Mind and body steeped in wants.

41

Rein in matter with thy mind
Thus thou nip thy wants in bud.

42

Score over senses sensuous feelings
Betters that mind, bettered by knowing
But above all Spirit that reins supreme.

43

Let thy Spirit
Rule the roost,
Restrain thou
Thy mind mischievous.

Ends thus:

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

Chapter -4: Practical Wisdom

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

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

That brings us to the first of the caste-oriented precepts in the Gita - *chaatur varnyam mayaa srustam* (s13). The plain reading of this *sloka* would have us believe that the Lord Himself created the four-caste system, of Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra, to suit the inclinations of a given soul towards certain earmarked calling of social and spiritual life in this world. And then, as a rider that is vague at the very best; Lord Krishna says that though He is the author of it all, He should not be deemed as the doer. These so-called caste characteristics and duties as well figure in s 41-s48 of the concluding chapter, which are discussed therein.

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

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

Or is the *chaatur varnyam* His real will, whether one likes it or not? The answer could be found in the Lord's averments as one reads on. The four types of beings the Lord identifies by their nature and disposition are - the virtuous, the vile, the passionate and the deluded. Isn't the proposition that people of a given nature and disposition could be bracketed into one single caste so absurd? After all, even a given family provides many shades of human nature in its members, won't it? That being the case, could Krishna be so naive as not to know about it! Above all, hasn't He declared in s 29 ch.9, '*None I favour, slight I none / Devout Mine but gain Me true*'. *Slokas* like *chaaturvarnyam* that would be encountered intermittently in the Gita are but mischievous, if not malicious, interpolations meant to buttress the Aryan caste prejudices and thus should be dismissed as such. However the said *slokas* are versified in nonpartisan manner in this rendering.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Advice this to Sun I gave
Told he Manu
Ikshvaku thus got in turn.

2

Followed world My word for long
Lost which mankind in due course.

3

It's but love I nurse for thee
Made Me reveal this Secret
Wisdom Supreme I gave Sun.

4

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Born of now, how come Thou
Did Sun advise there for long!

5

Thus spoke the Lord:
Born all here times umpteen
Aware am I but know not thou.

6

Beyond the pale of birth 'n death
On My volition I take birth.

7

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

8

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

9

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

10

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

14

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

15

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

16

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

17

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

18

Grasping action, in non-action
Inaction in action, discern wise.

19

Whoso privy to this truth
Gives up wants all senses seek.

20

He that content leans on none
Resigned he lives in thick of things.

21

Mind if keeps thy greed at bay
It's no sin thou meet thy needs.

22

One that truly well realized
Happy being with his share
Rids of envy from his mind
Easy he feels ever engaged
Treats he alike grief 'n joy
Wins 'n losses not to speak.

23

Acts of man to favour none
Grace they have of deeds selfless.

33

Better wise deeds than acts selfless
Wise thus strive to better themselves.

35

As 'n when thou this realize
In us both then world discern
And get rid of thy illusions.

36

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

37

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

38

None that betters this wisdom
Realize thou by striving hard.

39

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

40

Besides those who this doubt
Here as above suffer uncouth.

41

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

42

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

Ends thus:

Practical Wisdom,
The Fourth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter -5: Art of Renunciation

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

S18 avers the Omnipresence of the Supreme in Brahmans, cows, elephants, dogs and dog eaters. This tasteless description could be but an interpolation as it is so ill behoves the Lord's eloquence and sophistication of expression seen throughout. Incidentally, the succeeding s19 makes it clear that whoever recognizes Him in all beings attains the Supreme State in life itself. It may be noted that s29 and s30 of next chapter also run

along the same lines. S27-s28 that deal with yogic practices and s29, which asserts the Supreme as the beneficiary of sacrificial rituals are but interpolation for reasons that bear no repetition.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Pray be clear, as Thee aver
Act 'n give up in selfsame breath.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:
Give up all 'n thou be freed
So is the case with selfless work
But know latter scores much better.

3

Wise neither want, nor they shun
That's how they give up ever engaged.

4

Way action 'n path learning
Know not ignorant not different.

5

Work highway 'n lane freedom
Know the learned are the same.

6

What thou forego if thee cease
Deeds selfless make acts forsake.

7

Such one realized
Self-willed, dutiful
Within self remains
Without ever engaged.

8

Privy to this will realize
On his body as it works
Say hath he none to name one.

9

Wise do realize needs physical
Urges are they driven by genes.

10

Spreads on lotus leaves as water
Sticks none sin of deeds duteous.

11

Wise in selfless work engage
Forego while they self-purify.

12

Wise ever stay cool never in want
Bog down but naive ever in want.

13

Covetous not 'n ever laid back
Wise in tune with Supreme lay.

14

It's his nature, not the Spirit
Makes man act by wants induced.

15

Takes not Supreme credit or fault
Grasp none have of this uncouth.

16

He that keeps his bias at bay
Sun-like he shines being wise.

17

In clear conscience 'n fairness
Gives man freedom faith in Him

19

Keeps who equity ever in thought
Faultless being attains he Brahman.

20

In state Brahman,
Gloats never man as smiles fortune
Nor loses heart when things go wrong.

21

Joys induced all tire one soon
Stay self-joyous all blissful souls.

22

End as in grief joys of flesh
Go not wise for pleasures such brief.

23

Subdue lust 'n rein in wrath
Leads that to thy state of joy.

24

Live in ease the true knowing
Enjoy they all within themselves.

25

With pure intent sans ill-will
Realized all reach State Supreme.

26

Unmoved by his mind subdued
Stays ever free the self-realized.

Ends thus:

Art of Renunciation,
The Fifth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-6: Practice of Restraint

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

Seen in this background, s 41 and s42 are clearly interpolations not only for affecting the continuity of the text but also for what they contain. S41 would have it that those who perform the *asvamedha* (ritualistic horse sacrifice) would reach heaven to be born again rich. Likewise s 42 would have us that, or such would be born in learned homes. It would seem that s46-s47 are digressions, but in effect they carry forward the Lord's discourse from s32, at which point Arjuna interrupted Him with his queries.

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

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Forego none if forsake chores
Eye not gain 'n thou be freed.

2

If thou let go its godly
Makes that hard thy self-interest.

3

Uphill though the way forsake
As 'n when thou make it there
Stay thus put with no more strain.

4

Reining senses sans motive
Wise on selfless deeds focus.

5

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

6

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

7

Overcome if vicissitudes
Vibe thee well with Me Supreme.

8

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

9

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

18

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

19

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

20

Restrain mind in self-focus
Beatitude of life that makes

21

Transcends senses if thy mind
It's then thou reach state of bliss.

22

Rooted so on peak of bliss
Wise not bother lows of life.

23

So to live in yogic state
Untie wise from life's bothers.

24

Wise keep tabs on self-impulse
Affects to without are they immune.

25

Wed wise focus with calm mind
Makes that life of theirs tranquil.

26

Pulled by wants as trips the mind
Gain ground wise by self-leverage.

27

Passions languid, mind tranquil
Keep man ever on blissful course.

28

Mind that's pure with self-control
Leads that man to State Brahman.

29

Espy wise in right outlook
Others in self 'n vice versa.

30

Discern Me in what they see
Ever they find Me nearby them.

31

Me who sees in all beings
He's the one that dwells in Me.

32

He's the yogi self-feels who
Joys of others 'n grief as well.

33

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Frail being man, fail I see
Yoga Thou espouse, lasting in practice.

34

Can one ever tame his mind
Like the wind that yields to none?

35

Thus spoke the Lord:
Calm 'n custom bring in ropes
Tough ask though to subdue mind.

36

Fail keep going unruly
Persevere self-willed all the way.

37

Thus spoke Arjuna:
What if one
Throws up all
Lacks who zeal
Hath though faith?

38

Resolve if dissolves in mid-course
Won't that be like scattered clouds?

39

Kindly dispel all my doubts
Think I none of else for that.

40

Thus spoke the Lord:
Strives if one to enrich self
Ends not in grief here or there.

43

Harnessed habit, of births past
Helps man strive to self-realize.

44

With the reason thus imbibed
Realized outwit scholars there.

45

Awareness of births of yore
Helps the striving gain moksha.

46

Ahead in protocol comes yogi
Learned, ascetics, as all sticklers for rituals.

47

He's the yogi of yogis

Self-inner who fills with Me.

Ends thus:

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

Chapter-7: Know the Spirit

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

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

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
How to retain Me in mind
He in yoga comes to know.

2

Make thee privy that knowledge
Leaves that no scope for some more.

3

Rarely beings seek their self
Of them but a few Me grasp.

4

Earth 'n ether, fire 'n air
Water, mind, sense 'n self
Elements are of My Nature.

5

It's this Nature holds all worlds
But above 'n apart is My Nature.

6

While My Higher Nature brings
Ends all that Low Nature Mine.

7

Better than Me none exists
On Me hinges whatever exists.

8

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

9

Odour of this earth is Me

Heat of fire 'n life in being
As well wisdom in forsake.

10

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

11

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

12

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

13

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

14

If thee forsake well and true
To Me then thou come 'n grasp
Natures these Mine illusions.

15

Who in Supreme hath no faith
Gripped are by these illusions
And thus go on path wayward.

16

Distressed, desirous 'n knowing
Such pious are those Me worship.

17

Of these but the steadfast man
With pure intent gets My nod.

18

Noble as all worship Me
The knower true is selfsame Me.

19

Once in a while
Births after many,
Born who knows
I pervade worlds.

24

Unmanifest Am State Supreme
But saddle Me with form uncouth.

25

Dull in delusion won't perceive
Me that's unborn veiled from them.

26

Am privy to what goes on
But man hath no grasp of Me.

27

Illusions dual, want and wrath
Ever in delusion keep they man.

28

Pure minded sans illusions
On Me such of virtue lean.

29

Seek all those who My refuge
See they Brahman ever in self.

30

Me Be-All 'n End -All grasps
Me he ponders on deathbed.

Ends thus:

Know the Spirit,
The Seventh Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter- 8: Cycle of Creation

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

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

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

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:
O Lord appraise what's Brahman
Lies what within 'n backs action
Nature of deities besides the beings.

2

What is that guides bodily acts,

What makes yogis realize Thee?

3

Thus spoke the Lord:

Self Imperishable is Brahman

But dwells it yet there in beings

Brings that forth is Act Supreme.

4

Perish as beings all in time

Spirit that lasts of them is Me.

6

In the end the way one tends

Charts that future course he takes.

7

If thou act with this in mind

In the end thou gain Me true,

By My word now opt for war

With thy strength 'n skill I gave.

8

Me they reach whoso keep

On Me focus as they work.

15

Having come to stay with Me

Get they rid of births and deaths.

16

Journey to Brahman holds return ticket

Journeys back none abode from Mine.

17

Wise all realize days Brahman

Ages thousands make with nights.

18

By day as He brings beings

Un-manifests He all by night.

19

It's all rebirths through His day

But with nightfall cease they all

As He wakes up puts He back.

20

My State Supreme that never ends

Un-manifested it's above Brahman.

21

It's My Abode that Supreme

For man to reach not to leave.

22

It's through devotion that thee gain

State Supreme that pervades worlds.

Ends thus:

Cycle of Creation,
The Eighth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-9: The Sacred Secret

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

In s13, it is stated that the realized man constantly and single-mindedly remains devoted to the Supreme and in s14 it is averred that such ever remain united with Him in meditation. But it is only in s22 that the protection of the Supreme to those engaged in His service in true devotion is assured. While s23 states that those who worship other gods with faith, worship Him only, albeit defectively, s25 pictures varied outcome of worshipping other gods, a contradiction of s3, ch.12. And in s24, He is the Enjoyer and the Lord of all Sacrifice, an anathema to the philosophy of the Gita. Also s15 is but a digression to facilitate s16-s21 and s23-s25. What is more, there could be some omissions from the original, given the seemingly incomplete exposition of the promised dharma in s2.

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

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

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Unenvied as thou I would tell
The art of leading fruitful life.

2

Supreme secret that's sacred
Profound dharma for mankind
Fair and simple, practicable.

3

Fail who follow this dharma
Pay they price in recurring births.

4

Whatever is there I pervade
In My ambit lay beings
Though it's not the other way round.

5

Fail if thou to grasp it thus
Feel as though I'm confined in
What I bring forth 'n sustain.

6

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

8

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

9

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

10

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

11

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

12

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

13

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

14

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

22

Those as meditate 'n worship
Them I take My wings under

26

Hold I dear a leaf even
Offered when by pure minded.

27

Act thou throughout in good faith
Thus thou make Me feel honoured.

28

Rid be thou of all that binds
Freed be thus thou come to Me.

29

None I favour; slight I none
Devout Mine all gain Me true.

30

Start as wicked My worship
Take them all as well realized.

31

Tend I them then turn even
Devout Mine none go restive.

Ends thus:

The Secret Sacred,
The Ninth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-10: Discern the Divine

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

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

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Ear thy lend My words peerless
Bound they regale as thee gain.

2

Sourced though gods ’n seers in Me
Grasp they have none of My source.

3

Me as Lord of all who sees
Turns his back on wrongdoings.

4

Sourced in Me all faculties
State of mind of beings too.

5

Varied I made vicissitudes

As the case with attitudes.

6

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

7

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

8

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

9

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

10

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

11

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

12

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

13

That's how sages down the ages
Narada foremost described Thee,
Affirmed Asita, Devala 'n Vyasa
All of that now Thou confirm.

14

None can ever be sure of Thee
Hold I true thus what Thou say.

15

God of gods
O Lord of all,
Thou but know
Self Thy true.

16

Pray Thee confide Thy nature
With which Thou all worlds transcend.

17

How to grasp all aspects Thine,
How to engage Thee in mind?

18

Make me privy, O, My Lord

Forms 'n attributes of Thyself.

19

Thus spoke the Lord:
Of all countless Glories Mine
Suffice thee knew a few of them.

20

I'm the Self of one and all
I'm the beginning as well end
Not to speak of in between.

21

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

22

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

23

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

24

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

25

So Am 'Om' that sound supreme,
Of rituals Am prayer muted
Himalayas high that kiss the skies.

26

I'm the fig, the tree foremost
And so heavenly sage Narad,
Maestro divine Chitrardh Am
Besides Kapila, the sage attained.

27

Uchhaisravas, Am horse foremost
Nectar that was churned in seas
Airavat white, Indra's elephant
Sovereign whoso crowns mankind.

28

Vajrayudh Am weapon mighty
Kamadhenu the cow holy

Cupid who aids to sustain life
Vasuki the fierce king serpent.

29

It's Me Ananth of Nagas
Varun I am of aquatics,
It's Me Aryama, mane of manes
Yama the ruler of beings.

30

Prahlad Am, the demon godly
Among the reckoners, I'm the Time
It's Me lion, of wildlife all
As well Garud that rules the skies.

31

I'm the wind that purifies all
Among the archers Ram I'm
I'm the shark that mighty fish
And the Ganges, ever in flow.

32

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

33

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

34

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

35

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

36

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

37

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

38

Justice I'm in every court
Policy Am of all conquest,
Secret I'm of every mute
Wisdom Am of what is wise.

39

I'm the seed of all beings
From Me apart none exists.

40

Endless are My attributes
This brief is for just thy grasp.

41

All that's glorious all therein
Is but spark of My splendour.

42

O dear friend need there none to delve in full
Suffice to say it's portion Mine that supports all.

Ends thus:

Discern the Divine,
The Tenth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-11: Nature of Omnipresence

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

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

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

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Thy words compelling, Spirit about indwelling
Uttered in compassion, dispelled my delusion.

2

Besides I've heard, about Thy glories
Origins of beings, and how it all ends.

3

Thou art verily, what Thee aver
Wish I espied, from Thy Divine.

4

If Thou so feel, I'm worthy
Let me espy, Thy True Self.

5

Thus spoke the Lord:
Divine I let thee, divinity Mine
Of hues varied colours 'n kinds.

6

Find Adityas, twelve therein
Vasus eight, and Aswin twins
Rudras eleven 'n Maruts four-nine
Wonders umpteen none else seen.

7

May thou discern in My frame
Much more than thy thought would take.

8

Bestow thee that ESP
Helps which espy form Supreme
Beyond the pale of god's own sight.

15

Thus spoke Arjuna:
In Thou find I
Brahma on lotus,
Gods and sages
Beings 'n serpents!

16

With no beginning
End none sighted,
Boundless find I
In Thee universe!

17

Find I blinding
Light that blazing
From Thy diadem
Club and discus!

18

Thou art Supreme

Indweller Ancient,
Eternal Refuge
Dharma's Guardian.

19

Eyes sun like
And oven for mouth,
How Thou radiate
In arms thy manifold!

20

Fills Thy Frame
The space entire,
Makes Thy sight
The worlds tremble.

21

See in Thee the angelic world
Find them all Thou pray in awe
Spot I sages in their scores
Hear them extol, Thee in hymns.

22

Demigods all 'n celestial folk
Stand they stunned 'n look at Thee.

23

Makes it awful sight Thine terrible
Bear as Thou those weird organs.

24

Perplexed am I by Thy sight
Seems I've lost my sense of self.

25

Discern I nadir in Thy face
Pray assume now Form Normal.

26

See I Bhishma, Dron 'n Karn
Kauravs, ours, making way to mouth Thy wide.

27

Nauseates sight of teeth Thine terrible
Gnashing heads of theirs in smithereens.

28

Rivers as run, towards the seas
So these armies, towards Thy mouths.

30

Consume worlds as mouths Thy blazing
Find I blinding rays those scorching.

31

Who art Thou, this Terrible Thing!
For what avail, mission this Thine!!
Gripped now am with urge to know.

32

Thus spoke the Lord:
I'm the time that infolds all
It's all over for most here
Doomed are they, never mind war.

33

Since I've handed them sentence
Thou art no more than hangman,
Finish them all 'n flourish in turn
Brings as reign thee power 'n pelf.

34

Take up arms 'n lap up crown
For Drona, Bhishma and Karna,
As well Jayadrath with the rest
Truly are they doomed by Me.

35

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Stunned as he by what transpired
Beseeched Paartha, Lord Krishna.

36

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Sing Thy praises the rejoiced world
Hither 'n thither run wicked in awe
Bow to Thee those self-realized.

37

Can one fail to worship Thee
Creator's Creator, 'n Universal!

38

Thee the Primal, All-Dweller
Thou All-Knower, One to know.

39

God of gods, O, our Father
Thee I salute on and on.

40

One and All, who pervades all
Thou All-Powerful, praise be Thee.

41

Ignorant being of Thy Great Being
Owing to contempt familiarity bred
Sadly I have been badly behaving.

42

As I took Thee for granted
Kindly forgive, O, Great Soul.

43

Thou art Greater than greatest
None Thee in three worlds equal.

44

Treat me kindly 'n forgive
All I crave for, is Thy grace.

45

Form Thy Current holds dreadful
Pray show Divine Grace of Thine.

46

With mace, discus 'n diadem
Pray assume Thy Form four-armed.

47

Thus spoke the Lord:
As thou please Me, so I've shown
Form My Endless, none else seen.

48

Take to penance
Or pore over four Vedas
None that helps to see this Form.

49

Having beheld My bewildering Form
Now ease with My Form Normal.

50

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Having said thus Lord assumed
His form normal that calmed Arjun.

51

Thus spoke Arjuna:
O, Lord now I feel normal
With Thy gentle form human.

52

Thus spoke the Lord:
Ever crave gods 'n angels too
Just to behold that thee beheld.

53

Austerities well Vedic grasp
Charity, as well ritual regimen
Get none to what thou had seen

54

Yet in devotion, divines man
Attains besides, Form this Mine.

55

He that takes Me for Supreme
And treats his work as Mine own one,
Gets who rid of his restraints
And keeps his faith in Me always,
He who bears no ill-feeling
Ever on move, he comes to Me.

Ends thus:
Nature of Omnipresence,
The Eleventh Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-12: Doctrine of Faith

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

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Pray tell who's better realized,
One that devoted as stated
Or relies who on God Obscure.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:
Me in devotion who worships
Him I reckon as well realized.

3

Having said that add I might
Looks as one to God Obscure -

4

Doth he fine with senses reined
If well disposed towards the world.

5

But it's tough ask nonetheless
For one to realize God Obscure.

6

Whosoever hath faith in Me
And leans on Me heart 'n soul -

7

Him I help to cross over
Ocean vast of births 'n deaths.

8

If thou develop faith in Me
Take for granted I take thee.

9

Were thee to fail develop faith
It's not thou reached blind alley,
Ever Me having in thy mind
Practice lets thee turn the bend.

10

If thou feel that's hard as well
Indulge then in deeds Me please.

11

If thou find that difficult too
Give thyself to Me Supreme
Act then with thy subdued mind
With no thought for what follows.

12

Scores thought over mere roting
Bettors meditation awareness too
What helps man to find moorings
Are acts his with no axe to grind.

13

Kind-hearted 'n considerate
Friendly natured, forgiving too
Lays no store on highs and lows
Suffers no pride 'n possessive not –

14

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

15

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

16

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

17

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

18

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

19

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

20

Who in dharma this engage
Them I hold in special esteem.

Ends thus:

Doctrine of Faith,

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

Chapter-13: Field and Farmer

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

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

0

Thus spoke Arjuna:
What is nature 'n its role,
What is spirit 'n its nature,
What is frame 'n who lords it
What makes feeling 'n sixth sense?

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Sees who body his as field
Sees he all there is to see.

2

Knows who Spirit One dwells in all
Knows he all that's there to know.

3

Lend thy ear, as I reveal
Nature of thy frame,
Spirit that tenants as farmer
Besides Him and His prowess.

4

In chants validate what Vedas
Aspects that well Brahmanas delve
Reasoned wise in varied ways.

5

Subject to reason, ego as well
Steeped is frame in elements five,
Earth, water, fire, ether and air
Organs those ten, as well mind.

6

Desire, derision, pleasure 'n pain
Pitch their tents in frames human.

7

Knowing is being -
Amiable and humble, simple 'n honest
Patient 'n decent, clean and clear
Not to speak of fair and firm -

8

Void of desires, egotism devoid
Passion none for life and times –

9

With no craving for possessions
Fondness none for things of life
None the averse, all the same.

11

Naive though fail to follow suit
Tend all wise to probe nature
And strive to see the Spirit in Me

12

Let Me tell thee what's needed
To let thee grasp the State Brahman
Which if done would bring in bliss.

13

All-Reaching, He's All-Seeing
All Hearing, He pervades all.

14

Organs in His likeness made
Unlinked though to their senses,
He that sustains all three worlds
Unattached though to goings on.

15

In beings all 'n objects too
Within He lies, without as well,
If one comes to grasp this well
It's perception that's Supreme.

16

It's how Brahman dwells in all
Till He ends all what that keeps.

17

He's the Light that leaves no shade
He's the One for one to know
He's the Goal of all learning
He's the Tenant in every heart.

18

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

19

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

20

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

21

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

23

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

24

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

25

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

26

Whatever exists in this world
Designs Spirit in Nature's womb.

27

Sees he well, who would see
What doth perish is just the frame
End there none to Spirit therein.

28

Realize if thou Spirit in thee
Same as one that dwells in all
Hurt thou never thine own self
Thereby attain Me Supreme.

29

Beings act per their nature
Thus the Spirit that lay in them
Hath no hand in deeds of theirs.

31

Having none its attributes
Apart being from nature
Spirit hath no qualms of its own.

32

As with ether, spread all over
None the sullied, exposed being

So is the case with Spirit in thee.

33

Sun as one lights all three worlds
It's one Spirit that glows all frames.

34

Aware if thee of Spirit 'n frame
Frees that thou from all bindings
Making way to reach Supreme.

Ends thus:

Field and Farmer,
The Thirteenth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-14: Proclivities to Know

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

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Pass I now thee that knowledge
With which sages free themselves.

2

Knows whoso this reaches Me
Keeps thus births 'n deaths at bay.

5

To tie the Spirit 'n body tight
Uses Nature as its threads
Virtue, passion as well delusion.

6

Spirit as well gets well enticed
By the charms of life well-led
Steeped in wisdom and virtue.

7

Frames of passion as it weds
Spirit gets fond of joys of life.

8

It's in delusion Spirit with sloth
Doth go in tow on wrong path.

9

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

10

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

11

Wearing wisdom on his sleeve
Radiates virtuous throughout life.

12

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

13

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

14

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

15

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

16

Virtuous sully never their lives
Rue passionate as chase joys
Go down deluded drain of life.

17

Gives as virtue wisdom true
Renders passion unto grief
Leads as delusion into sloth.

18

Echelons virtuous reach higher
Remain 'as is where' passionate
Go down ladder ever the deluded.

20

Out of orbit if thou go
Of Nature that grips thy mind
Freed be thou of recurring births.

21

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Can man ever, rein in matter,
Is there regimen that reins it?

22

Thus spoke the Lord:
With no let or ever hindrance

Whatever it be he lets go,
Takes he things all as they come
With none fondness or distaste.

23

Seeing it all nature's work
From the fringes of conscience
Detached he watches goings on.

24

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

25

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

26

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

27

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

Ends thus:

Proclivities to Know,
The Fourteenth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-15: Art of Liberation

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

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Wise see Nature as fig tree huge
Roots its planted in high skies
Branching down with Vedic leaves
Helps which man reach State Supreme.

2

So to feed on their organs
With its downward roots it ties

Beings all to mundane things,
With man being charged by wants
Supplies he the feed it needs
Through the knots of threefold ways.

3

Man as fails to lay his hands
Roots on those that entwine him
Helps dispassion sunder them.

4

Roots as sundered, one gets freed
To reach the Vedic branch in reach,
Grasps as he the truth there all
Goes he up from branch to branch
To end up on the root utmost
On which Abode Supreme lies.

5

Freed of pride, desire 'n delusion
Climbs as he, in self he dwells,
Feels he same of pleasure 'n pain
Detached he reaches thus Supreme.

6

Sun too doth pale nears it when
Seat of moksha, Abode of Mine.

7

Spirit as lies in beings all
Gets it rubbed with one's nature.

8

Wind as carries scent of flowers
While leaving them as is where,
In like fashion Spirit from frames
Moves its awareness to rebirths.

10

Know not fools in lifetime theirs
Nature of Spirit thus lies in them
But ever on move from frame to frame.

11

This by striving wise realize
Fail though naive in spite of it.

16

Perish all beings though in time
Perishes not the Spirit in them.

17

Self Mine Highest that sustains
Is but different from that One.

18

Since I transcend that perishes

Apart 'n above the eternal One
Vedas vouch Me Soul Supreme.

19

Who aver Me as Soul Supreme
In My worship bring they faith.

20

Grasps who nuances of this science
Turns he wise 'n accomplished thus.

Ends thus:

Art of Liberation,
The Fifteenth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-16: Frailty of Thought

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

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

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Pure in heart 'n courage to boot
Even mind with helping hand
Works who hard 'n tries to grasp
Austere, upright, and well-read –

2

Even tempered, loves he peace
Liberal minded with kind heart
Calm 'n truthful, well mannered
Fickle he not or calumnious
Modest natured covets he not -

3

Free of bias he's fair-minded
Strong in will, he stalls envy
Humble, and he forgives too
He's virtuous thus earmarked.

4

Make all vile, rude guys all
Vainglorious 'n haughty too,

Besides being indignant
No less are they indulgent.

5

Gives as virtue man freedom
Keeps him vileness ever constricted.

6

World is as of good 'n bad
Serves thee to know latter too.

7

Conduct of theirs lacks virtue
Bear they demeanour that's impure.

8

Branding beings sexual products
Reckon not such in God 'n truth.

9

These small minds, of ruined souls
Wreck they world with acts of wrath.

10

Pride 'n lust, long wish list
Vile in conceit live impure.

11

Seeing life as one to gloat
Vile by impulse go to lengths.

12

Seek vile creatures ever shortcuts
On way to wants, they ill-get wealth.

13

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

14

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

15

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

16

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

17 .

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

18 .

Blinded by pride, lustful lot

Me they ill-treat lay in them.

20

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

21

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

22

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

23

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

24

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

Ends thus:

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

Chapter-17: Science of Devotion

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

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

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:
None the regard for scriptures
Who tend to manage life their well
What Thou say of such of beings
Virtuous, passionate or merely deluded.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:
It's one's nature that tends him
To be virtuous, passionate, or deluded.

3

Beings all have faith in some
It's one's nature that shapes it.

4

Virtuous seek gods in worship
Opt passionate to humour ghosts
Turn all deluded towards the Hades.

5

Hoping for there all to gain
Indulge vain in austerities
Though not endorsed by scriptures.

6

It's in delusion they all fast
Emaciating frames of theirs,
Thus in foolishness they all
Famish Mine own Self in them.

7

As with habits so with palates
Come to tend all in three ways.

8

Opt virtuous all recipes fine
Sustain health 'n enhance strength.

9

Hot 'n spicy, and pungent,
Prefer food passionate that ill-suits.

10

Food of deluded is all stale
Long in storage, and impure.

15

Rings with truth 'n laced with warmth
It's speech austere that's well-meaning.

16

Simple 'n stoic
Kind and candid
It's mind austere
With self-control.

17

Wanting none
Never in turn,
Done in concern
Deed it's austere.

18

It's in pretension passionate live
Eye they have on name 'n fame.

19

With troubled mind all deluded live

Hurt themselves 'n others as well.

20

Virtuous deed is that extends

Helping hand to one in need

Guided by the zeal to serve.

21

Deed passionate is quid pro quo

Ever done with some end in mind.

22

Aiding dubious with disdain

It's deed deluded that lacks goal.

Ends thus:

Science of Devotion,

The Seventeenth Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-18: Thy Looking-glass

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

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

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

S61 avers that the Supreme dwells in humans and deludes them all by his *maya*. This is contrary to what is stated in s14, c5, '*It's his nature, but not Spirit / Makes man act by wants induced*'. Thus, s61 clearly is an interpolation as it contravenes the neutrality of the Supreme Spirit in the affairs of man affirmed throughout by Lord Krishna.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Pray Thee tell, for my grasp

All about *sanyaas*, path forsake

And self-denial that's *tyaaga*.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:

Lack inclination, it's *sanyaas*

Sans wants work what makes *tyaaga*.

3

Fault some sages effort per se
Others give nod to deeds noble.

4

Make thee privy of three ways
By which, men all give up well.

5

Effort, gift 'n austerity
Take men all on road forsake.

6

Forsake I this vouchsafe when
Acts man with no axe to grind.

7

Avoid obligation, it's no abnegation
Boils it down to, give up of delusion.

8

Forgo made easy passionate opt
Desist from duties that strain them.

9

Indulge virtuous in their work
With no thought of its outcome.

10

With no illusion but diligence
Carries renunciant his duties
Agreeable or otherwise too.

11

Needs one work to sustain life
Relinquents avoid, overloads all.

13

Factors five all deeds engulf
Know them well to free thyself.

14

Prone are acts to these aspects -
Body to sustain, ego that goads
Senses thy lure, life to guard
Faith in deities that tends thee.

15

Be well or so be ill
In word, thought 'n deed as well
Sourced are acts in these aspects.

16

Ignoramus in vain ascribe
Acts of theirs to Spirit in them.

17

It's for thee to realize now

That by killing these Kauravs
Slay thee none of them thyself.

18

Aspects knowable, known 'n knower
Lead to duty, deed 'n doer, in that order.

19

Knowable as well deeds 'n doers
Bracket those freed in three groups.

20

Lay indivisible in frames divisible
Realize virtuous Spirit not perishable.

21

Spirit in them 'n others that lies
Apart 'n unique feel passionate.

22

Failing to see beyond the self
Deluded think like frog in well.

23

Illusions of life virtuous
See in light of limitations
Thus thou carry businesslike
Duties that their life ordains

24

In want passionate come to live
Bogged down by, what they eye.

25

Deluded work in reckless ways
Harm their cause 'n others' as well.

26

Taking well and ever at ease
Senses honed 'n ego evened
Detached virtuous ever engage.

27

Mind as covetous 'n thought impure
Crave passionate all things mundane
Which them excite as well pull down.

28

Verily deluded, vulgar 'n vacillate
Arrogant, dishonest, ignorant 'n malicious
Indolent being remain they gloomy.

29

By natures of these beings
Features intellect theirs vary.

30

Deal virtuous in measures equal
Weigh they fine all deeds their fair.

31

Perspective lack passionate right
In weird ways they tend their lives.

32

Given their state of perversion
Go all deluded in wrong path.

33

Virtuous ever in self-control
Steady they wavering mind of theirs.

34

Things that seem to bring joys
Passionate all with zeal pursue.

35

Proud 'n arrogant, doubting 'n grieving
Bog down deluded in despair.

36

Make a note of these three ways
Pains which banish 'n fetch bliss.

37

What fail sprint 'n serve long run
Virtuous know keep woes at bay.

38

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

39

Ever in day-dreams
End up deluded in dreamlands.

40

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

49

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

50

Leads how forsake to Brahman
Know that Wisdom Supreme now.

51

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

52

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

53

Lack thou pride, wish 'n wrath
Give up ego, crave not power
Be content and live in peace
It's then thou come near Brahman.

54

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

55

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

57

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

58

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

59

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

60

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

62

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

63

That thee heard of this wisdom
For task on hand now apply mind.

64

O, dear friend, let Me tell
Word My final that benefits.

65

If one remains to Me firm
It's My promise I take him.

66

Set all aside 'n have faith
Thus sans sin, reach Me thou

67

None of this for those who lack
Faith in Me and selfless work.

68

Whoso passes this secret
To devout Mine all reach Me true.

69

Know not I a dearer soul
None there ever a better service.

70

Who that studies this discourse
He Me prays in true wisdom.

71

Hears this whoso in good faith
Attains he the Worlds Higher.

72

Looks as if thou got it right
Let not delusions rule thy head.

73

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Glad O Lord
Gone are doubts,
Sense I gained
With Thy words.

74

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
It's what I've heard of that stirring
Dialogue between these great souls
Krishn and Arjun as they spoke.

75

It's with Vyasa's grace I've heard
This peerless art of yogic life
Which Lord Krishna taught Paartha.

76

Found I thrilling, dialogue stirring
Reminiscing I rejoice, again and again.

77

What a wondrous Form that was
Recalling I rejoice, again and again.

78

Wherever yogic Lord Krishna
Joins hands with great Paartha
Goddess Victory, spreads carpet
Heaven on earth to set there ever.

Ends thus:

Thy Looking-glass
The Eighteenth Chapter
Of Vyasa's classic
Bhagavad-Gita,

By:

BS Murthy, F-9, Nandini Mansion, 1-10-234, Ashok Nagar,
Hyderabad - 500 020, India.