

# Srimad Bhagavad Gita

Chapter 15  
Purushottama Yogah:  
Yoga of the Supreme Spirit

Transliterated Sanskrit Text

Free Translation

&

Brief Explanation

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Published  
In  
Esamskriti.com  
&  
Medhajournal.com

Nagpur

September 2010

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Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 15  
Purushottama Yogah:  
Yoga of the Supreme Spirit  
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Preamble

The last six Chapters of Gita state that the ever changing finite world of multiplicity is nothing but a projection of the Infinite and that the endless painful experiences are all caused by our misapprehensions of the Reality. The world of Matter and Spirit, the Field of experience and the Knower of the Field were discussed. It was proved that the Knower of the Field without the Field of experience is the Pure Consciousness, Pure Awareness which is infinite and permanent.

Upto the thirteenth chapter we get an idea that the world of matter - the Cosmos - is one homogeneous entity and the Spirit is nondual and infinite. The variations in the expressions of the same Spirit and Matter in different individuals are on account of the play of the three Gunas.

In this Chapter Sri Krishna discusses the nature of the Spirit in all its implications and explains the Unknown from the Known manifested objects of perception, emotion and thought. Infinite is defined as the Imperishable (*Akshara*) with reference to the perishable (*Kshara*) equipments of matter.

Speaking of the *Kshara Purusha (Kshetra)*, the *Akshara Purusha (Kshetrajna)* and the Supreme Person (*Brahman*), it explains how Brahman is superior to both 'Kshara' and 'Akshara', why he is called the Supreme Person, what is the value of knowing him as the Supreme Person and how can He be realized. Hence this Chapter is entitled "Purushottama Yoga" or the Yoga of the Supreme Person or Supreme Spirit.

The previous Chapter ended with a note that to worship the Lord with undeviating love leads to liberation. But such love is not possible without detachment from the world. So the Lord begins the present discourse with a description of the World Tree in order to create in the aspirant an intense dispassion leading to love and knowledge of the Supreme Lord, Brahman.

The Text

THE COSMIC TREE

**sri bhagavaan uvaacha**  
**oordhwamoolam adhahshaakham ashwattham praahur avyayam**  
**chhandaamsi yasya parnaani yastam veda sa vedavit // 15.1 //**

*Sri Bhagavan said*

*They (the scriptures) speak of the imperishable Asvatta tree (peepal tree) as having its roots above and branches below, whose leaves are the Vedas and he who knows this is the knower of the Vedas.*

With roots above and branches below, this world tree is eternal. It is *Samsaravriksha*, the cosmic tree. This tree of *samsara* or cosmic existence rests on a continuous series of births and deaths without beginning and end. This tree cannot be cut down except by the knowledge and experience of man's identity with Brahman.

The word 'Asvatta' means that which does not endure till the next day. The phenomenal world is compared to the Asvatta tree on account of its ever-changing nature. In an ordinary tree the roots extend downwards. But in the tree of the world the roots are stated to be above. This is because the roots are Brahman with maya (Saguna Brahman) since the Immortal Absolute (Nirguna Brahman) is beyond the category of causality and Brahman with maya is very subtle and very great and is supreme over all things.

The branches are the cosmic mind, egoism, five subtle elements and the other cosmic principles which are stated to extend downwards because as they go downward they become more and more gross.

Just as the leaves protect a tree, so the Vedas serve to protect the tree of the world. They formulate its *dharma* and *adharma* with their causes and effects and also show the way to prosperity and well-being in the relative world. The knowledge of the Vedas gives men knowledge of the gods and the cosmos and hence nothing else remains to be known beyond the tree of the world and Brahman.

**adhashchordhwam prasritaastasya shaakhaa  
gunapravridhaa vishayapravaalaah  
adhashcha moolaanyanusantataani  
karmaanubandheeni manushyaloke // 15.2 //**

*Its branches extend below and above, nourished by the Gunas with sense objects for its twigs and below, in the world of men stretch forth the roots, giving rise to actions.*

Upward and downward its branches spread: The flow of life in the individual is sometimes for a higher evolution but very often it is to satisfy animal nature i.e. towards a lower purpose. Thus the tree of life has its branches growing both upwards and downwards.

Nourished by the Gunas: The tendency to lead a higher or lower life is determined by the dominance of any of the three Gunas.

Sense objects are twigs: Nodular twigs are potential branches. Sense objects (*shabda, sparsha, roopa, rasa, gandha*) are twigs because in the presence of these objects there is a tendency to throw away higher values to attain carnal satisfaction.

Downward the roots extend: When the main root of the tree is firmly fixed high above In the Absolute, the subsidiary roots grow all around including downwards in the world of men initiating action. These secondary roots are vasanas created in us as a result of our past deeds driving us for actions and reactions, good or evil, in the world. Just as the secondary roots bind the tree to the earth firmly; these actions and reactions bind the individual to the plane of likes and dislikes, profit and loss etc.

The following two verses explain how we can cut down the tree and thereby experience the pure source of the life's manifestation, the Infinite Life.

**na roopamasyeha tathopalabhyate  
naanto na chaadirna cha sampratishthaa  
ashwatthamenam suviroodhamoolam  
asangashastrena dhridhena chhitwaa // 15.3 //**

*Its form is not perceived here as such, neither its end nor its origin, nor its existence; having cut asunder this firmly rooted peepal tree with the strong axe of non-attachment.*

**tatah padam tat parimaargitavyam  
yasmin gataa na nivartanti bhooyah  
tameva chaadyam purusham prapadye  
yatah pravrittih prasritaa puraanee // 15.4 //**

*Then that goal should be sought from where having gone none returns again praying "I seek refuge in that Primeval Purusha from whom has come forth this cosmic process".*

In order to avoid misunderstanding about the tree, The Lord says that its form is not perceived here as such. The tree of life mentioned in the previous verses represents the entire field of manifested life.

It (The Tree) starts from the ignorance of reality, ends on the realization of the Self and exists only so long as the desires function. Very few understand this implication. The strongly rooted manifested world can be cut only with non-attachment. The experience of life is known through Consciousness. If the Consciousness is withdrawn from the body, mind and intellect the perception, emotion and thought necessarily end. This removing of Consciousness from the inert body matter is detachment with which alone multiple experiences can be wiped out. Detachment from perception, emotion and thought will be nothingness.

To avoid the nothingness Sri Krishna adds that one should aspire for that goal from where there will be no return. The seeker of the Divine should withdraw more and more from the worldly perceptions, emotions and thoughts and meditate upon the Higher - the source from which the tree of life itself draws its sustenance. The method suggested to achieve this goal is to take refuge in the Primeval Purusha who is the source of all expressions of life. How one can visualize this Primeval Purusha is the theme of this chapter.

**nirmaanamohaa jitasangadoshaa  
adhyaatmanityaa vinivrittakaamaah  
dwandwairvimuktaah sukhaduhkhasamjnair  
gacchantyamoodhaah padamavyayam tat // 15.5 //**

*Free from pride and delusion, victorious over the evil of attachment, dwelling constantly in the Self, their desires having completely turned away, freed from the pairs of opposites known as pleasure and pain, the undeluded reach the eternal goal.*

Sri Krishna explains certain disciplines or conditions by following which one can reach the Divine experience and live a life of supreme fulfillment.

- Free from pride and delusion: Pride and erroneous judgment indicate a false sense of importance or arrogance. These qualities always create mental preoccupation to maintain them leaving no opportunity to think about the greater values.
- Evil of attachment conquered: Mere sensuous way of life is nothing but a life wasted without realizing its nobler purpose.
- Ever dwelling in the Self: Detachment from worldly objects is not possible without attachment to precious ideals as human equipment cannot function in a vacuum. However to avoid attachment to evil the seeker should divert his concentration to the Self.
- Desires completely at rest: Desire is the activity of the intellect. To discipline the intellect pleasures arising out of worldly objects should be discouraged. A mind without desire becomes calm and serene.
- Released from the pairs of opposites: Mind is the focal point at which pleasure or pain is contacted. Once the mind recognizes the pairs of opposites, it likes that which is agreeable and hates that which is disagreeable. This continuous process of liking and disliking destabilizes the mind. Hence it is advised that one should be equanimous towards the pairs of opposites.

The Lord assures that such a person reaches the eternal Goal.

MANIFESTED LIFE IS ONLY A PART

**na tad bhaasayate sooryo na shashaangko na paavakah  
yad gatwaa na nivartante taddhaama paramam mama // 15.6 //**

*Neither does the sun illumine there, nor the moon, nor the fire; having gone there they never return; that is My supreme abode.*

Neither sun nor moon nor fire illumine there: It is explained that the spiritual goal is the one having gone into which none returns. Perfection gained is never to be lost. The goal - the state of Perfection - is described here. Sun, moon and fire are sources of light by which eyes get vision. Light indicates the power of illumination for the sense organs like hearing by the ears, tasting by the tongue, feeling by the mind, thinking by the intellect etc. This is the light of Consciousness by which we become aware of all experiences.

This light of Consciousness cannot be illumined by any outside gross agents of light perceived in the world such as sun, moon and fire. In fact the very light of sun, moon and fire are the objects of consciousness. An object of perception cannot illumine the subject that perceives it since the subject and the object cannot be one and the same at any time. The awareness by which we experience our lives is the Eternal Self and to realize that Consciousness is the goal of life.

My Supreme Abode: On transcending the agitations of the mind and intellect one reaches the state of Consciousness which is the Abode of the Divine. Once this state is attained the seeker is assured by The Lord that there is no risk of sliding back to the world of plurality - 'to which having gone none returns'.

THE LORD AS THE LIFE OF THE UNIVERSE

**mamaivaamsho jeevaloke jeevabhootah sanaatanah  
manah shashthaaneendriyaani prakritisthaani karshati // 15.7 //**

*A fragment of My own self, having become a living soul, eternal, in the world of life, draws to itself the five senses with the mind for the sixth, that rest in nature.*

The nature of Jiva, ego, is explained in this verse.

A portion of Myself: Although the Infinite has no parts or divisions, the Infinite when expresses through a limited entity called body, is considered limited by the ignorant, just as pot space and total space.

The eternal Jiva suffers no limitation although it undergoes pain and pleasure when it is associated with the body. Hence the Self in man is eternal Jiva.

Attracts senses: The Consciousness gives life to the entire body and maintains the sense faculties and mental capacities around itself. The power of seeing, hearing etc. is really the power of Consciousness functioning through the sense organs. Hence It is referred to as functioning with the mind and five senses. The conditioned Self is experienced as the limited ego, Jiva, the mortal, or an imaginary part of the Indivisible Whole, because of our ignorance.

The Jiva or the individual soul is that aspect of the Supreme Self which manifests itself in every one as the doer and enjoyer. It is limited because of ignorance; but in reality both (individual soul and Supreme Soul) are one and the same. It is like pot space and outer space. The pot space is a portion of the outer space and becomes one with the latter on the destruction of the pot, the cause of the limitation.

**shareeram yadavaapnoti yacchaapyutkraamateeshwarah  
griheetwaitaani samyaati vaayurgandhaanivaashayaat // 15.8 //**

*When The Lord obtains a body and when He leaves it, He takes these (senses and mind) and goes with them as the wind takes the scents from their seats (flowers etc.)*

When The Lord acquires the body and leaves it: The Infinite conditioned by mind and intellect is Jiva and the Jiva takes various bodies from time to time. From the time Jiva enters the body and till it leaves i.e. constantly it keeps the sense faculties and mental impression with itself.

At death the subtle body departs from the gross body and it is left inert. Although the dead body is found to maintain its physical frame it neither has the sense faculty nor mental and intellectual capacity which it had before death. These physical, mental and intellectual expressions gave the body its individual personality and they are called subtle body. The gross body is called dead in the absence of the subtle body.

It is stated here that at death the subtle body moves off taking with itself all faculties - senses, mind and intellect - as the wind takes away the scent from its source i.e. flowers. Thus the mind is a bunch of vasanas which can exist only in Consciousness. This light of Awareness illumining the vasanas is called the Individual Personality - Jiva.

The Jiva is called The Lord here because the Individual Personality is the ruler of the body regulating all actions, feelings and thoughts.

**shrotram chakshuh sparshanam cha rasanam ghraanameva cha  
adhishthaaya manashchaayam vishayaanupasevate // 15.9 //**

*Presiding over the ear, the eye, touch, taste and smell, as well as the mind, He enjoys the objects of the senses.*

The subtle body is explained in more details. The Jiva enjoys the world of objects through sense organs and mind. Consciousness never directly illumines any object but when reflected upon mind and intellect It becomes Intelligence in which the sense objects become illumined. The Jiva, using the mind along with sense organs, enjoys the sense objects such as sound, touch, taste, smell etc.

**utkraamantam sthitam vaapi bhunjaanam vaa gunaanvitam  
vimoodhaa naanupashyanti pashyanti jnaanachakshushah // 15.10 //**

*The deluded do not see Him who departs, stays and enjoys, united with the Gunas; but they who possess the eye of knowledge behold Him.*

The Self is visible to the eye of knowledge only. Though the Self is the nearest and comes most easily within the range of their consciousness in a variety of functions, still the ignorant and deluded do not see Him because of their complete subservience to the sense-objects.

But those who are with intuitive vision could see the Self. Those with the inner eye of knowledge behold the Self as entirely distinct from the body.

**yatanto yoginashchainam pashyantyaatmanyavasthitam  
yatantopyakritaatmaano nainam pashyantyachetasah // 15.11 //**

*The seekers striving for perfection behold Him dwelling in the self; but the unrefined and unintelligent, even though striving, do not find Him.*

Two conditions are necessary if meditation is to yield results.

- The purification of the mind - removal of agitations created by attachments to sense objects.
- The intellect has to be tuned to the correct understanding of the Self and thus all doubts about its perception are removed through study, reflection and practice.

If these two requirements are not met through devotion (Bhakti) and service (Karma) all attempts at meditation in the Path of Knowledge will be futile. Those minds which are not purified despite sincere meditation have no chance of realizing the Divine because of attachment to sense objects.

So far the Self has been indicated as

- that which cannot be illumined by the known physical source of light like sun, moon and fire,
- that which, having reached, none returns from the state of perfection
- that of which the individual entity is Jiva.

To show that this goal is the essence of all and the reality behind all experiences Sri Krishna gives in the following four verses a summary of His manifestations. He is described as

- the illuminating light of the consciousness
- the all sustaining life
- the subjective warmth of life in all living organisms.
- the Self in all.

**yadaadityagatam tejo jagad bhaasayate'khilam  
yacchandramasi yacchaagnau tattejo viddhi maamakam // 15.12 //**

*That light which, residing in the sun, illumines the whole world, that which is in the moon and in the fire - know that light as Mine.*

Sri Krishna says that the very light emerging from the sun which illumines the whole world is the light that is emerging from Him, the Infinite Consciousness. Not only are this but even the light coming from the moon and the fire all expressions of the Infinite Reality expressing through the moon and the fire.



The manifestations are different because the equipments are different just as the same electrical energy manifests in a bulb, in a fan and in a heater in different ways. Consciousness expressed through the sun is sun-light, through the moon is moon-light and through the fuel is fire. Yet all these manifestations are nothing but one Infinite Reality. The Infinite manifests itself in various forms in order to create conducive environment for the world to exist.

**gaamaavishya cha bhootani dhaarayaamyahamojasaa  
pushnaami chaushadheeh sarvaah somo bhootwaa rasaatmakah // 15.13 //**

*Permeating the earth I support all beings by My energy; and having become the watery moon, I nourish all herbs.*

The Lord says that the capacity in the earth to sustain life and nourish it, are all His own vitality, meaning the same Consciousness expressing through the sun, the moon, the earth, the atmosphere provide nourishment to all living beings. The energy of The Lord holds the vast heaven and earth together. The sun, the moon and the fire are the sources of all energy in the world, but that which gives these phenomenal factors the capacity to give out energy from them is the Consciousness which is common to all of them. Moon is considered to be the repository of all fluids which nourish the living beings.

**aham vaishwaanaro bhootwaa praaninaam dehamaashritah  
praanaapaana samaayuktah pachaamyannam chaturvidham // 15.14 //**

*Having become the fire, Vaiswanara, I abide in the body of living beings and associated with Prana and Apana, digest the fourfold food.*

The same Supreme Consciousness is that which expresses itself as warmth of life in all living beings: if there is no warmth in the body it is considered as dead. Metabolism creates heat in the body and this process continues so long as there is life. That Eternal Reality which is indicated as Life manifests as Digestive Fire (*Vaishwaanara*) which assimilates food. This digestive power assimilates food in four ways through masticating, swallowing, sucking and licking. The power in the digestive system is nothing but a manifestation of the Principle of Life. Prana and Apana are the physiological functions of perception and excretion that are present in all living creatures. It is The Lord that helps us to swallow the food, assimilate it and eliminate the wasteful by-products.

**sarvasya chaaham hridi sannivishto  
mattah smritir jnaanam apohanam cha  
vedaishcha sarvairahameva vedyo  
vedaantakrid vedavideva chaaham // 15.15 //**

*And I am seated in the hearts of all; from Me are memory, knowledge, as well as their absence. I am verily that which has to be known by all the Vedas; I am indeed the author of the Vedanta and the knower of the Vedas am I.*

I am seated in the hearts of all: A peaceful joyous mind settled in tranquility capable of concentrating on the higher inspirations is what is called the heart. The Lord is self-evident during meditation in the heart of the meditator.

Memory, knowledge and their absence: From the Supreme Consciousness alone all memory, knowledge and forgetfulness come to us. A capacity to forget is an essential requisite for acquiring new knowledge because unless the imperfect knowledge is thrown out new knowledge cannot be assimilated.

To be known by all the Vedas: The Infinite Consciousness is the one common factor that has been glorified in all the Vedas and to realize this is the fulfillment of existence.

Author of Vedanta and the Knower of Vedas: Since the very essence of Vedas is that Consciousness which is the Ultimate Reality, everything else is a projection upon it. The seeker who listens to the Vedas, who reflects upon their wisdom and who finally experiences the fulfillment of his life is also considered as nothing other than Consciousness.

In short, the phenomenal powers, the material world, the matter and its functions are all the manifestations at different levels of the One Infinite Eternal Divinity. This is the very theme indicated in the Vedas as the Eternal Reality and to know it and bring it under our experience is to know the Infinite.

Till now the glories of The Lord in manifested forms have been described. In the following verses The True Nature of the Infinite is pointed out as

- 1) The Unconditioned,
- 2) The All Pervading and
- 3) The Eternal

This Infinite reality is above all concepts such as Finite and the Infinite, the Perishable and the Imperishable. This section is the heart of this Chapter and is the basis for its nomenclature.

THE SUPREME PERSON, *PURUSHOTTAMA*

**dwaavimau purushau loke ksharashchaakshara eva cha  
ksharah sarvaani bhootani kootastho'kshara uchyate // 15.16 //**

*Two Purushas are there in this world, the Perishable and the Imperishable. All these existences are the Perishable and the unchanging is the Imperishable.*

In the Thirteenth Chapter, Field of the Matter and Knower of the Field were elaborated. In this Chapter it was made clear that the sun, earth, plant kingdom and man and his capabilities etc, consisting of the Field of the matter are nothing other than the Supreme Self. Thus the Field of the matter is the Spirit, the Consciousness, the difference being that when the Spirit expresses as matter It looks as if It were subject to change and destruction. Thus the realm of the matter is described in this verse as *Kshara Purusha* - the Perishable. With reference to this *Kshara Purusha* the Spirit is the Imperishable,

*Akshara Purusha.* With reference to the ever changing world of the matter, Consciousness is Imperishable and Changeless. This Consciousness Principle is referred to here as Akshara with reference to and contact with the Kshara.

The Self in the midst of changes remains changeless and all changes can take place only in contact with It just as an anvil (*Kootastham*) remaining changeless allows all the iron pieces kept and hammered on it to change their shapes.

**uttamah purushastwanyah paramaatmetyudaahritah  
yo lokatrayamaavishya bibhartavyaya eeshwarah // 15.17 //**

*But other than these, is the Supreme Purusha called the Highest Self, the indestructible Lord who, pervading the three worlds (waking, dream and deep sleep), sustains them.*

The Imperishable is the quality attained by the Spirit with reference to the Field surrounding It. A man occupying a high position in an office acquires the dignity and the status of that position. Even if that position is removed the man never ceases to exist; he exists as an individual living being. When the Field of the matter is removed from the Knower of the Field what remains is the Knowing Principle, the Pure Knowledge.

Similarly, when the perishable is transcended what remains is not the Imperishable but that which played as the Perishable and Imperishable Purushas. This is the Pure Spirit, the Supreme Self which sustains the three worlds or the three states of experiences viz. waking, dreaming and deep sleep states of consciousness. The Self alone is the illuminator in all these three states of existence.

Thus there are no three types of Purushas - Perishable, Imperishable or Supreme. If a pot is kept in a room we feel that there are three different types of space, one completely differing from the other - Pot space, room space and the total space. But in fact there is only one space which can be understood if the factors conditioning or limiting the space are removed i.e. if the pot is broken and the room is dismantled. The unconditioned pot space and room space are nothing but the total space itself.

Thus the Consciousness is itself Perishable, Field in another form and as the knower of the Field the same Consciousness is the Imperishable Reality in the perishable conditionings. But when these conditionings are transcended the same Self is experienced as the Supreme Self - the *Paramatman, Purushottama*.

**yasmaat ksharam ateeto'hamaksharaadapi chottamah  
ato'smi loke vede cha prathitah purushottamah // 15.18 //**

*As I transcend the perishable and am higher even than the Imperishable, I am celebrated as the Supreme Person, Purushottama, in the world and in the Vedas.*

The Lord explains here how He is the Purushottama, the Supreme Person. He says that Pure Consciousness is higher than both the Perishable and the Imperishable. The

Perishable can continue the process of change only against the Imperishable Truth as no change is perceptible without reference to a changeless factor. If the changes in the matter -body, mind and intellect- have to be recognized there must be something which is steady that illumines these changes. This constant factor among the perishable is called the Imperishable.

The illumining factor can be called Imperishable only when it is compared to the Perishable. Once the Perishable spheres are crossed over, the Imperishable Itself becomes the Pure Infinite which is Purushottama.

Since the Truth, Purushottama, is experienced only after transcending both Perishable and Imperishable, the Absolute Truth is known as the Highest Spirit, Purushottama. This term is used to indicate the Supreme Spirit both in the Vedas and by the men of the world.

FRUIT OF THAT KNOWLEDGE

**yo maamevam asamoodho jaanaati purushottamam  
sa sarvavidbhajati maam sarvabhaavena bhaarata // 15.19 //**

*He, who undeluded, knows Me thus as the Highest Purusha, he knowing all, worships Me with his whole being (heart) O Bharata.*

The Lord tells the fruits gained by the one who realizes the Supreme Truth. Undeluded is the one who never looks upon the physical body as himself or as belonging to himself. To know means not only the intellectual comprehension but the subjective experience that he is the Purushottama-principle. Sri Krishna declares that such a seeker is the greatest of the devotees because such knowledge leads to devotion.

The Highest Spirit, Purushottama, being the Infinite Consciousness, is the all-knower because he knows that the principle of Consciousness is behind all perception, feeling and thought.

**iti guhyatamam shaastram idamuktam mayaanagha  
etadbuddhwaa buddhimaan syaat kritakrityashcha bhaarata // 15.20 //**

*Thus this most secret science (teaching) has been taught by Me, O Sinless One. On knowing this, a man becomes wise and all his duties are accomplished, O Bharata.*

In this concluding verse The Lord praises the Purushottama theme which gives liberation from all sorrows and agitations. He says that He taught this most secret science; secret because It (the spiritual science, Brahavidya) is a knowledge that cannot come to any one of its own accord unless one is initiated into it by the Knower of Reality. The secret is also that Purushottama is the substratum of every thing. Sinless means the one with steady mind. The knowledge of the Self which gives emancipation from the cycle of births and deaths and freedom from the bonds of Karma is eulogized here.

He who has realized the Purushottama-state of Consciousness becomes wise in as much as he cannot thereafter make any error of judgment in his life creating confusion and sorrows all around. The second benefit is the enjoyment of a complete sense of fulfillment, the joy of accomplishing what is expected of him (achieving the goal of life which is realization of Brahman).

If this most profound teaching is understood it makes a man wise. After this there is nothing for him to learn or strive for. He has attained the goal of life and the aim of human existence. He has the complete knowledge of the Supreme Being and gets Brahma Jnana. He becomes Jivan Mukta, who is beyond body-consciousness, three Gunas, three states of consciousness- Waking, Dream and Deep Sleep - pairs of opposites and the cycle of births and deaths. There is no rebirth for him. When a person has realized the Self, he has discharged all the duties of his life.

*This Chapter is the essence of the Gita, the Vedas and the Upanishads. It is generally recited before taking food as a mark of sacred offering to the Lord.*

**om tat sat iti srimadbhagavadgeetaasu upanishatsu brahma vidyaayaam  
yogashaastre sri krishnaarjuna samvaade purushottama yogo naama  
panchadasho'dhyaayah ||**

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the fifteenth discourse entitled The Yoga of the Supreme Spirit

## Concepts and Issues

Sri Krishna describes Samsara or the created world, comparing it to an inverted tree. Its root which is on the top is Brahman, the Absolute. The three Gunas are its branches, the Vedas its leaves and the Vedic rituals are its subsidiary roots. They have spread out below. However it is not seen as such. Neither its origin, nor its end, nor its middle can be discerned. One has to cut this tree by the weapon of detachment and search for that by reaching which, there is no return to mundane existence.

One has to take refuge in that primeval person from which this tree of Samsara has emanated. Only those bereft of egoism, delusion and attachment, who are free from desires and pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain, who are devoted to The Lord, can attain that eternal abode. Neither the sun nor the moon nor the fire can light up that abode. After reaching it there is no return.

The Jiva or the individual soul is a little part of the Supreme Lord and eternal. While being born here, he attracts to himself the mind and the five organs of knowledge. While leaving the body he takes them away with him even as wind carries away the smell. The Jiva enjoys the sense objects through these sense organs and the mind. He is too subtle to be perceived by the ignorant whereas the wise do perceive him. The Yogis striving for perfection succeed in seeing him.

Sri Krishna says that He is The Lord, the Light of lights. It is He who supports the earth and He who sustains vegetation through the moon. It is again He that is responsible for the digestive process in the body, as the *Vaisvanara* fire. He is the spirit established in the hearts of all. He is the one sought by the Vedas. He is the creator of Vedanta.

In this world there are two Purushas or beings - Kshara, the perishable and the Akshara, the imperishable. But He is the Paramatman, the Supreme Self, the Purushottama, the Being par excellence, different and distinct from them and pervading all the three worlds. Whoever realizes Him as such, becomes omniscient and worships Him in all respects.

## Live as the Gita Teaches You to Live

In this Chapter the core teaching is that Sri Krishna (Brahman) alone exists in all names and forms, either movable or immovable objects of the universe. All the planets including the sun, the moon and the stars move and shine with a fraction of His energy. He alone exists as Consciousness in human beings in the physical, mental and intellectual levels. He who knows Him as the Supreme Purusha is the knower of all and worships Him with his whole heart. He who understands this secret knowledge becomes wise; all his doubts and sufferings in the world come to an end spontaneously and he becomes the performer of all the duties.

## Points to Ponder

1. Why the Samsara is depicted as an inverted tree with its roots up?
2. What are the contributions of the Three Gunas towards the destruction of men?
3. Analyze the term Purushottama.
4. How can one reach the goal of human life - God Realisation?
5. Write short notes on:
  - a. Kshara and Akshara
  - b. Vaisvanara fire
  - c. Kootasth am
  - d. Paramatma

**Next time we shall take up Chapter 16**

*HARIH OM*