

The Bhagavad Gita as a Yoga Shastra

By His Holiness Shri 108 Swami Hariharji Maharaj

Dear devotees of the Bhagavad Gita, the very embodiment of my own soul.

The word **Gita** originated from the word **anand**, which means bliss. How can we derive bliss by reading the Bhagavad Gita? Why was the immortal message of the Lord recited in 18 chapters? Why did the Lord not give the message in one word? All the 18 chapters are designated, each as a **yoga**. Each chapter of the Gita has a title of its own, but all the chapters have but one message that is, all human beings will meet in unity with the Supreme Being just like many rivers which flow into the same ocean.

Why is the first chapter called The Yoga of Despondency of Arjuna? Why was it not called the despondency of Dhrtarastra, Duryodana or any other person at the battlefield who was also experiencing despondency? This is because Arjuna's despondency was a sort of spiritual anguish, which united him with Lord Krishna.

The whole world is filled with sorrow, we human beings will feel sorrow unless we are united with the Lord. We should disentangle ourselves from our sorrow for worldly things and seek for spiritual enlightenment.

There is not a single moment when we are not doing work (action). The Gita says do action which will unite you with God. The person who performs action for the Lord is united with the Supreme Being and is the **karma yogi**.

Is there anyone here who has no devotion? Even animals have devotion. Some people are devoted to acquiring wealth, land and other material things. While doing that, they are prepared to kill each other. Such devotion becomes **bhog**. But the devotion (bhakti) as expounded in Chapter 12 The Yoga Of Devotion, which leads us to the path of the Lord becomes **yoga**.

Everyone is knowledgeable in his own field. For example a doctor is knowledgeable in medicine, a barber in hair, a tailor in clothes and so forth. When one applies his knowledge just to gain material things, he brings about his downfall. Some prime ministers and presidents have risen to great heights and then fallen out of power because of this. The Bhagavad Gita leads us up the 18 steps (18 chapters) to the Lord. Our devotion, action and knowledge of the Lord will help us rise to higher levels of spirituality.

Through the knowledge of the Gita, there will be unity among ourselves. The Light of Gita Knowledge will prevail and bring upon all the people on this Earth, peace and happiness.

This is my fervent prayer and message to you all.

This is the transcript by Smt. Premila Bhandari from an audio-taped recording of the simultaneous translation by Dr. Danesh of a discourse by His Holiness in the Geeta Ashram, when he visited Penang in 2001.