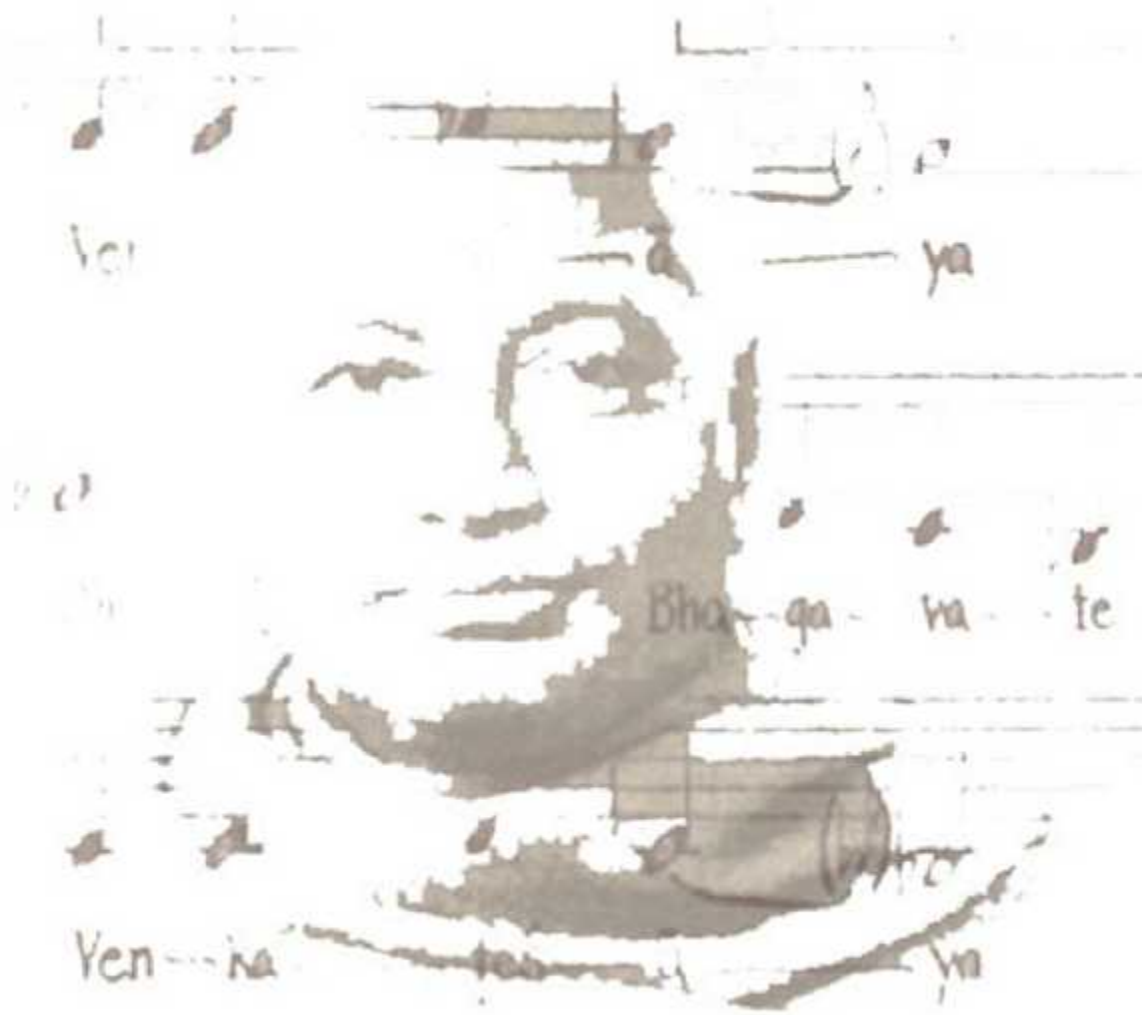


BUDDHI YOGA

[The Yoga of understanding which is the Bhagavad Gita]





Om Namah Venkatesaya
Om Namah Shivaya

Buddhi Yoga

Swami Venkatesananda

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Buddhi Yoga

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Preface

We should progress. It is essential. Life is movement. Growth is expansion. The expansion takes place in nature on two levels. If you contemplate the growth of a tree, you will realise that, as its branches spread out, its roots go deep, and spread out underground too. Minus the latter, the growth above, even if it were possible, would wither away, and might become a menace.

No one would dare sit under a tree without roots. Yet, the whole humanity today lives in such a state! Knowledge has soared high above the clouds to see the other side of the moon! Knowledge has branched out in many directions. Luckily, these branches are laden with fruits.

But, is this tree of knowledge rooted in firm soil? Are we safe in its shade? Or, are we going to be crushed by the weight of the tree we have planted and grown, by the weight of the very fruits we have longed to taste and enjoy!

Where is Knowledge rooted? In Knowledge of Self. Knowledge of "the other" is external growth or expansion. Knowledge of Self is inner growth, in the depth of our being. The two together are the greatest blessing to mankind.

The science that enables us to gain this inner Knowledge of the Self, is Yoga. Many techniques have been evolved to bring this discovery about. Some insist on world-and-life-negation; others extol total world-and-life-acceptance. The former leads to inertia. The latter back to materialism. Not because of their intrinsic lack, but because understanding is lacking in the practitioner.

There is one scripture, however, which describes both the methods, but insists upon understanding. Equipped with this understanding, Man recognises the existence of the world, but is not lost in its glamour, recognizes the need for growth and expansion, but does not neglect the rest.

That scripture is the Gita. That Yoga is called Buddhi Yoga, the yoga of Understanding. As we study this Yoga of Understanding, we shall see that the scripture, though in Sanskrit, is no monopoly of the people of any faith, race, or nationality, but is the nourishment that all men need.

Introduction to the Bhagavad Gita Bhagavad

Gita means 'Divine Song'. It is like the Gospel, and hence has been styled the "Indian Bible". It is revelation in the sense that Incarnate God taught it to Man. It is in the form of a dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, a warrior, and was revealed, on a battlefield five thousand years ago, to signify that it is to be applied to the problems that arise in the daily battle, of our life. It is generally accepted as historical.

Its study does not imply conversion of anyone from one faith to another; it

expressly discourages such practice. Its study will only confirm us in our own faith.

The Bhagavad Gita is a small scripture of seven hundred couplets. But it is amazing what a wealth of sheer information and inspiration it contains.

Even today, it is the 'guiding hand' of many of India's foremost national leaders, and it has stirred the hearts of many of the world's western philosophers, too. That is because it re-enacts a routine human drama. The situation portrayed in the Gita occurs several times in our own lives. And the Gita tells us how to act in those situations.

Mahatma Gandhi 'lived' the Gita, and demonstrated not only that it can be applied in our daily life, but that such an application will greatly enrich our life. Its teachings are entirely non-sectarian and universal.

Dr. Zimmer, a great Indologist of Europe, believes that the Bhagavad Gita is a synthesis of the Aryan and pre-Aryan thought. According to him, pre-Aryan religious thought is what, in its Brahminised - Aryanised version, is preserved in the two systems of Indian philosophy - Sankhya and Yoga - as also in Jainism.

The Bhagavad Gita is part of a much larger epic, the Mahabharatham, which describes the laws that govern creation - Dharma, and is presented to us in the form of the conflict between good and evil, and the eventual triumph of the good over the evil.

There were two rival families - the Pandavas and the Kauravas, who were cousins. The Pandavas were virtuous; the Kauravas were wicked. The Kauravas, by cunning methods, took away the kingdom that rightly belonged to the Pandavas, and subjected them to inhuman hardships. The Pandavas, led always by the eldest brother Dharmaputra, who was virtue itself, were virtuous and noble. They tried to regain their kingdom by peaceful means, but eventually war was declared.

Both Duryodhana, the eldest of the Kaurava brothers, and Arjuna, one of the Pandava brothers, approached Sri Krishna for help in their campaign for support of other rulers. Sri Krishna was impartial. He said: "Both of you are dear to Me. Therefore, now choose what you want. You can have either Me, or my vast army. But please remember also, I will not take up arms and fight." Duryodhana chose the big army of Sri Krishna. Arjuna gladly accepted Sri Krishna Himself, who became his charioteer.

The Gita was revealed to Arjuna on the first day of the battle. In its dialogue, there are four speakers, Dhritarashtra, Sanjaya, Arjuna, and Krishna.

Dhritarashtra was the blind father of the Kauravas, and Sanjaya his minister and charioteer.

Just before the war began, the sage Vyasa, who is traditionally supposed to be the author of the Gita, and was the grandfather of all the brothers, blessed Sanjaya with supernatural vision and hearing. Sanjaya was thus able to know what was going on in the battlefield, and thus it was he who transmitted the Bhagavad Gita.

Dhritarashtra opens the Gita with the question : 'What did the Pandavas and also my people do when they assembled together on the holy plain of Kurukshetra, desirous to fight, O Sanjaya?' The whole narrative of the Gita is Sanjaya's answer to this.

Sri Krishna's teaching has been the Light, guiding the life of thousands of people in every generation of mankind in this world, all these five thousand years since the scripture was born on the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

To quote from tributes from some great men.

Aldous Huxley said: "To a world at war, a world that, because it lacks the intellectual and spiritual prerequisites to peace, can only hope to patch up some kind of armed truce, the Gita stands pointing, clearly and unmistakably, to the only road of escape from the self-imposed necessity of self-destruction."

Schopenhauer said: "In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita, since whose composition many years of the gods have elapsed, and in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial."

Mahatma Gandhi said: "When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, I turn to the Bhagavad Gita, and find a verse to comfort me. Then I begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. Let the Gita be to you a mine of diamonds, as it has been to me. Let the Gita be your constant guide and friend on life's way. Let the Gita light the path and dignify your labour."

Swami Sivananda said: "Gita embodies in itself a solution to the immediately pressing problems of man, and carries a wonderful message of encouragement, hope, cheer and consolation. It is a direct appeal to divinise the entire nature of man. It gives man a positive promise of salvation and makes him fearless. Therein lies the supreme value of the Gita." I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to The Lord, Sri Krishna, the real author of Buddhi Yoga, and my divine Master, Swami Sivananda, in whom I witnessed its exemplar.

Swami Venkatesananda

Lecture 1

Why are we here tonight ? Quite simple, to find out why we are here. In order to find out why we are here, it would be very good and helpful if we don't come here knowing why we have come. It's a bit complicated. If I come here expecting to find something, and don't find it, I'm frustrated. If I come here expecting to find something, and find it here, I'm distracted - and such is life. On the one hand - distraction, on the other - frustration. You expect something, and it turns out as you expected, you will be distracted. You miss all the fun.

If you expect something and do not find it, then you are frustrated. It's a bit tricky. I hope that, if I make fun of myself, or of you, or the world, you will take a good look at what might be behind that fun. If we expect to find something, and find it, we are distracted. That is our experience in life. Every bachelor wants to get married. When he finds that he can get married, he is distracted, he wants something else. It doesn't satisfy him.

Then there is the other aspect of it. He wants to get married, he falls in love with a wonderful girl, he expects to marry her. He does, so they miss the glory of being Romeo and Juliet. Then a few children arrive, and everything seems to be complete. But then there is this dreadful distraction of trying to live up to the marriage, the dreadful distraction of having to keep the family unit intact. Now that everything is wonderful, everything must go on being wonderful, till the end of wonderfulness.

So, that is what happens to our lives. When we get what we want, we are frustrated. Instead, when we come here, it is much simpler to come with a clean slate, so that you and I, together, can write what we want on this clean board. A lovely story is told about a Zen Master. A great scholar went to meet this great Zen Master, to learn the truth from him. The Zen Master knew who this wonderful gentleman was, and guessed his intention. The gentleman entered the Zen Master's presence, who, as was the custom, invited him to a cup of tea. He went on pouring and pouring the cup of tea, with the result that the cup was full, the saucer was full, and the gentleman's lap was also full. He asked, "But why do you keep pouring, can't you see the cup is, full?" And the Zen Master answered, "If as you enter my room, your cup, is already full, what do you expect me to do? Pour some more? It will overflow."

Come with an empty cup, a clean slate, an enquiring mind. That is the right attitude in all study, in all discussion, in all communication, in all dialogue.

The spirit of enquiry is important. Marriages break and come to the rocks, only because people get married. The spirit of courtship comes to an end, and you can rest assured, that once the courtship comes to an end, divorce proceedings have commenced. Whether you go to a divorce court or not, is immaterial. It is in the courtship that all the fun lies. In exactly the same way, in what we are going to do, it is the enquiry that is all important. Is there an answer? Ask yourself, find out,

let this be the enquiry. Is there an answer to the question, "Why am I here ?" Find out. Just as courtship keeps the couple in a state of ecstasy, this spirit of enquiry keeps us alert.

There may not be a conclusion to this enquiry. What a conclusion? Conclusion is a full stop. And, because we run into this dead-end of anticipating a conclusion, people begin to ask, "What then?" We assume that there is an end, a conclusion. Again, coming back to love symbolism, love is only a symbolism. This courtship continues, this enquiry continues, what is the end ? The end is something wonderful. I guess you know something wonderful about spiders. I have not seen it, but have only read about it in books. I believe immediately after the mating, the spider eats the male. And that is absolutely true of this quest, the quest of Truth. What is the conclusion ? The conclusion is absorption, it is not annihilation, it is not destruction, it is absorption, it is the two becoming one. A wave is absorbed into the ocean. It is not as though the wave was ever distinct from the ocean. It appeared to be, and now it is absorbed into the ocean. That is the conclusion.

We are anticipating a conclusion, we are anticipating the answer to this question, "What are we?" It is because we have never bothered, not to answer this question, but to ask. This question has never been allowed to arise in our minds. We are in a mess in this world: our life is in a mess, our society is in a mess. Why is our society in a mess? Because each member of that society is in a mess, and contributes his nature to that society. If all of us have only disharmony in our lives, you can't expect the society to enjoy harmony. If all of us suffer from frustration, if all of us exude hatred, how do we expect society to be a heaven?

Basically, the problem is not one of sociology, but philosophy. The moment the word, philosophy, is uttered, someone exclaims, "Ah, now we know: God, World, Man, you understand these three, all your problems are over." Philosophy means "love of wisdom". Love that is wisdom, wisdom that is love. Not love alone, not wisdom alone. Love that is wisdom, wisdom that is love.

We begin to look within, learn to ask ourselves this question, "What am I ?", not even hoping to get an answer, not even expecting to find an answer, not even anticipating that there is an answer. The question arises in my heart. That is all that is important, nothing more, nothing less. Is there an answer? That is exactly what I am trying to find out. If there is no answer, we will know. If there is, we will know.

What am 'I'? Till we learn to ask this question sincerely, shall continue to lead a messy life, jumping from frying pan into fire, and when the fire is too hot, back to the frying pan. And, what do we do ? What are we doing now? We have got together. Someone stands here, someone sits there. I suppose, being in a lecture room, this place where I stand is reserved for the professor. In spiritual communication, we call the teacher a guru - I'm not one. I'm only giving you the nomenclature. What is the difference between professor and guru? A big

difference. The teacher's student is called the pupil.

English is a foreign language to me. I learnt it at school; the advantage being, I learned to look at words and not to take them for granted; where perhaps you would, because it's your mother tongue. Pupil. What is this pupil? When anatomy was taught, we were told that we have two pupils. I said, "Good Heavens, each one has two pupils, I may be a stupid fool, and still I have two pupils." But I began to ask why. Why is this called pupil? And the student, in relation to the teacher, is also called a pupil. On the other hand, in spiritual communication, we have the disciple and the guru.

The pupil is one who behaves like the pupil of your eyes. What does a pupil do? When we come into a dark room, it opens wide. When we go into bright sunshine, it closes up. In other words, when the pupil stands before the Light of Truth, he closes his eyes. In darkness, he is quite at home. That is the nature of a pupil. Why does he not receive this great Light of Wisdom? The great master, the great sage, the great man of Self-realisation, can do nothing to a pupil. Why? Because, the moment the pupil comes and stands in front of this Light of Truth, he closes up, whereas the disciple does not. Disciple is only a spelling mistake. It actually is discipline. It is when the pupil disciplines himself, opens himself, is receptive to the Light of Truth that radiates from the master, that he is benefited.

As a matter of fact, the word guru means just that. Each letter of the Sanskrit alphabet, which corresponds to a syllable in English, has a meaning of its own. Gu refers to gloom. The gloom of ignorance, the gloom of absence of Self-knowledge, the gloom of darkness. Ru means remover. Again, I am deliberately choosing a word with phonetic similarity to the original syllable. So that guru means 'the remover of the darkness of ignorance'. Guru is the Light, the Light of Truth.

Do we need a guru? Can we not walk the path of Truth without the guidance of a guru? Yes and no. No, because that Truth which shines in and through you, itself becomes your guru. Without light we cannot see. That Light is the guru. Yet, it may be unnecessary for a microscopic minority. It may be unnecessary for some to find what you and I commonly call a guru, a human personality.

In the case of such a personality it may even be a great risk following that guru. You can't follow a guru! What do you mean, 'following a guru'? A guru is the Light, and since here you are talking of the human personality, he is facing the Light that is the Truth. You know what happens when you follow that man? You are walking in the shadow of his human personality. You can't help it. That's why we stumble and then blame the guru. "Ah, I followed him, I fell down." You didn't follow him; you were walking on his shadow. He showed you the Light. You refused to take advantage of that Light, but followed the man, who cast his shadow behind. You walked in that shadow and got lost. It wasn't his fault - it's nobody's fault.

And yet, without a guru, how do we know? How do we see? There are people who have condemned the idea of a guru outright. They have said, "Don't follow any guru." Means what? "Follow me!" He says, "Don't follow any guru." And if you did just that, what are you doing? You are following him. You are making him the guru.

How is it possible that we can see, without Light. And yet, if we have the Light and refuse to see, again we have the same result. Therefore, here we are not trying to follow one another, but we are trying to sit together. You providing some Light for me, and I'm providing some Light for you. And, by just casting our Light upon one another, we might find the Truth.

I don't know if any of you have experienced this phenomenon; it took my breath away during my pilgrimage in the Himalayas. It was the dark fortnight and we were in the heart of the Himalayas. I looked out of the window. It was cold, very cold. I found the whole landscape beautifully moonlit. I thought, "This is funny, there is no moon today." I jumped out of the window. You know what it was? Fantastic! Indescribably beautiful! We were surrounded by snow-capped mountains and the snow-radiated light, and the peaks were reflecting on one another.

Now, if you will please remember this lovely analogy, you will remember what we are doing here. You are not listening to a discourse; we are talking to each other. If we adopt this method, not only here in this hall, but in all enquiry outside, not expecting to brainwash or to be brainwashed, neither swallowing nor rejecting, merely responding, the two together will produce the Light with which we will be able to find our path. That is the Light that casts no shadow at all. Because you become the Light itself. It is not the Light of some other human personality that you try to follow, but you become the Light. And that is why the great Buddha said, "Be ye Light unto yourself."

Yet the candle cannot light itself. It's full of fire, the entire candle is inflammable material, and yet it cannot light itself. It has to - using the wrong word - borrow the light from someone else. It has to be kindled by somebody else. And, once this candle is lit, becomes a candle in its own right.

You are a candle; if you refuse to recognise this inner candle, this candle of your own Light, the Light of your self-knowledge, and all the time walk in the shadow of this human personality that you call the guru, naturally you are heading towards a great loss.

We are trying to discuss a scripture. Scriptures have come in for a lot of criticism. Most deservedly. Why? It is very easy to quote; and you know the famous proverb: "the devil quoting scriptures". In Sanskrit, we have two words: "Deva" and "Asura". Deva is a god. Div means to illumine. The same root has given us the other English words, divine, day, daylight. Deva is a being of Light. Kura is the opposite, one who has no light. If you are a being of Light, you must

be able to see the Truth yourself. If you can't see, what will you do? If you ask me about America, about something I don't know, I will only quote what the Time Magazine says. I can't say first hand. I don't know. It is here that we become devils quoting scriptures, not Devas shedding Light.

If I have first hand experience, I won't quote. In India, a few years ago, girls were not allowed on the stage; so, all female parts were played by boys. Now, suppose you are aware that the cast of a particular play had all males. You see what you think is a lovely looking girl, and you think that the manager has introduced one girl into the cast. "Lovely girl" you murmur to yourself. Some lady sitting next to you nudges you and says, "Oh no, it is a man." You take a closer look, and you say, "Ah yes, I see now." Now, you are only guessing. You ask the lady sitting next to you, "How did you know it was not a girl?" "He is my husband." How does she know? She doesn't guess, she doesn't quote somebody, she knows.

Now, this is the beauty of Light. There is no quotation here. There is actual direct perception, experience. And then again, how do we know what can be experienced? From the scriptures. What are they? They are the recorded experiences of those who have gone ahead of us. This girl says, "He is a man." Direct experience. We have no business to doubt it.

Shifting to another sphere; every captain of a ship, or the pilot of an aeroplane, has a chart, a navigation chart. He can't throw the chart away, and say, "Oh, I'll find the way myself. I'll depend upon the inner light". If you want to find the path, and there is that chart available, why don't you make use of it? But, everyone of these things can be used, disused, and misused. Of these three, I don't like only one thing. Disuse.

Very often we misuse the scriptures, and so have invited upon them unmerited criticism. Somewhere there is a word 'chosen' - immediately we want to be the 'chosen' race, the 'chosen' religion, the 'chosen' few. I am not referring particularly to the Hebrew scriptures, or the Muslim scriptures. These expressions are obtained even in Hindu scriptures. "We are the chosen ones." "Unless you were born here, unless you appear like this, unless you follow this, you are damned." "This is the only door through which you can enter." We are told that "God is within you." If, in order to find the God within, I have to follow this "somebody", and walk through this "only" gate, I would be running away from myself.

These are the man-made abuses of the scriptures, that have invited upon them unmerited criticism. The scriptures are not to blame. Man's own abuse is responsible for this criticism. Scriptures are like charts, navigation charts. We can use them, we can find our path with their help. But, if three or four of us have got charts, written in different languages and different markings, we will not know how to interpret them; so, we start quarrelling.

What is the way to discover which one is right ? Make use of them. Find out. There is only one way in which this dispute can be settled. Find out!

Is faith necessary in a scripture? Yes. Otherwise you won't study it. Must we have blind faith in this scripture? No! Then we won't be able to read it. I am using the words literally. We have blind faith. Means what? What do I see? I see nothing. I don't even see a paper here. It is useless. Again, I must have faith in it, otherwise I would throw it into the dustbin. That is why Lord Buddha said, "Neither this nor that. In the middle is the path."

There is no general rule. From moment to moment, keep yourself alert, and try to discover. That is the most wonderful thing. Should we take this scripture literally? No. Throw it away? No. Keep it, study it. If you have no faith in it at all, you won't study it, or at least be receptive to the truths embedded in the scripture. If you have blind faith, you won't study it, either.

Study it, and apply it. Without faith, without axioms, there is no science.

And this is precisely true of the scriptures that have been handed down to us. Take them. Accept them. Experiment with them, and discover the Truths enshrined in them. It is then that you, in your own life, in your own consciousness, will be able to become a scripture. Your life will be a scripture. There will be no need for you to quote. You will be that scripture. That is the meaning of studying a scripture, that is the meaning of resorting to a guru. We must resort to a guru, not hunt one. If you start hunting me, I will run. That is not the right attitude.

Here we shall assemble together, night after night, trying to see if some light can be shed on, not so much our life, not so much our problems, but on "being". What are we ?

For, it is certain, that the moment I know what I am, I will at least cease to be a fool. We shall cease to be fools only the moment we discover that there is "something", "I am".

What am I? What are we? This is the question that haunts us, this is the question that is most important to us in our life, for life flows from this "I Am,". Becoming is nothing but consecutive displacement of being. Somebody asked me, "Swami, you go from place to place; don't you get sick, don't you get tired ?" I said, "I don't go from place to place." Why? The car goes from place to place, the plane goes from place to place. What difference does it make to me? This attitude produces a tremendous inner transformation. We are not moving. We are not doing anything. We are. And this being shifts, or something else shifts, I don't know. We still don't know if the sun moves around the earth or the earth moves around the sun. Absurd discussion. In infinite space, what moves around what? The answer depends upon the terms of reference. If you are standing on the sun, the earth moves around the sun; if you are standing on the earth, the sun moves

around the earth.

So that, here, we 'are'. The movement is illusory, exactly the same way as the film. In a cinema what moves? The screen is stationary, you are stationary, the projection room is stationary, the projector itself is stationary, and even the reels have been fixed and screwed, except that they keep revolving. That is not the movement that you see on the screen. And if you know the technicalities of it, each frame has got a distinct picture. That picture does not move. What is moving? Scientific explanations can come later; but, let us learn to wonder. How is it that by merely putting a series of things one after the other, and shifting their position, there is an illusion of movement on the screen. Each frame has only got a certain state of being. There is no motion inside the film. This state of being, followed by that state of being, creates an illusion of motion. An illusion of action, an illusion of activity, an illusion of life. So that again, to come back to our original theme, when we know what we are, when this question arises in our heart, then our life will be fruitful, glorious, and divine.

Lecture 2

The scripture we are discussing, is called the Bhagavad Gita, the Song of God, or the Word of God. It has a story behind it. All scriptures have a Genesis, a story behind them. That is the way in which the ancients introduced a philosophical truth. Often these scriptures, especially the Genesis, involved human relations, human problems, human reactions to those human problems. I don't know how far this is valid, but they are supposed to guide us in the resolution of our own problems. How far they can claim to do so is upto you and me to believe or not to believe. They contain portraits of human life - allegorically, exoterically, esoterically, literally, as you wish to take these things. There is no hard and fast rule. Nor need we be dogmatic here. Why are these wonderful scriptures embedded in human stories? For the simple reason that we all like stories. All of us like stories, and who doesn't? Perhaps I should illustrate with an anecdote.

I am fond of making light of serious topics, because I feel, to be light-hearted itself, is the best philosophical approach to the truth. One who is good, can also be happy and blissful. Goodness does not mean having a long face. I like to make people laugh and joke, and, at first, some people didn't like it. One day, a young lady came to me and very nicely said, "You know Swami, from an Indian Swami or Holy man we expect the most serious presentation of these holy truths, not a flippant way of dealing with them. The sublime must be kept sublime, and must not be brought down to the ridiculous." I said, "Mother, I don't know if I can be serious. Do you insist upon it? If I present a high philosophical discussion to people who are totally raw to this type of pursuit, young boys and girls, it may be a bit difficult to hold their attention. They will go to sleep." She said, "I understand your objection. But I am going to get you serious seekers of the highest calibre. Now please give a serious talk on the Upanishads." So, a sort of inner circle meeting was organised, and Swami was asked to give a very serious talk on the philosophy of the Upanishads. Immediately it started, this girl could hardly keep her eyes open for five minutes, and down came the head and she had a very good sleep for a whole hour. As soon as I stopped, her eyes opened and she also woke. I thought, now I understand why you want serious talks on exalted topics! you want to sleep! And I also understand another thing: why it is said that philosophy promotes peace. Immediately it puts you to sleep, and I am almost sure that people who sleep can't fight.

Now, that is a peculiar thing. We do want to elevate our consciousness to a sublime height; yet, there is undoubtedly a resistance within. This resistance manifests itself in a thousand ways. In Indian philosophy, it is called Mala - impurity. But we need not be ashamed of ourselves. We all have impurity in our own hearts. How did it get there? We do not know. This impurity manifests itself, not only in the waywardness of the mind in our day to day living, but also as positive obstacles to philosophical enquiry. If you hang a picture of, let us say Jesus Christ, on one side of a room, and a nude painting on the other side, which do you think will attract everyone's attention first? They will turn back again on second thoughts, and even these second thoughts may be prompted by "what will

he think" This is mala, which haunts our lives. It does not do to ignore this. It is wiser to recognise it, and then deal with it. And the only way in which philosophical truths can be profitably conveyed from one person to another, is by appealing at the same time to both the intellect and the emotions. If you keep the emotional level, like the cinema, then the purpose is defeated. If you appeal too much to the emotions, then the philosophical quest disappears. And, if you appeal too much to the Intellect, then the whole thing goes to sleep, and there is resistance, there is a blockage.

The ancients had a wonderful method of combining the two. I am particularly conscious of this in most of our Indian scriptures, where you have a high emotional content, a high emotional appeal, and suddenly you have a mind-shocking spiritual truth, and you will say, "Ah um, is that so?" You listen to the story like the T.V. commercials. You do not know when the commercial is going to end and the news is going to start; so, you keep looking. It is just sandwiched between them in the most delightful way. These commercials must have learnt from the oriental scriptures, the best way to capture the imagination, and to push in the commercials.

All stories which have a spiritual purpose, a moral embedded them, contain the basic element of drama. Those who have studied drama will appreciate that every drama requires a hero or a heroine, and a villain. Without a villain there is no drama. We may go home and perhaps run down the villain and praise the hero, without grasping this wonderful truth. We remember both of them. Perhaps we remember the villain a little more, while paying lip service to the hero. We can't ignore or forget the villain. He is as important to the play as the hero.

In other words - Good and Evil. This is how the world has been created, sustained, and maintained. There is nothing absolute in creation. No absolute good; no substance without a shadow can exist in creation. For this creation is a relative affair.

There is a state of being where non-being does not exist. There is a notion of reality where unreality does not exist. How do you know? By guessing, on the testimony of those who have experienced such a state, and on the basis of analogy. What is the analogy? A simple thing. The world exists and the mind exists. So long as the world exists and the mind exists, thought also exists. We are bound to think. Whereas it is very comfortable to lie down, doing nothing physically, it is very uncomfortable not to think. One would expect that just as physical laziness is extremely comfortable, mental laziness is also comfortable. It is not. Lie down and daydream, think of a million things. Imagine yourselves as kings and queens of great lands, if not on this earth, somewhere else, with all your desires fulfilled. You can comfortably go on day-dreaming. Stop thinking, and you will get tired, bored, fatigued. Stop thinking for two minutes. I do not know if it is true, but they say that twenty seconds is the maximum period a normal person can live without thinking. Yet, during sleep, we exist without thinking. The mind is not obsessed by thoughts. I am not referring to nightmare

here. That is a dream state. During good deep sleep state, which can prevail even, according to learned scientific psychologists, up to about forty minutes to one hour, we are completely without thoughts. Yet there is an existence, a thoughtless existence. And, combining the two, great saints, yogis and philosophers infer - it is only an inference, an axiom, which has to be proved in our own life - that there is a state in which there can be consciousness minus the diversity, and existence minus the ignorance of sleep. They have experienced it. They give it to us. That state is called bhuma.

yo vai bhuma tat sukham, na alpe sukham asti

Great Yogis have declared 'that Supreme Infinite alone is Bliss.' What you have here is alpana, the finite pleasures which will only lead to displeasure, misery, unhappiness.

ye hi samsparshajaa bhogaa duhkha yonaya eva te aadyantavantah kaunteya na teshu ramate budhah (Gita V-22)

The enjoyments that are born of contacts are only generators of pain, for they have, a beginning and an end, O Arjuna; the wise do not rejoice in them.

Here, whatever pleasure you have is bounded on one side with a beginning and on the other with an end. Everything that has a beginning must have an end. Think of something which has an end and does not have a beginning! Think of something which has a beginning but does not have an end! You can't. It is illogical. But, is everything logical? May not be. So, here is an axiom, take it, test it in your own life, and find whether it is true or false.

These worldly pleasures have a beginning and an end. When the thing begins, you are elated, distracted, and when a thing ends you are frustrated. This is the song of our life. Take, for instance, a wonderful couple in Australia, with an only son. And this boy is in Vietnam. This couple spend sleepless nights when they hear that this boy is coming-home-on leave. What is that? Do you call it happiness or unhappiness? Excitement? "My son is coming home." "Oh, I hope my son's plane does not crash - all the planes in the world can crash, but not that plane which carries my son back to Perth. It can even crash after it leaves Perth airport, but not till then." Well, by God's grace, the son has landed safe and sound all of one piece, and you go and hug him. "Ah, how lovely to have you back here. How many days will you be here? When are you going back?" So, the anxiety has started. There is an undercurrent of anxiety, a loss of the pleasure that you are having, so that in effect we do not know what it is to be happy.

Somewhere we have lost the key to happiness. Why? Because our happiness depends on something. Our happiness depends upon a contact with something else. So long as my happiness is in your hands, I cannot be happy - impossible. Quite apart from the discussion of the Bhagavad Gita, I have a very simple secret to share with you. Never let anybody know what can make you happy, or what can make you unhappy. If you do, your happiness is finished. You have told somebody how to tempt you, and how to threaten you. What makes you happy,

nobody should know. If I know what makes you happy, then I will tempt you. Every time I want you to be my slave, I will tempt you. If I know what will make you unhappy, I will threaten you. Every time I want you to be my slave, I will threaten you. You will live in constant dread. Fear, fear, fear, and this fear will not leave you. No peace of mind, no rest, nothing. The ultimate answer is to ensure that your happiness is in your own hands, the switch to your happiness is in your own hands. If you hand it over to some other person, some other thing in life, your happiness is already gone. That is what Krishna reminds us. ye hi samsparshajaa bhogaa dukkha yonaya eva te He said that these contact-born pleasures, these pleasures born of contact with some other object in this world, are not miseries. Perhaps that may sound illogical, but they are the wombs of misery. You cannot say that your son returning from Vietnam is an event which can be labelled unhappiness; no, there is joy, happiness. That happiness is the womb, is the mother of the unhappiness that is coming very soon - the parting. Meeting seems to be wonderful, enjoyable, delightful, pleasurable. But please remember that the parting comes after the meeting, and it has to come. In this world, meeting and parting are inevitable, birth and death are inevitable, night and day are inevitable. These things follow one another. So, if you enjoy the one, you are definitely going to be miserable at the other. So that, the ultimate thing is to enjoy the infinite, the Absolute.

Till we find the Absolute, what shall we do? That is the question. Till the time comes when we discover the Absolute and become one with the Absolute ... like the spider's partner ... what shall we do?

Be subject to this conflict of good and evil - that is the story of all stories. That is the basis of all stories, which have in them a scripture embedded. Whether you call it the Bible, Koran, a Hindu scripture, Greek Mythology, Roman Mythology. Examine all these stories, and you will find that fundamentally they all have the same strain - the hero, the villain, and their conflict. In India, we have a few such basic stories. I will give you a bird's eye view of the scripture of which the Bhagavad Gita forms part.

But first, let me tell you: there is another one, Ramayana. It more ancient than the story of which the Bhagavad Gita forms part. It is a beautiful and interesting story. In that book, Rama was God - the hero - and the villain was called Ravana. Strangely enough, this word Rama seems to have denoted something divine, something that pertained to the solar dynasty. In quite a number ancient myths and legends, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, there is always a Ra somewhere. In Egyptian mythology, Ra actually meant the sun, and strangely enough, in the Indian Ramayana, this Rama was supposed to be a descendant of the sun. Rama was divine, and Ravana was something totally undivine. Rama would not hurt a fly, and Ravana was terribly cruel - he would torture even a God. Rama lived, let us say in North India, and Ravana lived thousands of miles away. This villain was no kin, was not related in any way to the hero.

Perhaps 2000 years later, the same drama of the conflict of good and evil was

re-enacted on the same soil of India, and this time the good people, no longer an individual but a corporate goodness, were called Pandavas - five of them. I want you to be alert to this story, because it contains some subtle lessons for us. The villain was not an individual, but corporate villainy, the Kauravas. And how many were they? One hundred. I am only drawing lessons from these. The first lesson is that this is bound to be the proportion in the world. Do not expect all the people to be angels. If for every hundred wicked people we have in the world, we have five tolerably good people, then it's a golden age.

Now the conflict starts. Who are they? Not like Rama and Ravana. One in India, and one in another country. No. Here they are cousins. The conflict now draws closer.

Stepping aside from this story. Today, what is the position. Each one of us is half a devil, and half a divine being. It is no longer a struggle between one person who is good, or a few people who are good, and other people who are wicked, but the struggle has entered into our own heart. Within our own heart, there are the forces of light. Within our own heart, there are the forces of darkness. First, they were strangers; then they were cousins. Now they, the forces of good - and evil, are part of our being.

The story continues. Right from their birth, these wicked people had wanted to kill and crush and exploit the good ones. This is the nature of the villain. He is aggressive, he is intolerant, and his only ambition is that the neighbour's motor car must also form part of his garage. "I have two, but never mind. I'll have three. Why not?" There is no question of justice. There is no question of distribution of the spoils. No. "Why should I not have all the wealth in the world? Why not?" That is the question that every fool asks himself. "Why should I not own everything" That is every fool's ambition, every villain's ambition.

The struggle goes on between the two - the good and the wicked. As is said, God is always on the side of the righteous. For the simple reason that you can't vanquish a man who wants nothing. It's an extremely difficult thing. If I have no desire, if I have no ambition, you do not know how to lead me into frustration. You can't. It is only when I have ambition, when I have a desire, and if you know that desire, by refusing me fulfilment of that ambition, of that desire, you can lead me to misery, to unhappiness. If I accept whatever is given, what can you do? You can only fulfil my ambition. That is the great meaning behind the ancient proverb, "A contented mind is a continuous feast." You can do nothing with this man. He is always happy, because he wants nothing. Whatever is given, even if it is a blow, he receives it with joy. You cannot make him unhappy.

vihaaya kaamaanyah sarvaanpumaamshcharati nihsprihah nirmamo nirahamkaarah sa shaantimadhigachchati (Gita II-71)

That man attains peace who, abandoning all desires, moves about without longing, without the sense of mine and without egoism.

Says Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. This Yoga was illustrated by these good

people in their own lives. "Free from all desires, craving for nothing. This wonderful man of God lives in happiness and peace." And even if you don't believe in a super-human ultra-phenomenal thing called God, this is the secret. We say, God helps, God comes to the rescue of good ones. It is not as though someone comes from the sky to save the good man from being crushed. The good man is uncrushable, that is the secret!

When you don't want to argue, you say, "You are right." There is no argument. There is no quarrel. That is a good man's nature. That is a good man's trick. Try this, and you will find that your life is full of happiness. Somebody wants to come and fight with you, "Oh, you said such and such. You are wrong." Reply, "Perfectly. You are right." This one sentence, "You are right", acts as the best of all needles to prick any balloon that floats near you. "You are right." It's obvious. If he didn't feel that he was right, he wouldn't come and tell you that. Even if he is a fool, or I think he is a fool, let him discover; I don't have to tell him.

Suppose he comes and says, "Swami, you are a fool." What would be my reaction? I would say, "You are right." Perhaps a friend is offended. "How can you say that? Are you a fool then?" I may or may not be a fool. That's a different story. He thinks I am a fool. That statement is a hundred per cent right. Now, if you come and ask me, "Are you a fool?", I will ask you back, "What do you think?" If you think I am not, well you think I am not. What am I? I am, I am. Completely unaffected by your thought that I am a good man, and his thought that I am a fool ... I am what I am.

"Resist not evil," said Jesus Christ. Here again, even the devil can quote scriptures. I shall give you an example of this.

A young girl is walking along the kerb, a thief grabs her handbag, you look at him, he shows you his muscles, and you say, "Ah, Jesus Christ said, Resist not evil," and go your way. That is not right. If someone took all your clothes and hit you with your own shoes, and he was weaker than you, and you knew you could hurt him, and then you said, "Resist not evil", then you are a follower of Jesus Christ, No doubt. But where something is happening, where you can help, and you run away, you are a coward, not a saint. This is an extremely difficult spiritual truth to apply blindly to our lives.

Let's remember this: the key words, "You are right", will promote peace and harmony in our lives. "You are right." I am what I am, unaffected by the opinions of other people. Just because somebody says, "You are a fool", I am not going to be a fool. Just because some one says, "You are a very wise man", I am not going to be a wise man. My wisdom or foolishness does not depend on other people's opinions.

Now, let's get back to the story. This is the nature of the good man. He does not resist evil when it concerns his own personal property. "Resist not evil", has its qualifications. Resist not the evil that is directed against you. And even that has

another qualification, which we shall discuss presently. The conflict goes on, and these good people prove to be invincible. Eventually they are cheated, and then banished. The story is very colourful. These wicked people say, while banishing the good people, "All right, you stay away from the kingdom for twelve or thirteen years, and when you come back, we will give you your half of the kingdom."

Most of you know politics. It's an extremely difficult thing to renounce power. Once you have tried it, the chair seems so comfortable. When you are first elected to a position of power, not only in governmental organisations, but even in little societies, social structures or groups, a subtle change takes place in you. First, a few of you may think the Swami is a nice man. "We'll form a group, an organisation, and you will be our leader. You are such a wonderful man." Maybe I was a wonderful man. I don't know. After a few years of occupying that position, I suddenly became a wonderful fool. I begin to believe that her opinion was true. This is the greatest danger. If her opinion was true, what about his opinion? Somebody said I was a fool, somebody said I was a wise man. And somehow, the majority approves her; so, I am in the chair. I begin to feel, "I am a wonderful man." That is the surest sign of a fool. But then it is too late. I am not going to renounce power. That is one of the reasons why God invented, forgive me for saying so, death. No fool can occupy a chair forever. At least death will get him out of the chair. It is a most wonderful thing, if you think about it. Otherwise, the world would be ruled by fools forever. Thanks to death, it doesn't happen. Such is the temptation of power.

When these good people came back after their exile, they had fulfilled their part of the contract, they said, "Look, give us our share of the kingdom." The wicked ones said, "What do you mean? We won't give you. Take it by force if you like!"

Now this is an extremely subtle truth, an extremely difficult question to decide. Should that evil be tolerated or not? Where does love meet justice? Should love overlap, cover, and cancel justice? Should justice again make a travesty of love? Is there a state of being, is there a mode of action, which combines love and justice? This is something which has puzzled every one. Here we have a situation in which these good people had fulfilled their part of the contract by going into exile, have come back to claim their birthright, and these wicked ones say, "Go. We won't give it." Is this to be taken as a personal effrontery? In which case you are to keep quiet. No. And here, we are reminded of Mahatma Gandhi, who said, "I don't hate the British, they are my friends. I love them. And because I love them, I want to save them from the injustice that they are showing towards the people of India." It's an extremely subtle and complicated way of thinking.

That is what the young man, who sees the young girl walking along the kerb, molested by a villain, will feel, "I am not going to punish him, no, but I love him, not his actions." That is what is meant by "Love the sinner, but not the sin." I love him, the deity in him, the being behind the mask. But this evil which covers that being must be eradicated, because of my love for this man. It is only when we are able to distinguish thus between love and hatred within ourselves that we will

understand right action.

Puzzled by this situation, these good people go to Krishna, God-incarnate. "What shall we do?" And Krishna says, "I'll make one last effort to resolve this peacefully." He himself goes as an emissary to work for peace. These wicked people refuse. Though Krishna acted as the mediator, when he found that it was useless, that these strong wicked people who were in power were reluctant to abandon their power, he said, "Now is the time for war."

So that again, "resist not evil", so long as it is only directed against you. But if it involves higher issues than mere personal effrontery, it may become your duty to resist evil. This resistance to evil in those days, not only in India, but all over the world, was not considered the duty of every citizen. I was born a Brahmin. I am not fond of shooting, it would be very difficult for me. Supposing I was recruited to the army, and I betrayed cowardice on the battle front, it would be the loss of your victory! So that, in those days all over the world, this resistance to evil was confined to people of an aggressive temperament. In India they were called the Kshatriyas. The Brahmins were those people who were religious or contemplative by temperament. They could not possibly exchange their places, it would have been disaster. These people whose story we are discussing here, were all Kshatriyas, fighters, people of aggressive temperament. For a man, let us say a policeman, whose duty it is to maintain law and order, if he betrayed weakness, and says, "resist not evil", he will promote chaos in society. So that, here again, we have to discriminate. If someone comes to hit me, or if I see some violence going on around me, my duty first is to go and report the matter to the police, and make them intervene, and therefore bring law and order. But it so happened that the parties involved were themselves the warriors, the princes. Krishna tells them to declare war.

The campaign started. One member of this party, one member of that party, went round canvassing support. There were many who joined them, and eventually both of them went to Krishna, incarnate Godhead, as we believe he was. It is said that Krishna was having his afternoon nap, when both these people entered accidentally at the same time. Krishna woke up, looked at them, and said, "I am impartial, both of you are my friends."

If you read between the lines, you will derive a wonderful spiritual lesson. Whether we call ourselves wicked or good, we are all the same from the point of view of God. God doesn't discriminate between the good and the evil, between the good man and the bad man. If He thought I was too wicked to live, He could snuff life out of me in half a second. God's blessings are shared by everybody, whether we label them good or wicked.

So he said, "I am impartial. You choose. I place myself on one side, and I won't fight, and I place my army on the other scale." The wicked people want quantity. That's another sign of wickedness. If you love quantity in preference to quality, you know you are on that side. That wicked man, that Kaurava, thought, "What

am I going to do with Krishna? We'll have the army." Arjuna said, "Good. Thanks very much. I'll have you, Krishna, on my side." Exactly what the Scripture said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you."

The first thing. God must be on our side. Truth must be on our side. Once we ensure that, everything else will come, one by one.

And the war started.

Lecture 3

It may be simple arithmetic, it may be merely playing with words. Somehow I have the feeling that there is no essential and fundamental difference between the word "good" and the word "God". If you look at the two words, you will discover the similarity between them. What is the difference, arithmetically? "0". So, there is no difference. The difference is zero.

This again seems to be an inherent factor in creation. What is evil? We don't know. We only know that it comes into being, or it becomes. All becoming is evil. "Being" is good, "Being" is the truth. Becoming becomes falsehood, becomes untruth, becomes evil. Therefore, evil is not something which drops from the lap of Satan.

I once read a criticism of Indian philosophical thought or theological thought, by a non-Hindu. He says, "The Indian Philosophers say everything is pervaded by God. If that is so, how can they explain the existence of evil in this world? Do they accept even evil as something that is pervaded by God?" We don't know, I am afraid there is no answer to that question. A young Indian girl in Mauritius was very distressed when she read this, and she came running to me, saying, "What to do?" I said, "I have no answer." If someone who believes in the holy Bible advances this criticism, I would very much love him to explain to me another mystery which the Bible contains, "God created the world, and he saw it was good." Lovely. He must have a different vision from you and me who don't feel that the world is so good. Well, God saw it was good and I accept it. He created Adam. Very good. He created Eve. Also good. Perhaps better, I don't know; depends on what sort of Eve she was. Then comes the serpent. Who created that? Obviously God. Everything was created by him. "Why did he create the serpent?" You will have to ask God, not me. The serpent seems to have a will of its own. Distinct and different from God's will, hostile to God's will, antagonistic to God's will. So, whereas God commanded Adam and Eve not to do something, the serpent comes and tempts them to do that very thing, to defy God's will, go against God's will. It is not as though Adam and Eve had forgotten what God told them, but the temptation was more powerful. Who created this evil, and who conferred upon it greater strength than God's own? Any theologian will tell you it's a divine mystery. And it is good to remember that evil, or the misunderstanding of it, is a divine mystery we can't explain. We can concoct a million theories, but it will still be beyond us. Therefore, the Indian philosopher covers the whole thing with a thick blanket, and that is called Maya.

daivi hyeshaa gunamayi mama maayaa duratvayaa maameva ye prapadyante maayaametaam taranti te (Gita VII-14)

Verily, this divine illusion of Mine, made up of the (three) qualities (of Nature) is difficult to cross over; those who take refuge in Me alone, cross over this illusion.

It is a divine power. We don't know what it is. I have a rather simple way of looking at it. It is the other side of God. Everything that is conceivable has two

sides. Take the thinnest tissue you can get hold of, it still has two sides. Divide that tissue into two, you get four sides. Everything conceivable has two sides. All your concept of truth, all your concept of reality, all your concept of even God, presupposes the opposite. Thesis presupposes antithesis. Hence, the ultimate truth is regarded as transcendental.

uttamah purushashtvanyah paramaatmetyudaahritah yo lokatrayamaavishya bibhartavyaya
ishvarah (Gita XV-17)

But distinct is the supreme Purusha, called the highest Self, the indestructible Lord, Who, pervading the three worlds, sustains them.

That supreme being is something different. Don't ask anyone to explain what that supreme being is. As soon as you say that supreme being is reality, your mind is unconsciously manufacturing un-reality. I opposite. If you say God is light, you are immediately saying He is not un-light, darkness. If you say that God is truth, He is not non-truth. Absurd! The moment a thought is born, you are manufacturing a duality - "pairs of opposites", as they are called. It's impossible to get out of it.

There was a very great saint in India, called Ashtavakra. He was a fantastic person. I will tell you a story connected with him; then we will get back to our discussion of good and evil. There was a king called Janaka, who seems to have been a legendary personality. A wonderful warrior, a great statesman, and the wisest man. He was stricken by a disease once. Now from here on, it is hypothesis. We can't question the hypothesis. He had a peculiar disease, which made him sleep for twelve hours a day; 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. he slept, every day, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. he was awake.

Now, part two of the disease was that the moment his head touched the pillow he started dreaming, and the dream continued till he woke up.

Factor number three, every night he dreamed the same dream. 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. he had the same dream every night.

Hypothesis number four, every night he dreamed he was a beggar going about with his begging bowl, to the houses of other people. Somewhere he was kicked, somewhere he was given food, and somewhere he was scolded. As soon as he woke up, he realised he was the king emperor. This continued for some time, so that he didn't know what the truth was. One day at 6 a.m., he opened his eyes, and he saw lovely servant maids, one holding a dish of scented water, another with a fan, and he asked, "Who are you?" They looked at him in astonishment.

They told the ministers that something had happened to the king. "He doesn't behave normally." The council of ministers assembled, and sent the prime minister to find out what the trouble was. As soon as the prime minister came, he said, "Your Majesty".

"What do you mean, "Your Majesty. Why do you call a beggar Your Majesty?"

What is all this? Who brought me here? Where is my begging bowl?" The prime minister didn't know what to do; but eventually he realised the trouble. This king had been dreaming that he was a beggar. He tried to convince him, "No sir, you are not a beggar, you are the king emperor."

"Well, it does seem to be right, the throne and the Court and so on."

Then of everyone Janaka asked this question, "Is this true, is that true?" For twelve hours, I am a beggar, for twelve I am a king. Which is the truth?"

Obviously, nobody could answer his question. And up came a queer looking person called Ashtavakra. History says that he was one of the greatest sages alive at that time. He entered the palace, came into the king's court, and the king asked him the same question. "Which is the truth? Is this the truth, is that the truth?" This man, this great sage, had the courage born of his own conviction, to say, "Neither. That is one kind of dream, and this is another kind of dream. Wake up from this dream, and realise that what you are seeking is beyond these." They just stared at one another, and Janaka became an enlightened person.

Beyond this, beyond that. That is perhaps what Buddha also hinted at, when he said, "Truth is not this, truth is not that." In the middle. You know what the most exasperating thing about this middle path is? You can't see it.

My barber taught me this lesson. Unlike you, we shave our heads every month. This barber in Rishikesh is a fantastic man. We could sit there, keep doing our reading or typing or whatever it was, he would come, apply some water and soap, and using a razor, shave us completely bald, without disturbing us. He was an expert. He used to give me my shave every month. One day, as he was doing this, I was doing my work, and I felt that it was not the usual smooth shave. He stopped working, and asked me, "Swamiji, does it hurt you?" It did, but very little.

I turned to him, and asked him, "How do you know?" I wanted to find out if I had winced or grimaced.

He said. "No. I didn't realise from your face that it hurt you, I saw something. Look!"

He put his razor in front of me. "Can you see the edge?" I said, "Yes, like an extremely fine black line". He said, "Ah, that is why it hurt you. I thought it hurt you."

Then he started sharpening it a little bit more, and said, "Can you see the edge now?"

I said "No". Now it was perfect.

What was the lesson? The razor's edge cannot be seen. You have heard of this middle path being referred to as the razor's edge. The spiritual path, the path to Nirvana, the path to salvation, is a razor's edge. It cannot be seen. It is neither this nor that. Keep eliminating this, keep eliminating that. Not this, not that, that's all you can say. What it is you cannot say. For, the moment you say this is it, you have already defined it. To define the truth is to deny it. To define the truth is to create a problem with untruth.

There was another great master we all adore in India. We call him an incarnation of God. All these great masters are elevated to Godhead in India. If you can't follow them, worship them! A very simple method, isn't it? Buddha, Christ, Krishna, they have their teaching. We are supposed to follow them, we are supposed to assimilate their teaching, and become like them. But that is impossible. So, we put them on a pedestal, worship them, and say, "Ah, I worship Buddha, so I am a Buddhist." You are not a Buddhist. You are a worshipper of Buddha. How do you become a Buddhist? By worshipping a statue of Buddha? How do you become a Christian? By worshipping a statue of Christ? You are a worshipper of Jesus Christ, that's all. You are not a Christian. To be a Christian, you must become Christ. To be a Buddhist, you must become the Buddha. It's a bit difficult. We are clever. We make use of all these people. We kill them first, so that they cannot ask us inconvenient questions, and then we worship them. I wonder what they think of us now.

One such great person in India, was called Dakshinamurti.

There are always people who can quote chapter and verse from a thousand scriptures. They are like a library which speaks. The other library is only a reference library. But this one is able to speak. A computer. All the knowledge of the world is mimeographed, and fed into it. All you have to do is press a switch, ask a question, "Swami, what is this?" These people are called very wise men. Sit in their presence. It becomes an intellectual entertainment. And we love it. Just like watching a football match on the television. I have never understood what pleasure one derives from watching a football match on the television. If you want to play, lovely, you'll develop your health and strength and so on. But we always try to have a substitute. Somebody must play football, and we must sit and watch. There is one advantage there. Whichever side wins or loses, you can still clap! We have developed the habit of having our work done by somebody else. Even learning is done by somebody else. Knowledge is gained by someone else; wisdom is gained by somebody else. Ask anyone here how does this tape recorder work? I don't know. But I know it works. Why should I bother to learn? When it comes to scriptures, when it comes to religion, when it comes to philosophy, it is all there, written down, printed, 50,000 copies sold. You are one of these 50,000 copies. Such is called a man of wisdom. A man of great learning. And the more confusing the man becomes, the higher the pedestal he gets. You know why? You can't argue with him. You don't know what he's talking about!

I once had a sample of this. I went to visit a friend in India. The day before I got

there, a very great learned Swami had been to that place, and had delivered a thrilling lecture. My friend had attended that meeting, "You know, Swami So-and-So was here yesterday. Fantastic intellect. Brilliant man. It was an inspiring, thrilling, soul-elevating lecture". I said, "I am sorry I missed it. Can you give me something that he said?" "Oh, I couldn't understand a word. The lecture was fantastic. I couldn't understand a word that he said." This is what we want. And these men are called men of great learning, great wisdom! I don't know why.

Four of them were getting more and more confused. Naturally! When you stuff into this poor little head, all sorts of information which has no relation to your life, you'll get more and more confused. In search of enlightenment, they were wandering in the forest. They saw a young man sitting there. Looking at him, they suddenly felt they wanted to go and ask him to help them. His presence was so terrific that they couldn't talk. They went near him, bowed to him, and their looks asked a question. He also looked at them in silence, and gestured with one hand.

This is beautifully portrayed in a Sanskrit verse, which means "Here is the picture. Under a tree is seated a young man, radiant with wisdom and enlightenment. At his feet are seated four old men. The Guru instructs in silence, and the disciples are enlightened."

Vasishtha was instructing Rama on the highest truth. He said, "Look. The whole visible universe is a mere appearance." He doesn't say it is unreal. Because the moment you say unreal, you are going to ask some other question. It is an appearance. Its reality is not known. Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita,

adhashchordhvam prasritaastasya shaakhaah gunappravridhah vishayapravaalaah
adhashcha mulaanyanusantataani karmaanubandhini manushyaloke
na rupamasyeha tathopalabhyatenaanto na chaadir na cha sampratishthah
ashvatthamenam suvirudhamula masangashastrena dridhena chitvaa (Gita XV-2,3)

Below and above spread its branches, nourished by the gunas; sense-objects are its buds; and below in the world of men stretch forth the roots originating action. Its form is not perceived here as such, neither its end nor its origin, nor its foundation nor resting place; having cut asunder this firmly rooted peepul tree with the strong axe of non-attachment.

This universe appears to be something. You and I are unable to see its real nature. This was what Vasishtha said, too. We don't know how many thousands of years ago he lived. We don't know how many thousands of years ago Krishna existed, or how many thousands of years ago the Bhagavad Gita was born. But, yet, this truth is hidden in the Bhagavad Gita.

"Na rupamasyeha tathopalabhyate." The world that you see doesn't possess the form that you ascribe to it. A fantastic thought. A shocking thought. Maybe it's the truth. It doesn't say what the form is; no, you find out. But this much is clear: that what we see is not reality.

I had a shocking experience last year, at Kuala Lumpur, in Malaysia, when I was taken to the Rubber Research Institute. I went into one room. There was a huge

big photograph there. I looked at it, and said that it looked like an aerial photograph of the coast line of Israel. The girl who took me around said, "No. You know what it is? A portrait of a single particle of rubber." One pinpoint of rubber! How did that pinpoint become this? An electron microscope did it. When we look at that pinpoint - one molecule of rubber - and photograph it, it becomes this. I looked at her, and said, "You are very charming, very beautiful. Now, supposing, instead of these eyes, I had electron microscopes, what would you appear to be?" Dreadful. Frightful. Now, which is reality? Is this reality, or is that reality? We don't know.

The reality is never seen, can never be seen. That which cannot be seen by your eyes, that which cannot be experienced by your senses, that which cannot be conceived by your mind, that is reality. This great truth was being explained by Vasishtha. He used a very homely illustration, and pointed to the sky, "What do you see there?" "A blue dome." "Does that blue dome exist?" "No. It is empty space." "Do you see empty space?" "No, I see something blue." Now, it is distinctly, definitely a curved something, a dome like structure. Don't bluff yourself. Look at the sky tomorrow morning. What do you see? Definitely you will see a dome. Round. Curved. The scientists have all sorts of theories. At one time they said the earth was flat. At another time they said the earth was round. Now they say it looks like a fresh laid egg. We don't know what they will say next year. We are not worried about these theories. Let us ask ourselves, what do 'I' see up there. A dome. Blue dome. Looks like beautiful glass. Then our rational intelligence tells us that it is not so, it is something else.

That is precisely what happens in front of me now. I see this. It is not what it seems to be. We have never said, as has been misunderstood and misinterpreted especially by Western scholars, that the world is unreal. We have never said that. That would reduce Indian philosophers and thinkers to fools. No. What you see is not as it is. The student asked Vasishtha, "If everything is a vast dream, if everything that happens here is a vast dream, and if you are not what you appear to be, and I am not what I appear to be, then," he said, "why do you sit and talk to me? Why does this duality exist? Why do you recognise this duality of you and I?" And Vasishtha, again, explains this very beautifully, in an extremely simple and telling way. He says, "Rama, that truth can only be experienced in total silence. It cannot be expressed."

"Expressed" is to press out. The moment you press out, you are already inventing an "in" and an "out. A thing that is all-pervading, omnipresent, cannot be expressed. It cannot be talked about. The moment you open your mouth to speak one truth, you have created duality. Duality is born the moment we make up our minds we wish to talk, we wish to express. Duality is conceived the moment we begin to think. Thus, good and evil are nothing more than two sides of the one thing.

Coming down to earth, in Krishna's own life, said that He was born in order to exterminate the wicked, to support and protect the good.

paritraanaaya saadhunaam vinaashaaya ca dushkritaam dharmasamsthaapanaarthaaya
sambhavaami yuge yuge (Gita IV-8)

For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of righteousness, I am born in every age.

Says Krishna, "I incarnate myself again and again in order to protect the good people, in order to destroy the wicked, and to uphold righteousness."

What happened, historically speaking, was interesting. It is said that in the days of Krishna, there were quite a number of Hitlers, diabolical people, terrible people, wicked people, who oppressed the good, and therefore oppressed God, I suppose. Krishna just waved His magic wand, so to say, and destroyed all of them. When Krishna was about 125 years old, humanly speaking, He thought, "It is time I left the world, and slipped away, ascended to heaven." He looked around. The world still had people. Who were they? The good people. They were there in tremendous numbers. They were now the possessors of earth. They were now the rulers of earth. They were now the rich people, the people who conducted the affairs of the country. He looked around, and He thought, "What have I done now? I have created another gang of gangsters. Let me finish them also, and then I'll go. Then at least for some time to come, there'll be peace on earth."

When will there be peace on earth? When there are no people on earth who are power-drunk. A famous axiom: "Power corrupts. Absolute power corrupts absolutely." It is not as though a wicked man drops straight from a black cloud, and a good man drops from a white cloud. Both are born of mothers. It is the good man who in course of time assumes a position of power, and that power corrupts him inside, and he becomes a wicked man. I have seen this happen in all walks of life, including our life, in monasteries, ashrams, in holy places, in temples, in places which we usually associate with holy men, with sublime, divine life. "The road to hell is paved with many a good intention." A good man with the best of intentions, says that what is wrong with the world, is that 'that' man is in power. Kick him out, and we will have a paradise on earth. Two words are missing there, "for me." "Let these people be butchered, killed, or disposed of, and there will be paradise on earth "for me." You will stay where you are. If you are poor, you will become poorer; if you are suffering, you'll suffer a little more. But, "Kick these rascals out, so that I may occupy their place." That is all that these people ask for. May be I am uncharitable. But if you study the history of the world, you will see that the great political leaders of mankind may have had wonderful idealism when they preached their doctrines, and wanted to capture power.

"These are rogues, kill them."

"All right, but what are you going to do?"

"Aha, I'll take their place. What else do you think I should do? And when I take

their place, it is not as though I assume that position, ascend to that position, out of ill-will or malice. No, I may even go there with the best of all intentions. Now from today I will dedicate my life entirely to the service of the downtrodden and the poor etc., etc."

But once he gets into that place the tune changes. "You know, I am so important to the welfare of my people, that I must protect myself. I must have a bodyguard. And in order for this great benefactor of humanity to be saved, it may be necessary for some people to be shot. Not that I want to kill, no, but in order that I may live to serve you, please dispose of him! Kill him!" The same thing, the same thing! There doesn't seem to be any difference.

Now, it may be that I am bluffing myself, but I don't say that all these great men of the world, all these leaders are rogues or rascals. No. With the best of all intentions, they may be becoming duplicates of the previous rascals. This is how the world goes on. Good itself becomes evil. This is what we should bear in mind. So long as it was oppressed, so long as it was on its defensive, so long as it had its eyes turned towards God, good remained good.

When we are unhappy, we turn towards God, and become good. When, perhaps by that very intervention of God, that unhappiness has been taken away, we ourselves become devils. And so the game goes on. Whenever there is a possibility of extinction of the good - which can never happen - whenever the battle approaches a sort of dead-end, when the oppression has reached its limits, then the Divine manifests itself.

I can visualise it happening in every walk of life, history, in personal human relationships, everywhere. If you oppress someone, the weakest man on earth, long enough, you will be destroyed. It's inevitably. It is like the story I heard in South Africa. A man was pitting on one of those big truck tubes, and he was inflating that tube. He forgot the pressure gauge; he went on and on putting more and more air into that tube, while he was sitting on it. Then something happened; the tube blew up. The man was found in a few pieces.

It is inevitable. Whenever there is oppression, there is compression, and this is inevitably followed by explosion. You can't help it. Whether you call it history, whether you call it politics, whether you call it social relationships or family relationships, no oppression can go on forever. Therefore, the Upanishads say, "Satyameva Jayate."
"Truth alone triumphs."

Goodness alone triumphs. This evil does not have even a temporary triumph. If you look at the same tube, give it a personality, make it something human, and this chap is sitting on it, and that one, lying inside the tube, says, "All right, all right, go on, go on, a little more," and he is flexing his muscles all the time, and then, whoomp! off it goes! Now, in other words, oppression actually helps the building up of the power. Suppression actually enables the building up of that

power. Even a little boy, if you corner him, if you get him against the wall and keep hitting him, will give you a kick, and you will land over there. You may explain it physiologically, that at that moment the adrenal glands released their hormone, and it filled him with energy. But this is the inevitable truth: oppression is followed by compression - and compression releases energy, and results in explosion.

That is what we call Avatara. Avatara is literally 'descent of God for the ascent of man'. Descent of Divinity. Divine intervention in the history of humanity. Big words. High sounding words. In extremely simple language, it is merely the manifestation of the power of goodness. If you again go back to our equation between good and God, the difference is zero. Goodness, when it is oppressed and compressed sufficiently, explodes, and the Divine is born. History records quite a number of such Divine interventions in the affairs of humanity.

I read somewhere, of some Christian priests telling the Hindus, "Look, we, in our history, had periodic divine interventions. Your God is not concerned with your history at all." I am afraid that this sort of attitude does no one any good. On the contrary, I feel that this person, whom the Indians call Krishna, was no other than Christ. Most Indians and Christians may rebel against this idea. A number of them may accept it. And then, up come the scholars, one of those computer minds, who says, "Oh, no. What rubbish! Why? Jesus Christ we know lived two thousand years ago. And can you prove that Krishna lived?" Even in the case of those who accept the historicity of Krishna, they are not quite sure when he lived. Some say he lived 5,000 B.C. and some think he lived 3,000 B.C. What is the difference between 5,000 B.C. and 3,000 B.C.? 5 minus 3 is 2; the rest is just zeros. What do we know? To the computer mind, there is a terrible difference. It's impossible. It's illogical. His mind is prejudiced, inflexible. But then, to be told that Jesus Christ was born in the year 4 B.C. sounds very sensible to him. What is B.C.? Before the birth of Christ. Somebody was born four years before he was born. That somehow sounds all right. The calendar was different in those days, and some error crept in.

We are talking about a period before printing was invented, before newspapers were invented - and so the world was much more peaceful. We are talking about a period from which very few records have come down to us, and therefore, we must look at prehistoric events with an amount of understanding, and with the least dogma or bias or prejudice possible. Look at the story. Krishna was born, we don't know when, at a time when evil was thriving, and the good people were being oppressed. Krishna was born in a prison. Jesus Christ was born in a manger. A sort of location which our normal mind doesn't want to associate with such a great personality. A very humble beginning here, a very humble beginning there. I am demonstrating with two hands; but please remember that both hands belong to the same personality. And immediately after the birth of Christ, the child was whisked away, for fear of some dreadful king. Immediately after the birth of Krishna, he was also whisked away, for fear of his uncle who was also a king. Here, there is massacre of all children. There, there massacre of all children.

Both these children grew up. Very early in their life they started questioning orthodox beliefs. Jesus Christ went into a temple and started chasing all the money changers away. Krishna is said to have stopped certain forms of worship as waste of time and money. He said, "What are you doing? Why are you interested in such useless forms of worship? You must worship God."

And then they grew up, and they began to teach. If you read the Sermon on the Mount and the Bhagavad Gita, you'll find no fundamental difference. But very few people read these things. We only read about them. We don't read the Gita. We only read the commentaries. That is, you read me, not Krishna. We don't read the Sermon on the Mount. We go about saying, "You know that Jesus Christ was the greatest person on earth?" All right, what did He say, then? "Oh, don't ask me all that." We are only interested in saying, "My master was greater than yours." I don't know what my master said, and you don't know what your master said. The two things are identical, absolutely. You could even say that one quotes from the other. One speaking with the paraphrase of the other.

Then, they had power over the elements. Jesus Christ stopped a tempest. Even the wind and the waves obeyed him; and Krishna merely sips the forest fire and drinks it. All sorts of miracles he performed. Christ walked on water, Krishna also walked on water. Then, it goes on and on and on, the stories are absolutely parallel. A few miracles here and a few miracles there; a few impossible stories here, and a few impossible stories there.

And then, finally, Jesus Christ was crucified. What does crucified mean? Nailed on to a tree. Nailed on to a piece of wood, a tree. And the same story is repeated here. Krishna, it is said, was sitting under a tree and a hunter, looking through a bush, mistook the foot for the face of a buck, and aimed and shot. You can imagine, if a man was sitting under a tree with the foot hanging down, and he was shot through the foot, the arrow would go through that foot, and nail him to the tree.

Then, the last scene in the drama. You know what happened to Jesus Christ. He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." The forgiveness is even illustrated in the case of Krishna. The hunter runs and falls at the feet of Krishna, and says, "Forgive me. I am sorry. I didn't know it was you. I thought it was a deer." And Krishna says, "Ah, don't worry. You did my will. You were only obeying God's will. I had willed that I should leave the world and go. I only made a short of drama." And Krishna said, "I not only forgive you but make sure that you ascend to Heaven before me." A sort of space vehicle came down to lift Krishna off to heaven and he tells the assassin, "Look, you had better go up first. And then, after leaving you up there in heaven, send this chariot back, I will come up, next trip." So that there the assassin was forgiven, and here, he was not only forgiven, but this forgiveness was illustrated by sending the assassin to heaven.

There is a lost, unknown period in the life of Jesus Christ; quite likely, certain

stories associated with Krishna, Krishna's boyhood, were also later filled in by historians. We don't know what happened then. A divine birth, a divine child, and suddenly he starts playing around, he is pictured as a very naughty boy. Maybe these are all just stories, we don't know. And later, again he becomes a great statesman, a wonderful philosopher, a great teacher, an enlightened personality. Very often when I read these stories, I wonder whether they are two different personalities, or whether we are reading about one person, Christ who was Krishna.

This Krishna became the charioteer of Arjuna, one of the Pandavas, the good people we were discussing yesterday. When war was proposed, Krishna said he would not fight, but became the charioteer of one of the warriors on the good side. As soon as the two armies had assembled, Arjuna told Krishna,

senayorubhayormadhye ratham sthaapaya mechyuta yaavadetaanniriksheham
yoddhukaamaanavasthitaan (Gita I-21)

In the middle of the two armies, place my chariot, O Krishna, so that I may behold those who stand here, desirous to fight.

Arjuna says, "Look Krishna, take my chariot and place it right between the two armies, so that I may take a good look." And Krishna says, "Yes sir." Now, here is a wonderful lesson for us, the lesson which is again in accord with the life of Jesus Christ. One whom the world adores as an incarnation of God, becomes a charioteer, a driver, a chauffeur, to say "Yes sir", to a mortal man. And please remember, that is what Jesus Christ taught too, when he washed the feet of the apostles. A similar story is also told of Krishna, that he washed the feet of all the holy men in an assembly. When Krishna took the chariot, and placed it between the two armies, Arjuna took a good look at the enemy army, and collapsed. Why? He says, "Aha, they are my people. They are all my own friends, my own cousins." Here is a tremendous lesson for us. It is this sense of "my"-ness that leads us into trouble.

It's tremendously simple. A man smokes. I feel that it's not right for a young man to smoke. But I like coffee, that's all right; coffee is not such a bad thing, smoking is. Why is that? Drinking coffee is my habit. Smoking is his habit. All his evil habits must go. Mine are all right. I am always fond of something which is mine. My philosophy is always right. My brother is always good. My people are the chosen ones. It is this thing that is the cause of all our miseries and anxieties.

I don't know if you have thought about this. Mister is the word. You know it can be contracted into Mr. Good. Keep that in mind. "I" is the first person singular. Its possessive case is "my". Why is that? Take for instance, "you" becomes "yours"; there is some sort of similarity. But here, between "I" and "my", there is no similarity at all. My own feeling is this: that this 'my' is not the possessive case of "I" - I cannot possess anything. This is my mala. But it is not my mala. I can leave it here, and go away. Any one can take it, and call it "My mala" again. So, a man can never possess anything. Impossible. This word, therefore, is not really the possessive case of "I," but it is a contraction. It is merely a contraction of thee

word "misery." That is what Krishna points out right in the beginning. The moment you use the word "my", you have surrendered yourself to misery. You try to possess something. You can't. It possesses you. A great philosopher said that the only way in which you can prove your possessions is by giving them away. The only way you can prove that this is mine, is to give it away to somebody else. Otherwise, it possesses you. If you say, "This is mine, I don't want to lose it," it possesses you. This little word "My" is the root of all misery.

On the one hand, it entails misery, it gives birth to misery. You are happy when you have it, you are unhappy when you lose it. And, since all that is born must die, all that is created must perish, and all meeting must end in parting, when you want to say, "This is my object of pleasure," you have already sown the seeds of unhappiness. This is one aspect of it.

The other aspect is, what is "Mine" we always tolerate. My defects are not defects, I know the reason why they are there. My philosophy is right. My point of view is the only truth, and everything Mine is all right. We tolerate a lot of evils within ourselves. We don't even try to recognise them and eradicate them, because of this one simple word - My. So, if we feel that all beings in the world are "my kinsmen", we shall be loving and understanding. Demonstrating that, Krishna begins his teachings.

Lecture 4

Till Arjuna came onto the battlefield, he had the feeling - "these are wicked people, they must be killed. They must be conquered, they must be destroyed." When he faced them, he saw in front of him, not wicked people whom it was his duty to destroy, but his friends and relatives.

Arjuna was a Kshatriva, warrior. It was his duty, his business, his job, to chastise unjust people. Those of you who are students of Bhagavad Gita, must please remember this. The expression, *tasmaat yuddhyasva bhaarata* - therefore, fight Arjuna, occurs several times in the scripture. This has led many misinterpreters to declare: "Look. These people talk of non-violence. Absurd. Even their own God, Krishna, commanded his disciple to fight." It is good to remember that this commandment was addressed to Arjuna, only because that was his duty. It was like a commander in the army telling his soldiers, "Fight!", on the battlefield. Just because he said "fight" in one context, the soldier should not carry it over even to his barracks. That would be disaster. He can't turn around to his commander and say, "Oh, you asked me to fight, so I am fighting." The command has to be taken with reference to the context, understood properly with reference to the context.

As I said on the very first day, absolutely no blind faith or blind acceptance will do here, in the practice of the Yoga of the Bhagavad Gita. This is an extraordinary Yoga. In Hatha Yoga, the Yoga of physical culture, someone might say, "Put your arms up." Here, this is a Buddhi Yoga, Yoga of Intelligence, Yoga of Discrimination, Yoga of Understanding. If he says, "Put your hands up", I would very much like to know where is 'up'? What do you mean by up? I must try to understand the commandments.

Those seekers who endeavour to read general rules in the Bhagavad Gita, will be terribly disappointed. They are the ones who complain of contradictions. "Look at the Gita. In one place it says this, and in another place it says something entirely different. In one chapter one thing is said, and in another chapter something quite the contrary is said." Exactly! Why were these contradictions introduced or allowed to remain in the Gita? In order that we may understand, not swallow.

In these days of prefabricated houses, predigested foods, and preconceived notions, this word 'understanding' is very important. When it comes to the question of food, I think a lot of us have forgotten that God has put a lot of funny things into our mouth. A tongue and two rows of teeth to masticate this food, and send it down slowly. Oh no, we are more interested in gulping it down. With the result that nature withdraws the teeth. We don't need the teeth. Well! never mind, pay somebody else, and we will have a set of dentures. The value of the dentures being that you don't have to brush your teeth, you can wash them outside. All these things are being disused. More and more human faculties are coming into disuse - not abuse, but disuse, which is more dreadful.

There was a great man called Swami Vivekananda in India. It seems that he said once that he preferred a bold rogue to a cowardly saint. A bold rogue stands some chance of achieving something, when he right-about turns. A cowardly, good man very often ends up in a corner. He is not bold enough to do something wicked, and he is not bold enough to do something good. We need to make use of our faculties. We need to use our intelligence. We need to use our understanding. And if we surrender our understanding, we will not understand the Gita. It is not a scripture to be swallowed. Nothing that is said there applies to us in our present day life, literally. But everything that is said there applies to us in our everyday life, at the present moment, in spirit.

So that, when he said 'Kill', it didn't mean keep killing indiscriminately. But, as we shall see, 'do your duty.' Now, it is here that there are confusions. This man Arjuna comes on to the battlefield, looks at the enemies, and says, "No, they are not my enemies any more. They are my cousins, relatives, uncles, cousins of my father. How can I kill them?"

What happens to our sense of duty? Why should it depend upon our sentiments? Why should it depend on our assumed relationships? The relationship is only our presumption, assumption. Is it real? For example, a young man joins the police force. A few young people are rioting on the University campus. He is asked to stop the rioting, he wields his baton right and left, hits some people on the nose, some people on the arm, etc. He does his duty. Why? He has no personal relationship towards anyone. He gets married to one of those girls, and a year later, the same lot riot again. Now, this time, when he starts using his baton, it won't fall on that one person, that girl. Why, what happens now? Why doesn't he do his duty? Because now a personal relationship, a sort of mine-ness has come.

In some cases, we assume a sort of personal relationship. Hence, this leads to bondage. Am I bound to my business, or have I forged that bondage upon myself? Who has bound me to whom? to what? I have assumed that bondage myself. I want to be bound.

I don't want to offend any pious and religious people here, but I have often been shocked by this expression in the Lord's prayer. "Lead us not into temptation." Because I don't think God leads us into temptation. Oh no, no, God would never lead us into temptation. I believe that the original version was: "Leave us not in temptation, but deliver us from sin." All the troubles and difficulties that we find on the path of our lives are made by our own very good selves! All, or most of these difficulties spring from this little word "my". My friends, my relations, my wealth, my philosophy of life, my religion, my church, my body, my shirt, my house, my, my. Wherever there is this my, then misery is not far away. Misery has not entered us. We have entered into misery. I am afraid that nobody can save us. If we do not wake up to this truth, feel this internal tragedy ourselves, nobody can save us. And that is what the Holy Bible says right in the Genesis chapter. Adam and Eve have been given freedom of choice, free will to choose their conduct, and

even God will not take that away. That we should exercise our free will, and freely choose to be good, is His will. I don't say that God wants us to be wicked or vicious. If we deliberately choose the wrong path, He will wait. We may go wrong. It doesn't matter, we will come back. So, that is the law of life. We choose to forge our own bondage. We put chains around our own necks. It is done by us. This is one of the greatest teachings of the Bhagavad Gita. Says Krishna in the Gita,

aatmairvahyaatmano bandhuraatmaiva ripuraatmanah. (Gita VI-5)

For this self alone is the friend of oneself, and this self alone is the enemy of oneself.

You are your own friend, and you are your own enemy. Don't try to throw your burdens on to somebody else. If I pass my exams, I say, "Oh what a wonderful student I am." If I fail, "Funny teachers!" Somebody else is at fault. In my school days, we even used to blame, not the teacher, because some of the teachers were very good, but his wife, "She must have been nagging him, or behaving in a funny way that day, and just after the nagging had gone on, he must have marked my paper, and you know the result."

Now, this is the bane of our existence. To save me, I want somebody else. To lead me, I want somebody else. If I pass, it is me; but if I fail, it is somebody else's fault. All the time, we want a scapegoat. I am the best of all angels on earth, only you can't see my wings. If only this had been like that, if only this thing had happened, if instead of this government we had such and such a government, I would be a superman. Somebody, someone or other we want to blame. Why do we want to follow somebody? Not because we want to follow that person, but we want somebody standing there, with broad shoulders, ready to receive all our abuses. Why did you do this? "Oh, he taught me wrong." Why did you come, to grief in this? "Oh, that fellow was a fool. I thought he was a great saint, so I followed him." This is what happened to one of the Swamis in India. The disciple thought the Swami was not a human being, he thought he was divine. So he went to him, and suddenly discovered that he was a human being. Why does he want to blame the Swami for that? He should blame himself; his eyesight was poor.

With the young people changing their mode of dressing, this sort of thing might happen around the corner every day. You think she is a girl and follow, and suddenly it turns out to be a boy. Who is to blame? Is that boy to blame, or are you to blame? We don't accept responsibility. We want to find somebody, somebody else to throw our blame on. Hence, when we say we belong to this church, that religion, or this sect, it is not because we are sincere in our seeking. It is not because we really want to follow, this holy man, or this church, or this sect. We are all the time looking. "I'll try to follow this, man. Well, if something goes wrong, I can blame him." It's a ridiculous way of living. Krishna points out very bluntly, "If you are self-controlled, your mind is your best friend. If your mind and senses are under your control, these very mind and senses which lead you astray, will be your friends. And if your mind and senses are unruly, they will lead you astray. They are your enemies."

When I assume this relationship, 'These are my people', it is my fault. No one else is to blame. I remember at some other university, where I was asked to give a lecture, I had mentioned the word renunciation. During question time at about half past ten at night, one good lady was terribly upset about the Indian concept of renunciation. You know how when Buddha renounced, he renounced his wife and child, and went away to the forest. I must have hinted at that, or told the story. And Jesus had said, "Leave all these things and follow me." She said, "You talk of renunciation. Is it not running away from duty? What about my husband and children? How can I leave them and run away? Is it right for me to do that?" I don't remember the full answer, but I think I said that I didn't insist that anyone must run away, but some people may be called. But then, in answer to her question, I asked a question, "When a Swami comes and tells you that, you start arguing. But there is another invisible power, not a Swami power, who might come and knock at the door." Who is that? Death. When that Death knocks at your door, which of you has the courage, to say, "Look, my daughter is getting married, please wait, and then I will come?" No chance! When death knocks at the door, you just leave everything and go, even the food on the table.

She kept quiet.

When this sort of good choice is offered to us, again you see we want to blame our cowardice on somebody else. I am cowardly. I am attached to my family. I am attached to these people. I don't want to admit that. I want to believe in some other philosophy, some other rule, some other game, to cover up my own weakness. It is useless waste of time. Hence, Krishna is very clear cut here. It's your business. If you want to do it, do it. If you don't want to do it, don't do it. Don't blame it on other people.

I had a wonderful experience in Johannesburg, South Africa. A very young and charming girl, the daughter of a very good friend of mine, was sitting there and smoking. I don't have very many prejudices, but I somehow don't like women smoking a cigarette, I don't know why. What is the difference between a man smoking and a woman smoking, I don't know. I still have that bit of a prejudice. I said to her, "Why do you smoke?" Now, she was a brilliant young girl. She took another big puff, and replied, "I like it." I said, "I like your answer. I may not like your smoking, but I like your answer."

That is the honesty that is demanded of us. Not because somebody is going to be impressed by your honesty, but because that is going to lead us to Truth. That honesty will lead us to Truth. This is where the lesson starts. 'My people', and therefore I don't 'want to fight. There is a delusion there.

There is a confusion there. You know, we are all learned men. Knowledge is becoming more and more cheap, more and more universal, and more and more worthless. We have read all sorts of scriptures, all sorts of religious books, all sorts of philosophical tomes. Huge volumes. Encyclopedias of religious

knowledge. I have bumped into quite a few of these great men and women, who have an answer to any question. They know everything. Whatever they want to do, they can always support with a reason, with some quotation, from some scripture or other. That, strangely enough, was what Arjuna did! Arjuna starts telling, "Krishna (Krishna was a sort of cousin to him), Look, this is useless and sinful. We shouldn't fight and kill one another."

Very sensible! Not to fight is a wonderful thing, a perfect precept. But then it has to have a context to make valid. Out of context, 'not to fight' is not valid. Ahimsa or non-violence is not valid in certain circumstances, unless you belong to the few who have no concern about the world, who don't even see the world. There were such great men once upon a time. But, in the context of our daily life, we again have to find out. "Am I running away from this battle, this duty, which may even involve violence?" He must ask himself, "Am I excusing myself from this, because I have a very strong conviction that all killing is bad, or because I am afraid to hold a rifle? Or, my sweetheart is at home, I don't want to leave her and go to Vietnam"? It is a very difficult thing. There is no general rule at all. One has to weigh every situation on the balance of his own discrimination, and arrive at his own conclusion. There is no general rule.

Arjuna says, "If we kill one another, the whole social fabric is destroyed." Perfect. But not in this context. And, what did this wonderful divine being, Krishna, do? He kept quiet. For, this was the ancient rule: unless your advice is sought, don't offer it. We Swamis are breaking this rule. Even without being asked I go and give advice, which is what I did in the case of the girl whom I advised to give up smoking. I gave her a lecture on the evils of smoking. The result? I wasted my energy and made a fool of myself. Nothing more. She is not interested. She doesn't care.

In those days, the great ones never did this. We were told that in India, and perhaps in the Western world too, great saints roamed about, incognito, pretending to be fools. The person who is sincerely interested in the quest of truth, must come, he must get himself into the proper frame of mind, and ask. Then he is open. To him shall the knowledge of the Self be imparted. That was the rule. And that was one of the reasons why the Indians never went out proselytising. Theirs was not the duty of going out and getting people, or saving people's souls. Oh, no, no, no, no, wait till the necessary maturity is arrived at. It's very important in Yoga and Spiritual life.

I will give you a rather crude and vulgar illustration of this, hope you will forgive me for this. Take for instance this great wave that is going round the world, of Sex Education. That is: you must tell little girls of four and five all about childbirth and so on. Do you know you can ruin the child of four or five years by telling her how a child is born? She can never understand it. Impossible. Absurd. Perhaps a young girl of sixteen, seventeen or eighteen, may be able to grasp vaguely the whole thing. But a girl of four or five or six cannot. Why? She has not attained that maturity, the psycho-physical maturity, which alone will enable her to see

and realise. Again, till she has her first child, it will still be a mystery to her. It will no longer be a horror - if you tell that to a little girl of five or six, she will be horrified. In the case of the young lady of sixteen or seventeen, she may intellectually try to grasp the whole situation, but it will still be a mystery to her till she has her first child.

Now, if you understand this, you will understand the process of spiritual instruction. Spiritual instruction is not merely verbal communication of facts. This is very different from the place we are occupying today. We are occupying a University lecture hall. In a University lecture hall, it is merely communication of facts, so called facts. But in the case of spiritual instruction, the process is completely different. I wonder if you realise what the word instruction means? Instruction is construction within. A structure is put up within. There must be structure within. If somebody comes and tells you what the world looks like, does it mean anything to you? No, nothing at all. There is no structure in you.

Here it is instruction - spiritual instruction. And inspiration. The relation between the Guru and disciple is so close - it is inspiration. One inspires, as it were, breathes into the other. God breathed into that dust, and it became Man. God breathed life, and it became a living soul. In exactly the same way, the Guru must breathe into the disciple - then there is instruction. A structure is put up within. That is what is needed. The disciple must be ready for it, disciplined, mature. Till that time comes, the Gurus or great Masters don't teach them. It is not as though they were callous or indifferent. Again, these Indian Gurus have come in for a lot of condemnation and criticism. On the one hand, people say, "All these people are going around telling all sorts of funny things." On the other hand, people say, "All their knowledge they keep as a close-guarded secret. Unless you bribe them heavily, they won't teach you."

It's not that. They will wait till you mature. They wait - they are not callous, they are not indifferent. They don't want to make money out of this. No, no, no, no. They are only waiting for you to ask. When will you ask? When you are mature. Ask in the right spirit, with the right attitude. Till then they will pretend that they know nothing.

I will give you an example. Again, I am not running anybody down. This happened in our monastery. Swami Sivananda was sitting there, and two or three of us were sitting in front of him, doing some work, when in came a very important person. He was a Doctor of Philosophy, and all sorts of things. He was more learned than all of us, in terms of book-learning. We welcomed him, took him inside, gave him a chair. He looked at Swami Sivananda, and asked, "Swamiji, what is the difference between Nirvikalpa Samadhi and Savikalpa Samadhi?" A very high philosophical question. Samadhi is super-conscious state, and has itself been classified into quite a number of types. In one type, the feeling "I am" exists; in another type, even the feeling "I am" is gone, Cosmic Consciousness alone exists. And now he is asking, "What is the difference between Nirvikalpa Samadhi and Savikalpa Samadhi?" We were youngsters

sitting there, and we thought, "All right. We wouldn't have dared to ask this question of our Guru. But here is a man who has asked. Let us take advantage of this, and listen to the Swami's answer." Swami just put his spectacles up, "Hmmm. Hmmm. Would you like tea or coffee?" This man thought that perhaps Swami was trying to entertain him; so, he said he would have a cup of tea. Swami sent someone for tea, another for some biscuits. Now, where is the answer to the question? The philosopher, poor fellow, didn't want to repeat the question. He perhaps thought that he had floored the Guru. "He says he is a very great man, but he couldn't even answer my question." The conversation had reached a sort of deadlock. Even before he could finish, his lady walked in, looked at him, "What are you doing here? For such a long time I have been waiting for you down there." And, quietly - I can't describe to you the scene, any bachelor looking at it would never want to get married - quietly he got up; he bowed to Swami Sivananda, said to her, "Yes, I am coming," and walked out. Now when he had gone, then came the answer. Swami Sivananda looked at us, and said, "Such is the man who wants to know the difference between Nirvikalpa Samadhi and Savikalpa Samadhi." When his wife comes and shoots at him, quietly, like a slave, he gets up, and walks behind her. And he wants to know the difference between the different states of God-realisation!" This is what the Eastern Mystic avoids - immature intellectual curiosity.

Krishna keeps quiet. A few minutes later, Arjuna the seeker, realising his own insufficiency, surrenders himself to the feet of the Guru. That is the attitude.

These two things are important. Realising our insufficiency. We can't go and surrender ourselves at the feet of a Guru, whoever he may be, just because it is the fashion. You will not get any benefit out of it. "He has a Guru, therefore I also want to have a Guru." It is more like getting a piece of furniture into your room. Guru is not a piece of furniture. He is a Light. He is a fire. I must be disciplined enough to look within, introspect, realise my insufficiency. It is not as though I am nothing, therefore I go to a Guru. If I am nothing, what am I going to offer my Guru? Nothing. I am a dead burden, dead weight. No. I am not nothing. I have tried my best on my own, tried to seek the truth on my own, I have struggled hard. I don't want a Guru to take over my burden. What do we think the Guru is? A cloth to wipe off our sins? I sin, and then I go to my Guru, and he will take away all my sins? Guru is not soap and towel, or an electric broom. "Oh, I am a sinner, Lord, please take away all my dirt!" What do you think he is? A vacuum cleaner? I go and stick my head under his feet and all my sins are gone! It's absurd! We are blaspheming all the time.

You try your best. God has already given you a wonderful body, a wonderful brain, a heart to understand, to knock. Ah, a beautiful thing. Even those who read the Bible, and say they are Christians, read only the convenient portions, whatever is convenient to them. The Bible says, "Knock, and it shall open." Jesus Christ wasn't thinking of these modern automatic doors which open as you walk towards them. He didn't say, "Walk, and it shall open", but "Knock, and it shall open." You have to take the trouble to knock. We are wonderful people. Great

seekers, we are. We lie down on a soft bed, with an eiderdown drawn right up to our nose, "God, please save me." Of course He will save you - put you to sleep. "Knock, it shall open." Knock! Knock! The effort must be taken. Having reached that door, having pushed that door, I find that it is beyond my strength to open it. I knock. It is then that the divine intervenes and saves us.

Another rather illiterate foreign Yogi has criticised the Yoga philosophy, "Look at these people. Yoga is un-Christian." Why? Because the Yogis say that they will save themselves. They don't need God to save them. I don't know where he got this idea from. In the Bhagavad Gita itself, it is said,

sarvadharmaanparityajya maamekam sharanam vraja aham tvaa sarvapaapebhyo mokshayishyaami
maa shucha (Gita XVIII-66)

Abandoning all duties, take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate thee from all sins; grieve not.

"Don't worry. Come. Surrender yourself to me. I will liberate you."

The final act of liberation is not achieved by human personality. It is the gift of God. But, just because the final act of liberation is the gift of God, we shouldn't wait for the Sadhana or the spiritual practices to be done by Him. No, no, no. Go to the utmost of your own ability. That ability has been bestowed upon you by God. The ability to pray, the ability to meditate, the ability to choose the righteous life, have already been bestowed upon you by God. Strive. And then realise your further insufficiency, and surrender. When a disciple comes with this surrender, then the guru initiates,

kaarpanyadoshopahatah svabhaavah prichchaami tvaam dharmasammudhachetaah
yat shreyasyaannishchitam bruhi tanme shishyasteham shaadi maam tvaam prapannam (Gita
II-7)

My heart is overpowered by the taint of pity; my mind confused as to duty. I ask Thee. Tell me decisively what good for me. I am Thy disciple. Instruct me who has taken refuge in Thee.

Says Arjuna, "I am confused. This seems to be right, and that also seems to be right. This seems to be wrong, and that also seems to be wrong. Now, what am I to-do?"

This is a dilemma we often find ourselves in, very often in life. This seems to be right - the opposite also seems to be right. Take, for instance, the parents of a teenage boy. You hear that he is drinking. You don't want him to drink. "What shall I do? Give him a belting?" "Ah, but he's a young man. How can I do that? It's wrong to hit." Hitting him seems to be right, hitting him seems to be wrong. Well, let him go. That seems to be right. "If I don't stop him, he may continue. I may be responsible for his misconduct." Again, that seems to be wrong. Hitting seems to be wrong, not hitting seems to be wrong. Not hitting seems to be right, hitting seems to be right. "What am I to do?" It is here that the Bhagavad Gita can help us.

I am sure, quite a number of you begin to feel now, "But we don't find ourselves in this quandary very often in our life." You may feel this some time in your life, but there are thousands of people living in the world today, to whom this problem is absent. It doesn't arise in their minds at all: murderers, dacoits, scoundrels, prostitutes - there is no problem in their case. As a wonderful man said, "In the case of a congenital idiot and an enlightened person, there is no problem at all." A man who is in a swoon, and a man who has attained God-realisation, both commit no sins. But the man in a swoon is not a saint. Why? After some time he will wake up, and then comes trouble. A man who is asleep tells no lies, but that does not make him a saint. A man says, "For six or seven hours, I never told a lie." What a wonderful person! He was asleep. Tickle him. As soon as he opens his eyes, he will bluff you.

To a born criminal, crime is not a problem. There are people in the world who have just graduated to the human level. They are not responsible for the crimes they are committing. Their conscience is animal conscience. I do not suggest here that you must let such people go, and do as they like. No. Just as, for instance, if your own pet dog goes mad and bites you, what do you do? Shoot him. In the same way, if this man, even though he is not responsible from the point of view of evolution for the crimes he commits, in order to preserve the state of your society, you will have to punish him.

From the higher point of view, from the spiritual point of view, they are not yet evolved. In their case, there is no problem. There is no conscience. And, if you will pardon my saying so, a good proportion of human beings are in that state. They only appear to be human beings. They wear human dress. They really are not human beings inside. It would take a lot of persuasion to make me believe that Hitler was a human being. I can't believe it. A person of such brutality. Why do we call it brutality? In English, when you say, "Look at his brutality", means "The fellow is a brute inside."

This is a wonderful lesson. The very fact that we often find ourselves on the horns of a dilemma - to do or not to - means that we are evolving. We are human beings. Only human beings may get into this trouble. Only human beings of a certain stage of evolution, will have this trouble. Others will not.

It is when we are caught in such situations, that a scripture like the Bhagavad Gita helps. A criticism that has been levelled at the whole Gita itself has been this. Somebody said, "Ah, nonsense, it is 'totally untrue. Fictitious.'" And they have a reason. I gave you just a glimpse of the story yesterday. Two armies, facing each other, ready to go, and in the middle of these two armies stands one chariot. In it, there is a Christ, Krishna, and there is a man, Arjuna. In the middle of these two armies, these two are talking philosophy. You accept it? I accept it. I'll tell you why. Apart from my faith in the Gita, and the other interpretation I'll tell you now. I'll accept it because I have personally met a very great commander of the Indian Army, who exemplified this very thing in his own life. He was a very good friend of mine. Major General Yadunath Singh. He died a few years ago, after

serving as the President's military secretary.

He was the commander in the Kashmir war. He was extremely religiously punctual in his meditation, and in the study of the Gita. Lots of us offer excuses why we didn't get up in the morning for meditation. The children cry, the husband is sick, the neighbours are making a lot of noise, etc. Every day, he would read one chapter of the Gita, no matter where he was. In a tent, right on the front line. He wouldn't miss his meditation. He has told me himself that on occasions he would sit there reading the Gita, bullets whizzing past. He knew he would die one of these days, we all have to die. Thus it is possible to practise this even on the battle-field. Therefore, I am not surprised that on the battle-field, Krishna and Arjuna were discussing yoga.

Apart from that, my own feeling is this: that Krishna deliberately chose the battle-field to impart this wisdom to Arjuna, because he hid in it a special message. "Please let not your philosophy commence and conclude in your lounge." I saw a very wonderful Indian scholar who came to our ashram for a day. He was in trouble; so, we excused him. There he was, in an armchair, lying down, a tin of cigarettes on one side, and a copy of the Gita on the other. He said, as he sipped his drink, "Oh, you know, Swamiji, the Self alone is real." I don't know how to describe this. This is not the purpose of philosophy. It is not when everything is going right, everything is wonderful, your stomach is full, you have a big bank account, and you sit there and discuss what Krishna told Arjuna. Of course Krishna told it to Arjuna. Not to you. When you are in trouble, when you are actually engaged in the battle of life, when someone is aiming a bullet at your forehead, if then you say, "Ah, it is nothing. Only my body goes, not my soul", that is something. This is exactly the lesson I draw from the Bible, from the gospel. I am a Christian, but I am not an exclusive Christian. It is not so much the fact that Jesus was crucified that matters to me. It is not so much that Jesus was resurrected and He ascended to heaven that matters to me. I have heard so many similar stories in India, that I don't pay much attention to these things. What thrills my heart in the story of Jesus was that, when He was abandoned by everybody, when He was denied by His own disciples, by Peter, even then He did not flag. He went on. That is Yoga. That is the message of the Gita. Does your philosophy stand by you, strengthen you, fill you with spirit and courage, in the darkest moment of your life? Then, that philosophy is life.

Lecture 5

We were discussing the Guru disciple relationship, and the precise moment at which the light shines, the door opens. It is a two way process. Free will alone is insufficient. Grace is not partial, whimsical. God is not a whimsical monarch, a drunken monarch, who says, "All right, I'm pleased with you, you'll be saved. I'm not pleased with so-and-so, he'll be damned." No. We do not claim to know the mechanics of Grace, we do not know when exactly God bestows His Grace, and when God does not bestow His Grace, because the bestowal of Grace seems to depend on total surrender. Total surrender - a very tricky thing. How can one declare, "I have totally surrendered myself." Means what? You are a stupid egotist. 'You' are very much there. You have not surrendered yourself if you can say, "I have surrendered myself."

My grandmother used to play this game when we were sleeping. She would want to find out who was asleep, and who was pretending to sleep. She would walk into the room where we were sleeping, and she would prop up our hands, after declaring, "The children who are really asleep, will keep their hands up."

If you have done total self-surrender, how do you know? Who is it that knows? So, here is the puzzle. When do you know when you have gone to sleep? Have you ever been able to pinpoint that minute when you actually slipped from the waking consciousness, or dream consciousness, into sleep? No. Impossible. In exactly the same way, we do not know when surrender is complete.

A young man wanted to attain God-realisation. He wanted initiation from a great Master. His mother told him, "Go to that Master, take some fruits and flowers with you, offer them at his feet, bow to him, he will initiate you." The young man went to that Master's house, knocked at the door, and from within the Master asked, "Who is it?" The young man from outside replied, "It is I, sir, it is I." The master replied from within, "Come after I die." In the Indian languages, there is no distinction between "I die" and "I dies." So, this could also mean, "Come after I dies." The young man wept. What is the use of going to him when he is dead? But his mother was able to explain the Master's remark. She said, "My son, what he said was one hundred per cent correct. He didn't ask you to come after he died. No. After this thing called died. After surrendering, after destroying your egotism, your vanity, go to him. Then, with such total surrender, when you go to him, enlightenment is instantaneous."

I don't know if any of you are aware of a funny little story connected with Krishna. As a young boy, Krishna was very naughty and mischievous. It is said that there were a lot of young girls, all of them keen on marrying Krishna, all of them in love with him. They were doing some sort of ceremony to obtain Krishna as the husband. These young girls were bathing in a river, in the nude. In those days, it was not a normal thing to do. It is said that Krishna was walking along the roadside when he saw these girls bathing in the nude. Quickly, he gathered up their clothes, and went up a tree and sat there. When the horrified girls shouted,

"Hey, give us our clothes," he said, "No, come up and take." People have been horrified by this story and say, "How can you think of this person as an incarnation of God?" I am horrified that intelligent people could misunderstand this story. The basic element in the story is that these were girls who were bent on marrying this young man, and if he wanted to see them naked, all that he had to do was to marry them. They were ready, they were willing, they were eager, and yet, why did he do it? Perhaps to teach them a lesson, not to bathe naked in the river. If he had not come along, somebody else may have. Apart from this, it has a philosophical meaning. If you want God, you must go completely naked. Throw off all preconceived notions, all fear, all anxiety, all egoism, for all these things hang by that one peg, egotism, I-ness. If there is no I-ness, there is no ignorance, there is no anxiety, there is no fear, nothing. All that stands between us and God is Ego. This "I" is nothing but a mirror image of God. But we are not aware of that Truth. We somehow assume to this mirror image, for this mirror image, a reality it does not possess. That is, the 'I', the mirror image, which is an appearance, an image of God - assumes a reality which it does not possess, and that is 'I', egotism. How this came about, we don't know. But this much we know, that this is the only trouble, the only obstacle. When this is gone, there is no further problem in life. Krishna wanted to teach them this lesson. You want to become one with God, to marry God? You want to be God's Bride, in the language of Christian mysticism. Shed all your clothes, all your coverings. Stand in your own pristine purity, nakedness, before God. That's what he wanted to teach them. To totally surrender to God.

Total surrender should not be born of lethargy, laziness, inertia, unwillingness to exert, but born of a proper and correct understanding of the inadequacy of human effort. The inadequacy of human effort can become clear to us only after human effort itself has reached its climax. Not before. How can you say, "Oh, no I can't do this," without trying? Have you tried? This is another thing where I am a bit dogmatic. I just can't take people, especially young people, who say, "Oh, no Swami, I can't do it." Why? How do you know you can't do it till you have tried?

It is better to have a broken arm trying to reach the moon, than to give up without trying. These people just want to blame somebody else. Somebody has to be blamed all the time. And then, suppose somebody attempts to do something and fails in that attempt. "You see, I told you! He is a fool." They must blame him now. Why don't we try, attempt something? Something great. Whatever you regard as great, attempt it, go on, to the limits of your endurance, the limits of your powers, powers that God has bestowed on you. Then, realising your inadequacy, pray, "God, I have done my job, I have reached the limits of the equipment that you bestowed upon me. I am finished, what next?" That is real surrender. Not a surrender anticipating inadequacy, but a surrender born of the fullest realisation of human inadequacy.

The moment this surrender is accomplished, you are there. Nothing more is necessary. Surrender itself is Self-realisation. Hence, the moment Arjuna said, 'I surrender myself to you', Krishna reveals the greatest truth.

ashochyaananvashochastvam prajnaavaadaamshcha bhaashase
gataasunagataasumshcha naanushochaati panditaah (Gita II-11)

Thou hast grieved for those that should not be grieved for, yet thou speakest words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead.

This is a short verse of thirty-two syllables. You may even ignore the second line. A half verse of sixteen syllables. You may even ignore the second half here! You have one quarter, 'asochyaan anvashochastvam' - a brief mantra of eight syllables. I have used this as a talisman, and it has saved my life on quite a number of occasions. In plain language, it means, "You are worrying unnecessarily." I have tried this. Whenever there is a big worry, I close my eyes, and visualise Krishna standing in front of me, saying, "You are worrying unnecessarily," and I think, 'You are right, I am worrying unnecessarily.' All worry is unnecessary.

We are born to work. We are full of energy. I feel that a human being is born to work, it doesn't matter what type of work. Perhaps somebody will say, "Ah, what good is sleep, then?" Sleep also is work. It is recharging the battery, the Pranic battery. I am giving you a random thought for you to take home. A great Mystic and Yogi declared that we do not derive prana or life force or energy from food. We do not derive energy from water. We may derive some sort of energy from air, but the bulk of the energy that we possess is derived from - you will be shocked - sleep. This seems to be true. Food and water can only give you cells, protein, the flesh. But the energy that is filled into those cells is gained during sleep. How do we gain this strength from sleep? We go to the source, and from there we replenish ourselves. So that even sleep, in a manner of speaking, is 'working', in order to replenish ourselves with pranic energy. Even during sleep, some part of our being is active. Now we are active, talking, listening, seeing. During sleep, we recharge this inner battery, so that, as long as we are alive in this world, we should be alive and kicking.

A lot of work there is in this world to be done, and again, the right spirit is important. If we adopt the right spirit in our work, in our activity, we shall be freed from worry. Worry always arises from work performed without the right spirit, with the wrong motive. Work performed or neglected, not in the right spirit, or with a bad motive. That is what leads us to worry.

No man has ever killed himself by work. As a matter of fact, a couple of years ago, a few scientists called gerentologists, went around the world asking questions of people who have either crossed the century mark, or were nearly there.

They went to an old man and asked him, "What is the secret of your longevity?" "I have never smoked a cigarette, I have never drunk anything but water, I have been a vegetarian throughout my life, I had no serious sex life." Ah, good!

Go to another old man, "What about you, sir?" "I have smoked all my life. I

never touched water, always drank wine and whiskey, and I have led a very full life in all respects. I am happy, and long lived."

In this manner they went from person to person. They found that all of them gave contradictory views and opinions on this problem of what makes people live long. But eventually, these wonderful men who were conducting this research came to one brilliant conclusion which is worth remembering. They said, "All these people share one great quality. A spirit of dedication. They have discovered a purpose for their life, and they have relentlessly pursued that purpose. Right purpose or wrong purpose, is another matter. They have had a purpose in their life." So they said, "One who lives a purposeful life, lives long."

One can have a purpose in life, a goal in life, but not a motive. A motive is something completely different. So that, if we lead a purposeful life, trying to achieve a goal all the time, we will be free from worry. Why? Worry is born of wrong motivation, wrong attitude. Hence, Krishna tells us,

karmanyevaadhikaaraste maa phaleshu kadaachana
maa karmaphalaheturhurmaa te sangostvakarmani (Gita II-47)

Thy right is to work only, but never with its fruits; let not the fruits of action be thy motive, nor let thy attachment be to inaction.

There are some beautiful ideas here. Let me dispose of one idea first, "maa te sangostvakarmani." Don't imagine that, by not doing anything, you will achieve something wonderful. More and more people are following this, becoming machines in this world. Not taking any initiative, "If I don't do anything at all, I can do no wrong." By leading this kind of cabbage life, don't think that you have attained Self-realisation. No. During the course of evolution, God's intelligence is so super-wonderful that He doesn't permit this bluff to go on forever. Suddenly something comes. Death knocks you down here. "Maa te sangostvakarmani", don't yield to lethargy, impotence. No, that will not do. A yogi's life is a full life, a dynamic life, all the time dynamic. Every cell of your body is vibrant with energy, life force. Dampening them is not Yoga. No, no, no!

Remembering this formula, I was very happy to read in a magazine, where a great medical scientist extolled the glory of exercise. I don't know if this is self-hypnosis or auto-suggestion, or if it is true. If you have been resting in your armchair for two or three hours, your pulse rate is high. You make yourself active for a little while, the pulse rate falls down, though it may be accelerated at first. The theory is that, when you are idle, the heart functions faster. Perhaps I just suggested this to myself; but I did this, and my pulse was slower after exercise. This is what is meant by Krishna in this verse, "Maa te sangostvakarmani".

If you neglect the exercise of your body and of your mind and intelligence, you will forfeit them. This is a very necessary prologue to the great truth that Krishna reveals to us. He says, Remember, the energy is there, you have got to use it. If you don't use it, you will forfeit it." And therefore, since the energy is there, use it.

Use it in the service of others, use it doing good to others, use it in leading a good life, a righteous life, for, "Karmanyevadhikaraste". You have got a right to work, a right to live in this world. You have a right to express yourself in this world, you have a right to manifest all your latent faculties, all the hidden talents. You have a right to do this. A birthright. There is something fantastic here. Fantastic teaching. You have got a right to serve. Exercise that right. "Maa phaleshu kadaachana". Don't have one eye on profit. Very often, we do this, even social workers. We want to do wonderful good to the world, one hand this way, one hand here. I am giving you, and pocketing something more. It doesn't do anyone any good. This is what causes worry.

If I come to you and say, "Look, I want to serve you. Give me an opportunity to serve you," nobody will say no. But if I come and tell you, "Look, I am a good typist, I will do some typing work for you, how much per week?" Then you would pull yourself up, and ask, "How efficient are you. Let me see, I may not want a typist just now."

There is no limit to service in this world. It is only when there this profit motive that a clash is brought about. The boss wants to extract as much work from his subordinates as possible. The subordinate wants to extract as much money from the boss as possible. This is where conflict comes in. "karmanyevadhikaraste maa phaleshu kadaachana" Don't look for the profit from what you are doing. Then you will be free from worry. This is one of our basic teachings. Throughout the Gita, Krishna merely gives a commentary on this basic teaching. "Don't worry."

How not to worry? The basic teaching is here. Go on doing your work. That itself is the reward. You are manifesting the hidden talents in you. You are realising yourself.

Self-realisation has been subjected to a lot of misunderstanding. It has come to mean sitting in a corner, looking at the tip of your nose. That is not Self-realisation. It is quite right, you need a focal point. You can look at the tip of your nose instead of the heart. No objection at all. But Self-realisation means a lot more. Do you know what you are? And have you made sure that that is real? Every aspect of yourself must become real. You shouldn't sit in a corner and bluff yourself, "Oh, I'm a wonderful man." Try. Don't talk. That is Self-realisation.

Self-realisation means: whatever you think you are or you can do, must be made real. If you think you have got perfect control over your body, sit down and say, "I am not going to change this position for three hours." That is physical Self-realisation. Come on and try it. If you say, "I am the master of my habits and cravings and desires," exercise that mastery. Make sure that it is real. Don't say, "Of course, it is only a silly habit, I can throw away whenever I want." When the cigarette is properly smoked and there is no more left, I can throw it away any time. Never a full cigarette. This sort of self-bluffing helps no one. Self-realisation means this. Step by step, you are going to realise, make real, whatever is hidden

in you. And the world gives us an opportunity to do this. The world has been created by God just for Self-realisation. Let us never bluff ourselves that 'If it wasn't for me, all these people would go to hell.' I don't think so. "If I did not exist, all these people may starve and die." I don't think so. You know why I say it is nonsense? I was given two slices of bread and butter by my host. Should I say that but for him I would have starved and died? Very doubtful. You know why? Because the wheat from which that slice of bread was made, was planted two years ago, already meant for me. He was only a channel. That is the right attitude.

What am I doing here? Attaining Self-realisation. What I am doing here now is Self-realisation. What you are doing here now is Self-realisation. And I can even be frank with you, now that we have come so close to one another. There was a doubt in the minds of some of our friends. Bhagavad Gita? No one may be interested at all. "Will the Swami be able to put across the message from some funny Indian Scripture?" Maybe not, but let us try! They did it. And I am attaining Self-realisation now. I am sure that most of you are doing the same thing. You have broken a barrier, so have I.

Whatever is hidden in you, bring it out, make it manifest itself in this world. That is Self-realisation. That, therefore, is an end in itself. Every action, every piece of activity, is an end in itself. Because, it is Self-realisation. The child playing with a toy, the young man breaking a glass, all is Self-realisation, if you can look at it in that spirit. God did not create the world in order that we may uplift people, elevate people, feed the hungry, clothe the naked. Why should we clothe the naked? Perhaps, if we did not clothe the naked man, he would have led a more healthy life. Don't let us cheat ourselves. We are bluffing ourselves. That is not the purpose. Self-realisation is the purpose. Each man and woman must realise the Self. Have you got compassion? Yes. Show it! How? By feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, serving the sick.

You remember what Jesus Christ said when somebody cornered Him, "That man is suffering. Is he suffering for his own sins, or the sins of his father and grandfathers?" And Jesus Christ answered, "In order that God may be glorified." He is not suffering for his sins, or the sins of somebody else. Don't bother about all that. Do your duty. That is the great commandment. This wonderful teaching of Jesus can be crudely translated into, "Mind your business." Don't try to fiddle around with other people's business. He is suffering. Do you see he is suffering? Then go, serve him. That is why he is suffering: because he wants to give you an opportunity to attain Self-realisation.

Now, this again is paradoxical. If we serve in this spirit, we will be immediately freed from worry. There is no motive. Why am I serving? There is no motive. There is not even the motive of freeing myself from worry. That is why I said it is paradoxical. I don't even have a desire to be free from worry.

If you want to worry, then why should I care. I have tried this on a number of people when they start crying. "If you want to cry, then cry. Why should I worry?"

And, they immediately stop. Even worry is not so important to avoid. If we lived the Divine Life, if we lived in accordance with the teachings of Krishna, of the Gita, we would not worry.

But, it is not as though we are doing all this in order to avoid worry. It can hit us both ways. Like the people who can't sleep. There is a good man who could not sleep. He is a millionaire. That is the trouble. He goes to the doctor because he can't sleep, and the doctor says, "Ah, it is quite simple. Just throw one hand on this side, and one hand on that side, stretch yourself fully, adjust your pillow nicely, take a deep breath, relax, and sleep". The man thinks, "I'll try it. It looks very simple." So he goes home, lies down, one hand on this side, one hand on that side, the whole body stretched out, but, "Why can't I relax?" Now, this is another worry. Previously he was worried about not being able to sleep. And now that the doctor has given him a prescription, relax, he is asking himself the same question in another form, "Why can't I relax?" You see the point? Unless he forgets this nuisance, relaxing or not relaxing, sleeping or not sleeping, till then he won't go to sleep. He is worried.

It is again like the story told of a sick young man who went to one of those Indian Ayurvedic physicians. They believe not only in herbs, but also in charms. This man had some stomach trouble and he went to the Ayurvedic physician who gave him a tonic, laid his hand on it, blessed it, and said, "It is wonderfully effective. Just one dose and the stomach pain will go. But there is only one condition. When you drink it, you should not think of a monkey." Now he has ruined the patient. You know why? If he had not said it, it is quite possible that the man would not have thought of a monkey. But now that the doctor has sown the seed, every time he lifts the bottle, he asks himself, "What should I not think?" He remembers the monkey.

So, here again we must be very careful. We are told, "If you work in this fashion, do your job in this fashion, you will be free from worry." But freedom from worry is not the reward that promised. No. Worrylessness is something which follows. Freedom from worry is something which follows right action in the right spirit. And right action in the right spirit is to regard the action itself as its own reward. The moment you think of a reward that is supposed to follow your action, you are asking for trouble. Do, because you have to do. Do, because that is why you are here. Do not bother about the reward.

From this has been woven the theory of Karma. Perhaps, most of you are familiar with this word. I must say that, whereas Westerners have misunderstood this law of Karma in one way, Easterners have also misunderstood it in another way. In India, many people say, "Oh, it is my Karma." That is fatalism. Very often, in the minds of Westerners, I have discovered a misunderstanding - that they think that even the action that we are performing now is predetermined. No, no, no. Something wrong here, something wrong there.

This law of Karma should not lead us to fatalism. There is no sense of fatalism at

all. You have a right to work. Don't worry about the fruits of your actions. Because, if you have done something right now, it must bear its right fruit at the right moment. It may not be now. A little later. Never mind, don't analyse anything here. Just keep doing what is right, persist in doing what is right.

Again, as you will notice, this philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita is a Self-oriented philosophy. It is not selfish, but Self-oriented philosophy. All the time, even as I am sitting and talking, even when I am doing something which may or may not be of great value to society, I am not interested in serving the society as much as I am in realising my Self. Service of society is one of the several ways in which I attain Self-realisation. The fullness of Self-realisation is not possible without service of society.

I serve, not because I suffer under a delusion that without me all these people will remain ignorant or foolish. Oh, no. It is because I will remain ignorant and foolish if I do not sit in front of you and render this service. This service that I am rendering now is a vital part of my Self-realisation. Hence, I have to be active. I have to realise the Self all the time, minute after minute. This is entirely my free will, this is an exercise of my free will. What it is going to lead me to is none of my business.

I wonder if I am making myself clear. It is an extremely important principle. If, when I am sitting here and talking to you, I am worrying about what your reaction is going to be, whether you are impressed or not, whether you like me or not, whether you understand me rightly or not, if I am all the time worried about your reaction, then I am not all here. I am split, one half here, one half there, looking at me through you. That is precisely the thing that brings about failure. And then I say, "Ah, my Karma." Nonsense! It is not my Karma. I didn't do it properly, that's all!

If you completely forget, completely ignore all expectations of a reward, but put your heart and soul into this work, naturally, you are all there. Your whole being is there. It must be successful.

This is a wonderful philosophy. It is also, perhaps, a great psychological truth. That is, it demands an integration of our personality. Whatever you do, your whole being must be there, not only your body. Your action must have an intellectual assent, it must not merely command your emotional personality. The whole thing, thinking, feeling, and willing, should all be there in one piece. That action is the most efficient action. And such action is possible only if we keep the reward severely out of the picture. It might come, it might not come. I suppose, if you don't tell people, "If you do this, you will be blessed with success," people won't come. On the other hand, if you hold this carrot in front of the donkey, the donkey may still be only aiming at the carrot.

That is the inevitable tragedy of all religions. They say that I must do charity. Why? So that I will go to Heaven. "One dollar in charity I will give; so, I must go

to Heaven." If this is the attitude, you will never go to Heaven. Let us have a Heaven here. Whatever action we do, whatever we do in this life, let us do it happily, joyously. That itself is Heaven. Why do you want to have another Heaven? There is no use tempting or compelling people to do good. Oh, no. Why? Because, when they are tempted or forced, they are not all there. There is no integration of personality. And integration of personality is Yoga. Yoga means integration of personality. That's a very important thing to remember. And, if there is this integration of personality, then, naturally, automatically, our actions will become efficient. Hence, Krishna defines Yoga as "Yogah karmasu kaushalam." Yoga is efficiency in action. Whatever you do, you will be efficient. What is meant by efficient? Is your efficiency measured in terms of the money it brings you? No. Not at all. There was a great poet in the early part of this century, a contemporary of my Guru, Swami Sivananda. He was a revolutionary poet, a fantastic man; but, so poor. I have heard it said that he would write a stirring poem in Tamil, one of the South Indian languages, take it to one of these newspapers, and say, "Please, if you like, publish it in your name. I don't care. But please give me two rupees. I am hungry." He was a revolutionary nationalist, and he died a very premature death. Perhaps he starved and died. Today his portraits are unveiled here; his statues are unveiled there. These things happen, but he didn't work for them. If his efficiency meant an immediate reward for him, he was totally inefficient. His life was not one of success. Success came later; but he was not there to enjoy that success. His success was in his own work, his own Self-realisation.

There was another great saint and musician. He lived a self-imposed, poverty-stricken life; he spurned wealth. Today, every song that he composed brings a lot of money to the present-day musicians. He composed a song glorifying God, and expressing devotion to Him. Just as Jesus Christ said, "What does it profit a man if he acquires the whole world and loses his soul?" In exactly the same way he had sung, "What do I care for this wealth. I have got love of God enshrined in my heart." There are people who sing that song today, but before they go on the stage to sing it, they must first sign the contract 'How much will you give me for singing that song?'

Would you say that he was efficient or not? He was totally efficient. These two poets were totally efficient. Their action was perfect action. But did it bring them success? Yes and no. When this man composed this poem, his whole personality was there, poured into it. Every word of that song was filled with his spirit. That is what Yoga means. Therefore, he had performed the action of composing that poem very efficiently.

But, according to our standards, he was inefficient. In other words, we say, "If he is efficient, he must bring in more money." You know something funny here? You are equating efficiency with dacoity. If you are efficient, you must bring more money. So that, in order to be efficient, you need a little bit of good work, plus pickpocketing. He must know how to do it, very charmingly.

That was not the standard of good people. To them, efficiency meant self-satisfaction. He wrote the poem. He looked at it, he loved it. You do anything you like, even sweeping the floor. You look at it, you are thrilled, you are satisfied. That's all that efficiency means.

Don't again equate success or failure with the reward your action brings. That is where the snag lies. So long as our mind looks beyond the action to a reward, so long we cannot escape worry, anxiety, unhappiness. One who performs action in this spirit, *karmanyevadhikaraste*, I have a right to work, and in being active in this world, I am but exercising my birthright, and I will be equanimous of mind, in a state of equilibrium. His mind will never be disturbed.

What disturbs our mind? Desire. Nothing but desire. Nothing but craving. When these are absent, the mind is in a state of equilibrium. Ask yourself now. Why is your mind in a state of equilibrium? Because at the moment, there are no desires. Later, it will start all over again. Bubbling, boiling. Why? Desires have started manifesting themselves in your mind.

What form does our desire take? Usually, the form of 'I am doing this, I must get that.' This is the tragedy of modern life. Nobody wants to do a thing without linking it up with the prospect of a reward. That is the tragedy. That is why we are unhappy.

For Instance, I am a Swami. In India, in Gujerat, when a Swami is invited to have a meal, they will welcome him at the entrance of the house with a garland, take him inside, feed him very nicely, and on top of all that, they will give him what they call a *dakshina*, a love-offering. This is their tradition in Gujerat, but not often in other parts of India. Now supposing some Gujerati boys say, "Come home for lunch, Swami." I go there expecting to be entertained lavishly and worshipped, and given a *dakshina* of a hundred dollars when I take leave. I go to his house, he receives me with great honour and respect, feeds me well, and when I go, he slips a ten dollar note in my pocket. I am going to be disappointed. Why? I expected hundred and I got ten.

Supposing somebody else, who is not a Gujerati, invites me. I go to his house not expecting anything, and he puts a garland around my neck; I am already satisfied - it was more than I expected. nice lunch, very nice, and as I get up to go he gives me one dollar. Wonderful. Why is it wonderful ? Because I expected nothing.

Therefore, the happiness that we derive from life is in exact inverse proportion to what we expect from it. If you expect nothing, everything makes you happy. If you expect a lot, even a lot of things may not make you happy. Since therefore the Yogi does not expect a reward for his actions, his mind is in a state of constant equilibrium. A very beautiful definition is given in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

samatvam yoga uchyate (II-48)

Equanimity of mind, is called Yoga.

"Equanimity of mind is Yoga." This is the immediate fruit of performing our actions with the right spirit, without expectation of reward, feeling that the performance of the action itself is Self-realisation. We have the right to work, but not to the fruit thereof.

It reminds me of the Bill of Rights; it is not so much Bill of Rights, as Bull of Rights, haunting us. The word "Rights", what does it suggest to you? It is right, isn't it? But the workers in a factory say, "We claim our right!" Means what? How did it ever acquire the meaning of reward? The word "right" is most often used to denote "reward". It doesn't possess that meaning at all. My right! What is my right? My right to work. I have done that. Finished.

We should adopt this attitude: I have a right to work, I will work. But people say, "If we do this, they will take undue advantage of us." It is very hard for people to take advantage of a good man for a long time. Maybe for a day or two. Sooner or later, the continued good action of this good man will make it impossible for me to take undue advantage of him. What undue advantage can you take of me? Let's take my own example. I say, "I am a good typist, I will type any letters you want written." He loads me with all the work he has. He can't take undue advantage of me. You know why? Because there is some energy in me. God gave me this energy, and only that energy I am using, Self-realising, in order to serve him. Can he load me with some more work? Can he overwork me? You can't overwork. You will collapse out of fatigue. There is no undue advantage. That is all the energy I had. I have utilized it in his service and so I go to sleep. When people drive themselves to extremes, and have a breakdown, it is not overwork that got them there, but greed, the desire for "more profit, more reward!"

So, then, let us not worry about people taking undue advantage of us. We have a right, our birthright. That right is to work, and work in the right spirit. To live our life in the right spirit - and that is its own reward.

Lecture 6

The common misconception is that every action must have a motive, that man must have an ambition. This misconception is being drilled into our minds right from childhood. Far from this being the truth, the opposite the truth. The less ambitious we are, the more efficient we are likely to be. The less we are driven by mad craving and desire, the more we are likely to achieve. Psychology is only peeping into this realm today, where the Yogis of ancient days held their court.

You are terribly worried about a certain problem. You can't remember a name, so you scratch your head, you frown. This is not good for improving the memory. Pulling your hair will only make you go bald; it doesn't seem to promote memory. The Yogi's simple analogy is this. You have dropped your wedding ring in a pond. It has great value, both monetary and sentimental value. If you are wise, you will quickly get out of that pond, wait till the water settles down, without making any further ripples on the surface. Let it become calm, still, absolutely placid. Then, all you need do is just have a look and you will find it. The more excited you are, the less are the chances of you ever finding that ring there. You are going to disturb the surface of the pond more and more, and the chances of you retrieving it will recede more and more.

It is this mad craving, this mad desire, "I must have this," that acts as a terrible tyrant in our life, brings on worry after worry, grief after grief, sorrow upon sorrow. And yet, we are caught in this rat race. No one has the courage to get out of this, and say "All right, you go ahead."

You know why we don't want to let the others go ahead, overtake us? Because we are not hundred per cent convinced that the road ahead of this speed is Death, self-destruction. If I knew that accumulation of wealth would lead me to ruin, I wouldn't mind if some of you overtook me along that path. I would take it easier. Though superficially we all say that this material progress is leading us to self-destruction, are we sincere? It is this insincerity that gets us. If I am sincere, let us say, in remaining a bachelor, I feel that this is perfectly all right, I do not miss a wife. If I am sincere, why should I be like him? He is married and quite happy; let him carry on, but I don't want to be like him. I don't want to be like somebody else. I want to be me. I want to be myself. Why should I have the craving to become like somebody else? This is the root of all trouble. Even when one becomes a Swami, let us say, it is to become your Self. It is not to become like somebody else. Absolutely impossible. It is in this craving to be like somebody else, that the trouble lies.

Quite a few people of royal standing were born in the same year that I was born. Sometimes, I sort of daydream. If only I had been born a few days earlier, I might have been a prince living in a palace, or a king in the Middle East. Would I like to be like that? Yes, of course. Would I like to be that? Please ask yourself this. It is a very important question. Would you like to be the Queen of England today? Ah, the glamour. It looks wonderful. I find my picture in every shop. Hm? Okay? You

have your picture hung in every shop, but you would not see them. Why? You can't enter a shop. You can't go shopping. You can't do this, you can't do that. What we want is: I must be what I am, plus that. I must have the freedom of being just a simple citizen of Perth, and at the same time I must be the Queen of England. Impossible. You can't exchange your place for somebody else's.

What you want is Self-realisation. Look within, see what you are, and be that. It is mad craving that drives us from pillar to post, "I want to be like this, I want to be like that. I want a motor car like his. I want a house like hers." No. I am quite happy as I am. And all that I wish to do is to be what I am, in reality. To get closer and closer to that reality within. If we are sincere in this search for reality, we will not regret not rushing about, not being pushed around by cravings, desires and ambitions.

What is an ambition? An ambition is the declaration of a lack within. Why am I ambitious? Why do I want to gain something? Not so much to do something. To do something may be merely Self-realisation. Why do I want to gain something? Because I feel that something is absent, is lacking in me. If I lack it, will this lack be fulfilled? Please remember that word. Can this lack be fulfilled by gaining something? Absurd.

Someone once took me to a super eye specialist. He said, "This is the most brilliant eye surgeon, because he has got the latest, most fantastic equipment." I said, "My dear brother, if he is as brilliant as you suggest, why does he need all that equipment?"

On the same principle, suppose my I.Q. is low. I can't add up a few figures. Now, what do you do? You give me an adding machine. But you have not improved my I.Q. You have given me a crutch. The more a man leans on a crutch, the weaker his own limbs are going to be. When I began to use a camera, I had a wonderful eye-sight. I could look at an object, measure the light value with my own eyes, and be accurate to a degree. Now, I can't do it. You know why? Every camera is fitted with an automatic exposure meter. I don't have to use my judgement, with the result that I have lost a faculty. The more we depend on these things, the less efficient we become. The man who is efficient, will be efficient up here in his brain.

So that, when I discover a lack within myself, this lack cannot be fulfilled by supplying something from outside. I am using these as illustrations. I am not dogmatic in this, this is not my province at all. Again, if I suffer from a lack of Vitamin B, I can't obtain it by swallowing a few pills. No. I have to eliminate them now. In addition to eliminating the food that I have eaten, I have to eliminate these chemicals that I have introduced into my system. If I suffer from hormonal deficiency, I must ensure that the manufacturers of these hormones within my system function better. Not take some other hormones. These are some of the fallacies of the basic philosophy, that when you lack something, you should import it, get it from somewhere else, acquire it externally. This is where we go

wrong.

This brings us to the basic principle in Yogic physical culture. When I practise Yoga, when I stand on my head, I am strengthening the pituitary gland. I am bringing about a better balance of the hormonal system in me. I am restoring the hormonal balance - or, harmony and balance. This must be done from within, not from outside.

If I lack something which gives rise to an ambition, I must discover the source of that lack, the meaning of that lack. I must understand why it is that I have this craving. What do I lack? There is something missing in me, and the fulfilment must come by removing that lack in my own personality. If I am afraid, if I suffer from a sense of insecurity, there is something lacking within me. Wisdom. Understanding. That lack must go. Leaning against a wall is no good. It may break that wall, but it will not strengthen me.

This is the fault of most of the modern systems, whether you call them medical systems, psychological systems, religious systems, monetary systems, or social systems. This is the basic lacuna in all these systems. "I lack something, there is something missing within me. I will supply it from outside." Since this is impossible, it leads to frustrations.

The thing must come from within. Beauty must come from within, not from a few creams you rub on the surface. The deficiency must be supplied from within. The deficiency must be removed there. Then, the greatest wonder is that, when the deficiency disappears, the craving disappears. For example, some people have cravings for even such things as charcoal. Why? There is a lack within. When that lack has been removed, the craving suddenly disappears.

So that the fulfilment of desire, of ambition, does not consist of supplying something from outside, but turning within, to the source of this lack, and removing it there by fulfilling the Self. By Self-realisation.

Hence Krishna tells us in the Bhagavad Gita, with beautiful imagery,

aapuryamaanamachalapratishtam samudramaapah pravishanti yadvat
tadvatkaamaa yam pravishanti sarve sa shanti maapnoti na kaamakaami (Gita II-70)

He attains peace into whom all desires enter as waters enter the ocean which, filled from all sides, remains unmoved; but not the man who is full of desires.

The ocean is calm and peaceful. The sun's rays suck water vapour up. Clouds form. Very often it rains on the ocean itself. I have not been able to understand why the rain falls on the ocean. Why does God waste all his energy by sucking up water from the ocean, and then putting it back? Perhaps to teach us a wonderful lesson. This is the only reason that I can conceive of why rain should fall on the ocean itself. Look at this rain falling on the ocean, and how the ocean, undisturbedly, tranquilly, takes back the water. What happens to this water that so lovingly falls? It becomes one with the ocean. The other cloud formation is

wafted onto the shore. Wind and gales blow the clouds onto the shore. How these clouds are pushed around, smashed on mountain peaks! The moisture comes down as rain, has to undergo terrible torture in these mountains. Pushed around here and there by boulders, becomes muddy, dirty, then flows down, sometimes joining a big river, sometimes being pushed around in small canals. Then the water flows down and joins the main stream to the sea, and is calm again.

So, Krishna tells us, When a desire arises in your mind, find out the root of that desire. Find out why that desire arises there, in your own mind. You will immediately see that the goal of that desire is within. It doesn't have to be wafted around and brought back. It can come down from there.

A simple story crossed my mind. A story told to me by a high official somewhere, in a small government office. The boss entered the office, and found one man sleeping there. He shook him, and said "Ay, what are you doing?" "I am sleeping, Sir." "Why are you sleeping?" "Sir, I have finished my work." "You should do something creative." "What for, Sir?" "Then you will get promotion. Earn a lot of money. Be able to buy a big house. Retire. Take rest." "But isn't that what I am doing now, Sir? Instead of going to all that trouble, and having a holiday in fifty years time, I am having it now."

Now, though this story might be ridiculous, and totally immoral from your point of view, that is precisely the state of being that we are aiming at. It is called Yoga.

yam labdhvaa chaaparam laabham manyate naadhikam tatah yasmin sthito na duhkkena
gurunaapi vichaalyate
tamvidyaadduhkhasamyogariyogam yogasamjnitam (Gita VI-22,23)

Which, having obtained, he thinks there is no other gain superior to it; wherein established, he is not moved even by heavy sorrow.

Let that be known by the name of Yoga, the severance from union with pain.

Krishna says, "Having obtained this state of being, you would not look for a greater achievement. Having got this, nothing other than this tempts you." That is Self-realisation. The man of Self-realisation discovers that the ambition which drives an imperfect personality, does not exist for him. He works. He is ever busy, ever active. All his hidden and latent talents and faculties express themselves. That is Self-realisation. He is active, but not because he wants to achieve something. The greatest achievement is Self-realisation. Being established in this, he is established in pure being. There is nothing more to do, there is nothing more to gain.

You might say, "Well Swami, I have got a very lovely wife, two children, a good house, two cars. I am enjoying reasonably good health. I don't want anything more." Good. That is only half a Yogi. The other half is a wonderful definition.

"Yasmin sthito na duhkkena gurunaapi vichaalyate." When you are established in this state of Yoga, no misery whatsoever touches you, affects you. You feel, "Anything that might happen to the body does not happen to me, anything that

happens to the world does not affect me. How can it affect me? I am. I am what I am. And I will ever be what I am. There is no disturbance in this basic Self-realisation. I am the Self. I cannot cease to be the Self."

This is the great glory of the philosophy of Self-realisation. You don't have to prove the Self. You can't disprove the Self. The Self is unchanging. Why? Because, what is unchanging in me, is called the Self. You can't disprove that the Self is unchanging. No. What is unchanging in you is the Self. If you are established in that unchanging Self, what does it matter if your hair is black or white or if there is no hair at all? I am. "I am" is the great realisation. So that, whatever happens, you are not affected.

You don't cry when it becomes night. Wait for a little while, the sun will come up. You don't say that it's a wonderful thing that the sun has come up. Wait for a little while, it will go down. Night will come again. These passing phenomena, night and day, happiness and unhappiness, pain and pleasure, these things are part of the changing, ever changing pattern of this world.

I am the witness. I 'am'. You don't even have to add 'the witness'. I 'am'. That is the most wonderful thing. One who is established in Self-realisation, "I am" consciousness, is not disturbed at all, whatever happens outside. That is the sure sign of a man of wisdom, a man of Self-realisation.

We don't admire great beings like Buddha, Krishna, or Christ, for the miracles they performed, for the wonderful teachings they have left behind. No. What were they in the times of the greatest trials? That is what reveals the inner man. If wisdom is not there, we are still subject to this fluctuation - we are happy at some time and unhappy at others. If we are subject to this fluctuation, if we identify ourselves with these changing passing phenomena, we are lost.

In the Gita is given what I would call the steps of self-destruction.

dhyaayato vishayaanpumsah sangasteshupajaayate sangat sanjaayate kaamah
kaamaatkrodhobhijaayate
krodhaadbhavati sammohah sammohaatsmritivibhramah smritibhramshaadbuddhinaasho
buddhinaashaat pranashyati (Gita II-62,63)

When a man thinks of the objects, attachment for them arises; from attachment, desire is born; from desire, anger arises.

From anger comes delusion, from delusion, the loss of memory; from loss of memory, the destruction of discrimination; from destruction of discrimination, he perishes.

A beautiful flight of steps downwards. The picture is this. A man is standing outside a big supermarket, and he looks at something. Perhaps some of you might discover modern psychological doctrines in this description, but please, remember that the Bhagavad Gita is at least four to five thousand years old. He stands in front of something, an object. Now his mind has alighted upon this object, which he values because it gives him pleasure. Because he thinks it

supplies a lack in his own personality. So, he loves it.

I don't know if men are subject to this? Certainly women are. A lovely dress. She has only seen it once. That will do. That object has been registered within. "Sangasteshupajaayate." A contact has been established through the camera lens of the eyeball. I have a camera. I can click it here and take it home with me. You know what happens? You are coming with me inside the camera. In exactly the same way, her eyeball has now taken the imprint of this dress. So that, although that girl saw the dress in the window of the shop, she is actually taking the thing home with her. The mind has assumed the shape of the dress. She goes home, and she cannot sleep. As soon as she closes her eyes, the dress hangs in front of her. "Sangaat sanjaayate kaamah." It applies not only to dresses. It applies to everybody with something which we are fond of. A young man may look at a girl, she will haunt his dreams until he gets her.

Now we will proceed step by step. This thing is haunting. You can't forget it. Why? Because the thing has been printed, planted, in your consciousness. How was it possible for this thing to be planted in your consciousness? Because there was this lack in you. Otherwise, you would not even have noticed it. This thing seemed to supply this lack, fulfil this desire. So now, you take this picture home, you want to possess it. People unfortunately call ambition a very desirable thing. This is why it is very undesirable. For instance, you are filled with desire to possess this thing. You must have it. "Kaamaatkrodhobhijaayate." Out of this ambition, this desire to possess this thing, arises anger. Frustration.

Somebody might say, "Oh, no, my husband is very fond of me. Whatever I want, he will give." Today he will, perhaps. But, here again is a snag. Desire satisfied in this manner multiplies itself. All of us have experienced this. But, stupid as we are, we forget this experience. "Oh, I am a young man. I will smoke just one cigarette, I will not smoke again." This resolution lasts for the next hour; then he starts up again - just one more. Without realising that, every time this wrong action is repeated, the groove is becoming deeper. The habit is becoming more unbreakable. You know it. I don't want anybody to feel that this is anything that you don't know. Yet, we will go and ask a doctor, a priest, a psychologist, "How am I to break this habit?" Who asked you to start this habit? Why do you ask how to break this habit? How do you break a glass? Throw it down and stamp on it. How do you break a cigarette habit? Throw the cigarette down and stamp on it.

Again the same thing. With our lips, we are asking the question, "How can I overcome this habit?" With our own inner consciousness, we love that habit. So, we pray to God. "Lord, I love this temptation, but lead me not into this temptation. I love to be tempted, but I shall ask you not to lead me into this temptation. If I stray, then turn your blind eye on me." We want it. And, because we want these bad habits, we strengthen them by repetition. It is a totally untrue statement to say that craving is removed by enjoyment. It is completely untrue. Every time there is indulgence in this enjoyment, the groove becomes deeper and deeper. Then, all the contents of our mind, all the energies of our mind, flow

more and more freely, more powerfully, along that groove. It becomes deeper and deeper and deeper. There is only one way of breaking a habit: putting it under your foot; stamp - it is finished.

A lot of people say they want to give up the habit gradually. This will go on and on until he begins to smoke. Especially in the case of Indians who are cremated when they die. First he keeps smoking cigarette, and then the cigarette smokes him; and later on, he is cremated. There is no gradual business here. I often ask the young people, "How long does it take a man to die? Does he die gradually, or instantaneously?" I may be suffering for a long time, I may be ill for a long time, but death is instantaneous. Finished. And this is how desires can be got rid of, not by gradually, weaning ourselves away.

These are all bits and pieces we picked up from psychological jargon, and use to our own advantage. Dis-advantage.

Remember, every time a craving is indulged in, it becomes deeper. You can't get rid of it. And the time comes when even the fondest husband, the best wife, or the greatest friend, says "No". I want something, and my father, my wife, my husband, my daughter, my friend, says "No". And frustration sets in. In that frustration, 'kaamaatkrodhobhijaayate', you become angry, lose your temper.

This has always intrigued me again. Temper is a very funny word. Temper is used in different meanings in different sciences. Steel for instance, when it is very strong, not brittle, is said to have first class temper. A knife is supposed to have first class temper when it is sharp. A man is supposed to have a temper, and he loses it every time he becomes angry. I think it is a very significant transference of meaning. My intelligence and my wisdom are usually sharp. Becoming angry makes me lose the temper of my intelligence. My wisdom is calm and strong. I can do anything, but in a moment of anger I lose this strength of will. Perhaps that is why we began to use the expression, "loss of temper". The temper of our intelligence, the temper of our will, the temper of our wisdom, is lost when we become angry.

The brain is clouded when we become angry, when we lose our temper, and we lose the sense of our identity. In a moment of anger we don't know what we are. We shout at people who we normally respect. Our friends, elders, teachers, priests, other men. Why? Because we have forgotten our identity. We behave like animals. "Smritibhramshaat buddhinaashah." Once we have lost our identity as thinking, discriminating beings, then "buddhi" or enlightened intellect, which alone distinguishes the human kingdom from the lower kingdom, is gone. And what is left? "Buddhinaashaat pranashyati." We go to self-destruction.

It starts with that evil that modern society condones and glorifies - ambition. Now again we should go back and reiterate the other statement. It does not mean that Krishna or the Bhagavad Gita or Eastern philosophy encourages laziness. No. Act, be busy all the time. Be efficient in whatever you do. But kill this

ambition. Serve, because you love to serve. Serve, because you want to realise your Self! Can you do this? "Yes ! What is my reward?" In other words, if there is no reward, are you going to commit suicide? In order to live, do we go about asking people for fees? No. Then, in order to express this life, in order to express, realise, make real the talents and the faculties with which we have been endowed, why do we seek a reward? Ambition. Craving. Desire. In order to overcome this ambition we are asked to meditate. Before we go on to that topic, I must say a little more.

This meditation in itself is not the end. A period of meditation every day is a very healthy practice in order to reverse the destructive course, that I described just now. The destructive course is a movement outside, external movement, externalisation. In order to meditate, we are asked to cultivate introversion. The energies of the mind, which have been moving outwards, have to be arrested and turned within. That is meditation. But then, this in itself is not the end. It is not as though you are going to sit there in a corner, and be looking at the tip of your nose. Oh, no. By entering into the state of meditation, we discover the being within. We discover the hidden talents and faculties within. We discover the wonders of the world within. And then, these flow, these become real, these faculties and talents become real. Life becomes real. I live. Living itself gives me joy. Everything that I do gives joy, the greatest joy.

Remember the clerk who demonstrated that you can have happiness here and now. Why go around a circuitous route to happiness or leisure at a future date? I say, be happy here and now. Doing this very thing, I can be happy. This thing itself can give me happiness. This thing itself can make me happy, because I am happy. We are not using it as a tool, as a commodity with which to buy happiness. This is the difference between the Yogi and the worldly man. This is the simple difference. The Yogi derives happiness from the action itself. Whereas, the worldly man uses life, uses his talents, uses his faculties in order to buy happiness. Since he can't buy happiness, he keeps using these things, accumulating, multiplying them.

A man gets married once; his marriage is a failure. He doesn't sit and think, "Why was that marriage a failure, there must be something wrong with me." Oh, no! He thinks, "This girl is no good. Divorce her and get another one!" It doesn't work. And still he doesn't turn within. He doesn't ask, "What was wrong with me that I wasn't happy?" He always blames it on somebody else. This is no good, I'll have that. That is no good, I'll have this. Till he discovers that nothing is any good, and then it is too late. Only death is good at that time.

This is the difference between a Yogi and a worldly man. With a Yogi, the act itself gives happiness, life itself gives happiness. He doesn't live for happiness, work for happiness; the work itself is happiness. If you understand that, you have understood the entire Yoga philosophy. Yet, saying something, and doing something, are entirely different. It is very easy to say, but rather difficult to do.

Our great masters have given us a few hints here and there. When we are assailed by desire, our consciousness flows outwards, trying to grasp objects of pleasure. This flowing outward involves few psychological categories: 1. The buddhi, or discriminating or evaluating intellect; 2. The mind, or thinking principle; 3. The senses; 4. The organs of knowledge.

Eventually, we are able to experience the world and its pleasures only with the help of the organs of knowledge, the sense organs, as they are called - Indriyas. I see it is smooth. I say that I see it is smooth, but it is not the organ of sight which gives me the experience of smoothness, but the tactile sense of my fingers. I touched, and it was smooth. The expression is faulty. I see it is smooth, really means, I feel it is smooth. In the same way, the form is apprehended by the sense of sight. A piece of music is appreciated by the sense of hearing. These are the senses that bring us into contact with the objective world. So that, whatever we do, these senses play a significant part in our life.

Now, therefore, the path of introversion commences with the senses.

indriyaani paraanyaahuh indriyebhyah param manah manasastu paraa buddhiryo buddheh paratastu sah (Gita III-42)

They say that the senses are superior to the body; superior to the senses is the mind; superior to the mind is the intellect; one who is superior even to the intellect is He, the Self.

A beautiful psychological analysis. "Indriyaani paraanyaahuh," says Krishna to Arjuna. There is something wonderful here. Your senses are superior to the sense objects-to the world. A great statement, an inspiring statement, a ray of hope. You think that the object is attracting you. No. The object does not attract you. Your senses are superior to that object. Supposing a few young men are sitting on the beach, and one Miss World in a bikini passes that way. I am sure that every young man would say, "It's not my fault that I looked at her. She was walking in front of me there, I had to look. She was so attractive." But a few hundred yards away from this group, someone is sitting. This girl walks at almost point blank range from him, and he doesn't even turn his head. You know why? He is blind. So that her attractiveness is of no consequence to him. It is not important at all. My eyes are superior to all that is in the world, because, with them, I can see and allow myself to be tempted. Without them, the greatest beauty is nothing but a lump of flesh to me.

Even if you don't want to be philosophers, to be men of God, this gives you a great sense of dignity. Who says that she attracts me? No. I want to be attracted. It is like the story of a young couple, both villagers. Soon after they were married, the young man got a job in a big city; so, both of them went there and took a flat. This girl was alone in the flat while the husband was away at work. After a few days, the young man returned home, and saw that she was crying, and he asked her, "Oh, what's wrong with you now? Why are you crying?" She said, "That man next door is a vicious man." "Why, what's wrong?" "He is looking at me throughout the day." What would the husband's reaction be? He looked at his

wife and asked, "How do you know he is looking at you all day, you are also looking at him? If you had been minding your business, you wouldn't even have been aware that he was looking at you. It is because you are also attracted by his presence" Whose fault is it? In passing, I might remind you that this is one of the basic principles of meditation. We often complain of distractions, noise here, noise there. When you sit there, and listen to your own breathing, why does this noise distract you? Who asked you to listen to that? If I don't listen to it, it will not distract me. But then I want to pat myself on the back and feel that I am meditating without a distraction. So, I ask myself, "Am I still hearing the noise?" Yes, of course I am still hearing. If there is noise in next room, don't worry, just go on. Otherwise, you are distracting yourself.

In all these, it is good to know that our senses are superior to the world outside. It may not lead us to terrible egoism or vanity, as I shall explain later, but it does give us an initial boost. It gives us great hope, because the world outside exists only because I come into contact with it. I grip the world, I grasp the world, I touch the world, I apprehend the world with the senses. They are superior.

Now, let's get back to the beach, with that young thing walking along. Another young man is sitting there. He has just failed in his examinations, and on the result of that examination depended his entire career. His hopes and dreams were finished. He wanted to die. He got into the water, but it was a bit too cold! So, he was sitting there. This lovely long-legged thing was walking along, but he doesn't even notice. You know why? His mind is not there. This happens to all of us. Especially to mothers of young children. A little baby has bouts of illness. The most tantalising objects of pleasure completely lose their meaning to the mother. A young girl might have gone raving mad after a fancy hat a year ago, but today her baby is sick. She is driving her baby to a doctor and she looks at the same hat, but it doesn't mean a thing. Why? Her mind is not there. The mind is elsewhere. So that, "Indriyebhyah param manah". You may even look at an object of pleasure and be indifferent to it, because your mind is not associated with that sense-organ.

Let us get back to the beach, and to another fellow who may be attracted to this beauty. He might be looking at her, following her with his eyes when somebody else calls him. He doesn't hear. Why? All his mind is flowing through the eyes. There was nothing left for the ears. This happens, I am quite sure, even to young men and women in class rooms. They are so busy looking at somebody else, that what the professor says falls on deaf ears. They are not deaf; there is no portion of the mind left for the ears to function with. The entire mind is flowing out through the eyes. Therefore, mind is superior to the senses. If I know how to handle this mind, I can switch off the senses.

"Manasastu paraa buddhih." Superior to the mind, is the discriminating intellect. Or, let us put it another way. Superior to the mind, is the eye of wisdom, "manasastu paraa buddhih." Wisdom is superior to mere mentation. It is this wisdom, it is this discriminating intellect, that decides the scale of values. If you

want to experiment and discover this truth for yourselves, all that you have to do is to get together four people: a scholar 65 years old, a young lady, a little boy, and a baby - or some such assortment of humanity. Take them through a supermarket. You are not going to buy them anything, there is no money involved. Each one is given only a sheet of paper and a pencil. Take them round the entire supermarket. Come out, and immediately ask them to write what they saw.

You will be surprised at what they saw. All of them went together into the supermarket, passed by the same stalls. What they saw was completely different. The old man perhaps saw some nice books, a walking stick. The young woman saw some dresses - she didn't even know that walking sticks were sold in that shop. The boy was looking at the model toys, and the little child was interested in the chocolates. Why? This is what is called interest. The mind picks up only those objects in which you are interested. In other words, the interest is again governed by the scale of values, created by the discriminating intellect called Buddhi. Our whole life is dependent on the functioning of the Buddhi.

The cerebral cortex, the topmost layer of the brain is impoverished in most of us. It gets the least nourishment from the heart, because the heart is unable to pump enough blood to the brain. That is why we become more and more stupid. Even if the brain gets some nourishment, the topmost portion is terribly anaemic in most of us, and therefore we are fools. We do not have a proper scale of values. This is one reason why the yogis recommend the head stand - sirasasana - one of the best ways of nourishing the cerebral cortex, becoming more wise. There is something very interesting here - wisdom consists in looking at the world from a different angle. Standing on your head compels you to do that. Therefore, Yogis become wiser. "Manasastu paraa buddhih." The Buddhi is superior to the mind. The mind only follows the dictates of the Buddhi, the discriminating intelligence or wisdom within.

"Yo buddheh parastu sah." Beyond that discriminating intellect, as the seer behind that eye of wisdom, is you, your Self, the Self. He who is established in the Self, he who is conscious of the Self, is not swayed by passions, is not swayed by desires, does not need the prod of ambition to make him work, to make him live. He is a man who is fulfilled. No ambitions tempt him. No calamities threaten him. He is established in Self-realisation.

Lecture 7

Of the basic enemies of man, we have dealt with just one. There is one more. It is repulsion - the opposite of desire, the opposite of attachment, the opposite of attraction, the opposite of infatuation.

kaama esha krodha esha rajogunasamudbhavah mahaashano mahaapaapmaa vidhyenamiha
vairinam (Gita III-37)

It is desire, it is the anger born of the quality of Rajas, all devouring, all sinful; know this as the foe here (in this world).

Says Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita.

You have only two enemies in the world. They are not outside you. They are within you. Within where, is for each one of us to discover. One is Kama, the other is Krodha. One is attraction, the other is repulsion. Yoga philosophy calls them Raga and Dwesha.

Raga is infatuation. These words are nearly impossible to translate, nearly impossible to express. Words are just symbols, x y z. God is a symbol in metaphysics and theology. What it represents is for each one of us to work out. A word may mean something in one problem, and quite another thing in another problem. Exactly the same thing applies to this other symbol - g o d. To me it may mean one thing, to you it may mean something entirely different. Words are uttered, expressed, pressed outside. The meaning has to be inscribed. In the case of the meaning, it is the inspiration that is essential. What it means to you is the most important thing. This is a fundamental principle in Indian philosophy. I hope you will get the principle correctly, without bias or prejudice.

If you think you have understood, you are a fool. You have not understood, because that ultimate reality is not an object to be grasped. It is a Truth to which you should surrender yourself. It is not a finite thing which you can measure, which you can encompass, which you can comprehend. It is infinite. You will always have to surrender the little self to it.

Merge the little self into the infinite. When you say 'Ah, I see,' when you don't see anything, it is like talking to your friend over the telephone, and saying 'I see'. You see nothing. The reality is not an object, it is your subject. Therefore, philosophers use all sorts of puzzling statements and paradoxes; slightly that way, slightly this way. When you have understood this, you will be silent, because you can't express it.

Again we go back to the scripture to which I have referred once or twice here, the teachings of Vasishtha. He seems to have been a colossal character. No living or dead philosopher anywhere in the world can hope to measure up to him. A colossal man, one who could sit, and declare with the courage of his own conviction, that what you see is unreal, an appearance. Don't trust your vision, it is defective. The optician may say that your vision is normal. He only means by that, that you are as blind as the majority of people are; nothing more, nothing

less. But that means nothing. We are still blind. I can't see microbes floating around here. I mentioned on a previous occasion about the electron microscope. It will not say that she is a beautiful woman. If every pore of her skin is made to appear like the map of Israel, I don't know what concept of beauty you will have then. Now, this is only from the physical, point of view.

Take the psychological point of view, it is even, more interesting. I will start with a little Zen story. A wonderful holy man was sitting on the bank of a river. A young man and his wife had one of those family quarrels, all part of the game of living. This girl in a huff, tore out of the husband's arms, and said, 'I don't care for you, I will go away,' and she left. The poor husband started chasing her. After a few minutes, he came to a crossroad near which this holy man was sitting. The husband was perplexed. In order not to waste his time taking the wrong road, he asked this holy man. "Did a young beautiful woman go walking past this way? Which road did she take?"

This wonderful man looked up and said, "Ah, a young beautiful woman? I don't know, I saw a skeleton with a little bit of flesh on, going in that direction. If that is what you call your wife, go." A skeleton with flesh on. One definition of a beautiful girl. Right. Now, let us get a little closer. Ask the husband for his definition. "She is my darling, the object of my happiness, the source of my bliss. Everything. My whole world."

This is the reason why, in India, "samsaram" stands for the world, with all its misery and pain and death and unhappiness and so on, and "samsaram" in colloquial language refers to wife. A man might often point out his wife, and say, "She is my samsaram, she is my world"; in other words, "All my happiness, all my misery, has its origin in her." To the man, she is the source of his joy, his whole world.

What does the girl's father think? "Oh, very naughty. Right from her childhood, she has been terribly naughty. I tell her not to dress like this." That's exactly what the husband wants her to do. "I tell her not to go to parties." That's exactly where her husband takes her. "I ask her not to smoke." That's her husband's pleasure again! "A terribly naughty girl!"

The father wouldn't even like a stranger to remark "How beautiful your daughter is!" You know why? "How can you look at my daughter and admire her beauty? It is not for you." Look at the two entirely different points of view.

Let's go to the third party, a little baby. This baby may or may not be able to talk to you. But you can always find out. Look at that little baby. "What is this girl to you?" "My feeding bottle. Whenever I am hungry, she feeds me. Beauty or no beauty, I don't care, she is my feeding bottle. And if even Satan himself comes to threaten me, I run and jump onto her lap. She is my fortress. My security. Beauty? What do you mean by beauty?"

Supposing the whole family went to Africa, to a National Park, where tigers and lions roam freely. The girl stepped out of the car, and there was a lioness. And you ask the lioness, "What do you see? Beautiful girl? Naughty? Feeding bottle?" "No, Bread and jam. 150 lbs of breakfast. Ready made and hot!" The lioness doesn't know that this is a human being, a beautiful girl, a naughty girl, a feeding bottle!

Now, what in reality is she? Impossible to fathom. Impossible to understand. Because the very process of your understanding prohibits this. Let us not bluff ourselves that we are not prejudiced at all, we are not biased at all, that we always judge objectively.

Without shattering anybody's egoism here, let us face facts. When I look at him, I only look at him through my own eyes. That is all that is possible. I can understand him or her in a sort of roundabout manner, basing my understanding on this principle: just as I look at her with my eyes and arrive at an opinion, he might look at her with his eyes, and he has every right to his own opinion. That is the greatest understanding that is possible, that is all that is possible.

I can't look at anything through his eyes, it's impossible. I can appreciate his point of view, and what does that mean? I can tell myself that, just as I have my point of view, he has his point of view. I can therefore give him - who am I to give him? I mean, in a manner of speaking - his freedom of thought.

Therefore, when this theological formula, this theological symbol God, or g o d is used, it means nothing, except what it means to you. God is one. Of course God is one. But! My God need not be your God, will not be your God, cannot be your God.

This wonderful man Vasishtha, after giving us this world-shattering, mind-shattering, intellect-shattering truth that what you see is unreal, an appearance, then tells us, 'Don't bluff yourself that you can see the world as others see it. You cannot.' Therefore, in this very room, there are one hundred universes. "Loka", in Sanskrit, means universe, but literally means a "plane of perception." It means that there are hundred lokas in this room; for, each one of us has his or her own world, in this room. What you see, you alone can see. No one else can see.

There is an objection here: look at that dress, what is its colour? Pink. Ask any one here, "What is its colour ?' They all reply "Pink". Unanimity - they all see the same thing in the same way! How can Vasishtha assert the contrary! This wonderful man Vasishtha has a few answers to number one. He says sometimes, accidentally, a few people may have the same experience. Accidentally. Just like this: a ready made jacket is hanging in a shop. Let us say, all the menfolk here walk into that shop. It's just a matter of chance that jacket will fit a few of them.

There is the other argument, which is again intellect-shattering. Perhaps you have heard of colour blindness? One mistakes one colour for another colour.

Usually between red and green, I am told. Now, supposing I was born colour blind. I am over-simplifying this. So that, congenitally, I see pink as green, and green as pink. When I was a little boy, I saw a dress. I asked my mother, "What is this?", and she said, "It's a pink dress." "Oh, so this is pink!" Now, according to the system of wavelengths, the wavelength that I perceive could be equated to green. But I register in my mind that this thing that I am seeing is pink. So that, forty years later, when I am shown this dress, of course I see it as pink, though actually what I am seeing from within, scientifically, technically, the impression that is produced on my optical nerve, is green colour. But, since my mind has associated that wavelength with pink, I say pink. I am bluffing myself, I am bluffing you.

Hence, when a few people agree hundred per cent, to a certain definition of God, it only means they are bluffing themselves. They are thinking in terms of their own understanding. But they have come to a sort of agreement, conventional agreement, that I'll see this God one way, you will see God another way, but all of us will call this God. It suits our common purpose, and we go on. All this goes to show that, although we may use hundreds of word-symbols, they have no real significance or purpose in our life -only their meaning has.

We have become the victims of symbolism. Symbolism has a tremendous value in our life, it has a wonderful place in our life. We can't live without making use of symbolism. But, as with everything else in life, if we allow these instruments to make use of us, we are gone. Wealth is very good, very necessary. Somebody asked me the other day, "You are a Swami, you don't have a bank account, you don't have any possessions, no family, no property? Is it true? You don't handle money at all?" I said, "Of course, I handle money. I travel from country to country. I can't go to the airport and thumb a lift. I have to pay a ticket. Money is necessary for everybody. Food is necessary for everybody. But the moment 'we' become necessary for 'that' bank account, we are doomed. So long as I possess the money, it is perfectly all right. If that money begins to possess me, I am sunk.

We need this symbolism. Somebody has a cross, a crucifix, hanging around the neck, to remind them of Jesus Christ, His wonderful life, His great sacrifice. I have got my own. My Master. Whenever I feel a bit depressed, I open my locket, and I look at him. But then somebody said to me, "Your locket is getting a bit rusty and dirty, shall I gold plate it?" Now there is some trouble. Shall we gold plate it? Shall we make it a golden locket? If it is golden, I am not going to look the inside anymore. I am going to be admiring the outside.

This is where the symbol loses its symbolism, and we crucify the spirit afresh. It is finished, so far as we are concerned. We don't want to understand what the symbolism means, we worship the symbol. Why do we worship the symbol? Not to remind us of the meaning. Not in order to enable us to meditate on the symbol. But, as a very cunning and wonderful substitute for the necessity to follow that symbolism. Why do I worship the Buddha? Why do I worship my Guru? As a substitute for following him? This would make it a tragedy, this leads to a

tragedy. I worship my Guru. Yes, of course I worship my Guru. In order that I may meditate upon him, and follow His teachings. Not as a substitute for it.

Our life is full of symbolism. Without symbolism, we cannot live. But that symbolism exists to be understood, and rightly applied to our life. Then it serves its purpose.

Back to these two words - Raga and Dwesha. I gave you such long explanation, because the moment a word is uttered, the moment you jump up and say, "Ahhh, I have understood," it is probably a very clear indication you have not.

When you use words like Raga, Dwesha, passion or desire, ambition, anger, dislike, you feel "Oh, that is bad." Now, that means you have not understood.

We have a passion for labels. Here is a watch. It is a nice timepiece, a good brand. It is first class! It has a couple of words on it, a label. "Oh it must be wonderful, super first class." How do we know? We are guided by the labels. Our good sisters and mothers go to a shop to buy a dress. They determine its value on the basis of the price tag. "Oh, it costs twentyfive dollars! It must be good." The same dress, but it costs only two dollars, and so, "It's no good." Only two dollars, cheap! Or we look for some big name. "Made in Switzerland." Labels and labels and labels. The same thing with Mr. So-and-So. If you find a lot of letters - titles - after his name, he must be a great man. We have already made up our mind that he is that. Labels and labels and labels.

This is extended to philosophy and metaphysics. Labels, words. We don't look for the meaning at all. Take, for instance, ambition. "Yes, I have understood what ambition means. All ambition is bad. Right?" No, wrong. Here again, the general rule is that there is no general rule. We look for a general rule, we want to make our lives so easy and sloppy. We don't want to think, we don't want to understand. Somebody must give us a ready made answer. The ten commandments. Twenty three instructions. Then we look steadily into that. We tell ourselves, "Umm. That one is a bit tricky. Umm. This is all right, I can do that. Umm. Now, what shall I do?" Add a little, subtract a little. We want a ready made doctrine, ready made things dished out to us, so that there will be no need for us to think, to understand. And so, we look for general rules, look for a guide. A Guru, a Master, a Scripture that we can quote. Absurd! There is no general rule.

We may be given a Light. That is why the Guru is called the Light. That is why the scripture is called the Light. Light is light. The sun shines. You can do nothing with that sunshine. You can walk in that sunshine, you can study in that sunshine, work in that sunshine. But you cannot sell that sunshine, you cannot make it to a commodity for me to make use of. It is a Light.

If you understand what this Light means you, can make your life blessed, but you can not make use of that Light. The Guru is the Light. The scripture is a Light. It has to be absorbed. We have to expose ourselves to this Light, and

become that Light, receive that energy, assimilate that energy, and find our own path, our own way. The Light will not go ahead of us, it will only shine on our path. When somebody says, "Cut out all desires, we reply, "Oh, all right. Finished. All desires are cut out." Then we wonder, "Cut out that desire to live too?" Ah. Why not? What makes you eat now? If you don't desire to live, why do you eat? "All right. We shall not eat, but die." Well, cut out that desire to die. Cut out that desire to stop eating. It can go on.

You can see the puzzle here. This is what called understanding. When we look at a problem, at a solution, at the truth, at a doctrine, at a psychological principle, from only one point of view, we can never understand it. Now, understanding literally means, looking at something from an unusual angle. Standing under. Think of standing under something. Do we do this? No. Look at this problem from as many view-points as you can, and then you might get a comprehensive vision of the truth. Don't jump to conclusions!

What do you mean conclusions? Conclusion can only be a full stop! How can we ever arrive at a conclusion? What is there beyond that conclusion? There is only one conclusion: absorption in the Truth. That is the conclusion. It is prescribed by the Truth, not by me.

There is no conclusion so far am concerned. It is a perpetual experiment, unending experiment with the Truth, to discover the Truth. When I discover the Truth, I am inside it. That is all. So, let us not jump to, conclusions. "Desire is bad ? Oh, I'll have no desires!" You know what you will do? You will only avoid all inconvenient desires, and give the other things holy, holy names.

So, we don't get a comprehensive view of the problem, and that's why we suffer. Desire is bad, ambition is bad - it leads us astray. Have we understood it.? No. Why? Because of the root trouble that the great Truths cannot be defined positively. They can only be alluded to negatively. So that it is perhaps not right to say, "Do not entertain ambition." The Indian philosopher uses the negative approach, "Vairagya." Vairagya is absence of attachment, absence of infatuation, absence of craving. This is the right attitude towards the world: absence of craving, infatuation; absence of a selfish motive. We can only describe it in a negative way.

When I say "Love," you think "Ah, I know, of course I know. It is seen there on the television set, in Hollywood films." But that is not called love, that is called passion, infatuation. "Oh, I see!" you respond. Yet, you see nothing! It has to be defined in an indirect way: absence of all hatred.

These two are your enemies: infatuation or desire - and the opposite: hatred. These are the enemies. Then should we say, "Ah, I shall not hate anybody at all. Om, Om." While a man is murdering some body else, can you say, "No hatred, no retaliation. Om." No, you are a coward! You don't have to hate in order to restrain that murderer from doing what he likes. Why don't you do it? "Oh, no, no, no.

Thou shalt riot hate. Resist not evil." This is called the philosophy of laziness. This fellow has cut out that little bit from the Bible, "Resist not evil," and he has kept it in his pocket. When it is convenient, he will take it out, and show it to you. "See ? Resist not evil. I'll resist not that evil." What if somebody jumped on his throat, and started choking him! Will he say, "Resist not evil. You can have my throat, and take it away?" Oh, no. He will quote some other section of the Bible. His is the philosophy of laziness! We must understand these things.

It is very difficult. Every situation has to be sized up correctly, on the spot, without prejudging. You can't possibly answer this question, "If the hydrogen bomb is dropped over Australia in 2023, what will you do?" It is impossible for me to answer that question. We will have to wait for the situation to arise. We will have to face the problem, because the solution to this problem, any problem, is brought in by the problem itself, on its own shoulders.

You can't have a solution before the problem is there. This is what we are trying all the time. 'Ifs' and 'buts' and 'if this happens' and 'if that happens'. We have already solved all the problems of the world for eternity. Impossible! Absurd! All we can say is, "When the problem comes, I'll deal with it. Enough unto the day is the evil thereof." We must bear in mind the general principles, and apply those general principles to each occasion as it arises. Solve each problem as it knocks at our door.

One of our enemies is attachment, infatuation. The other of our enemies is the opposite, the opposite of infatuation. Why is attachment, or limited love, our enemy? Because it involves disliking somebody else. The moment we use the expression "I like something" at the back of our minds, is the concept, "I don't like what is not this." And therefore, both these lead us away from our Self, astray from our Self, and therefore they are to be avoided. They are our enemies. Why are they our enemies? Because they lead us away from our Self.

Desire is undesirable, and the opposite of desire, dislike, is also undesirable. Hence, again I have an oversimplified formula. Whether you cling or you kick, you come into contact, and that contact is the enemy. Clinging and kicking, both are to be avoided.

You have seen how the Indian salutes. This is what is considered desirable. The two palms of the hands, coming together; the fingers are not interlocked - then you are caught. They are not even half an inch apart. They are just touching one another. They are not involved in each other, they are not apart from each other, they are one, but in a free and independent way, in a free and wonderful spirit. There is no compulsion here. Yet, because there no compulsion, there is no revulsion either. They are together, there is a spirit of togetherness, of unity, and that is love.

This love is something which transcends both the lower form of love, and hatred. The lower form of love and its corollary, hatred, both are our enemies.

Why? Because they lead us away from the centre of our own being. They lead us to continuously changing, ever changing states of becoming.

I become his friend, and, as soon as I become his friend, he tells me, "Don't talk to so-and-so, he is my enemy. So, I become his enemy. This goes on multiplying and multiplying ad infinitum; and our life is a mess. Hence, desire and also its opposite, hatred, are our enemies. One of the greatest of Indian sages, Narada, even goes to the extent of saying, "Turn all these things towards God. If there is love in your heart, if there is passion in your heart, if there infinite desire in your heart, if there is vanity in your heart, turn all this towards God."

I am not very good at drawing, but you can visualise a big circle. Humanity occupies the circumference. Millions of dots on the circumference. God is the centre. Man must reach that centre via his unique Path, the radius. That is the destiny of human life. That is the goal of evolution. You can visualise such a goal. It is again an inspiring, if frightening truth, that this centre is equidistant from every point on the circumference. It doesn't matter if the point is on the upper semi-circle, or the lower semi-circle. There is a saintly, holy man at the top of the circle, and there is an unholy man at the bottom, a thief, dacoit, murderer.

Says Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita,

api chetsuduraachaaro bhajate macmtmananyabhaak saadhureva sa mantavyah samyagvyavasito
hi sah (Gita-IX-30)

Even if the most sinful worships Me, with devotion to none else, he too should indeed be regarded as righteous, for he has rightly resolved.

"Even if you are a supremely wicked man, the most wickedest amongst wicked people, the worst of all sinners, even you are not abandoned by God." It is so simple. Light the lamp of Truth. Light the lamp of understanding, God-realisation, Self-realisation. As we all know, the darkness of the whole world cannot defy the light of a single lighted candle. So that, where is despair? Who is Godforsaken? Where is eternal damnation? Absurd!

To come back to the circle. Each one follows his or her own path. I am not necessarily referring to his or her native religion here, but his or her own path. What is that path? Don't ask me, ask yourself. Whatever be that path, you follow your radius - that is your shortest road to the centre. You can't follow me. It's impossible. The holy man follows his radius to the centre. The terribly unholy man, following his path to the centre, will reach the centre about the same time. If, and a very big 'if' - this is the snag in the whole game - that is, if you are facing the centre. That is the only condition. We are only interested in the direction. Even ambition takes on a value, if it is in the right direction. Even its opposite may have some value, if there is the right direction. We should know what to give up, and we should know what to aspire for.

So that, when we come back to this business of "Don't have any desire," it refers to don't have any selfish desires, any desire which takes you along the wrong

direction away from the centre. Any desire which takes you towards the centre, acts like a catalyst, acts like fire. Fire burns everything else, but it doesn't need some other fire to destroy it. In order to destroy a rubbish heap, you throw some fire, some matchstick on to it. The fire will not be there forever. Don't worry. As soon as this fire has destroyed that rubbish heap, it will burn itself out. Even so, the desire to be good, the desire to be Godly, the desire for Self-realisation, the desire to cultivate understanding and Self-awareness, is like this matchstick. It is there, it need not be abandoned, it should not be abandoned, for it leads to the destruction of all selfish desires. It leads our consciousness in the right direction, and then the desire vanishes. Hatred is something which should be abandoned, for ever and ever. Again, renunciation of worldly pleasures may at one stage appear to be running away, abandoning something. Yet it may be necessary to give the whole life a certain direction.

kaama esha krodha esha rajogunasamudbhavah mahaashano mahaapaapmaa viddhyenamiha
vairinam (Gita III-37)

It is desire, it is the anger born of the quality of Rajas, all-devouring, all-sinful; know this as the foe in this world.

Desire and hatred are the worst of our enemies. They should be abandoned by every seeker after truth. Supposing this man standing on the circumference has his face turned away from the Truth. Then, what happens? Nothing serious. He will go-round the world, and then he will have to come back. For, that Being, that Truth, that Reality, is omnipresent; that Reality alone is real. You can substitute the word God for it, I have no objection; because, whatever is real is God. We are not going to quarrel over terms, over terminology. What is God? Reality is God. You can use the word God, or you can use the word Reality, if you don't want to use either of these words, you can use x y z. That alone being real, the shadow has to vanish some time or other. This non-existent appearance has to go some time or other.

Very often I am rebellious when it comes to confrontation with people who say, "You know, if you don't do this, you will go to hell, and stay there for ever." I reply, "That's quite simple, I'll get used to it!" I have got used to all sorts of things in life; I was born in South India, accustomed to taking hot curry, and all sorts of hot chutney and so on. Then I started to travel, and became accustomed to bland food. Good, I got used to it very soon, with the result that, if I had hot curry, it burned my mouth. People can get used to anything.

There is a funny story told about a man whose feet were dogged by misfortune. Whatever he touched, turned into failure. So, he went to one of those astrologers, fortune tellers, and consulted him. The fortune teller said, "Oh, my friend, you know, for the next seven years it will be like this. More and more misfortune. You will be sunk in misery. But you are only a young man." "Ah," the young man asked, "but afterwards?" "Oh, afterwards, you will get used to it," replied the astrologer.

If these people who come to me with their theories of eternal damnation are a

bit more serious, I ask them, "Look, do you sincerely believe that God is Omnipresent? Yes or No?" "Yes?" "Good, then you say that I will go to Hell and stay there forever. It's all right. God is there too. If God is Omnipresent, even in Hell God exists, doesn't He? Then what is wrong with being in Hell?"

It is this sort of threat and fear that turns people away from religion. What we need is understanding. Even if a man turns away from God, just as a man turning away from light, what will he see? His own shadow. He will get frightened. Perhaps he will walk on his own shadow. He might stumble. He might break his leg. He might break his nose. All right. But he will come back to reality.

It is this great and heartening message that is contained in the Bhagavad Gita. It is said, and the Gita again and again tells us, that all you need to do is turn towards the Light. If you are facing away from the light, you will see the shadow. You don't create that Light, because the Light shines constantly; and forever. All that you need to do is turn toward the light, and your problem is solved.

It is said that Alexander's father had a rather unruly horse in his royal stable. He had asked the best of men to break this horse in. Everybody had failed. The moment somebody mounted on the horse, it kicked him sky high. But the horse was very beautiful, and Alexander's father was still very fond of it. Alexander, then a little boy, was also watching this game, and it is said that one day he went to his father, who was on the verge of despair, and said, "Father, can I try to break in this horse?" And his father said, "Son, so many powerful men have tried and failed, and you, a little boy?" "Yes, if you give me permission, I'll try." And this royal pride wouldn't allow this old man to betray an extraordinary affection for the son, so he said "All right, young fellow, go, try!" It is said that Alexander mounted the horse in less than two minutes. His father was flabbergasted, and asked, "How did you do it?" "Well Father, I saw something. Every one of these men who had attempted to ride this horse, came in the morning, when the horse facing west. And everyone patted the horse on its back and cheeks, and then jumped on. The horse was looking at its own shadow, and when it saw something happened on top of that shadow, it got frightened. I was watching this game, and when I went there, just turned it eastwards, the shadow was behind, so the horse didn't even know what had happened."

This seemed to be a rather silly story. I don't know if it is true or not, but this is all that matters in life. We can't possibly subdue Raga, infatuation, we can't possibly subdue Dwesha, hatred. These two are part of the world complex, called Samsara. All that we need to do, in order to overcome these two dreadful enemies, is to turn towards the Light, towards the centre, towards God. To live all the time aware of the Self. That is called Jnana. Jnana is not book knowledge, Jnana is not intellectual comprehension. Jnana is spiritual understanding, spiritual appreciation, spiritual vision, spiritual wisdom. This spiritual vision dispels the gloom of darkness, which in turn gives birth to all our problems that spring from infatuation and hatred, Raga and Dwesha.

Lecture 8

We have discussed the twin forces that disrupt our life, and tear into pieces the forces of attraction and repulsion. We should bear in mind the fact that they are inherent in creation, and that we cannot rebel against them. Without them, creation will not go on, cannot go on. When I say this, it is not as though we are challenging God's Omnipotence. Oh, no. This is part of God's creation. The twentyfour hours of the day are naturally divided into a certain segment called day-time, a certain segment called night-time. The two together form the day of twentyfour hours. Can God not create a day of only daylight ? Yes, but this is how it is. These twin forces of attraction and repulsion are inherent in the world; in the world of matter, but not in the world of spirit, of spirituality.

These forces operate only in the realm of matter.

indriyasyendriyasyaarthē raagadvēshau vyavasthitau tayornavashamaagachchettau hyasya paripanthinau (Gita III-34)

Attachment and aversion for the objects of the senses abide in the senses; let none come under their sway, for they are his foes, says Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita.

There is a certain affinity between the senses, the body, and the material universe. Some objects are pleasant to the touch. Other objects are not so pleasant to the touch. When I touch one thing, I feel like carrying on a little more; when I touch another thing, I feel like taking my hand away. When you look at something, you feel attracted, tempted to look a little more; you look at something else, you want to turn your head away. Take, for instance, glare. A certain degree of light is tolerated by the optic nerve. Beyond that, it hurts the eye. Physiologically, these things are true. These things are part of creation. If you are longing for Self-realisation, if you want to enter the realm of the Self, then try not to come under their influence.

You will appreciate the grandeur and glory of creation when you reflect on these wonderful truths. This can be used as a meditation technique, in order to become intensely aware of your own inner personality, inner being. Close your eyes, inhale, keep inhaling till you can't inhale any more. Why not? You can take a balloon, keep blowing; it is full, keep blowing, keep blowing, it will burst. Now, let us say, I don't care if my chest bursts. Not that I want to commit suicide, but I don't care. What happens? Suddenly, I can't breathe in any more. I can't inhale any more. Why? There is a thermostat type of thing, a sort of built-in governor, and that thing quietly connects and disconnects. The switch that enables me to inhale deeply is switched off. The other switch that will enable me to exhale is switched on. If, for instance, this command and counter-command were not there, you can appreciate, we would blow up like a balloon, in half a minute. This command and counter-command are inherent in your physical body. You know what happens when you do this? Some muscles contract and become tense, while the others expand and let go. If these twin forces do not operate, you cannot live.

The same twin forces operate to put us to sleep, and wake us up. Funny isn't it? Who puts you to sleep? Perhaps you will say, "Now I am awake, and when I get tired, I lie down and go off to sleep." But when you sleep, who wakes you up? That is a question we never ask ourselves. We have never asked these simple questions. I am tired, and I want to sleep. Very good. You could sleep forever. Who wakes me up tomorrow morning. The same twin forces operate there.

As students of psychology will appreciate, the will to live, and the death wish, are living together in our psychophysical organism, one wanting to destroy, another wanting to perpetuate. That is why we are alive. Otherwise, we won't be alive. It is these twin forces that keep us alive on the physical plane - a very important thing to remember. These twin forces are necessary for the continuance of life on the physical plane. You might say, "Well I am a naturalist. I am going to live absolutely in tune with the laws of nature." Good, you will live for a long time. Well, if you are unable to live absolutely in tune with nature, your body will also begin to disintegrate, although very much slower than mine will. If I live for 60 years, you will live for 600 years. But you will still disintegrate and die. And then, again you will come back into this embodiment and keep going, because this law governs only the physical plane. There is a plane beyond that. That is a spiritual plane. We are not this physical body. I am not this physical body.

I was asked by a friend, "Do you believe in reincarnation?" Now, first of all, I always try to clarify, a question, before answering it. There are some who want to show off, "I not only understand your question, but I have the answer to it, ready made." And so, we come to grief, because you mean something, I mean something else. Instead of that, when a question is asked, please ask that person to explain what the question means. "Please tell me what do you mean by reincarnation? It's a big word."

"Oh, it is that after you die, you are reborn."

I said, "If I am dead, I will not be reborn. If I die, how do you think I will be reborn?"

She replied, "I understand your spirit is alive after death. Even after the body dies, the spirit is still alive."

Now, already she is beginning to get some clarity of vision. The body, once it dies, cannot be reborn. It is absurd. But there is a confusion between the 'I' and the body. And then I asked her again, pointing to her body, "Look, when was this born?" "Fortyfive years ago."

"You were born, this body was born, 45 years ago? Impossible. Your mother must have been a mountain. What was born 45 years ago was a tiny little thing. My question was 'when' was this born?" "

Ah she said, "This was born perhaps last week."

What is this made of? Bread and butter, carrot and cheese. Therefore, what dies? Bread and butter, carrot and cheese. Let it go. Why are you worried? Thus again, this death wish covers only this physical material being. It does not affect your Self at all. Yet, there is a confusion. Who is 'I'? This body?! This is bread and butter, carrot and cheese. This is not "I". The "I" is not involved in the play of the twin forces.

One who wishes to attain Self-realisation, must overcome the twin forces. There are two forces, one dragging us this side, the other dragging us that side. How do we overcome these? A very simple answer - the middle of the road path. The middle path which Lord Buddha advocated. This middle path cannot be defined at all. On this side is Raga, attachment, attraction, infatuation; on that side is Dwesha, anger, hatred, repulsion, dislike. And what is the middle? The middle cannot be defined in positive terms. Therefore, when you are thinking in terms of this infatuation, attraction, you describe it negatively - desirelessness. The opposite to Raga is Vairagya. The opposite of Raga, that's all we can say. The opposite of attraction, the opposite of infatuation. In the heart of a spiritual man, there is no craving, there is no attraction, there is no infatuation. That's all we can say.

When we are thinking of the same middle-of-the-road, in terms of hatred, anger, and dislike, we describe it as absence of these. They only define it as the absence of hatred, the absence of anger, the absence of dislike. They do not define it positively at all. But, for our own enlightenment, to help us understand these concepts, if we should go on defining everything negatively, we won't get a positive help. Hence, great saints and sages, Krishna, the Talmudic sages, Jesus, Buddha, St. Paul, St. Francis, all of them have given one word - love.

I am sometimes terrified to use this word love, because of the obvious misunderstanding of its meaning, brought about by stars. That is not love, and I don't think it is even passion. What we see in films and television dramas, is not love, it is not passion. It's a confusion. We are not talking of that here. Perhaps, in worldly relationships, this love is evident in the love of a mother for her little baby - not even a child, no, not a young one, not son, not daughter. The love or the feeling that a mother has, let us say, for her three months old baby. That is love. All the rest is something else. Because I believe that afterwards even this relationship is polluted by all sorts of other considerations. A son grows up, a daughter grows up, and then you love that son, you love that daughter; not motivelessly, not unselfishly, not non-egotistically, not egolessly, but there is some sort of viciousness which pollutes the relationship. Some selfishness, apparent or hidden, is there. That is the flaw of love which cannot therefore be positively defined as 'this is love'. It can only be said that in the heart of that mother there is not the slightest trace of animosity not hostility towards that being, that little baby. Beyond this, I don't think this pure love exists in this world, except in the heart of the most enlightened person, in one who is very

close to God. Yet, this pure love is God. It is this pure love that transcends these two, the twin forces of attraction and repulsion, love and hatred, as we know them on the physical plane. This spiritual love is above both these, and, therefore, right in the middle.

This middle of the road path is so fine, so subtle, that it is impossible to see it. Here it is that Krishna gives us a wonderful challenge, and that is why this Yoga is called Buddhi Yoga. There is no general rule, there is no definition. You can't definitely say that this is what a holy man will do. He may not do it, he may do just the opposite. You can't define anything. You can't take somebody else's advice. It is no good asking, "Oh, what shall I do?" It is unfortunate, but nobody can answer that question. You have to find the answer yourself.

There is absolutely no guidance from outside. From within the answer must come. You will have to ask yourself from moment to moment, "What does this inner light point to?" Therefore, here in this Yoga, the seeker is ever alert. He can't afford to be non-vigilant even for a moment - else, he is lost. Take for instance the Sirasasana; we can all learn to stand on our head. Very easy. At about twenty minutes is a barrier - your legs become numb, you want to collapse. Cross that barrier, you can go on for a long time, so that it can become a mechanical affair. All forms of Yoga can become mechanical. I can go on breathing, I can see people, I can keep talking while I use my rosary. You can repeat a mantra mechanically. Anything can become mechanical.

Nursing is a wonderful profession, and if it is done with the Bhavana, or the attitude that I shall discuss presently, it can lead to God-realisation. But it can again be done mechanically. I have heard this with horror from the lips of some very nice, very loving nurses, "Ah, my dear, you know there was a death in my ward." It's as though she has a few names on the board, and one name has been wiped out. "Ah, bed number 4 is serious, bed number 5 is not serious. Bed number 4 is critically ill, bed number 6 passed away yesterday." It can become wooden, mechanical, and lose its meaning, lose its spiritual qualities. And, in the same way, the marriage relationship can become mechanical. The husband comes home, with a "Hello darling." You would think they got married only yesterday, perhaps, and hence such intense love and affection; but they may be almost on the verge of divorce!

These things have become common-place words which are not meant. Hypocrisy! I don't want to say hypocritical, because they don't mean to be hypocritical. They use it so automatically, there is not even hypocrisy involved in it. All that is completely un-Yogic. In the case of this Buddhi Yoga, where we are asked to follow the middle path, you have to be constantly vigilant. Am I slipping, on this side or that side? Maybe this, maybe that.

Hence, this Yoga is called Buddhi Yoga, Yoga of Wisdom, Yoga of enlightened Intelligence. That is a very special term used by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita; it is not found in any other scripture in India - Buddhi Yoga. Yoga of enlightened

discrimination. And this enlightened discrimination has to be constantly active in our lives. When that is in full swing, it is then that we have a taste of love.

I remember the story of one of our greatest sages. In prehistoric era, they usually became Swamis in their old age. They had three stages of life. The first stage was the stage of a student. The second was the stage of a householder. As soon as the student had finished, his study under his guru or teacher, he married and led a righteous householder's life. Then, when this gentleman looked at his son, and saw a moustache growing on the son's face, he handed over the reins of the family to him. Otherwise, it leads to frustration. The young man is frustrated and wants to lead his own life. So that, at that time, in ancient days, the couple retired, and led a life of seclusion, slightly isolated from society. Not completely cut off, just a little isolated from society. They were the spiritual teachers. They were called the rishis and the maharishis. The maharishis were married people, still living with their wife. But she was not a wife any more - she was a spiritual companion, or sister.

There was one such wonderful sage, called Yajnavalkya. The story is narrated in the Upanishads. He was a very clever man, a man of direct Self-realisation. It seems to have been the custom in those days that the king, in addition to having other forms of entertainment, also held debates involving spiritual topics. There was a king, called Janaka. He was fabulously rich, and he would have in his courtyard a thousand cows - cows also were valuable in those days - their horns and hooves covered with gold. You can imagine the amount of money that was involved. The king would sit on his throne and announce, "Ladies and gentlemen, there are a thousand cows, all of them with horns and hooves covered in gold. They belong to the wisest man in this assembly. Ministers and judges, find out amongst yourselves who the wisest man is, and to him belongs this wealth." Yajnavalkya seems to have been the winner all the time; and so he had enormous wealth. He had two wives who were living with him. One morning, he called both of them and said, "Look, I think it is time that I dropped even this business of debating and teaching, of looking after you and getting all this wealth. I want to become a sannyasi, a Swami." Swamis, in those days, led a wandering life; they never even went into a house, but stayed on the roadside. No name, no address. Very often, they didn't even talk. Occasionally, they would enlighten somebody.

Yajnavalkya said, "Look, I'm going. I have all this wealth. Both of you are dear to me. I will divide the wealth equally between you two, and take leave of you."

The elder wife said, "All right. If that is your will, farewell."

The younger one said, "Wait a moment. If you want to go, then go. I will not stop you. You said you would give me half your wealth. Thank you very much. I used to sit and listen to your discourses, and you taught your pupils to attain Self-realisation, liberation, freedom. Total freedom. Now, you are giving me a lot of wealth, but if you also indicate where this freedom is sold, I'll go and buy it. I am more interested in that."

This man gave a hearty laugh, and said, "Oh, no, you'll live like a wealthy woman. But, who ever told you that you can attain Self-realisation with the help of wealth?"

Then she said, "All right, if that is the position, let my sister have my share also; but teach me how to attain salvation, liberation, Moksha. That is more important. Self-realisation is more important."

The Upanishad, which gives us this story, is full of wonderful tenderness. It looks as though the holy man who wanted to leave even his wives and go away, suddenly looked at this wife again with great affection, and a spiritual honeymoon started. The rest of the dialogue sounds as though he had fallen in love for the first time.

He said, "Ah come, come. I am delighted with your question. Come, sit down, I'll tell you." From then on, the conversation is so delightful, and he gives us this wonderful truth. Wonderful!

na vaa are patyuh kaamaaya paatih priyo bhavaati aatmanastu kaamaaya paatih priyo bhavaati

na vaa are jaayaayai kaamaaya jaayaa priyaa bhavaati aatmanastu kaamaaya jaayaa priyaa bhavaati (Brihadaraanyaka Upanishad II-4,5)

It is not for the sake of the husband that the husband is dear, but for the sake of the Self.

It is not for the sake of the wife that the wife is dear, but for the sake of the Self.

"My dear, it is not because I am your husband that you love me, but because of the Self." A very great truth. Unless we understand this clearly, no love is possible. Till then, we dare not use that word love. "It is not because I am your husband that you love me, but because I am your Self. It is not because these things are dear to us, valuable to us, that we love them, but because the one Self knits all of us together."

We are all one in that Self. It is only from the purely physical point of view that we are different from one another. It is only from the point of view of our thoughts and ideas, the products of our minds and intellect, that we seem to be different from one another. On the spiritual plane, we are one. It is not that after a time we will become one. We can't become one, unless we are one. It is only the removal of this dirt of "Avidya", ignorance, that is necessary. Once that goes, underneath, or above, we should realise this oneness.

This realisation of this oneness is love. No love is possible between two beings, two personalities. Impossible. Two personalities can't love one another. It is a contract, a business. If you want it that way, wonderful; but please don't use the word love. Don't call it love. It is a partnership. "I'll look after the house, you go and get me the money." This is all a business contract. And the husband says almost the same thing to the wife. "I'll go and work and sweat and toil and earn

the money, but please give me my breakfast at the proper time. Keep the house clean. If you don't do that, well, Ill get a divorce. Till then I'll call you 'my darling', and you'll also call me 'my love'."

This is what goes on. Here it is only a business contract, a business partnership. This is not love. Love is unity. Love is a recognition of that unity, the unity that exists already. This unity cannot be created, need not be created, because it is there.

na vaa are patyuh kaamaaya paatih priyo bhavaati aatmanastu kaamaaya paatih priyo bhavaati

The recognition of this truth is fundamental to this Buddhi Yoga. It is this love that creates. It is this love that sustains. It is this love which, paradoxically enough, even destroys.

This has created a lot of misunderstanding in Western minds, towards Indian philosophy. "How can you say that there is a God who destroys? And you worship that God?" Shiva, a member of the Hindu Trinity, is supposed to be the one who destroys. Or Kali is supposed to be the destroyer. "How can you regard these things as God?" Why not? Destruction is a necessary antecedent to all construction. No construction is possible without a previous destruction. You cannot have a tree, a plant, unless the seed has been destroyed before. You would never have a chicken if you wanted the egg always to be there. Impossible! A certain form of destruction is inevitable, is part of creation.

Now, you may think, "I can kill anybody. I can do what I like. I can eat a dozen chickens tomorrow morning, why not?" But, this cosmic force, this cosmic intelligence, this cosmic consciousness that brings about this destruction, is love, not hatred. It is love, not passion. It is love, not desire. This cosmic energy, Shakti, Maya, Kali, Shiva, or whatever it is you call it, is not motivated in its destructive aspect by hatred or passion. No, not this. But by love, pure love. It is almost impossible to understand this, unless we are humble and receptive to Light. It hurts our sentiments, it hurts our prejudices, to be told that this should happen, that this is good. This truth is very hard to grasp; it is repulsive to uninitiated ears. But, the student of Yoga is able to see His Grace and His Love manifesting itself - when necessary - as pain, destruction, and unpleasant experiences.

I shall tell you a story. It is said that there was a great king in India. He had a minister who was also a very wise man. The wise man was in the king's company almost all the time. They used to go hunting together. One morning, just before going to the forest for the hunting expedition, the king sat down for his breakfast. He had a lovely apple, and he himself took the knife to cut it; and as he did so, he cut off the tip of his finger. "Ah" he cried. The minister, who was sitting in front of him, said, "Don't make such a noise, your Majesty, it's for your own good."

Immediately the king became red with anger and shouted, "How dare you!",

and, suffering from agony, he said to a soldier standing there, "Hey, arrest this man, put him in gaol." The soldier had to obey the king's command, and put the minister in gaol, saying, "Come along, please sir, put your hands together, I'll put on the handcuffs."

This minister was smiling all the time. As he was walking away, he said, "And this is for my good, my king."

The king went alone for hunting. It so happened that there was a gang of bandits in the forest, who had a sort of religious vow which necessitated the sacrificing of a human being. It's just a story, don't take it very seriously. It necessitated a human sacrifice to a deity. They were looking for one, and fortunately or unfortunately, the king came past. They surrounded him saying, "This wonderful man is going to be sacrificed today. The gods will be highly pleased with us. Good, let's kill him."

They gave the king a nice bath, and the priest looked at his little finger and asked, "What is that?" The king said, "This morning, I cut my finger as I was cutting an apple." The priest looked at him in utter disgust, gave him one slap, and told him to get out. "What has been cut by a man is not fit to be offered to God. You are already polluted. Useless. Get out." The king said, "Thank you very much," jumped on his horse, and raced back to his palace.

Half way back he remembered. "The minister was right. If the tip of my finger had not gone, my head would have gone today. This is the one who saved my life." He raced back, opened the prison, embraced the minister, and said, "You were perfectly right. That thing that happened was for my good. And you knew. Ah, you wonderful man. Sorry for putting you in prison. Let us go and have our lunch." Then, half way through, again he suddenly remembered something else and said, "Look, I sent you to prison unjustly. You didn't get cross with me, but said that was for your own good. Now, can you explain that?"

Said the minister, "If you had not locked me up, I would have accompanied you. They would have left you and sacrificed me! So, you put me in prison, and saved my life. Thank you."

Now, this may be a rather amusing and meaningless story, but I think it has a great lesson for us. This is the attitude that 'the true man of God' takes - the person who has his eyes rivetted on the middle of the road path. He sees beyond all destruction and is not afraid of it, not even the destruction of his own body. Death is nothing. It's the most desirable, the most welcome change. People spend lots and lots of money going for a change, from here to England, from here to Fiji. Without the expenditure of a single cent - except the expense someone else incurs for the funeral; but you don't have to spend anything in order to go - you can go for a very great change. Throw away this worn-out useless body here, and get a new one.

vaasaamsi jirnaani yathaa vihaaya navaani grihnaati naroparaani tathaa shariraani
vihaaya jirna nyanyaani samyaati navaani dehi (Gita II-22)

Just as a man casts off worn-out clothes and puts on new ones, so also the embodied Self casts off worn out bodies and enters others which are new.

This consciousness, the Self, this personality, dwells in this body. When the purpose for which this incarnation was assumed, has been finished, well, that is all, we go on to the next one. Just as when my work in Perth is finished, I go on to Singapore. Nothing more dreadful or serious than this. We are worried by this feeling that all destruction is something devilish. It is not the devil that destroys. There is no devil in the world, except in one's own foolish mind.

It is this attitude that is at the base of Buddhi Yoga. The awakening intellect peeps through the veil of ignorance, and perceives that it is this love, supreme love of God, or, love that is God, that keeps this universe, maintains it, and destroys it, when the time is come, when the need is there. Why? Wherefore? We don't know. There is no why or wherefore at all. These questions do not arise. When a husband knows why he loves his wife, he doesn't love her, he loves only the why. When the wife knows why she loves the husband, it is not the husband she loves, she only loves the why.

There is no why in love at all, it is totally blind, because the Light is cosmic. Not blind in the sense of ignorance, but blind because there is a blinding Light of Truth, in front. That is love. And all activity that springs from this love, from this consciousness, is Buddhi Yoga.

Krishna gives us one or two attitudes which, remembered, will lead us to this Buddhi Yoga. It is good to remember again that this is not a general rule. It doesn't help us in our life as sort of commandments to follow rigidly. It only enunciates a principle. This principle has to be born in mind, and applied to each situation. Principle number one. Please remember that it is not you, the "I" that works in this world, but something else. It is not the mirror-reflection that speaks, it is the original that speaks. It is not the mirror-reflection that breathes, it is the original that breathes. The substance breathes, not the image. We know this. A man is made in the image of God - the image does not walk, the image does not function, the image does not breathe, the image does not see - the image does nothing. It's all done by the substance, the original. This is attitude number one, and it is very important. This is true egolessness. True egolessness is, sorry for the grammar, when the 'I' begins to feel "not 'I', but God does this." Not 'I', but God. Not 'I', but the person whose image I am, 'that' does it. Not 'I', but the substance, 'that' is beautiful. This is attitude number one. Nimitta Bhavana, or attitude of an instrument.

As you will immediately see, it is a very imperfect description. It cannot be described. We may throw out some hints here and there, suggestive of the truth, but the truth cannot be defined. Now, if a doctor adopts this attitude, what will he do? Does he feel that he is an instrument in the hands of God? Even that gives him an ependent personality. Does that image say, "Oh, I am an trument in the

hands of that chap who is standing in front of me?" No. Even here we are not going to ascend into this hundred story building all at once. So, in the beginning, we are told: perform your actions as a matter of duty. That is, in other words, don't look for a reward. "It is my duty to do this, so I will do it. What I get out of it is not my business."

Now, that is a very imperfect and insecure attitude, because sooner or later I begin to wonder, even if I don't commit the blunder of demanding, "I am doing my duty, but is she also doing her duty?" Love has gone. It has started to demand, and when love starts to demand, it becomes passion. It is no longer love. So that, this concept of duty is a very imperfect one, however much it may be necessary as a preliminary to go on. Work for work's sake, you have heard. Very beautiful, very good. But then it tends to become mechanical. No good. No. It cannot become mechanical. Can a thing that is motivated by love, become mechanical? Oh, no! It is full, soul-ful, full of love. Love cannot be mechanical in its manifestation.

How to explain this. We can eliminate all the non-loves - it is not duty, it is not working for work's sake. Therefore, they invented this thing called the attitude of an instrument, of an instrument that you use. For instance, this girl is writing. The pen obeys the master hundred per cent. Whatever she wants to write, the pen writes, dutifully, beautifully. The pen doesn't have the egotistic feeling 'I am writing this,' or 'I am not writing this.' If she takes it into her hand, and writes with it, it writes - which is the symbolism behind the musical instrument of which Krishna was fond, the flute. The flute is nothing but a hollow tube, a reed. It is nothing, it is worth not even 10 cents. And yet, when Krishna put this to his lips, "Ah, lovely," from there celestial music would issue. Why? Because it is hollow. It is its hollowness. I would prefer to be called His Hollowness, not His Holiness. The more hollow we are, the better the divine music which flows from us. If there is a little bit of obstruction in the tube, the music is spoilt. Now that is an instrument. It is not an instrument in the sense that it has a distinct individuality, but it is an instrument in the sense of this fountain pen. We are instruments in the hands of God, in the sense that this pen is an instrument in the girl's hands. We are an instrument in the hands of God, in the sense that his flute was a musical instrument in the hands of Krishna. The emptier it is, the better. The more hollow it is, the better, and yet ever willing to radiate music.

In this egolessness, there are two things, which Krishna pointedly refers to in the Gita.

prakriteh kriyamaanaani gunaih karmaani sarvashah ahamkaaravimudhaatmaa kartaahamiti manyate (Gita III-27)

All actions are wrought in all cases by the qualities of Nature only. He whose mind is deluded by egoism thinks "I am the doer".

God's nature does all sorts of things in this world, but foolish man thinks, "Ah, I have done this." We can't even sit and talk here, but for God's grace. It is God's grace that has put this little thing called vocal cord in my throat. It is God who enables me to speak. If there is a pinpoint of an ulcer on that vocal cord, I am

finished. You have no idea how small this vocal cord is. So small it is, and yet it is what enables me to talk. In the same way, a tiny little bone in the middle ear enables you to hear. If something happens to that tiny little bone, you won't hear a thing.

So that, it is God's nature, God's power, God's energy, that functions through us and enables us to live. One who realises this will, be ever thankful to God, from moment to moment. He will not look for a reward, will not ask, "What will you give me if I do this?" - but will thank God for keeping him alive and enabling him to live. That is the attitude of the truly unselfish, egoless Yogi.

The second attitude is even more interesting. Just as not I, but God, works through this personality, in the same way, the service that is rendered, is rendered to God. Not for this body, not to this physical organism, this perishable physical organism, but to God. Anyone who adopts the other attitude, "I have served this man, I have worked wonders, I have saved this man's life" - comes the rather frustrating end. "The operation was successful, but_the patient died." It's frustrating, as is illustrated in the following example.

There was a story in the "Life" magazine about or six years ago, of a man who had been burnt alive when he tried to rescue somebody from a burning house. A team of about forty or fifty nurses and doctors and so on, using a few million dollars worth of medicines and dressings and all the latest gadgets, brought him back to life. Ah, a miracle, a dead man has been brought back to life! What more do you want? Then it seems, so goes the story I read, he fell in love with the nurse who was nursing him back to life, and he married her. The community provided them with a house, and everything that was necessary to rehabilitate them. He had a jeep that he was driving around doing some work. Six months after the miraculous recovery, he was driving his jeep, it skidded on the turn of a hill, turned turtle, the engine burst into flames, and he was incinerated again. It might prove a point in the theory of Karma. What have the doctors, etc., done? They worked a miracle - revived this man, kept him alive for six months, but he died. Everyone dies. What is the purpose of all our service if everyone has to die? - this is the frustration I alluded to.

If we look to the physical personalities of the people whom we serve, we are living in a realm of ignorance. Possessiveness results from this. Attachment results from this. "I serve him, and therefore he belongs to me." When I say he belongs to me, I belong to him, I am tied to him, tied down to him. It's a vicious circle once again, which will keep us forever in bondage. And, therefore, Krishna gives us a delightful picture.

yatah pravrittirbhutaanaam yena sarvamidam tatam svakarmanaa tamabhyarchya siddhim vindati maanavaah (Gita XVIII-46)

He from whom all the beings have evolved, and by whom all this is pervaded - worshipping Him with his own duty, man attains perfection.

He said, "Arjuna, realise this." The world you serve, the human beings or other

beings you serve, are also manifestations of the same God. You are not serving Mr. So-and-So, or Mrs. So-and-So. You are serving the manifestations of God. You are not serving, God serves. God serves his own manifestations.

"Yatah pravrittirbhutoanaam." After all, all these beings have their origin in God, "Yena sarvamidam tatam," and by God are all these beings pervaded. Every cell of our being is filled with the divine presence. The whole universe is filled with it, that is the meaning of the word Omnipresent. The whole universe is pervaded by this divine presence, interpenetrated by this divine presence. I don't serve you, you don't serve me. No one serves anybody else. It is God who serves His own manifestation.

Here I may sound rather crude and ungrateful, uncultured. A simple story is told of a holy man walking along the road. He was knocked down by a charming and wealthy lady driver, who didn't even care to stop and pick him up. She was in a great hurry to attend a party. Just behind her came a lady doctor in her car. When she saw this man lying on the road unconscious, she put him in her car, took him home, nursed him back to consciousness. As soon as this holy man opened his eyes, she bent over him extremely affectionately. She was proud of what she had done. "Oh, what have I done today. Who is there like me in this world?" She looked at him and said, "Are you all right? Can you recognise me? Do you know in whose house you are?" He said, "Hm. You knocked me down, and you brought me back to consciousness." She was shocked, "Oh, no I didn't. Some wretched girl knocked you down." "Oh, I know that, I know that. But the same consciousness is there in her, the same Self is there in her, and the same Self is here. The same divine presence through that girl knocked me down. And the same divine presence through you revived me. It is all God. Everything is God."

"Svakarmanaa tamabhyarchya" A beautiful picture, which I always try to remember and keep in mind. Abhyarchya is worship. You take flowers and offer at the feet of an image of God. This is called archana. Krishna says that you can do this archana, you can do this worship constantly. You don't have to go to a temple, you don't have to go to a room, a puja room or prayer room. Whatever you do - svakarmanaa - there is no right or wrong, no good or bad, no limitations here. What'ever' you do. Close your eyes - you don't even have to close your eyes if you know how to close your eyes from within - take that action, symbolically as it were, to represent a flower, and offer it at the feet of the Omnipresent God.

Where is He?

In the heart of the person whom you serve. Remember it is God whom you serve. Look into the heart of that person, hold up as a flower the action you have performed, and say, "Lord, accept this prayerful offering at your Feet."

"Siddhim vindati maanavah". Doing this, living in this manner, with this attitude, man attains perfection, Self-realisation.

Lecture 9

It is always a very difficult thing to conclude a discussion, because suddenly you realise that there are too many loose ends from the other talks to allow to be tied in a single night's lecture. At the beginning of today's offering, I would like to make it clear that we have done nothing here. If these few talks have brought about just this little inner change, transformation, which would compel us to think, which would compel us to understand, then our being together here for these nine days will not have been in vain. That's all we have tried to achieve. Nothing more, nothing less.

This understanding is possible, only if we are bold enough, courageous enough, to look at a problem, a situation, a question, a fact, a truth, from as many points of view as possible. We are all accustomed to looking at a problem from one point of view, from "my" point of view. That is all that we are normally capable of.

A dog cannot think like a cat, and it is impossible for a cat to appreciate the viewpoint of a rat. To the cat it is just play, but to the rat it may be a different thing. They can't possibly exchange their points of view. This law of bigotry, bias - it is a law of bestial nature, as is the law of cause and effect, or the law of opposite forces, positive and negative, as I said yesterday. Wherever such bias, such bigotry, such bestiality and fanaticism exist, you can rest assured that the animal has not yet been transcended. I hope you will remember this cat and rat business.

You can't punish the cat for not appreciating the misery of the rat. It is impossible. It has not been created with the ability to look at things from the viewpoint of the rat, while the human being is supposed to possess this faculty. The faculty of not stepping into somebody else's shoes, but of looking at a problem from as many points of view as possible. Again, I don't pretend that I can look at a certain problem from his point of view. No. He suggests to me that there is another point of view, and, using my own point of view, I am merely going to shift my position. It is a very difficult thing, it is almost impossible. To put yourself in his shoes is impossible, unnatural, I can't do it. What I can do is this. Instead of merely, doggedly - meaning that you are still not evolved higher than a dog - pursuing my own point of view, I can abandon this dog-nature, and try to walk round this thing, walk round this problem, looking at it from a few other points of view.

That reminds me of a delightful verse in the Bhagavad Gita, in the eleventh chapter, where Krishna had been glorifying God and His Infinite Being, Cosmic Being, saying that God and God alone is the essence of all creation. He began to sound as though he was referring to himself. Arjuna, the disciple, broke down and said, "Your description is wonderful. May I see what that reality looks like?"

It is said that Krishna himself, standing on the field of battle, assumed the Cosmic Form which Arjuna saw, and in glorifying that Form, Arjuna uses a wonderful expression,

namah purastadatha prishthataste namostu to sarvata eva sarva
anantaviryaamitavikramastvam sarvam samaapnoshi tatosi sarvah (Gita XI-40)

Salutations to Thee, from front and behind! Salutations to Thee on every side! O All! Thou infinite in power and prowess, pervadest all; wherefore Thou art all.

He says, "O, Lord, I salute Thee from front, O, Lord, I salute Thee from behind, O, Lord, I salute Thee from every point of the circumference I am capable of treading. I salute Thee from all directions."

This, to me, means just this: God, Thou art Truth, and this Truth is infinite. Forgive my incapacity to grasp Thee with these finite arms. Instead of trying to grasp Thy infinite form with finite arms, let me touch you. To put it in ordinary language: let me touch you; I'll touch your front, I'll touch your back, I'll touch you everywhere. That is what we have been trying to do, and that is what real understanding means.

In human relationship, understanding is a wonderful word, a wonderful concept. We have known what intolerance means. Intolerance, especially in the matter of religion, is something unforgivable. It is the one thing unforgivable. To use God's name, to use the fair name of religion, to practise intolerance, is unforgivable blasphemy and sin. Forget that. Even tolerance is a fairly unhealthy and undesirable trait, an undesirable, unhealthy attitude. A man who tolerates another, has hoisted himself upon a pedestal, looks down on this chap, and says, "Ah, vicious fellow, all right! I'll tolerate you. I am such a good man, that I'll tolerate you." It is better, much better, than intolerance, but still not so good, not quite human.

One day, that man comes down on equal footing with the other fellow, and there is what you call 'love'. What you call love, not the love that I explained yesterday. On an equal footing, "We are friends." The love of friendship, the love of equality, that is called love. Both of them standing on the same pedestal, arms about each other. "I don't tolerate you, but I love you." It's a matter of equality. Understanding is even better, the best of all.

Understanding literally means "standing under." In tolerance, you stood above; in love, you stood shoulder to shoulder; in understanding, you stand under. If you stand under, the other man is always taller than you are, higher than you are, nobler than you are, better than you are, greater than you are. You have the chronic nature of appreciating everybody.

In business and accountancy, appreciation means 'the value goes up.' So that, from the point of view of the man of understanding, from the point of view of the man who stands under, everybody else has an appreciated value. This is the understanding we need in religion, this is the understanding we need in social relationships. This understanding alone can be developed, not the understanding which we pretend to have, "Oh, put yourself in his position." If I put myself in his position, I don't know what I'll do. It is hypothetical nonsense! To put oneself in

somebody else's position is hypothetical nonsense; it is not possible. Real understanding, which is possible, is standing under, and appreciating everything else. Because, ultimately,

ishvarah sarvabhutaanaam hriddesherjuna tishthati bhraamayansa vabhutaanz
yantraarudhaani maayayaa (Gita XVIII-61)

The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna, causing all beings, by His illusive power, to revolve as if mounted on a machine.

"Arjuna, the whole world is pervaded by God, and God alone dwells in the heart of all beings." Beings, not human beings only. It is this divine consciousness emanating divine power that sustains all beings. You are not the only one in the world. The world has not been created for your enjoyment, for your pleasure. If you are realistic enough, you will appreciate this truth. The moment that idea enters into my heart, I have purchased trouble. The very next moment, I realise that I was wrong. You don't have things created for any individual's pleasure, for any individual's happiness. Oh, no. This Cosmic Being, this Cosmic consciousness, dwells in the heart of all beings. Not in this one being, not just in human beings, but in all beings. We have to understand it.

Since all beings are pervaded by His consciousness, by God's consciousness, so long as this idea of "I" persists here, I must bow down. For, as we saw yesterday, it is this ego that stands between us, between me and God-realisation. It is this false idea that 'I am', that the image has got its own independence and individuality, that is the cause of all troubles and miseries. Once this is gone, then there is no trouble, there is no suffering.

The ego can act in two ways, can manifest itself in our life in two ways: firstly,

ahamkaaravimudhaatmaa kartaahamiti manyate (Gita III-27)

He whose mind is deluded by egoism, thinks 'I am the doer'.

The man who is possessed by this egoism, attributes all actions to himself. "I am sitting and talking here. I am sitting and listening. I am doing this, I am doing that." It's wrong. 'You' can do nothing. It is the vocal cord that's speaking. It's the auditory nerve that listens. It is perhaps a little nervous centre somewhere in the body that enables me to move my fingers. If that is paralyzed, I am finished. I have seen this myself. It is a frightening thought. We are only sitting here tonight and sharing these thoughts because of God's energy. Who is sitting there? You? Me? Who is able to see? You? Me? Who is able to hear? You? Me? No. Energy, Cosmic energy, Cosmic Being, Cosmic Prana, Cosmic Consciousness. It is not this "I", but some thing else. This is all we need to know. Not "I", but God. The same ego can come down and meet us on the other side. On the one side, the fool says, "I am doing this." On the other side, the fool says, "I won't do this."

yadahankaaramaashritya na yotsya iti manyase mithyaisha vyavasaayaste prakritistvaam
niyokshyati (Gita XVIII-59)

If, filled with egoism, thou thinkest, "I will not fight", vain is this, thy resolve; Nature will compel thee.

Says Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. "You say, "I won't fight." Who are you to say, "I won't fight?" You say, "I do it." Wrong. You say, "I don't do it." Also wrong. What am I supposed to do? Realise that this "I" is non-existent, that is the point. If you say, "I do it", you are an egotist. And often we pretend or we console ourselves, "All' egotistic action is bad. Oh, I'd rather not do anything." Egotistic action is bad. So that, if someone says to you, "Will you come and give a talk?", and you say "Oh, no, no, no, I don't want to give a talk, I want to be very humble", that means you are such a terrible egotist, that you don't want others to have a chance to criticise you. You have created in your own mind a tremendously big image of yourself. You don't want that image to be destroyed, disturbed, blackened; so, you duck under and say, "Oh, I am such a great man, I wouldn't allow myself to be criticised by you." Break it. Come out in public. Let a hundred people laugh at you.

This side is wrong, that side is also wrong. Look at this teaching. That is why it is called Buddhi Yoga. You must keep your mind alert, your Buddhi alert, your intelligence alert, your consciousness alert, your discriminating faculty alert, and see through. If there is this feeling within, "I do this", cut it out. God does, not "I". Then when this power wants to do, wants to work, let it. Let this power function. Let Cosmic will function through each one of us.

That is the reason why, again to go back to our symbolism, even in these days when all temples and churches are electrified, we always keep that flame, maybe a big oil lamp, maybe only a candle, but we still insist on this naked flame. Because it is only the naked flame that can teach us this wonderful lesson, this delightful lesson.

Earth, water, fire, air, and ether (space) are in you. Earth and water can be felt, can be handled, they resist the touch. Space and air cannot be grasped. You know they are there, but you can't grasp them, you can't see them. Fire, this element in the middle, shares some of the characteristics of the first two and the last two. Like water and earth, fire is visible, fire can be seen. But like air and space, fire cannot be grasped. It can be seen, but not grasped. It is in the middle, the middle path.

Why do we worship the fire? It shows us the middle path. Don't do this, don't do that. And therefore, your actions are going to share part of this and part of that. Part of the left and part of the right. That is why Jesus Christ is in the centre of the Cross. Neither on this wing nor that wing, but the centre.

Look at this fire again. In nature, fire always moves upwards. Keep your consciousness always upwards. Don't go down the ladder of evolution. This is what fire teaches us.

There are a lot of things that fire does. Fire brightens, fire illumines. All these are applicable to spiritual truth. But, apart from all that, what is most important

to our discussion now, is that it seems to be doing nothing. You look at it, it is just a flame. What do you mean 'a flame'? Is there one flame? No. Why? Because it keeps on flowing up. There is tremendous activity within that single flame. If only you can look at it through the electron micro-scope, you may find a ceaseless flow of sparks, ceaseless flow of electrons.

That is, this ceaseless activity seems to be inactive. This infinite diversity appears to be single. Wonderful. This is what the naked flame teaches us. That is the nature of the man who follows the middle of the road path. He is not going to be inactive, that is inertia. He is not going to rush about, making everyone feel what a wonderful man he is, doing wonderful things for the world. No.

Part of this nature, part of that nature. The activity from this side and the quietude from that side. Exactly, again, what Samadhi, or the fourth state, implies.

We have four states of consciousness. The waking and the dreaming. These two can be combined into one. In the waking state, the world is outside, and in the dreaming state, the world inside. The third stage is sleep, deep sleep, where the world does not exist. Even self-consciousness does not exist.

The fourth state is really the middle state. Both in the waking and dreaming states there is consciousness of the world, of diversity. In the deep sleep state, there is unconsciousness and homogeneity, no diversity, but singleness, unity. So, we have diversity plus consciousness on the one hand, and unity plus unconsciousness on the other. The fourth state called Samadhi, shares both these. There is consciousness, taken over from the waking-dreaming, state, and there is homogeneity from the sleep state. When these two get together, you have Samadhi.

This is what this wonderful naked flame that we use in our worship, that we use in our temples, churches and synagogues, teaches seekers like us.

This ego has to go, and its place need not be taken by God - God exists already. When the ego is pushed out, or when the ego is realised as the image of God, there is liberation, freedom. That is freedom. All other freedom is a travesty of freedom. All other freedom is bondage. Political freedom can lead to greater bondage. Personal freedom can be anarchy and chaos. Freedom from family, my parents, my neighbours, society, may become or may lead to immorality. Real freedom is freedom from this ego, from this ego-consciousness. Yoga enables us to achieve this freedom, this basic freedom.

From time immemorial, great saints and sages have struggled to evolve a method. Immediately after a method is invented, we try to make use of it. We surrender ourselves to the method, not to the truth. We want to attain freedom from a certain tyrant, and jump from frying pan into fire, and say, "Why is it that I am not free yet?" Of course we are not free, because we have only exchanged

masters.

Yet, the method is not to blame. We are to blame. Even right from the ancient days there were temples, places of worship, images of God, symbols of God. We want to feel the presence of God; so, we build this temple. We put something there, a stone, an image. Why? So that, in times of distress, we can run there, and kneel down before that symbol. God is here too, but I can't feel it. There, in the temple, I can, perhaps. I have some help. After all, why do I feel despair? Why do I feel insecure? Because I can't feel the omnipresence of God. I somehow feel that my oppressor is ungodly, is anti-God. Suppose all of you start choking me at my throat now. I naturally begin to feel that God does not exist here; otherwise, why does he choke me? So I want to run away. I want to have the feeling that there is one place from which God cannot escape. And that is the temple.

So that, in order to free me, I imprison God! A very delightful way of treating God. I want my freedom, so I put that God into a temple! Even then there is no harm. If I go to the temple and worship God in the proper manner, in the prescribed manner, it is perfectly all right. But sooner or later, the same evils of egoism and possessiveness enter the field of religion, the field of worship. I begin to feel that this is God, and naught else. This is God, and that is not God. A division has come. The evil that you want to avoid, follows you wherever you go. It's a shadow, and you can't escape from your own shadow.

So, right from those days, the Jewish prophet, Moses in the Middle East, the great Maharishis and Buddha in India, said, "Abandon all these props." So long as you lean on something, you will not exercise your own limbs. You will not use your brain if you depend on somebody else for facts and information. Abandon this. But then, in times of distress, you will get shaky, you will be compelled to think. Good. That is why they said, "Thou shalt not worship any graven images." They wanted you to think, to reflect, to meditate. The Buddhists, the Hindus, Jewish people, people all over the world, said, "You are not allowed to worship God as graven image." But, when we are in distress, what are we supposed to do? Someone had a bright idea, "Don't make an image of God. God is something so very great, infinite. But make sure your cheque-book is with you; then, if there is some distress, you can take the next plane and fly out! If somebody starts teasing you, give him ten dollars, he will keep quiet."

What has happened? We have found a substitute for God. The same image, the same image. Somehow it must come, somewhere, and get us. In the East again, and in the West, intellect began to take the place of an image of God. Intellect - not intelligence, not wisdom. Both the Buddhists and the Vedantic philosophers, and also the later Jewish teachers, were such great intellectuals, that they put that up as a prop. Same thing. It's prop again. They have not been able to face the real problem.

The real problem is ego. Knock that down. That is the worst of all props, the basis of all props. Knock that down, and you will get Self-realisation, and you will

be completely free. But then, that's a bit difficult for us. That is what God said to Moses. "I am That I am." Not 'this' I am. 'That' I am. I am 'That'. What do you mean, "I am That?" Find out. Find out what is meant by 'That'. What is 'That'? Everything that is not 'this'. "Ah, you mean this?" No. Because, the moment you use 'this', it is gone. "Ah, you mean that God is unthinkable?" No. Because it has again been grasped by you, "It is this." Not this, That. Keep quiet, keep searching. Courtship is more delightful than wedding. Keep going. Keep it up.

Again and again, we make the same mistake. We knock one idol down, and put another idol in its place. Buddha said, "Throw away all the idols". So, we have the idol Buddha. Very good. He said, "Don't worship, don't worry about a God." So, we say, "All right, we won't worry about any other God. You be our God." We merely change expressions, find synonyms for uncomfortable untruths. Paraphrasing one concept with another concept, and priding ourselves that we have abandoned the old-fashioned concepts.

What are we looking for? We are looking for a state consciousness that expresses this "I am That I am." "Tat Twam Asi." "That Thou Art."

In the Gita, Krishna gives us a description of different Yogas, or paths to the Realisation of that Truth. Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga leading on to Raja Yoga, and Jnana Yoga.

Karma Yoga demands self-sacrificing service.

Bhakti Yoga demands self-surrender to God. "I can't feel God inside; so, let us create a God outside." Even though we feel the presence of God outside in a temple, be sure that you surrender your little self, the Ego. The God that you worship in the temple, in the church, may be your creation; all right, never mind. Having created that God, if you are capable of surrendering this little self completely, it has still achieved its purpose. Why? For the simple reason that God is there in that image also. If God is Omnipresent, you can contact Him, you can touch Him anywhere you like. But then, please remember that that God demands self-surrender. Not worshipping that God. You can't possess the temple. "That temple belongs to me. That God belongs to me. This is my God." No, because then it is finished. gone.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna gives us a delightful concept. I have not heard it in any other scripture, even in India.

mayyaaveshya mano ye maam (Gita XII-2)

Enter your mind in Me.

What do we do? What are we going to do in a few minutes time? We are going to sit down, close our eyes, take a deep breath, and meditate on God seated in the lotus of our heart. This is what we are taught. If we understand the purpose of the method, we can make use of it for some time, and go on from there. But Krishna

uses a delightful expression: don't try to push Me into your heart, push yourself into My heart."

"Enter your mind into me." I hope you will remember this when you sit down to meditate. It is important that not only we should feel God's presence in our heart, but that we should feel our presence in God's Heart . It is true. We are all God. Therefore, in the method that we are adopting now, it is delightful thin to proceed in this manner.

First, visualise the presence of God in any manner you like in your heart. Feel that God is there, Jesus Christ, Buddha, Krishna, whatever you like. Then, still sitting there, feel the Bhavana, the visualisation. Feel that this form expands and fills you. The feeling must be intense, so that, after a few minutes, it is not 'I' sitting there, but Buddha is sitting there, Christ is sitting there, or Krishna is sitting there. If any evil thought arises, it must arise in Christ's mind. It must be Jesus Christ who is thinking the wicked thought. Which is impossible! So it will not arise. Then, once you are able to enter into this state without much effort, let this form expand, fill the whole of Australia, fill the whole earth. So that, if you are meditating upon Christ for instance, you feel Christ extending from Heaven to earth. A huge form; in that hum form, this earth is floating as a little cell. The whole earth is floating as a little cell in His lungs. Delightful form of meditation. Very good. Very effective.

So that Bhakti, which demands self-surrender, allows us to use these forms, in order that we may surrender ourselves to that form, and through that form to the Almighty, to the Omnipresent God.

Raja Yoga demands Self-realisation. You sit down, with closed eyes, open eyes, or what you like. Dive deep within, and come face to face with that Self.

Jnana, or the Path of Wisdom, Self-analysis. Self-analysis leads to self realisation, again. Keep asking the questions, "Who am I?, "Who is I, "What is I?"

But eventually, all these systems are meant to achieve only one purpose, Cosmic Consciousness. The Realisation of the Truth that the "I" is nothing but the mirror image of God. The "I" is not a non-reality; it is not the Reality. It exists, and yet, it does not exist. It exists as an image. That that image is not true; it is the substance that is true. The image exists because of the substance; it has an existence, yet not an absolute existence. Till this great truth is realised, you must keep searching, keep searching.

eshaa braahmi sthithi partha nainaam praapya vimuhyati sthitvaasyaamantakaalepi brahma nirvaanamricchati (Gita II-72)

This is the Brahmic seat, O Arjuna. Attaining this, none is deluded. Being established therein, even at the end of life, one attains to oneness with Brahman.

Some Yogis even go so far as to say that not only important to reach that Realisation, but having reached that, you should not slip from there. Hold on to

it. Because this Karma, which has given birth to this body, the ignorance, which gave rise to the attachment to this body to this body-consciousness, will still persist, even after we are able to touch this Cosmic Consciousness. A moment's non-vigilance might lead to a downfall. You might slip back into the state of ignorance. Somebody sets up an alarm clock; the alarm bell rings, we wake up, "Ah, give me another ten minutes!" Finished! Gone! Back to sleep again. You woke up. Of course you woke up. Nobody can say you didn't wake up. You woke up. Then, because you were non-vigilant for a little while, you slipped back into the deep sleep state again. That might happen to us.

To illustrate that, and as a fitting conclusion, to this study of the Gita, I'll narrate a story of an illustrious saint. You may say it is legendary, because this story occurs in one of our legends, called the Bhagavatam. But most Indians firmly believe that this was a historical personality. And some even go to the extent of saying that India is called Bharat, and has been named after this person, called Bharata. I am not going to explain the significance of part of the story but, if you are alert, you won't miss the lesson.

There was a very great king, called Bharata, in India; he reigned for a long time and, in accordance with the ancient tradition, at a certain period of his life, he said, "All right, I'll crown my son king, and retire into the forest." He went to the forest, built himself a small hut, and engaged himself in austerities, meditation, study of scriptures, and so on.

One day, he had just had his bath, and was about to return to his hut, when he heard the roar of a tiger from behind. A tiger was chasing a deer, and this deer was running very fast. It was a female, big with child, and, out of fear, it tried to jump the stream. The effort was too much, and the child was delivered, and the deer was drowned. The little one fell just on the water's edge. The holy man looked at that, and was filled with compassion. You must not misconstrue the story to mean that compassion is no good. Compassion is good. Attachment is no good. Where does compassion end, and attachment start? How not to confuse attachment for compassion? A very delicate thing to remember.

Moved by pity, he took that little thing, washed it, and after seeing that the mother was dead, took it home, thinking, "It is my duty." Now a sense of duty might often be misleading.

He took it to his cottage, and looked after it. This deer became very dear to him. That is where attachment comes in. Somewhere, somewhere, I don't know. Only vigilance might enable us to understand the meaning of the story. As the deer lived there, and grew old, a bond of friendship grew between them, the master and the pet. It was no longer a deer now; it was a pet.

The time came for the old man to leave his body. The deer knew that the master was about to die; as he was lying on his death bed, the deer looked at him, and started shedding a couple of tears. Bharata looked at the deer, and said, "Oh, I

have been looking after you for such a long-time. Now that I am passing, who will look after you, what will be your fate, I don't know." As he was thinking along these lines, the spirit left him. He reincarnated as a deer in accordance with a wonderful truth.

yam yam vaapi smaranbhaavam tyajat yante kalevaram tam tamevaiti kaunteya sadaa
tadhhaavabhaavitah (Gita VIII-6)

Whosoever at the end leaves the body, thinking of any being, that being only does he go, O Arjuna, because of his constant thought of that being.

"Whatever be the state of your mind at the time that you leave this incarnation, that determines the next one."

So that this wonderful man, who had touched Self-realisation, because he had left the body thinking of a deer, had to reincarnate as a deer. But through the power of his yogic practices in the previous birth, he was aware, even that deer was aware, "I was the great King Bharata, who had attained to great, spiritual evolution in the past birth, but because of a foolish attachment. I fell. So this time I must be careful, otherwise, I will go down and down and down." So the deer had to be extremely cautious with whom it mixed, and so on, and in course of time, the deer died. By force again of the previous human incarnation, the same personality was born as the son of a Brahmin.

Now, right from childhood, is said that the child was aware of both the previous incarnations. "I was a sage. I committed a blunder, and became a deer. Now, this is another chance I have, so I must be very careful." One need not disbelieve such stories, if you know that even now there are terribly precocious children who display an IQ far above what their age and physical growth would warrant; there are quite a number of instances. Even as a young boy, he took no interest in any worldly activities. He pretended and behaved like an animal, an imbecile idiot.

In the Bhagavatam scripture, which I am quoting here, it says that, because this young man had no worries at all, he was quite round and fat. But he wouldn't do a thing that was not rational. That is, he was not inhibiting his actions, but he was not taking a positive interest in worldly activities. Then came a time when even the family was disgusted with him, and they drove him out. "If you can't earn your food, then get out of this house." That was what he was waiting for. He didn't want to take the initiative and go. When they drove him out, he said, "Very good. It is not my fault now," and he went away.

He used to wander about, constantly aware of the Cosmic Being. That was all. That was the only duty he had now. Constant awareness of God. He used to take some alms. In India, the holy men never die of hunger. Even so, he used to be looked after by the community, and he wandered about.

One day, he was wandering in the forest. In those days, there used to be pious dacoits, righteous dacoits. That is, even before stealing or robbing somebody, they would go and pray in a temple! They would pray to this God, "If I am

successful, I shall offer a bull," or something like that. Sometimes even a human being, depending on what sort of a person was going to be the victim that night. If it was just an ordinary man, a fowl would do. If it was somebody very big, a goat. Somebody bigger than that, a bull. If they were going to rob a king, then the highest, a human sacrifice.

Something like that had happened; and just as they were looking for a human being to offer in sacrifice, they saw the man who was walking that way. They caught hold of him. They said, "A lovely human bull. Round and heavy, in the best of health. Lovely."

This Bharata knew he was being taken to be sacrificed. He thought, "All right. If I have to die, all right. If I have to live, also all right. What does it matter. All these things pertain only to the body."

These bandits took this young man to the temple, a Kali temple, put him there, and bathed him nicely. Poor man, he had not had his bath for a number of days, so that when somebody rubbed his back, he must have felt very nice. Again, such was the custom ritual, that they laid a good big plate full of food in front of him. He was hungry, as he had not had any proper food for days; so he ate the whole lot up. These bandits were standinglaughing. "We are going to kill him in a few minutes, and look at the way he eats. Idiot!"

But he was not an idiot. He knew that his throat was going to be cut; but still the food was there, so why not eat? Simple logic. He finished eating, then they grabbed him, offered some prayers, and lifted the sword.

You must now visualise the whole altar. It looks like Abraham's sacrifice. There is the image of Kali, and here sits the holy man, Bharata. The priest raises the knife to chop off this holy man's head. It is said that Kali actually came out of that image, caught hold of the sword, and chopped off the priest's head. A man had to be sacrificed. Better the priest. Why this holy man?

When this happened, the dacoits ran away, and this man was sitting still meditating upon the Supreme Being, knowing that the moment the head fell, he would attain liberation. But nothing happened, and he was perplexed. He looked up, he saw the priest lying dead, and Kali dancing. He thought: "All right, all right, if I have to live for some time, also all right. If death comes now, all right, if death comes fifteen years later, also all right. What wrong? God's will had to be fulfilled." And that's the motto of the story, perhaps.

There was something more to be done. Again he was walking, singing, dancing, constantly sustaining awareness of the Self. Through that forest, a king was being taken on his palanquin. The king also was a seeker, a very good man, but still a king. He was going in search of a Guru, a holy man to teach him. Four hefty palanquin-bearers had been employed to carry this palanquin, and they had to keep moving. If one man wanted rest, he had to find a substitute for his job. If he

saw someone walking along the road, he would ask him to carry the palanquin while he took rest.

The fellow in front was fatigued. Just then, Bharata was walking that way, and was called by the tired bearer. He went. No reasoning, no botheration here. All natural activity. Somebody calls, "Take this and carry it." So he did. That again, is egoless action, non-volitional activity, extremely difficult to even grasp. There is neither a longing nor a rejection. But, as he was carrying this palanquin like a porter, this holy man was careful no to trample under foot any living being, because that would be volitional activity, avoidable killing of any living being, which might involve Karma. So he was walking along carrying this palanquin, and if he saw some ants, he would stop. When he stopped, nobody could move, so the palanquin stopped. If he saw an army of ants marching along, he would leap over them; and so, all the bearers would have to leap.

You can visualise that the king sitting inside the palanquin had a very rough ride. Every time the palanquin jerked, he would be thrown round inside, and the royal head began to ache. He shouted, "Hey, behave yourself. The bearers said that it was not their fault, it was the new man who seemed to be a bit temperamental. So the king said, "Hey, if you don't behave yourself, I will kick you." The king was a good man; but still he was a king, with a royal prerogative to kick all underdogs. As soon as the king said that, a complete hand-brake was applied. The palanquin came to a full stop. This wonderful Bharata started speaking, "O king, you say, "I will kick you". Do you understand, who will kick whom? Who am I? Who are you? And what this business of kicking?"

As soon as he heard these words, the king jumped down from there. Nobody except a great sage could express such thoughts, "Who are you, who am I. Who is going to kick whom?"

Supposing somebody turns round, "Ah, I'll kick you." Would you answer in this manner? No, you would also feel, would you not, "You kick me? I'll kick you now."

But here, a very philosophical enquiry has started. The king instinctively knew that this was a holy man. He jumped down from the palanquin, caught hold of this man's feet, and said, "Please, sir, who are you? And why are you carrying this palanquin here?"

Then, in the Bhagavatam, comes one of the most inspiring sections. This was Bharata's mission, which had remained to be fulfilled. The enlightenment of the king. It had to be done, that was God's will; and so he was saved from the bandits, dacoits. Then he enlightened the king on the nature of the Self. This is Freedom.

This is Freedom. Freedom from egoism, freedom from vain activity. Vain activity does not mean useless activity. Vain activities have come to mean activities that don't bring money to us, glory to us. Vain activity means activity

that increases egoism. That is vain activity.

Total freedom is what we seek. But before we can achieve this state of freedom, we must find out who is it that asks for this freedom. "I want to be free. I want to attain peace of mind, I want to be happy all, the time."

What do we mean by, 'I want to be happy, I want total freedom from all possibilities of misery.' Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita:

tam vidyaadduhkhasamyogaviyogam yogasamjnitam (Gita VI-23)

Let that be known by the name of Yoga, the severance from union with pain.

What is Yoga? Yoga is the cutting of the possibility of contact with pain. Even the possibilities must go. "I want freedom." Freedom from even the possibility of a suffering, possibility of unhappiness, possibility of restlessness, possibility of insecurity. "I want freedom." But who is this 'I' who wants this freedom? I must know, first of all, who it is that aspires for this freedom. "I want to be free. What is this 'I'?"

The next question. What is the nature of this bondage? If I don't know the nature of this bondage, how am I to attain that freedom? Now, if I am locked in here, I must know that this is a wooden door, that is a certain type of lock, this wall is made of bricks, the windows are of glass. If I know the nature of the bondage, of the prison house, I can escape from it. But if I don't know - I may have been asleep, and someone may have put a cardboard wall around me, painted like rock, like in some modern houses, and I might sit there, crying, "Oh, I am finished!" I am not finished. Why? All I have to do is to touch that wall and find it is cardboard; one kick and it goes.

Again, who has bound me? By what am I bound? Does the bondage spring from me or from an external agency? If it is a bondage created by an external agency, I must go to it and say, "Please release me." If it is a bondage that I have created myself. I must wake up and disillusion myself, I must wake up and disillusion myself.

We are part of the cosmic energy, we can't escape. Cosmic energy has no death. While we are still engaged in activity as part off this wolrd dream, as part of this play of cosmic consciousness, as part of the manifestation of cosmic energy, while we are part of this game, we must ask ourselves the third question. Freedom to do what? Freedom from what? To do what? Freedom is not is not merely from external authority. I may escape from certain external authority; "I don't want to obey him." All right, you don't want to obey him. Then, what do you want to obey? You want to obey your own egoism. You want to obey your own vain desires. No. You are creating another bondage; a more powerful bondage perhaps.

Now, therefore, we must analyse these three questions:

1. Who asks for this freedom?
2. Freedom from what?
- 3, To do what - to be what?

This is discussed in such great elaboration by Bharata. And that is what is taught by the Gita. The teachings are all the same. The situations differ, the idioms differ, the language differs; but the basic teaching is the same. Towards the end of his teachings, this Bharata says, "O Raja, O King, I have told you what the Truth is. You nod your head and pretend that you have understood. But no. It is beyond the grasp of common being. It will come into your grasp, you will be able to comprehend it, you will be able to understand it only when you bathe yourself with the dust of the feet of the holy ones, when you go and surrender yourself to a master, to a Guru, and learn the truth directly from him. Humble yourself, be humble, surrender yourself to a Guru, and get the Truth transmitted from him. It is only then that it becomes clear."

That is the story of Bharata.

Now, coming back to the Bhagavad Gita, this total self-surrender is the note with which Krishna closes his teaching.

sarvadharmaanparityajya maamekam sharanam vraja aham tvaa sarvapaapebhyo mokshayishyaami inaa shuchah (Gita XVIII-66)

Abandoning all duties, take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate thee from all sins; grieve not.

"Arjuna, don't fear. Surrender your ego. The ego which says, "I will not fight." The ego which says, "I fight." Surrender this. Surrender yourself to Me. To God. I will liberate you."

Liberation is not attained by us. It is God's gift. Liberation is God's gift. But surrender is our duty.

After having said this, Krishna goes back to the first theme, The Law of the Genesis. He says, "Look, I have told you what I consider is the Truth.

vimrishyaitadaseshena yathecchasi tathaa kuru (Gita XVIII-63)

Having reflected over it fully, then act as thou wishest.

"Think over this, and do what you like." This the basic freedom that God has given us. We are not compelled to do this. We are not compelled to be good. We are not even compelled to do good; it is up to you, each one. As Adam and Eve were given the freedom to do as they liked, you and I have also the same freedom to do what we like. But we have the freedom to choose what is right. Arjuna, realising this, says,

nashto mohah smritirlabdhaa tvatprasaadaanmayaachyuta sthitosmi gatasandehah karishye vachanam tova (Gita XVIII-73)

Destroyed is my delusion as I have gained my memory (knowledge) through

Thy grace, O Krishna. I am firm, my doubts are gone. I will act according to Thy word.

"Now, by your teaching, my delusion is gone. I will do Thy will." These were probably the very last words of Jesus Christ also. "Thy will be done. Not mine, but Thy will be done." That is the key to the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita.

Om

In the spirit of the Bhagavad Gita, I offer this service as a flower of worship of the Lord who is seated in your heart.