Welcome to an Elementary Course on The Science of Self Realization

The Essence of Bhagavad Gita
Contents

• Introduction - The Search for Happiness.
• Does God exist? What is Scripture?
• Who is God?
• Who am I? The Science of the Soul.
• Why bad things happen to good people.
  - The Law of Karma
• The Science of Yoga and the topmost yoga system.
• Practical application of the Bhagavad Gita.
The Importance of Human Life

Difference between a human being and an animal

Common :- Eating
- Sleeping
- Mating
- Defending

Differences :- Higher intelligence
- Discrimination
- Inquiry into
  * the cause of suffering.
  * the destination of life.
The Real Problems of Life

* Birth
* Old age
* Disease
* Death

Miseries caused by -

* one’s own body and mind
* other living entities
* natural disturbances
Is material advancement the solution to the real problems of life?

• Modern technological advancement give
  - temporary relief
  - no permanent solution

• Modern solutions only give rise to other problems!
• False promises of happiness…….
  - The most famous and opulent people are the most miserable and lonely ones.

• Sense gratification is NOT the source of happiness

  e.g.

  | eyes   | - | moth |
  | ears   | - | deer |
  | nose   | - | musk deer |
  | tongue | - | fish |
  | touch  | - | elephant |
The Goal of Human Life

To inquire about -

* A permanent solution to the REAL problems of life.
* Permanent relief from all miseries.
* An eternal life of BLISS, PEACE and HAPPINESS.

Therefore inquire about -

* the root cause of all causes.
* the source of everything.
Does GOD exist?

Is Scripture the WORD of GOD?
Does GOD exist?
Proof of the existence of GOD

• For every urge there is fulfillment in nature.

• Creation implies a CREATOR.

• Laws imply a LAW MAKER.
Definition of GOD
HE MAA!

HE MAA!
Definition of GOD

• Ultimate source of everything.

• Supreme Controller.

• Supreme Proprietor.

• Supreme Enjoier.
Three ways of acquiring knowledge

Knowledge acquired could be based on -

- Sense perception: Pratyaksha praman
- Inference: Anuman praman
Three ways of acquiring knowledge

Knowledge acquired could be based on -

- Sense perception: Pratyaksha praman
- Inference: Anuman praman
- Word of authority: Shabda praman
As it comes from the perfect source......
Vedic Knowledge is infallible

Proof:
* Bhugol has saptadvip
* Cow dung
* Human embryology
Some astonishing predictions

• Buddha - S.B. 1:3:24
• Chaitanya Mahaprabhu - S.B. 11:5:32
• Chanakya - M.B 127:92:75
• Chandragupta Maurya and King Ashoka - S.B. 12:1:11
• Jesus Christ - Bhavisya Puran
• Mohammed - Bhavisya Puran
• Kali Yuga - Atharva Veda
• Veda : Original and infallible knowledge

• Sruti : received by hearing

• Apaurusheya : not made by humans

• Scripture is compared to an Instruction Manual
Why different Scriptures?

• Different scriptures are meant for different audience and are revealed according to time, place and circumstance.

• The essence is always the same
  e.g. - Different dictionaries.

  - Explanation of an expert physician.
Important Scriptures for Kali Yuga

• Bhagavad Gita

• Srimad Bhagavatam
Day 3
• No one equal to or above him.  
  *(Mattah parataram…BG 7.7)*

• Source of everything.  
  *(Aham sarvasya prabhavo…BG 10.8)*

• He is Bhagavan - all opulent.  
  *(Ete camsah kalah…SB 1.3.28)*

• Supreme proprietor, controller, enjoyer and well wisher.  
  *(Bhoktaram…BG 5.29)*
• Krishna is a person. Impersonal brahmajyoti is His bodily effulgence.

(Brahmano hi...BG 14.27, Avajananti mam...BG 9.11)

• Krishna and the demigods.

(Na me viduh...BG 10.2, Istan Bhogan...BG 3.12)

• Vishnu is an avatar of Krishna.

(Vishnus tu trini...Sattrata Tantra)

• Krishna can never be immoral.
Demigods
• Many
• Parts and parcel.
• Always worship the supreme, as obedient servants.
• Created by the supreme.
• Exist within material nature.

God
• One
• Supreme whole.
• Supremely worshipable.
• Supreme Creator.
• Beyond material creation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demigods</th>
<th>God</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Delegated with various grades of power to manage the affairs of the universe.</td>
<td>• Supreme controller.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Subordinate to the will of the supreme.</td>
<td>• Supremely independent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have material bodies, hence, subject to birth, old age, disease and death.</td>
<td>• Completely spiritual body, no birth, old age, disease and death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demigods</td>
<td>Gods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Come under the influence of the three material modes to different extents.</td>
<td>• Completely beyond the influence of the three material modes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Temporary posts.</td>
<td>• Eternally the same supreme lord.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Worship of

**DEMIGODS**

- Less intelligent.
  
  *(Antavat...alpa edhasam...BG 7.23).*

- Benefits material and temporary.
  
  *(Antavat...alpa medhasam...BG 7.23).*

- Cannot award benediction without the sanction of the lord
  
  *(Sa taya ...BG 7.22).*

**SUPREME LORD**

- Broad intelligence
  
  *(Akamah...udara dhih...SB).*

- Benefits eternal
  
  *(Nehabhikrama.... Bhagavad-Gita 2.40).*

- All benedictions bestowed by him alone.
Worship of

DEMIGODS

- Destination - abode of the demigods (fallible) *(Yanti...BG 9.25).*
- Improper way *(Ye pi anya devta...BG 9.23).*

SUPREME LORD

- Destination - abode of the supreme lord (infallible) *(Avyaktoshara...BG 8.21).*
- Proper way *(Sarva dharman...BG 18.66, yatha taror mula).*
Worship of

DEMIGODS

• Cannot award supreme liberation.
• Gives one what he wants.
• Material

SUPREME LORD

• Only he can award the supreme liberation (Mukti pradata Sarva arman...BG 18.66).
• Gives one what he needs.
• Devotional service to the supreme is completely spiritual.
Day 4
Who am I

My Real Identity is
Not this TEMPORARY BODY, but...
The ETERNAL SOUL!!!
Proof for the existence of the soul

- Common sense.
- Intuitive understanding.
- Consciousness - the symptom of existence of the soul.
- Near Death Experiences (NDEs).
- Past - life memories.
- Astral body travel.
The soul is:

* indestructible
* individual
* sat - cit - ananda
* situated in the region of the heart
* changes bodies
* infinitesimally small
* inconceivable
Matter is formless

The soul gives form to matter

Gross Body
- Earth
- Water
- Fire
- Air
- Ether

Subtle Body
- Mind
- Intelligence
- False Ego
Is man just a powerful computer or a robot?

- Machines are designed and programmed by humans.

- Humans have an independent consciousness (comparison between a camera and a panel of judges watching a drama).
Am I GOD?

We are :

* not GODS
* GOD’s
* can never become GOD
Soul and Supersoul

**Soul**
- Humans (*Jivatmas*)
- Infinitesimal (*anu*)
- Cognizant of one’s body.
- A loving servitor

**Supersoul**
- GOD (*paramatma*)
- Infinite (*vibhu*)
- Cognizant of everyone and everything.
- Eternally a loving master.

We are one in quality with GOD, but different in quantity. Our Salvation depends on the acceptance of this reality.
Day 5
Why do BAD things happen to GOOD people?
The five topics discussed in the Bhagavad Gita

* Ishvara - GOD
* Jiva - Living Entity
* Prakriti - Material Nature
* Kala - Time
* Karma - Activity
Prakrti (Material World)

• One fourth of the creation of the lord.
• Compared to a prison house. A facility given to the rebellious souls an opportunity to reform.
• Provides the soul with a body in the eighty-four lakh species of life.
• Binds the soul with the three modes.
The Three Modes of Material Nature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SATTVA GUNA (Goodness)</th>
<th>RAJO GUNA (Passion)</th>
<th>TAMO GUNA (Ignorance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Knowledge</td>
<td>• Unlimited desires</td>
<td>• Madness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Free from sins</td>
<td>• Fruitive activity</td>
<td>• Laziness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conditioned by the sense of happiness</td>
<td>• Attraction between man woman</td>
<td>• Sleep and intoxication</td>
</tr>
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</table>

All living beings in the material world are conditioned by the three worlds.
• The soul being conditioned, acts according to the mode of nature it comes in contact with.
• We seek happiness on the material platform, according to our conditioning.
• We are forced to helplessly act according to the impulses born of the modes of nature.
• Impure desires born of the three modes pervert our pure spiritual nature.
• Thus, the soul is forced to take birth again and again in this material world.
KALA (Time)

• Time is :
  * Krishna’s energy.
  * The most powerful force in the material world and is the ultimate among killers.
  * Is the cause of all transformation in prakṛti.
    - Cycle of Universe.
    - Six Transformations.
Karma (Activity)

**Definition:**
Activities performed by the living entity conditioned by the three modes, under the control and purview of time.

**The Law of Karma:**
For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

We are accountable for everything we think, speak and do. Therefore we must be aware of the consequences of the activities we perform.
Preliminary Knowledge of the Law of Karma

• “Good Karma” - Pious activity.

• “Bad Karma” - Sinful activity.

* The four pillars of sinful life.

* Concession given does not mean a free license to engage in sinful activities.

• Applicable only to the human species.

• Instant and delayed karma.
• Individual and collective Karma.
• Ignorance of the Law is no excuse to escape reaction.
• If everything is predestined, then why work?
• Good and Bad Karma do not cancel each other.
• Good and Bad Karma are both binding.
• To escape reaction Akarma must be performed.
Life is a Preparation -

Death is the Examination
## Different types of Karma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karma</td>
<td>As Per Scriptural directions -- pious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vikarma</td>
<td>Against scriptural directions -- sinful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akarma</td>
<td>For which one dose not suffer any reaction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Day 6
The Science of Yoga
and
The Topmost Yoga System
Lord Krishna says, “...one must become a yogi”

(BG ...6.46)
Yoga : What it is not!

• Mere physical exercises for
  - a shapely body.
  - good health and increased sense gratification.
  - increased life - span.

• Emaciated renunciate in meditation.

• Person with mystic powers.
Yoga: What it actually is!

• “UNION” in love between
  - individual and Supreme Consciousness.
  or
  - Living entity and God.

• *Yogi* is a person whose life and activities are oriented towards re-establishing his relationship with God.
Different Types of Yogas

- Human Beings
  - Law Abiders
    - Karma
      - Sakama
      - Karma
  - Law Breakers
    - Jnana
    - Astanga
    - Bhakti
Hard - working Materialists

- Sophisticated animals.
- Conditioned to the bodily concept of life - “who is crazy”.
- Don’t believe in soul, rebirth, GOD and the spiritual world.
- Don’t discriminate between sinful and pious activity. e.g. Charvak Philosophy
- Make futile attempts at being controller and enjoyer. “Prakrteh kriyamanani…” BG…3.27
  “Moghasa Mogha…” BG…3.12
Sakama Karma (Karma Kanda)

• Follow the scripture and have some idea of the soul, rebirth and GOD, without clear understanding.
• Perform pious activity with fruitive intent
• Don’t know that Good and Bad karma are equally binding.

• Forget the supreme goal of life i.e. attaining eternal pleasure. (“Nayam deho…” BG…5.5.1)
  e.g. Indra as a pig

• It is meant for gradual upliftment, not an end in itself.
Yoga according to the Bhagavad Gita

- The Bhagavad Gita describes four types of Yoga:
  Karma Yoga - A process whereby one performs his work for God.
  Jnana Yoga - A process of elevation to spiritual consciousness through cultivation of philosophical knowledge.
  Astanga Yoga - Mechanical meditation practice meant to control the mind and the senses to help focus one’s concentration on the supreme.
  Bhakti Yoga - The yoga of selfless, ecstatic, love of God through transcendental devotional service.
Karma Yoga - The art of working without entanglement

- Offer results to Vishnu / Krishna.
- Always be aware of one’s constitutional position.
- Work without -
  - any desire for fruits.
  - a feeling of proprietorship.
  - laziness.
Jnana Yoga

• Impersonal transcendentalist.
• Engaged in speculative knowledge.
• Troublesome path.
• Promoted to Bhakti Yoga through the association of a pure devotee.
Astanga Yoga

• Mechanical, meditative process for controlling mind and senses, for focusing on the supreme.

• Strict rules and regulations.

• Inherent danger of falling into the trap of eight Siddhis.

• Nearly impossible to perform in the age of Kali.
Bhakti Yoga

• The easiest means to revive our dormant, inherent constitutional position.
• Includes three terms - servitor, served and service.
• Nine processes of devotional service.
• Culmination of all Yogas.
• Attained through two ways:
  - Gradual
  - Direct
The ladder of spiritual development

Step 0: Fruitive worker, performing rituals for elevation to heavenly planets, regulated sense gratification in accordance with scriptures. **KARMA KANDA**

Step 1: Renouncing fruits of one’s labour. **KARMA YOGA / NISHKAMA KARMA**

Step 2: Renouncing fruits + speculative knowledge about Brahman + austerity. **JNANA YOGA**

Step 3: Renouncing fruits + knowledge + control of mind and senses by the eight-fold path + meditation on paramatma / supersoul in the heart. **ASHTANGA YOGA**

Step 4: Loving devotional service to the Supreme Lord, KRISHNA. **BHAKTI YOGA**
Day 7
Jnana - Theoretical knowledge and Vijnana - Realized knowledge
Qualifications of a bona fide spiritual master

• He must -
  * come in proper “parampara”.
  * have realized the conclusions of the scriptures by deliberations.
  * be fixed in devotional service of the Lord.
  * Have controlled senses.
  * be an “acharya” (teaching by personal example).
Temple: an institution of higher education
The purpose of a temple

- Teaching the importance of:
  * Association of devotees.
  * Dangers of materialistic association.
  * Accepting the guidance of a Guru.
How can one be Krishna Conscious in family life?

- The four regulative principles.
- Moral and spiritual honesty and charity.
- Dovetail your occupation in devotional service.
Making your home a temple

• Offering food.

• Offering arati.

• Inviting the family to participate.
Sadhana

- Japa
- Reading of scripture
- Hearing from advanced devotees
- How to chant in Kirtan as taught by Lord Chaitanya
- Regularly visiting the temple
Hare Krishna,
Hare Krishna,
Krishna Krishna,
Hare Krishna,
Hare Rama,
Hare Rama,
Hare Rama,
Hare Rama,
Hare Hare Hare......