

# BHAGAVAD GITA – THE TIMELESS SCIENCE

## Section 1

### 1.1 Setting the Scene for the Course: Why should I study The Bhagavad Gita?

#### 1.1.1 Bhagavad Gita - The Timeless Science

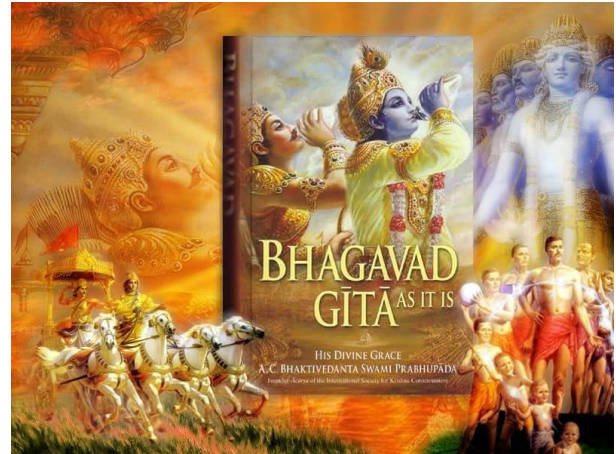
Bhagavad Gita is the most quintessential literature among all Vedic compositions. This composition as compiled by the great sage Vyasadeva has been endearing to all those who seek Truth, who look for perfection, who are interested in a complete science of everything irrespective of caste, creed, religion and nationality. This holy book presents the science of life, as it is, which was originally spoken to Arjun by Lord Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the battlefield of Mahabharata approximately 5000 years ago.

Through the ages, Srimad Bhagavad Gita has inspired and guided hosts of philosophers and scientists. Its influence is not limited to India. There is not a single language in the world in which Bhagavad Gita has not been translated. Just like the Quran and Bible are known all over the world, Bhagavad Gita is also known and respected in the entire world.

Bhagavad Gita is not the science of a particular community - it is the universal science of the soul. It is a science that compels us to embrace divinity and divine qualities. All other bodies of knowledge are subject to change but this body of knowledge contained in Bhagavad Gita is timeless - eternal.

If a big reservoir of water is within one's reach, then where is the need to go looking for a well in order to quench thirst? Bhagavad Gita is

exactly like a big reservoir of water that explains the essence of all Vedic literature and indeed there is no need to resort to any other literature in order to understand the science of



self-realization.

- *Whom is Bhagavad Gita endearing to?*
- *In how many languages has Bhagavad Gita been translated?*
- *Why is Bhagavad Gita timeless?*
- *Give an analogy to compare Bhagavad Gita with other Vedic literature.*

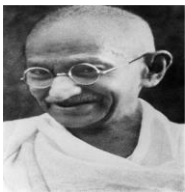
#### 1.1.2 Bhagavad Gita - The Torch-light of Wisdom

Arjuna in the battlefield got confused about his duty. Like Arjuna, we are all confused about our duty. This world is a battlefield. It requires great humility to ask perfect questions. Arjuna had that humility and thus he surrendered to Lord Krishna - the Absolute Truth, to get his confusion removed. Similarly we should also surrender to Lord Krishna while seeking His guidance. Lord Krishna's instructions are compiled in Bhagavad Gita to guide us through the ups and downs of life.

Bhagavad Gita is meant for those who wish to transcend all confusion. It seems that Krishna spoke to Arjuna so it is meant only for him but that is not true. It is meant for everybody.

When you are confused in your search for truth, then the removal of that kind of confusion will bring enlightenment to one and all. Let's see what some of the great historical personalities have said about Bhagavad Gita.

- *What quality is needed to ask perfect questions?*
- *How did Arjuna remove his confusion?*
- *Bhagavad Gita is a conversation between Krishna and Arjuna, why should I read it?*

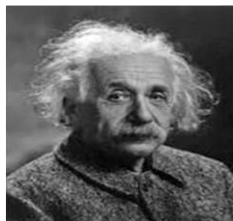


"When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and I see not one ray of hope on the horizon, I turn to Bhagavad-gita and find a

verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. Those who meditate on the Gita will derive fresh joy and new meanings from it every day."  
-- Mahatma Gandhi

"When I read the Bhagavad-Gita and reflect about how God created this universe everything else seems so superfluous."

-- Albert Einstein



"Gita is the most systematic statement of spiritual evolution of endowing value to mankind. It is one of the most clear and

comprehensive summaries of perennial philosophy ever revealed; hence its enduring value is subject not only to India but to all of humanity."

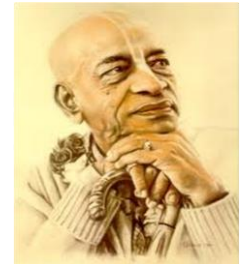
-- Aldous Huxley



"The marvel of the Bhagavad-Gita is its truly beautiful revelation of life's wisdom which enables philosophy to blossom into religion." --

Herman Hesse, the author of the book 'Siddhartha'

In this course we will follow the textbook 'Bhagavad Gita-As It Is' by HDG A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the Founder Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), popularly known as the Hare Krishna Movement.



om ajñāna-timirāndhasya  
jñānāñjana-śalākayā  
chakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena  
tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ

**Translation:** I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torchlight of knowledge.

### 1.1.3 Does Scientific Knowledge make me Humble?

The Solar system has been a great source of inspiration for early scientists in the modern context.

The astronomical data recorded by Tycho Brahe lead to the discovery of laws of planetary motion by Johannes Kepler. Subsequently Newton's Universal law of gravitation captured the essence of it.

"The most beautiful system of the sun, planets and comets could only proceed from the counsel



and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being.”

-- Sir Issac Newton

These scientific laws may not make much sense to ordinary populace, however, everybody can appreciate the fact that every object (planets) in the solar system appears to be floating in space. For example, the planet Earth is like a sphere and it is spinning around her axis. If you think deeply, you will realize that all of us are actually hanging - our heads being downward and legs upward. Everything is hanging under some force. Ocean water is hanging but it is not spilling out. This observation led Newton to coin the concept of the gravitational force by which the objects near the surface of the Earth are drawn towards the Earth. Irrespective of Newton's



law of gravitation or Einstein's theory of space-time curvature, every great planet of this solar system has been perfectly situated from the time of creation. In this sense, God's law of gravitation still remains a mystery.

## 1.2 Solar System and My Tiny Existence

The radius of the Earth itself is 6371 km. The distance between Earth and Sun is approximately 150 million km. The radius of the Sun is 695500 km. The city where you are sitting is just a tiny part of this universe. In that tiny city, you live in a very small house.

Although you claim that you are the owner of that house, the place is cohabited by numerous other living entities mostly unnoticed by you. There are lizards, mosquitoes and many other insects and microscopic germs etc. which have forcefully occupied some of your space as well. If you count them they will surely exceed the number of residents in your town. They are also as important as you think of yourself, from their perspectives.

Such introspection about your identity in this gigantic solar system will naturally make you humble. In natural humility, one starts asking thought provoking questions. These questions may resemble some of those stated below:

- What is the purpose of this creation?
- Why is the solar system organized the way it is?
- Why are there so many varieties of life-forms?
- What is the purpose of my own existence?
- What is my identity?

Numerous such questions may arise. When one starts contemplating, introspecting and questioning in this way, **the search for Truth begins.**

Human life is very precious. In this life if we do not give importance to the nature of the Absolute Truth then our existence would be no better than animals. Why things are the way they are, what substance we are made up of, what will be our destination when we die - these are more important questions than the kind of questions that we are being conditioned to ask. True humility awakens us and makes us bold to ask pertinent questions.

- *What does the observation of floating planets have to do with our quest for the Absolute Truth?*

## 1.3 Have I given a thought on some fundamental aspects of life?

### 1.3.1 Everybody is a servant

Parents serve their children. A leader serves his followers. A student serves his teacher and a teacher serves his students. Plants and animal



kingdom serve human society and vice-versa. If you take care of your garden you will get flowers and fruits. If you take care of your paddy crops you will get rice and wheat. If you take care of water bodies then you will get fresh water. Nothing is free for us - we must serve to survive.

Whoever is serving nicely they are very happy. If you observe your mother, she serves you and you can always see happiness on her face. As long as you are happy, she is also happy. There are thus two distinct observations:

- We are all servants
- Service must be selfless to become happy
- *In what way does a blade of grass serve?*
- *In what way does a house fly serve?*

#### We will learn from Bhagavad Gita that

"We must selflessly serve with devotion to the Absolute Truth to become happy."

### 1.3.2 We all seek relationships

As human beings, we are committed to various relations in this world. Parental relationships bind father and mother to their kids. A servant is bound by a servitor relationship with his/her master.

Friendship is something that we crave for, while conjugal love adds another dimension to our human bonding. There are some for whom we reserve our awe and reverence. These are

basic relationships that we see in this world. These relationships become sublime and pure when grounded in eternity and selfless attitude.

In the Introduction to Bhagavad Gita, Srila Prabhupad talks about this. We all have a relationship with the absolute truth. God is not something inanimate, God is a person. So as a person we can approach him. The moment God is impersonal you can't approach Him. If you simply think that God is gigantic and infinite then how will you approach Him?



But anyone can understand scientifically that God is a person and you can approach Him as his father, mother just like Nanda Maharaja and Yashoda Maiya approached Him. You can approach him as a servitor like Hanumanji, as a friend like Arjuna, Sudama, Uddhava, etc. The trees and cows in Vraj, all have affection for Krishna. Gopis approached Krishna as their lover. So these are the aspects that are also explained in Bhagavad Gita.

### 1.3.3 We seek possession or proprietorship

Each one of us is very proud of our own body and would like to have this body for eternity. Do you possess your body? Now you are young and you don't want to become old but is that possible? Youth is given to you and it will also be snatched away from you. Time takes away everything. Time gives you everything and time takes it back. Time gives you family and

time will snatch you away from the same family. Do you possess your car, your home, your intellect, your memory, your wealth, your followers etc? Margaret Thatcher, the British prime minister, was a very powerful woman. During her last days she lost her memory and she didn't even realize that her husband had already died.

Who can thus claim that he/she has proprietorship over his/her memory, intellect etc.? Do we possess our wealth? You can see in this world that the people who were very rich finally have to part with it at the time of death.

As one introspects this way, he/she attains wisdom. In that state, he/she recognizes that God is the ONLY proprietor. Thus true renunciation leads to wisdom. Detachment is the sign of wisdom. The moment you recognize that you own nothing in this world, you will be a wise person. The man who is attached to this world cannot be a person with wisdom; he is simply an ignorant fool.

### 1.3.4 Temporariness pervades this world

Everything in this world is temporary. The United Kingdom is smaller in size to Uttar Pradesh, one of the provinces in India. Yet at one point of time, British ruled almost the entire world. That vast British Empire is no more. The great USSR is no more. Many great civilizations have come and gone by the influence of great time (kala).

Neither happiness nor misery is permanent. Neither success nor failure is permanent. All of one's achievements and accomplishments hardly make any sense at the end of his life. Even great leaders like Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, and Indira Gandhi had to submit to this temporariness of this world. We are mere mortals. As Indians, we know very well that in spite of all our so-called

achievement, at the end, this body will be taken on four bamboos to the cremation ground. Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita 8.15:

*mām upetya punar janma  
duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam  
nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ  
saṁsiddhiṁ paramām gatāḥ*

**Translation:** "After attaining Me, the great souls, who are yogīs in devotion, never return to this temporary world, which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection".

So Bhagavad Gita is that timeless science which enlightens people of all ages in such deliberations. We are always servants, we seek



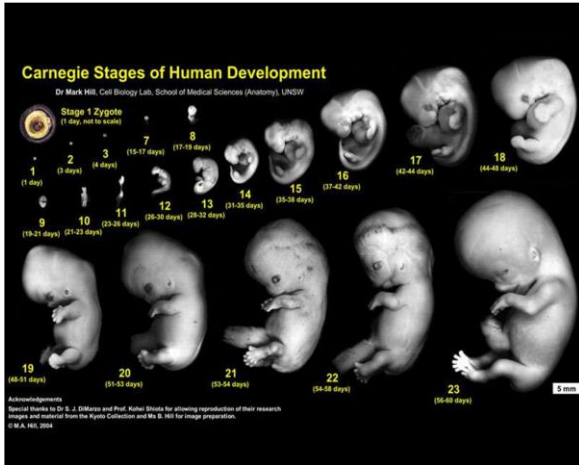
pure and eternal relationships, we owe no proprietorship in this world and our so called identities and existence are devoured by the temporariness of this world. Nobody can deny these observations. Thus Lord Krishna advises us through Arjuna in Bhagavad Gita 5.29:

*bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasāṁ  
sarva-loka-maheśvaram  
suhṛdaṁ sarva-bhūtānāṁ  
jñātvā māṁ śāntim ṛcchati*

**Translation:** "A person in full consciousness of Me, knowing Me to be the ultimate beneficiary of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Lord of all planets and demigods, and the benefactor and well-wisher of all living

entities, attains peace from the pangs of material miseries.”

## 1.4 Original Wonders of Creation:



### Where is the Miracle?

#### 1.4.1 Our Living Body

There are 8.4 million different varieties of species in this world as explained in Padma Purana - one of the Vedic literatures. Each bodily form evolves from a single cell. Let's look at the human body that evolves from only one cell - a combination of half of mother's cell and half of the father's cell at the time of conception. This original cell through repeated cell division gives rise to your bones, nails, hair, different body organs, skin and what not. Plants also grow like this. Every form of life whether insects, birds, reptiles etc. follow the same process.

Have you ever pondered over these observations? How is hair growing on your body? When you cut your hair you do not feel pain but when you cut your skin, you feel the pain. Have you ever thought about it? In the same body, you can cut your hair, you can cut your nails, but you can't cut your hand.

The miracle is that even if we can observe this process of development of a living body from a single cell, we cannot replicate the process. Scientists can only play with what God has

already given. We can use genetic manipulation and produce more fruits and vegetables. We can put more urea in the field and get more yields. This kind of manipulation we can do but we cannot self-replicate the process, the way nature self-replicates. This particular aspect of nature has attracted many thinkers.

#### 1.4.2 A Self-replicating Machine

A *self-replicating*

*machine* is a construct that is capable of autonomously manufacturing a copy of itself using raw materials taken from its environment, thus exhibiting self-



replication in a way analogous to that found in nature.

A detailed conceptual proposal for a physical non-biological self-replicating system was first put forward by mathematician John von Neumann in lectures delivered in 1948 and 1949, when he proposed a kinematic self-reproducing automaton model as a thought experiment.

John Von Neumann thus dreams that one day a single automaton - a computing machine with a single memory - will grow in terms of hardware as well as software such that this machine will be a Noble prize winner. This dream has its inspiration in the way the human body evolves as explained in this section. The human body evolves from one cell both in terms of hardware and software, i.e. bodily growth and mental and intellectual growth. So can we create a machine that starts from a single automaton and this machine grows in terms of hardware, in terms of size and also in

terms of software and in other words becomes intelligent? If we can do so, then one may claim that there is no need of God or that God is irrelevant entity. However, even if such a machine is ever created it cannot solve most of our problems especially those related to hunger and food production, which are rated topmost among world development issues. Thus

- Self-Replicating machines will not solve food security problems.
- Machines do not produce food that will sustain the creation.

Cows eat grass and give us milk. If we maintain cows in a healthy manner, food security will be guaranteed.



### 1.4.3 Can I replicate the Miracle?

Although one can observe the process of self-replication in nature, one cannot replicate the process. The reason has been explained in Srimad Bhagavatam as follows:

“The Personality of Godhead said: Under the supervision of the Supreme Lord and according to the result of his work, the living entity - the soul, is made to enter into the womb of a woman through the particle of male semen to assume a particular type of body. (SB 3.31.1)”

Thus, when we cannot replicate even grass, what can we speak of any higher form of living entity? Machines do not produce food that will sustain the creation. Machines are there to enhance our comfort level. You can use a machine like a tractor that will help you

in cultivation. You can create a machine in the form of a motor that will help you to bring water from deep in the ground but you can't create a machine that will create water. Water has to be taken from nature. Air has to be taken from nature.

If we maintain cows in a healthy manner, then food security will be guaranteed, but instead we are worried about self-replicating machines. All these people who are thinking about self-replicating machines, if they would have invested their energy in taking care of cows properly, innocent people would not have been subject to purchasing synthetic milk and impure ghee in the market.

Thus formation of a living body is a mystical coupling of the soul (anti-material) with the body (material). This forms a substantial portion of the subject matter of the Bhagavad Gita.

## Questions

### Fill in the Blanks

1. The Bhagavad Gita is a Vedic literature compiled by \_\_\_\_\_.
2. This holy book presents the \_\_\_\_\_ of life as it is.
3. Though the Bhagavad Gita was spoken by Lord Krishna to Arjuna 5000 years ago, it is still relevant to us because the knowledge contained in it is \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Seeing ourselves as a tiny part of the gigantic Solar System can make us \_\_\_\_\_.
5. When one starts introspecting and questioning one's existence, the search for \_\_\_\_\_ begins.

### Answer the following questions based on your own experience

1. What kind of questions cripple you?
2. What kind of questions rejuvenate you?

3. Have you ever read/heard Bhagavad Gita? What kind of expectations do you have when you turn your attention to the Bhagavad Gita?
4. What kind of proprietorship does a jiva or soul have? Narrate from your experience.
5. Everybody in this world is a servant. Justify your answer by relating the different roles that you play in your life.

**Answer the following questions based on Section 1:**

1. Explain the process of the evolution of a human body or any living form.
2. Self-replicating machines as dreamt by Von Neumann have not been actualized by current researchers. Do you think that this is possible in the future?
3. Will self-replicating machines be able to solve the problems of this world? Why?
4. How is self-replication in nature different from a self-replicating machine?
5. What do you understand by miracle as explained in this lesson?

---

*Section 2*

---

**1.5 Spirit of the Bhagavad Gita**

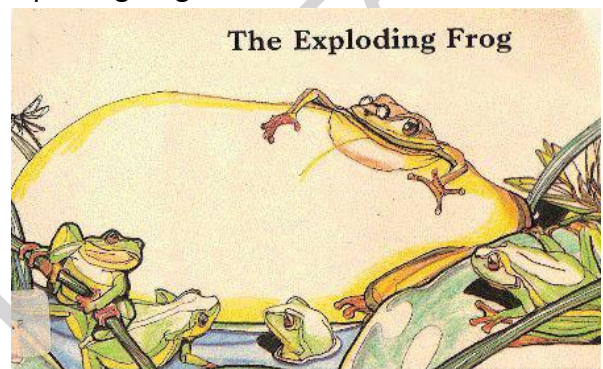
**1.5.1 Is there something beyond matter?**

**The Exploding Frog**

Very often it is assumed that there is very little beyond what we have seen. Because of our limited experience we tend to dismiss anything anti-material or anything beyond matter. Our situation is like that of a frog whose baby one day claimed to have seen a very big creature. The mother frog in its attempt to fathom the size of the creature began bloating itself asking

the baby frog if the creature was as big as itself now. Each time the frog bloated itself more, the baby would say “No. Bigger”! In this way the mother frog gradually puffed up her body and when it went beyond limit, it exploded with a big bang.

This instructive story could well be our own when we get very puffed up of our own limited knowledge and assume that there is nothing beyond matter. However, our narrow understanding could cripple us just like that exploding frog.



**1.5.2 What does the Bhagavad Gita say?**

We saw in Section 1 that our body is a mystical coupling of the body that is material and soul that is anti-material. Thus Bhagavad Gita teaches us about objects consisting of two natures - spirit and matter in the following manner:

- The world that we perceive is a place where unlimited jivas (atomic souls) are engaged in 8.4 million different bodies.
- The world is there to help us to rediscover our divinity – to purify our consciousness.
- All our endeavor must be to ascertain the Truth – not to get entangled in ignorance.
- Distinguishing spirit from matter is the first step in this process.

In the Introduction to Bhagavad Gita Srila Prabhupada says - That destination is called



the sanātana sky, the eternal, spiritual sky. In this material world we find that everything is temporary. It comes into being, stays for some time, produces some by-products, dwindles and then vanishes. That is the law of the material world, whether we use as an example this body, or a piece of fruit or anything. But beyond this temporary world there is another world of which we have information. That world consists of another nature, which is sanātana, eternal. Jīva is also described as sanātana, eternal, and the Lord is also described as sanātana in the Eleventh Chapter. We have an intimate relationship with the Lord and because we are all qualitatively one with the the sanātana Supreme Personality of Godhead — the whole purpose of Bhagavad-gītā is to revive our sanātana occupation, or sanātana-dharma, which is the eternal occupation of the living entity. We are temporarily engaged in different activities, but all of these activities can be purified when we give up all these temporary activities and take up the activities which are prescribed by the Supreme Lord and that is our pure life.

All our endeavor must be to search for absolute truth, not to get entangled in ignorance. Distinguishing spirit from matter is the first step in this process. So the aim of this course will be to motivate you that there is something beyond matter, something spiritual, something eternal, and something timeless, which we are made up of.

## 1.6 Understanding the Spirit of the Bhagavad Gita

### 1.6.1 Spirit I – Lord Krishna, the Absolute Truth

Sri Krishna the Absolute Truth and He is the speaker of Bhagavad Gita. Thus the message of Bhagavad Gita is Absolute - not subject to any interpretation. Vyasadeva is merely the

compiler. You will see in Bhagavad Gita whenever Krishna speaks, Vyasadeva didn't write *Sri Krishna uvaca*, rather he writes this as *Sri Bhagavan uvaca*.

Everybody knows that Krishna spoke Bhagavad Gita then why did he write "*Sri Bhagavan uvaca*"? Because he anticipated that a time will come in future when people will ascribe Lord Krishna as a mere human being. Such understanding would minimize the Absolute position of Bhagavad Gita. Therefore to prevent such abuse of this great literature, Srila Vyasadev wisely preserves Lord Krishna's supreme position. Krishna is God Himself. That's why Bhagavad Gita is very enduring. It is God's instructions for humanity.

Vyasadeva divided Veda into four divisions for people of the age of Kali. He also wrote Puranas, Itihasas like Mahabharata, and finally he wrote Brahma sutra (or Vedanta sutra). After writing Brahma sutra he felt very dissatisfied at heart and finally after being guided by his spiritual master, Srila Narada, he gave a natural commentary to Brahma sutra in the form of Srimad Bhagavatam. This literature directly narrates the transcendental glories of Lord Krishna in the form of His name, activities, form and abode. Bhagavad Gita is a part of the Mahabharata.

Bhagavad Gita is the juice of all Upanishads hence it is also known as *Gitopanishad*.

Not only the great Vyasadeva ascertains Lord Krishna to be the Absolute Truth, all great acharyas (spiritual authorities) such as Adi Shankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Nimbarka swami, Vishnu swami, and Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu also confirm this truth. In all Vedic literatures, this truth that Lord Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead has been established by great spiritual authorities like Srila Narada, Bhishma deva, Lord Shiva, Lord Brahma, Sage Kapila, Prahlada, Janaka,

Sukadeva Goswami, Manu, Four Kumaras, Bali Maharaja, and Yamaraja.

### 1.6.2 Spirit II – Becoming a Right Thinker

A right thinker can churn the nectar from Bhagavad Gita. Bhagavad Gita makes a person think. A person who always acts from a neutral position is a right thinker. Lord Krishna defines such a right thinker in Bhagavad Gita 2.58 as:

*yadā samharate cāyam  
kūrmo 'ṅgānīva sarvaśaḥ  
indriyāṅindriyārthebhyas  
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

**Translation:** “One who is able to withdraw his senses from the sense objects as the tortoise draws its limbs within the shell, is firmly fixed in perfect consciousness.”

Lord Krishna further distinguishes right thinkers from those who are very ordinary in Bhagavad Gita 2.69 as:

*yā nisā sarva-bhūtānām  
tasyām jāgarti samyamī  
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni  
sā nisā paśyato muneḥ*

**Translation:** “What is night for all beings is the time for awakening for the self-controlled, and the time of awakening for all beings is night for the introspective sage.”

Although Bhagavad Gita is literature for those who can think, anybody who starts taking interest in Bhagavad Gita starts thinking. This is the underlying sublime principle by which Bhagavad Gita works. Isn't it a wonderful thing? That is the sublime aspect of Bhagavad Gita. Anybody who will take shelter of Bhagavad Gita, he will become a right thinker. A person who always acts from a neutral position is a right thinker. He is not biased by his selfish mentality, he is not biased by other's selfish mentality, he is not biased by his own name and fame, and he is not biased by

anything. The moment you are biased, you cannot become a right thinker. That's why the yogis of India leave everything - family, home and fame - and enter the caves of Himalayas or take shelter in holy places. There they perform severe austerities and spiritual practices to gain neutrality. Neutral position means neither you have any hatred nor you are partial to anyone. You are able to see everyone as God's dear child.

One thinker is sufficient to guide 1000 people. Taking into account that the current population is at 7 billion, we need 7 million people who are educated in Bhagavad Gita. These 7 million thinkers will be able to guide the world of 7 billion in the path of self-enlightenment, prosperity and peace. Then the world will become “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.”

The real problem is that we don't have right thinkers. Srila Prabhupada once said that every village and city of India must be converted to Gita-nagari following in the foot-step of Mahatma Gandhi. Thus we have endeavored to run this Bhagavad Gita correspondence course to reach out to all those who have no opportunity to be properly educated in the science of Bhagavad Gita.

### 1.6.3 Spirit III- Building a Relationship with the Lord

Besides being a right thinker, one must be a friend and devotee of Lord Krishna. He should have simple faith in Lord Krishna's instructions. As Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita 4.3:

*sa evāyaṁ mayā te 'dya  
yogaḥ proktaḥ purātanaḥ  
bhakto 'si me sakhā ceti  
rahasyaṁ hy etad uttamam*

**Translation:** “That very ancient science of the relationship with the Supreme is today told by Me to you because you are My devotee as well

as My friend; therefore you can understand the transcendental mystery of this science.”

One must accept Bhagavad Gita As It Is as Lord Krishna spoke to Arjuna – no addition or no deletion to His instructions. As Srila Prabhupada says in the Introduction:

The spirit of Bhagavad-gītā is mentioned in Bhagavad-gītā itself. It is just like this: If we want to take a particular medicine, then we have to follow the directions written on the label. We cannot take the medicine according to our own whim or the direction of a friend. It must be taken according to the directions on

This Bhagavad Gita has revolutionized hearts of millions across the globe. Srila Prabhupada is against the idea of using selected verses from Bhagavad Gita to put forth one's misdirected ideas. There are 700 verses in Bhagavad Gita and one must accept all the verses, just like as per your medical prescription you have to accept all medicines - you cannot reject one and accept another.

### 1.7 Subject Matter of the Bhagavad Gita

The Bhagavad Gita deals with five subject matters which are as follows:



the label or the directions given by a physician. Similarly, Bhagavad-gītā should be taken or accepted as it is directed by the speaker Himself.

Ultimately Lord Krishna will reveal this knowledge to us if we sincerely surrender unto Him. He is there within our hearts and He will reveal this knowledge as we hear from the bonafide spiritual master. That is why in this correspondence course we will follow Bhagavad Gita As It Is by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada as the textbook.

1. Isvara (God)
2. Jiva (living entity)
3. Kala (time)
4. Prakriti (nature)
5. Karma (action)

Among these five topics, Lord Krishna deals mostly with the fifth topic, i.e. karma. Karma means the form of duty that liberates us from the influence of ignorance. Thus Lord Krishna prescribes duties in the form of Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Dhyana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. The yoga system that is spoken in Bhagavad Gita is duty because anything that is duty must connect you to Lord Krishna. You are doing

something but you are not getting connected to Lord Krishna that means you are wasting your human life. So this is the most talked about subject in Bhagavad Gita. We all must be situated in the yoga system and according to Bhagavad Gita the highest form of yoga is Bhakti yoga.

### 1.8 Definition of God

Parasara Muni, in Vishnu Puran, gave the definition of Bhagavan. He said that Bhagavan is that person who possesses six opulences in full:

1. All beauty
2. All wealth
3. All power/strength
4. All knowledge
5. All fame
6. All renunciation

This is Bhagavan and the goal of Bhagavad Gita is to know Him and get connected to Him through prescribed yoga system - in particular Bhakti Yoga.

### 1.9 Conclusion

Bhagavad Gita (BG) is a complete science of both spirit and matter from a holistic perspective. This book provides time-less science that is applicable to every human race in every corner of the society.

Bhagavad Gita informs us that we are tiny divine particles having the same quality as that of the Absolute divinity – Lord Krishna. Daily bathing in the message of Bhagavad Gita will help us to revive our divinity – spiritual qualities.

There has been debate among intellectuals about the chemical origin of life or life eternal – Bhagavad Gita speaks of the latter. Our empirical observations show that matter comes from life not vice versa.

We are servants, who is the master? Bhagavad Gita answers this question very lucidly. Lord Krishna is the ONLY master. He is also known by different traditions as Allah, Jehovah, God etc.

We crave for relationships – but all of them are temporary – some of them are even source of agony. Bhagavad Gita answers the nature of this pure relationship and its shelter. When we connect ourselves in yoga-system with Lord Krishna, we establish our divine relationship with Him. This in turn makes our filial or worldly relationships also divine. Everything here is temporary – what is permanent? Bhagavad Gita again provides a wonderful answer stating that the shelter of the Lord, His abode and His devotional service are eternal.

We are here in this material world because we want to become God. Suppose you have created a robot. You will make all planning in such a way that this robot will follow you. Would you like a robot that will revolt against you? So that's the difference between you and God. God has created you but has given you freedom as well. It is up to you to use your freedom, to use your free will to accept God or reject Him. He is your loving father after all.

Thus Bhagavad Gita is that timeless science which has answers to all your thought provoking queries.

## Questions

**Choose the correct word from the parenthesis**

1. The world is here to help us rediscover our (humanity/divinity).
2. In this material world we find that everything is (eternal/temporary).
3. The Lord is described as sanatana or eternal and the Jiva is described as (also eternal/ temporary).
4. We are (qualitatively/quantitatively)

one with the Lord.

5. The whole purpose of the Bhagavad Gita is to revive our (eternal occupation/ eternal ignorance)

**Answer the following questions**

1. How is a living body different from dead matter?
2. Who is a right thinker? Quote the verse from BG with meaning.
3. What is the best way to become a right thinker?
4. Mention the name of acharyas who have ascertained Lord Krishna to be the Supreme Absolute Truth?
5. Name the spiritual authorities mentioned in the Vedic literature who ascertain that Lord Krishna is the Absolute Truth.
6. Narrate three aspects of spirit with which the subject matter of BG must be approached.
7. Enumerate five topics discussed in BG.
8. Which topic is most talked about in BG?
9. What is the definition of God?
10. What is the link between one's duty and yoga systems as presented in BG?