

Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman

ॐ श्रीपरमात्मने नमः

Om Śrīparamātmāne Namaḥ

अथाष्टमोऽध्यायः

Athāṣṭamo'dhyāyaḥ (Gītā Chapter VIII)

अर्जुन उवाच (Arjuna uvāca)

किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।

अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तं अधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥ १ ॥

kiṁ tadbrahma kimadhyātmaṁ kiṁ karma Puruṣottama ।
adhibhūtaṁ ca kiṁ proktaṁ adhidaivaṁ kimucyate ॥1॥

Arjuna said: What is that Brahman? What is Adhyātma? What is Karma? O best among men, what is declared to be the Adhibhūta? And what is Adhidaiva?

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन ।

प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥ २ ॥

adhiyajñaḥ kathaṁ ko'tra dehe'sminmadhusūdana ।
prayānakāle ca kathaṁ jñeyo'si niyatātmabhiḥ ॥2॥

Who and how is Adhiyajña here in this body, O destroyer of Madhu? And, how at the time of death are you to be known by the self-controlled?

श्रीभगवानुवाच (Śrībhagavānuvāca)

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।

भूतभावोद्भवकरः विसर्गः कर्मसञ्ज्ञितः ॥ ३ ॥

akṣaraṁ brahma paramaṁ svabhāvo'dhyātmamucyate ।
bhūtabhāvodbhavakaraḥ visargaḥ karmasañjñitaḥ ॥3॥

The Blessed Lord said: Brahman is Imperishable, the Supreme; His essential nature is called "Self-knowledge" (Adhyātma), the creative force that causes beings to spring forth into manifestation is called "action" (Karma).

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।

अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर ॥ ४ ॥

adhibhūtaṁ kṣaro bhāvaḥ puruṣaścādhidaivatam ।
adhiyajño'hamevātra dehe dehabhṛtāṁ vara ॥4॥

Adhibhūta (or elements) constitutes My perishable nature, and the indweller (or the essence) is the Adhidaiva; I alone am the Adhiyajña here, in this body, O noblest of the embodied.

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।

यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥ ५ ॥

antakāle ca māmēva smaranmuktva kalevaram ।
yaḥ prayāti sa madbhāvaṁ yāti nāstyatra saṁśayaḥ ॥5॥

And whosoever, leaving the body, goes forth remembering Me alone, at the time of death attains My Being; there is no doubt about this.

यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।

तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ॥ ६ ॥

yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaranbhāvaṁ tyajatyante kalevaram ।

taṁ tamevaiti Kaunteya sadā tadbhāvabhāvitaḥ ॥6॥

Whosoever, at the end, leaves the body, thinking of any being, to that being only he goes, O Kaunteya (O son of Kunti) because of his constant thought of that being.

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिः मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयः ॥ ७ ॥

tasmātsarveṣu kāleṣu māmanusmara yudhya ca ।

mayyarpitamano buddhiḥ māmevaiṣyasyasaṁśayaḥ ॥7॥

Therefore, at all times, remember Me, and fight, with mind and intellect fixed (or absorbed) in Me; you shall doubtless come to Me alone.

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।

परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन् ॥ ८ ॥

abhyāsayogayuktena cetasā nānyagāminā ।

paramaṁ puruṣaṁ divyaṁ yāti Pārthānucintayan ॥8॥

O Pārtha, a person with the mind not distracted by any other thing, made steadfast by the method of habitual meditation, and constantly meditating on the Supreme Puruṣa, the Resplendent, attains Him.

कविं पुराणमनुशासितारं

अणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।

सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूपं

आदित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥ ९ ॥

kaviṁ Purāṇamanuśāsītāraṁ

aṇoraṇīyāṁsamanusmareद्याḥ ।

sarvasya dhātāramacintyarūpaṁ

Ādityavarṇaṁ tamasāḥ parastāt ॥9॥

Whoever meditates upon the Omniscient, the Ancient, the Ruler (of the whole world), smaller than the atom, the Nourisher (Supporter) of all, of Form Inconceivable, Effulgent like the Sun and beyond the darkness (of ignorance)...

प्रयाणकाले मनसाचलेन

भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।

भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक्

स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥ १० ॥

prayāṇakāle manasācalena

bhaktyā yukto yogabalena caiva ।

bhruvormadhye prāṇamāveśya samyak

sa taṁ paraṁ Puruṣamupaiti divyam ॥10॥

At the time of death, with an unshaken mind full of devotion, by the power of 'Yoga', fixing the whole prāṇa (breath) between the two eyebrows, he (the seeker) reaches the Supreme Resplendent Puruṣa.

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति
विशन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः ।
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति
तत्ते पदं सङ्ग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये

yadakṣaraṁ vedavido vadanti

viśanti yadyatayo vītarāgāḥ ।

yadicchanto brahmacaryaṁ caranti

tatte padaṁ saṅgraheṇa pravakṣye ||11||

*That which is declared Imperishable by the Veda-knowers; That into which the self-controlled and desire-free enter;
That, desiring which Brahmacharya is practiced- That Goal I will declare to thee in brief.*

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।
मूर्धन्याधायात्मनः प्राणं आस्थितो योगधारणाम्

sarvadvārāṇi saṁyamya mano ḥṛdi nirudhya ca ।

mūrdhnyādhāyātmanaḥ prāṇaṁ āsthito yogadhāraṇām ||12||

*Having closed all the gates, having confined the mind in the heart, having fixed the life-breath in the “head”,
engaged in the practice of concentration...*

ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।
यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम्

Omityekākṣaraṁ brahma vyāharanmāmanusmaran ।

yaḥ prayāti tyajandehaṁ sa yāti paramāṁ gatim ||13||

*Uttering the one-syllabled ‘OM’ – the (universal sound symbol of) Brahman – and remembering Me, he who
departs, leaving the body, attains the Supreme Goal.*

अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः ।
तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः

ananyacetāḥ satataṁ yo māṁ smarati nityaśaḥ ।

tasyāhaṁ sulabhaḥ Pārtha nityayuktasya yoginaḥ ||14||

*I am easily attainable by that ever-steadfast Yogi who constantly remembers Me daily, not thinking of anything else,
O Pārtha.*

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।
नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः

māmupetya punarjanma duḥkhālayamaśāśvatam ।

nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ saṁsiddhiṁ paramāṁ gatāḥ ||15||

*Having attained Me, these Mahātmās (great souls) who have attained the highest perfection (mokṣa) do not enter
into another body (rebirth), which is the house of pain and is impermanent.*

आब्रह्मभुवनल्लोकाः पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।
मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते

ābrahmabhuvanāllokāḥ punarāvartino'rjuna ।

māmupetya tu Kaunteya punarjanma na vidyate ||16||

*Worlds up to the “world-of-Brahmāji” are subject to rebirth, O Arjuna; but he who reaches Me, O Kaunteya, has no
re-birth.*

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तं अहर्यद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।

रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः ॥ १७ ॥

sahasrayugaparyantaṁ aharyadbrahmaṇo viduḥ ।

rātriṁ yugasahasrāntāṁ te'horātravido janāḥ ॥17॥

Those people who know (the length of) the day of Brahmā which ends in a thousand Yugas, and the night which (also) ends in a thousand Yugas, only they know day-and-night.

अव्यक्तादव्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।

रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्त संज्ञके ॥ १८ ॥

avyaktādvyaktayaḥ sarvāḥ prabhavantyaharāgame ।

rātryāgame praliyante tatraivāvvyaktasamjñake ॥18॥

From the unmanifest all the manifested proceed at the coming of the “day”; at the coming of “night” they dissolve verily in That alone, which is called the Unmanifest.

भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।

रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥ १९ ॥

bhūtagrāmaḥ sa evāyaṁ bhūtvā bhūtvā praliyate ।

rātryāgame'vaśaḥ Pārtha prabhavatyaharāgame ॥19॥

O Pārtha, this same multiple of beings are being born again and again, and are dissolved (into the unmanifest) helplessly at the coming of “night”, and they come forth again at the coming of “day”.

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्यः अव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः ।

यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥ २० ॥

parastasmāttu bhāvo'nyaḥ avyakto'vyaktātsanātanaḥ ।

yaḥ sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu naśyatsu na vinaśyati ॥20॥

But verily there exists, higher than that unmanifest (Avyakta), another Unmanifest, which is Eternal, which is not destroyed when all beings are destroyed.

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तः तमाहुः परमां गतिम् ।

यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥ २१ ॥

avyakto'kṣara ityuktaḥ tamāhuḥ paramāṁ gatim ।

yaṁ prāpya na nivartante taddhāma paramaṁ mama ॥21॥

Which is called the Unmanifest and the Imperishable, that, they say is the Highest Goal. They who reach It never again return. That is My highest abode (state).

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।

यस्यान्तः स्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥ २२ ॥

Puruṣaḥ sa paraḥ Pārtha bhaktyā labhyastvananyayā ।

yaśyāntaḥ sthāni bhūtāni yena sarvamidaṁ tatam ॥22॥

That Highest ‘Puruṣa’, O Pārtha, is attainable by unswerving devotion to Him alone, within whom all beings dwell, by whom all this is pervaded.

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिं आवृत्तिं चैव योगिनः ।

प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥ २३ ॥

yatra kāle tvanāvṛttiṁ āvṛttiṁ caiva yoginaḥ ।

prayātā yānti taṁ kālaṁ vakṣyāmi Bharatarṣabha ॥23॥

Now at what time (path) departing, Yogins go, never to return; as also to return, that time (path), I will tell you, O Chief of Bharatas.

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्लः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम् ।

तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ॥ २४ ॥

agnirjyotirahaḥ śuklaḥ ṣaṇmāsā uttarāyaṇam ।

tatra prayātā gacchanti Brahma Brahmavido janāḥ ॥24॥

Fire, light, day-time, the bright fortnight, the six months of the northern solstice; following this path, men who know Brahman go to Brahman.

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम् ।

तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिः योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥ २५ ॥

dhūmo rātristathā kṛṣṇaḥ ṣaṇmāsā dakṣiṇāyanam

tatra cāndramasaṁ jyotiḥ yogī prāpya nivartate ॥25॥

Smoke, night-time, the dark fortnight, also six months of the southern solstice- following this Path, the Yogī, having reached the lunar light, returns.

शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते ।

एकया यात्यनावृत्तिं अन्ययावर्तते पुनः ॥ २६ ॥

śuklakṛṣṇe gatī hyete jagataḥ śāśvate mate ।

ekayā yātyanāvṛttiṁ anyayāvartate punaḥ ॥26॥

The path of light and the path of darkness available for the world are verily thought to be both eternal. By the one, a man goes to the state of no-return; by the other, he returns again.

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन् योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥ २७ ॥

naite sṛtī Pārtha jānan yogī muhyati kaścana ।

tasmātsarveṣu kāleṣu yogayukto bhavāṛjuna ॥27॥

Knowing these two paths, O Pārtha, no Yogin is deluded; therefore, at all times be steadfast in Yoga, O Arjuna.

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव
दानेषु यत्पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।
अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा
योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम्

॥ २८ ॥

vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu caiva
dāneṣu yatpuṇyaphalaṁ pradiṣṭam ।
atyeti tatsarvamidaṁ viditvā
yogī paraṁ sthānamupaiti cādyam

॥28॥

Whatever fruit of merit is declared (in the scriptures) as springing up from study of the Vedas, from performance of sacrifices, from practice of austerities, and from charity – beyond all these goes the Yogin, who having known this (the two 'paths') attains the Supreme, Primeval (Essence).

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु उपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे अक्षरब्रह्मयोगो नाम
अष्टमोऽध्यायः ।

Om tatsat iti Śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyāṁ yogaśāstre
Śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṁvāde akṣarabrahmayogo nāma aṣṭamodhyāyaḥ ।

