

end. If any pleasure ceases to be pleasant after brief enjoyment, then it is quite clear that from its inception it carried pain within itself. Those upon whose authority our faith in a future life depends, have declared that there is no rest in the other world except for those who live in the Deity while on earth. The absolute, infinite, unconditioned Consciousness of Nirvāna, the everlasting life, is the only bliss : all else is misery and delusion.

Now the Blessed Lord points out the root of evil and exhorts us to be assiduous in its destruction.

23. The man who is able on earth, until the departure of life, to bear the pressure springing from desire¹ and anger, is possessed of right knowledge, — is blessed.

The words here rendered "until the departure," may also without inaccuracy be translated "before the departure," meaning that as the body after death is neither pleased by the possession of pleasant objects nor angry at being deprived of them, so ought a man to be prior to the departure of the breath from the body. The sage Vasishtha says : "Life being gone, the body knows not pleasure or pain ; if it be so for the man possessed of life, he is in the condition that leads to Nirvāna "

The Blessed Lord declares the positive qualities of the illuminated sage.

24. He whose joy is within,² whose diversion is within, and whose light also is within,³ is the man of right knowledge ; becoming the Supreme Spirit,⁴ he attains to effacement in the Supreme Spirit.

25. Effacement in the Supreme Spirit⁵ is gained by

¹ "Desire" is the attachment to or thirst for objects of pleasure directly perceived, heard of, or recollected as having been enjoyed

² "Joy is within," that is, in the true Self and not in objects

³ "Light is within," that is, the true Self is his light, and not senses, mind, etc.

⁴ "Becoming the Supreme Spirit," even before death. The sage is dead to all outside himself, his life and joy are within.

⁵ "Effacement in the Supreme Spirit," that is, Nirvāna.

the right-seeing¹ sage, with his sins exhausted,² doubts
 cut asunder,³ senses and organs under control,⁴
 and devoted to the well-being of all creatures.⁵

26. For men of renunciation,⁶ whose hearts are at
 rest from desire and anger, and knowing the
 Self,⁷ there is, on both sides of death, effacement
 in the Supreme Spirit.

The patient endurance of the onslaught of desire and anger was
 spoken of in verse 23, it has now been shown by what means these
 enemies may be extirpated. Having described the immediate
 Nirvāṇa of the sage, the Blessed Lord now declares the interior
 process of development suited to those whose hearts are purified
 by right performance of action.

27. Having driven out⁸ external objects, fixed the eyes
 between the eyebrows,⁹ and unified¹⁰ the upward and
 downward life-breaths, which remain within the nostrils,

28. He whose senses¹¹ and organs are under control,
 as also the thinking and ascertaining principles,
 — who is devoted to inner knowledge¹²
 and ever free from desire, fear, and anger, is liberated.¹³

Now is declared what will be realized when action has dropped
 off from him who has performed it rightly.

¹ "Right-seeing," or illuminated by knowledge of truth.

² "Sins exhausted," by right performance of action.

³ "Doubts cut asunder," by the reception of the spirit of truth.

⁴ "Senses and organs under control," that is, each engaged in its appropriate
 work under the law of universal harmony.

⁵ "Devoted to the well-being of all creatures," that is, an embodiment of
 divine grace and mercy.

⁶ "Men of renunciation," illuminated sages.

⁷ "Knowing the Self." It is the absence of this spiritual knowledge which
 keeps us in bondage even though our passions are somewhat controlled.

⁸ "Driven out," by abstaining from thoughts about them.

⁹ "Fixed the eyes . . . eyebrows," that is, not opening them completely for fear
 of the attraction of external objects, nor shutting them lest sleep should creep on.

¹⁰ "Unified," etc., letting breath neither go in nor come out of the body.

¹¹ "Senses," etc., as explained in verse 25.

¹² "Devoted to inner knowledge," desiring the assimilation of spiritual truths.

¹³ "Liberated," that is, in need of no other means for the attainment of libera-
 tion from the bondage of changeable existence.

29. Knowing me, the Enjoyer ¹ of all sacrifice and penance, the Supreme Lord of all worlds ² and the friend ³ of all creatures, he attains rest.

John xvii 3.

Thus ends chapter the fifth, called the "RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF RENUNCIATION OF ACTION," in the blessed BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ, the sacred lore, the divine wisdom, the book of divine union, the colloquy between the blessed KRISHNA and ARJUNA, and contained in the Bhîshma Parvan of the blessed MAHÂBHÂRATA, which is a collection of a hundred thousand verses by VYÂSA.

The external process, as given in verse 27, is easy to be imitated even by those, not purified by dedication of the fruit of action to the Supreme Spirit. But this is not the chief element in the process of spiritual illumination. The last verse completes the description.

Whoever knows the Supreme as the Great Spirit of the Infinite Universe, as well as the Spirit that dwells in every human heart, attains Nirvâna.

This chapter shows that for one not divinely illuminated the right performance of action is a more effective instrument in rendering the heart a fit temple for the Spirit of God than renunciation of action. But the right renunciation, in other words the natural dropping off of action, is superior to its performance, inasmuch as it is immediately followed by everlasting life.

Salutation to the all-wise Teacher who has so clearly solved the doubt about right performance of action and the solitary meditations of the recluse, and has shown what renunciation is superior and what inferior.

¹ "The Enjoyer," that is, I am the doer as well as the Deity for whose sake this is done.

² "Lord of all worlds," that is, because I am the Enjoyer, it is not to be understood that there is anything higher than I. Although I am all things, yet no thing is I.

³ "Friend," that is, one who does good with no expectation of reward.

CHAPTER VI.

RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF MEDITATION.

IN concluding the preceding chapter the Blessed Lord declared interior illumination to be the spiritual part of meditation. The three verses containing this declaration are like aphorisms, to which the present chapter serves as the commentary. Herein it is said that before interior illumination can take place religious and moral duties are to be performed, dedicating the result to the Supreme Spirit, but as soon as receptivity to this illumination has been developed, renunciation becomes natural. Thus, for the man of action there are three stages, — performance of action, meditation, and true illumination.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke* :

1. Whoever performs action that has to be done, without depending upon the fruit of action, is the man of renunciation¹ as well as the performer of right action, and not the mere giver up of consecrated fire² and works of the law.

The renunciation here spoken of is that renunciation which is but a means for the attainment of true renunciation; so also is the right performance of action here mentioned the means for attaining the absolute right performance. The next verse declares the absolute right performance of action to be identical with absolute renunciation.

¹ "Is the man of renunciation," etc. The only renunciation that is of value as a means for the attainment of the supreme good is the renunciation of the desire of possession.

² "Consecrated fire" has to be kept up under the Brāhmanical Law by householders for the performance of daily and periodical sacrifices

2. That which they call¹ renunciation, know that to be the right performance of action, O son of Pāndu. Without having renounced intentions² no one becomes a right performer of action.

The difficulty is to see how renunciation, which conveys the idea of cessation from action, should be the same as action, howsoever performed. But on reflection it will appear that ceasing to do any particular thing is in itself an act, the acme of renunciation is that state in which the intention to renounce is also renounced. While on the other hand, in the case of the right performance of action it is soon discovered by those aspiring to it that there is no intellectual representation possible for that which is right. Everything that we can think of is imperfect. Still, the hope which supports us in the search for the right shows that the right exists and that we do not know it. The natural effect of this is the absence of desire for action, including the form of it called cessation of action. The supreme truth thus represented to our intelligence is realized when Nirvāna is reached.

Having shown the importance of right performance of action by its praise, the Teacher next points out that it is the means for the attainment of right meditation.

3. For the wise man,³ desirous of mounting to meditation,⁴ action is said to be the means for the same. When thus mounted,⁵ cessation of action is said to be the means.

The time of attaining meditation is next described.

4. When the man has abandoned all intentions and

¹ "They call," that is, those versed in the Vedas and the Sacred Law.

² "Intentions," that is, the feeling that "I shall do it," preceding action.

³ "The wise man" is the performer of right action in the sense explained in the preceding chapter.

⁴ "Meditation" as described in the last three verses of Chapter V.

⁵ "When thus mounted," etc. Each time that in right action an interior peace and a feeling of having no responsibility is experienced, a step is taken toward right meditation. When one has begun to obtain these glimpses of the great peace, right meditation is not far from him. The power to remain fixed in meditation is the purification of the heart from desire of action here called cessation of action.

has no attachment leading to action in regard to objects of sense, then is he said to be mounted on meditation.

Psalm cxxx. 97.

"Intentions" here includes unconscious tendencies. When intentions in this sense are removed there can be no prompting to action. All desires are but manifestations of these unconscious tendencies, these form the stuff, and the manner of its behavior is Karma in its strict sense. Sometimes, especially in English, the law as well as the substance is called Karma.

All tendencies, conscious or unconscious, are to be removed. When tendencies become dynamic they can be suppressed by patience and moral fortitude, but not so with latent tendencies. Since the tendencies in man are infinite in variety, it is not difficult to see that it is useless to wait for them to become dynamic in order to suppress them. The complete exhaustion of all tendencies by such a process would require infinite time. A supplementary method, more effective than the obvious one, is therefore necessary. This method is the dedication of all acts, as well as the power of action, to the Deity, or the study of spiritual philosophy. There is no other means by which the ever-burning fire of desire can be quenched, the insatiable thirst for life can be satisfied. It may be added that the dedication to the Deity of the fruit of action is not complete if the desire for the attainment of salvation, or Nirvâna, is kept back. Resign yourself to the Deity, and know through faith that the final end of existence is to attain perfect obedience to God, who is all in all. You can have no power, not even to work for the attainment of Nirvâna; all is of God.

5. Upraise the self by the self — do not sink the self; the self is the friend of self, and even the self is the enemy of self.

To "upraise the self" one must strive to "mount to meditation;" and in order not to "sink the self" one must not forget that there is no other way to escape from the ceaseless wheel of evolution than that herein described. In this way the soul is saved from all danger of falling into conditions even more miserable than its present lot.

The "self is the friend of self" because in seeking the eternal

life the friends and relations who can aid us in all other matters may hinder rather than help us; the very love of them may itself become an obstacle. In the struggle for life everlasting a man is alone with his God.

The "self is the enemy of self" because the real enemy of man is his own heart, and even external enemies are such in consequence of our own nature. The pure heart is the self that rescues us from death, while the impure heart leads to destruction.

6. That self is the friend of the self by which the self is conquered; the unsubdued self prevails in enmity against the self even as an enemy.

1 Cor. ix. 27.

The combination of the body and mind ordinarily considered as "the self" is "conquered" when its perpetual restlessness is ended. When this is accomplished the Ego abides in its own form, — in other words, as it really is, identical with the Supreme Spirit, — and the soul receiving the perfect image of the Ego suffers no more.

How the "self is the friend of the self" is amplified.

7. The self of the man who is self-subdued¹ and free from desire and anger, is as the Supreme Self; and remains equal² in heat and cold, and also in honor and disgrace.

Romans viii
13, 14

"As the Supreme Self." When the self or heart of a man is perfectly at rest in God, it is said to be in the image or form of God.

The excellence of meditation is declared by praising the man who succeeds in it.

8. He whose heart is content with formal³ and real knowledge,⁴ and who is unshaken⁵ and the conqueror of the senses, is said to be at rest in the Divine; he

¹ "Self-subdued," that is, mind and body at rest.

² "Remains equal," etc., in consequence of divine illumination.

³ "Formal," that is, knowledge contained in scriptural instruction.

⁴ "Real knowledge" is finding confirmation within one's self of what is taught in the Scriptures.

⁵ "Unshaken," by blasts of desire and anger.

is the illuminated sage to whom stone and gold are one.

The equal-mindedness of the sage is not confined to stone and gold, but embraces all things.

9. Excellent among them all is he whose heart is even in regard to friends, comrades, those who are indifferent, well-wishers to himself, and also to those opposed, to enemies and to kinsmen, and also in regard to the righteous and evil-doers.

Matt. v. 43-48.

There is another rendering for the first part of this verse, which is, "he attains liberation whose heart," etc. "Among them all" refers to those who have attained to meditation. Such an one being the most excellent, perpetual effort is to be made for final success through meditation. From the next verse to the thirty-second, instruction in the practice of meditation is given.

10. Let him who has attained to meditation always¹ strive to reduce his heart to rest in the Supreme,² dwelling in a secret place,³ alone, with body and mind under control, devoid of expectation as well as of acceptance.⁴

Next is declared how the sage is to sit for meditation.

11. Having placed in a clean spot one's seat, firm,⁵ not very high⁶ nor very low,⁷ and formed of skins of animals⁸ placed upon cloth, and Kuça grass upon that,

¹ "Always," without intermission, continued and loving assiduity is implied by this word.

² "Reduce his heart . . . Supreme," that is, realize identity with the Supreme.

³ "Secret place,"—mountain, cave, or any place free from all chance of interruption or interference of any kind. This and the following four conditions give all the requisites for meditation.

⁴ "Acceptance," that is, sense of possession, even in relation to the rags of clothing and bits of food given to him by others.

⁵ "Firm," not liable to be disturbed by instability.

⁶ "Not high," for fear of falling.

⁷ "Nor low," for fear of illness from damp, etc.

⁸ "Skins of animals," etc., the order of placing these three articles is reversed by some authorities.

12. Sitting on that seat, strive for meditation, for the purification of the heart, making the mind one-pointed, and reducing to rest the action of the thinking principle as well as that of the senses and organs.

The mind is "one-pointed" when it is abstracted from all other things than that to which it is applied. There are three mental states. —

1. Distracted, that in which the mind cannot apply itself to the desired object.

2. Discursive, a condition in which attention cannot be fixed on any one object without reference to its being the object desired.

3 One-pointed, which alone is conducive to meditation.

The result of meditation is the purification of the heart.

13. Holding the body, neck, and head straight and unmoved, perfectly determined,¹ and as if beholding² the end of his own nose, and not looking in any direction,

14. With heart in supreme peace, devoid of fear,³ fixed in the Brahmachâri's vow,⁴ with thought controlled⁵ and heart in Me as the supreme goal, he remains.

Psalm cxii 7.

It is not enough to have the heart fixed on the Deity, but he must be recognized as "the supreme goal," the finality of everything. It is possible that the heart should be absorbed in something which at the same time is not considered as the highest object in the universe.

These directions will be entirely barren of results unless the nature is first purified by faith. The most minute description

¹ "Perfectly determined," that is, with the whole nature bent upon this one end.

² "As if beholding," the meditating mystic does not really look at his nose, but in consequence of his not looking at anything and not shutting his eyes, the lines of sight from the eyes naturally converge near the tip of his nose.

³ "Devoid of fear," as to the violation of law, moral and religious. The perfect love that casteth out fear (1 John iv 18).

⁴ "Brahmachâri's vow," such as celibacy, mendicancy, service to the Master.

⁵ "Thought controlled," that is, having absorbed into the mind all its functions except that his "heart is in Me," the perfect Deity.

of the physiology of pleasure is not necessarily productive of pleasure in us.

Having described the process, he proceeds to describe the result in case of success.

15. Thus always tranquillizing the heart in the Supreme, the sage, with thought controlled, attains the supreme rest in Nirvâna that is my essence.

The highest conscious being in the universe is the Lord, or *Içvara*, but his essence is consciousness, which is the same wherever manifested,—in the ant as well as in the greatest of celestial beings. The realization of this truth is Nirvâna. The idea of subject and object does not exist in Nirvâna, and consequently the notion of difference, including the difference between the individual and universal spirit, has no place in the Absolute, which is the Spirit.

Further instructions about the food, etc., of the meditating sage now follow.

16. There is no meditation for the man who eats too much or too little, nor for him whose habit is to sleep too much or too little.

According to the sacred authority the proper amount of food is half of what can be conveniently eaten; and the same rule applies to the quantity of drink which is taken.

17. For him who is regulated in food,¹ in walking,² in exertion of work,³—regulated as well in sleep and waking,⁴—meditation becomes the destroyer of all suffering.⁵

He who perseveres in this discipline at last attains to meditation, at the time described in the following verse.

¹ "Regulated in food," as above.

² "In walking," never to walk more than about eight miles.

³ "Exertion of work," such as talking, etc.

⁴ "Sleep and waking," keep awake during the first four and the last four hours of the night, and sleep during the rest.

⁵ "Destroyer of all suffering," that is, preventing continuance of conditioned existence by the rise to spiritual knowledge.

18. When the completely regulated heart remains at rest in the true Ego, then is the sage, free from attachment to any object of desire, said to be in yoga.

The "heart" is the combination of the principles of will, thought, and egotism. "Remains at rest," being applied to the true Ego, which is the same as the Supreme Spirit in exclusion of all objects. This stage is not final emancipation, for individual consciousness is not yet merged; it has yet an object, namely, the Supreme Spirit.

This condition, described above, is the conscious beatific vision. But in Nirvāna (to be described vv. 20-22) there is nothing which can specialize consciousness as individual or universal.

Yoga is the state described, it is defined by its greatest master as the cessation of the activity of the "heart."

19. The simile for the sage in yoga, with the heart at rest, and continuing in meditation is thought¹ to be as a lamp² in a windless place.

20. When the heart, restrained by the practice of yoga, rests from the final struggle, when it, viewing the Self³ by the Self,⁴ receives content in the Self,

21. When the objectless, self-perceived⁵ acme of bliss he knows, and being where he never falls from the Reality,⁶

22. Having gained which no other gain is considered superior thereto; in which one fixed is not moved, even by great grief.

The self is that which every one considers the greatest object of interest, so that when the self is gained there is no other gain desired. Death may be considered an example of "great grief." The idea is not that death is borne with patience, but that even

¹ "Thought," by those who have realized it.

² "Lamp," etc., that is, the heart of the sage in yoga is steady in its illumination, with no flickering shadows of doubt on its limitless expanse.

³ "Self," that is, the Universal Spirit, the Lord of all

⁴ "By the self," that is, as identical with "thou," the individual spirit.

⁵ "Self-perceived," that is, perceived by the principle called perception.

⁶ "Reality" is Nirvāna.

death will not produce any feeling of a character requiring the exercise of patience.

The practical application of the theory of yoga, described before, is next shown in relation to the hearer.

23. Know this¹ disconnection from union with pain as yoga which ought to be striven for with faith² and without indifference.³

How this meditation is to be striven for is next described.

24. Abandoning all desires born of intentions, together with the intentions themselves, and controlling by the mind⁴ the senses and organs which tend to action in every direction,

25. By degrees find rest in the inner self, possessed of patience; having brought the mind to rest in the true Self, think of nothing at all

The expression "by degrees" shows that without attempting to fix the mind at once on the Supreme Spirit the aspirant ought to proceed step by step from the more gross to the less gross, thus: let the principle of perception (the inner self) dwell at first exclusively on the element earth and then absorb it into the next subtler element of water, and that into air, and then by degrees air into *ākāśa*, or free space; *ākāśa* into the reflective principle (*manas*), that into egotism, egotism into the principle of perception (*buddhi*), and *buddhi* into the unmanifested cause of all things, *Prakriti*, and finally that separated from the self or ego, *Purusha*; the Ego thus rendered independent of nature is one with the Supreme Spirit without any difference at all

When this is done there comes rest free from all tendencies of every kind. The great Master of yoga, Patanjali, says that it is injurious to attempt to fix the mind at once on the Supreme Spirit.

¹ "This," that is, what has been described in verses 20-22.

² "With faith," that is, with full conviction as to the truth of the teaching of the Scriptures and Masters concerning it.

³ "Without indifference," persevering in the effort, even though no success is readily achieved.

⁴ "Mind," which can perceive the harm with which the objects of sense are impregnated.

26. To whatever object goes out the mind, ever active and inconstant, restraining it from that, reduce it into subjection in the Spirit.

Whenever the mind, which, owing to natural discursiveness, is repugnant to concentration, is snatched away by any object, the best thing to be done is to perceive how worthless that object is in comparison with the prize that awaits the aspirant on the successful termination of his labors.

The result of this subjection of the mind is next stated.

27. Supreme bliss comes truly to the sage in meditation, whose mind is in peace,¹ whose passion² is exhausted, who is one with the Supreme Spirit, and free from both good and evil.

28. Thus devoting the heart, the sage in meditation,³ free from imperfections, obtains without difficulty⁴ the acme of bliss by union⁵ with the Supreme Spirit.

Now comes the declaration of the nature of the ultimate goal, Nirvāna. It is first the extinction of all suffering, and then, for him who attains to it, it is the pure, unmixed, perfect, eternal bliss. Nirvāna is reached by the spiritual knowledge arising from yoga.

29. He whose heart is at rest through meditation, and who everywhere perceives the unity, perceives the Ego which is in every creature, and every creature in the Ego.

Restfulness of the heart is the only medium through which comes the perception of unity. He who "perceives the Ego in every creature," etc., realizes that the Ego is but one, although the forms of which it is the ego are many, and that the multitude of

¹ "Mind is in peace," on account of its fixed application to the true Self.

² "Passion" is the quality of *rajas*, producing delusion, restlessness, etc.

³ "Sage in meditation," he who perseveres in yoga, unhindered by indolence, sickness, absence of mind, retrogression, restlessness, want of faith, erroneous perception, pain, dulness of mind, and attachment to objects of enjoyment.

⁴ "Without difficulty," that is, without effort, through divine grace.

⁵ "Union," that is, perception of identity

forms can exist only as the power of the Ego. The individual spirit is here spoken of, — the spirit that is "own." The spirit that is not "own" is the Lord, Krishna. The individual ego is the spirit within, while the Lord is the spirit without. The next verse declares their identity, — that which is "own" is the Lord, and the Lord is the "own."

30. Who sees me everywhere, and sees everything
in me, for him I am not lost, nor is he lost
for me.

That is, the individual spirit knows the universal spirit as the self, and the relation is reciprocal. This is the acme of identity.

31. Whoever, relying on spiritual one-ness,¹ worships me, who am in all creatures, he, the sage in yoga, in whatever condition existing, is present in me.²

32. Whoever among the sages, O Arjuna, perceives everywhere the same sorrow and joy³ by measuring with his own self, is considered to be the most excellent.

Matthew xxv.
34-40

ARJUNA said:

33. O Slayer of Madhu,⁴ this Yoga by thee declared as being tranquillity,⁵ — of this I do not perceive uninterrupted continuance owing to restlessness of mind.

34. Restless, indeed, is the mind, O Krishna⁶ turbu-

¹ "Relying on spiritual one-ness," realizing as the Ego the absolute consciousness without which no object can exist, and yet which is no object.

² "Is present in me," that is, attains liberation.

³ "Same sorrow and joy," etc., that is, thinks that whatever is painful to himself is painful to others, owing to the non-duality of the Self. Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you.

⁴ "Slayer of Madhu" Krishna slew the giant Madhu, who represents the quality of passion in nature.

⁵ "Tranquillity," that is, the rest of the mind in the Self, freed from discursiveness as also from inaction.

⁶ "Krishna," that is, he who is beyond all change, the supreme object of all meditation.

lent,¹ wild,² and firm;³ the restraint of it I think is as greatly difficult as that of the wind.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke*:

35. Without doubt, O thou of mighty arms, the mind is restless and hard to restrain; but, O son of Kuntī, it is reducible by long-continued practice and absence of desire.

"Long-continued practice" is that of holding the mind fixed in any particular function, without interruption, for a long time. "Absence of desire" is loss of relish in enjoyments, present and future, by realizing their evil consequences. According to the great Master of yoga in India, these two are the chief means of attaining to meditation, — all others are secondary to these.

36. Yoga is difficult to be attained by him whose heart is not controlled, but is attainable through proper means⁴ by him whose heart is controlled.⁵

ARJUNA *said*:

37. O Krishna, who comes in faith, but whose mind is shaken,⁶ — not finding the success through yoga, what end⁷ does he obtain?

38. Does he, fallen from both,⁸ become destroyed like a broken cloud, without any support,⁹ O thou

¹ "Turbulent," because it destroys peace.

² "Wild," because its activity is subject to no rule.

³ "Firm," because it is difficult to be bent from its object.

⁴ "Proper means," that is, cessation of the functions of the thinking principle after its purification by being kept under control.

⁵ "Heart is controlled," by long practice and absence of desire.

⁶ "Mind is shaken," at the time of death, owing to the restlessness of the senses.

⁷ "End," that is, state of being.

⁸ "Both," that is, the good resulting from deeds of merit as well as from spiritual knowledge through yoga.

⁹ "Without any support," from any promise contained in the theocratic Brahmanical law. The law-abiding man may hope for the fulfilment of the divine promise supporting the law.

of mighty arms, being deluded on the way of the Spirit?¹

39. This my doubt, O Krishna, thou art able to remove without leaving any remnant; there can indeed be no remover of the doubt other than thee.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke* :

40. O son of Prithâ, neither here nor hereafter is there destruction² for him; never, my son, does a worker of righteousness come to an evil end.

Ps. lv. 22.

41. Attaining to the sphere of the workers of righteousness³ and dwelling there endless years,⁴ he that is fallen from yoga is born in the family of the pure and prosperous,⁵

42. Or even in the family of the wise, firm in meditation.⁶ On earth a birth like this is even more difficult⁷ to obtain.

43. There he gains union with that knowledge⁸ which belonged to the former body, and with that he again strives for perfection, O son of Kuru.

44. Because, by reason of that past practice, even against his will, he works; and though he be a mere inquirer about meditation, he reaches beyond the promise given by Vedic rites.

¹ "Way of the Spirit," that is, in the acquirement of spiritual knowledge.

² "Destruction;" exclusion from the society of the righteous on this earth and suffering after death, followed by re-birth in a position worse than before.

³ "Workers of righteousness," that is, those who perform acts of religious and moral merit.

⁴ "Endless years," that is, so long as to appear endless to mortals.

⁵ "Prosperous," because of his desire which led to his fall from meditation.

⁶ "Wise, firm in meditation," that is, men spiritually illuminated.

⁷ "More difficult," than the former, because it is free from all the temptations to which prosperity is subject.

⁸ "Knowledge" here means spiritual character; aspirations Godward.

"Even against his will" means that if he has committed any acts sufficiently unrighteous to produce evil tendencies stronger than the upward aspirations, then he has to exhaust those tendencies by experiencing their results; and as soon as these tendencies have become for a moment powerless, as all tendencies do become while changing their form, the upward aspirations assert their sway. If, again, the downward tendencies are not so great, he walks the right path, but with trembling and trepidation, and in the darkness of doubt.

"Though he be a mere inquirer" does not mean that any one having a mere sentimental desire to know what meditation is attains to the result mentioned; but that if one neglects all duties of life to know the nature of meditation he is superior to the performer of all works. Even in this it is to be understood that the desire is sincere and earnest, and not merely an excuse for lawless conduct. If this is so, even for a beginner, what need be said about those who have practised and failed?

45. Striving with strength the wise man, freed from sins, obtaining perfection because of efforts repeated through many births, then¹ goes to the supreme goal.

By the accumulated spiritual strength of many births the wise man is able to make such strenuous efforts as quickly to acquire that truth which sets him free.

46. The man of meditation² is superior to the man of penance, and also to the man of learning, this is my opinion. The man of meditation is superior also to men of action. Therefore, O Arjuna, become a man of meditation.

47. Of all who are in meditation, he who, with heart gone into me, full of faith, worships me, is supremely in meditation; this is my opinion.

In Chapter V. verse 28, it was declared that the last step is the knowledge of God, which bestows the life eternal. Here it is

¹ "Then," that is, on acquisition of spiritual wisdom.

² "Man of meditation," he who acquires wisdom as described in this chapter.

said that if the God who is known is not the Supreme God spoken of therein, the result is not final emancipation.

Thus ends chapter the sixth, called "RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF MEDITATION," in the blessed BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ, the sacred lore, the divine wisdom, the book of divine union, the colloquy between the blessed KRISHNA and ARJUNA, and contained in the Bhîshma Parvan of the blessed MAHÂBHÂRATA, which is a collection of a hundred thousand verses by VYÂSA.

In this chapter the growth of the capacity for renunciation is set as the limit of the right performance of action (v. 4); then yoga is set forth and the means of acquiring it (vv. 5-23); then instructions are given for restraining the mind, without which yoga is unattainable (vv. 23-36), and finally it is declared that the aspirant for spiritual knowledge through yoga, even though unsuccessful, does not suffer from evil results.

With this chapter closes the first hexad of the "Lord's Lay," declaring the nature of the Individual Spirit.

Salutation to the Supreme Bliss, Mâdhava, adored of all devotees, who declared meditation upon himself as the crest jewel of all meditation in faith.

CHAPTER VII.

RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF REALIZATION.

WITH this chapter begins the declaration of the mystery of the being of the Deity. In supreme reality the Deity has no attribute, and no relation to anything. Yet everything outside the Deity is false in the sense of not having the reality it claims. Man's suffering can never cease until this truth is realized. All religion, all philosophy, all mystical practices aim at this realization as their highest end.

Conditioned beings cannot possibly deal with the supreme truth except through symbolism of words which, without defining, indicates it. Hence it is clear that the value of these symbols depends upon the response which the nature of these beings makes to them. Consequently, as the characters of men differ, the symbols must differ also, in order to be of the same service to all.

The method of approaching the inconceivable Deity must therefore vary in order that all men may have the possibility of accepting some scheme of salvation which is synonymous with the knowledge of the Deity.

Mankind is divisible into three classes in relation to spiritual culture

1. Those who are capable of realizing what the Deity is by the comprehension of verbal symbols which declare the identity of the Deity with the true Ego as the only reality, and all else an incomprehensible mystery called falsehood or illusion, to show its contemptible character.

In the case of devotees of this class no preliminary training is needed for the perception of the truth, symbolized by the words of spiritual philosophy. As an object is seen as soon as the eye turns to it, so these pure souls find the Deity from the indication

given by the words that declare Him. With them there is no exercise of the power of action in obtaining *real* knowledge of the Deity, just as the seeing of an object placed before the eye does not involve the thought of actorship, or the sense of producing the object by looking at it. There is a power in the object which compels the recognition of its existence by the observer. So Truth forces upon these highly spiritual beings its own recognition as soon as it is declared. The present chapter is based upon this view of the truth.

2. Those upon whom the compelling power of Truth cannot operate on account of the restlessness of nature produced in them by passion and worldliness, but who yet receive spiritual truths in faith, and are able to meditate upon them with fixed concentration. The man of meditation hears that the Deity is absolute and identical with the true Self. He *believes* it, but does not *realize* it. The method of spiritual culture appropriate to him is the transference of identity to the Deity by successive stages of self-absorbing meditation as given in the eighth chapter.

The distinction between this and the preceding class is that it recognizes the independent agency of the aspirant for Truth, and has a practical end in view; namely, the realization of identity with the attributeless Deity. Those belonging to the first-mentioned class are free even from this desire; they find Truth is Truth and nothing more. It is obvious that this state of divine illumination is not merely the intellectual admission of Truth in words; as the knowledge of the word "chemistry" is not the same as mastery of the chemical science.

3. Those who through carnality of nature are not even able to concentrate their minds on Truth. These devotees worship God in love, — the love that is feeling God to be the innermost Self; they seek for Him in His wondrous works manifested in nature and in man; they live in brotherly love with all fellow-worshippers, admonishing one another and declaring to one another the mystery of the Godhead, wishing well to all creatures, and performing good works for the sake of God alone, — surrendering the personal will to the unsearchable will of God, the mysterious power which rules the universe. In this class there are individuals in different stages of spiritual development. For the sake of these worshippers the ninth and the three succeeding chapters are given.

All these devotees attain Nirvāna, — those of the first class as soon as the truth which they perceive extinguishes the illusive identity of the self-conscious principle and the Ego. This is accomplished by the separation of interest from the mind by repeatedly bringing it to rest in the Truth that is perceived.

Devotees of the two other classes progress through higher and higher spiritual states before attaining final rest.

Those who have thoroughly realized identity with the Deity are not touched by anything said here; there being nothing beyond the Deity, the Scriptures can have no relation to those who are "His very self" (Chap. VII. 18).

Having declared the superiority of the worshipper of the true God in the last verse of the preceding chapter, the Blessed Lord proceeds to show what God is the true God.

1. O son of Prithā, with heart devoted to me, practising meditation,¹ depending on me, how thou shalt know me completely, — to that listen.

¹ John v. 20,
² Cor. xiii. 12,
13.

"Depending on me" means, recognizing me to be the only hope of attaining the end aspired for. Everything said, done, or thought is of no value; God's will is the only door to salvation. Depend upon that with hope, and while thou hast to work, perform with body, speech, and mind what has been enjoined upon thee through revealed Scriptures.

2. Together with realization,² this knowledge I shall fully declare unto thee; knowing which there shall remain nothing else³ to be known.

John xiv. 17;
Col. ii. 3.

3. Among thousands of men, some *one*, perhaps, strives for perfection; among those striving for perfection, some *one*, perhaps, knows me in reality.

Luke vi. 40;
¹ Cor. ix. 24.

¹ "Practising meditation" is the means for acquiring exclusive devotion to "me," the Supreme Spirit, whose mysterious nature is declared herein.

² "With realization," a new and mysterious consciousness will be given, and not mere information.

³ "Remain nothing else;" the knower of truth being omniscient, for him there can be no more desire; he reaches the absolute in the only sense in which that is possible, — the Absolute God and I are one.

The difficulty of attaining to real knowledge of God induces the Blessed Lord Himself to declare it. (Cf. John i. 18; Matt. xi. 27.)

4. Earth, water, fire, air, and ākāśa, manas, buddhi, and ahankāra, — thus is my nature eight-fold divided.

The nature of the Deity is the totality of His power. Now this power is, first of all, divided into subject and object, — the conscious knower and what he knows. This universal object is the nature described in this verse, and the subject on whom nature depends is the Logos; the Logos as he is in himself is the Father whom no one has seen, the absolute consciousness.

It is declared that the principle of objectivity or nature is the power of existing in the eight forms mentioned. Care must be taken to guard against the misconception of regarding the principle of objectivity as the synthesis of these eight considered as components. For that which is the synthesis cannot make itself the synthesis, and therefore requires some outside power to support its existence by stringing together the eight components as the synthesis. But as it is the divine nature itself which is to be studied, where is such a synthesizing power to be found except in that nature itself? Otherwise it will be necessary to maintain the existence of more than one God, and also to incur a *regressus in infinitum*.

This divine power called objectivity is the power to assume eight forms; namely —

EARTH, which does not mean that which is so designated for practical purposes among mankind, but rather that form of the divine power which produces the earth. It may be otherwise looked upon as the subtle principle of smell.

WATER, FIRE, AIR, and ĀKĀŚA, these four elements are to be similarly understood as the divine power of producing them respectively, or as the subtle principles of taste, sight, touch, and hearing.

MANAS ordinarily signifies the faculty which makes images, the reflecting power; but here it means the power of producing that which is perceived as "I am this," without defining what "this" is.

BUDDHI usually means the faculty which produces the sense of reality by investing some one among the images produced by manas with the character of certainty. Buddhi is the power

which is perceived in the difference between what is called real and what is called imaginary. In regard to the real object, buddhi works with the image-making power; in regard to the imaginary it does not. Here it is to be taken as that element in the totality of the Divine Power which makes all the workings of that Power to appear as *in themselves* real, and hides their true character of being real only by reflecting the Reality which is the Deity.

AHANKÂRA usually signifies the principle of self-consciousness, or egotism. Here it designates the totality of the dynamic energy of the Deity, the power of producing the universe out of the Divine Substance which never changes.

5. This is inferior; different from this know my
 John. i. 4, 5. superior nature, which is the knower; by
 which, O thou of mighty arms, the universe
 is upheld.

It is "inferior," because unconscious, unable to exist except in connection with consciousness, which it cannot know, and yet works for. The "superior nature," or consciousness, is to be regarded only in relation with the other power, objectivity. The Supreme God of the universe is the Lord of the superior and inferior nature. He is independent of the universe and His own lordly power over it. (Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 28.)

In other words, the ruling power of the universe as related to consciousness is the Logos. This Logos is omnipotent and omniscient. But what is God in Himself as different from His character of ownership of the inferior and superior nature?

The ownership of the superior and inferior natures is the connection between them. For if any relation exists between consciousness and that which is unconscious, it can only be this, "I know It." The object known is not consciousness, and yet in relation to it is as something it knows. This is the ownership of the inferior nature.

Now, the ownership of the superior nature can only be the power of disconnecting it from the inferior nature; for then will cease the power represented by the statement "I know It." The ownership of both these natures is the power of uniting and disuniting them. (Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28.)

In order to know what the Deity is in Himself, this power is to be included in Power which has no being apart from the Deity. If

that is realized, all notions of knower, knowledge, and known are ended. In consequence, Power, or Nature, both superior and inferior, disappears, and what remains is consciousness without its character of being the superior nature, because it is not connected with any object.

This is the FATHER of the New Testament, whose Son, the Word, is the conscious creator, preserver, and destroyer of the universe, and is eternally in the bosom of the Father. Time is the relation between nature and consciousness; how then can time affect God? The relation between nature and consciousness cannot be ended by lapse of time, but by the knowledge that consciousness is not nature, which is unconscious.

This knowledge, being unrelated to time, is not an act of knowing, but a thing called knowledge, and therefore very rightly called the Grace of God, which alone can exercise the power by which the connection between nature and consciousness is severed. Consciousness, in itself, cannot be the object of knowledge; therefore no man at any time hath seen God (the Father); but the Son, or Consciousness, as related to nature, "hath declared Him." The Logos, as knowing and dominating nature, knows also his own independence of nature or the self-existence of consciousness, and thus can declare the Father, but not know Him, except as identical with Him, the quality of consciousness which is the Spirit of God being the same wherever found: and this cannot rightly be called knowledge.

6. Know that all creation has these¹ for their source :

Col. i 15-17; I am of the whole universe the origin and
John i. 3. the end.

Through these two powers, "the origin and the end," the Deity is the cause of all things, — the Alpha and Omega of existence. As Himself, the Deity has no attributes; but as the Word, the Lord of the two powers, He is the God of the universe.

7. O conqueror of wealth, there is nothing superior
to Me; ² all this is threaded by Me ³ as gem-
beads by string.

Isa. xlv. 6.

¹ "These," that is, superior and inferior nature

² "There is nothing . . . me." Absolute consciousness is beyond all things.

³ "All this is . . . me;" as the string, though unseen, keeps together the

How all things are strung on Nature's Lord is shown by the declaration of His powers as their essence.

8. O son of Kuntî, I am the taste in water, the splendor of Sun and Moon, the Pranava¹ in all the Vedas, sound in space, the humanity in men.

9. I am the sacred smell² in the Earth, and the brilliance in the Fire; the life in all creatures and the power of concentration³ in those whose minds are concentrated in the Spirit.

10. Know Me, O son of Prithâ, as the eternal seed⁴ of all creatures. I am the wisdom⁵ of the wise and the power⁶ of the powerful.

11. Of the strong I am that strength⁷ which is free from relish⁸ and longing,⁹ in all creatures I am the desire unopposed to righteousness.¹⁰

12. Know the moods arising from the qualities of *satva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, as from Me;¹¹ they are in Me, but not I in them.¹²

Amos iii 6.
Rom ix 18.

gem-beads that it threads, so consciousness, though not perceived, keeps together the universe of objects which are but manifestations of its power

¹ "Pranava," this mysterious syllable, Om, is the essence of all the Vedas; to comprehend its import is to comprehend the Truth embodied in the Vedas.

² "Sacred smell," all things are sacred in their natural condition, they become defiled by contact with the impurity of creatures

³ "Power of concentration," that by which they are connected with me.

⁴ "Seed," that is, final cause

⁵ "Wisdom," that is, manifestation of Truth in the form of Faith, or certainty about Truth

⁶ "Power," that is, the capacity for overcoming opposition.

⁷ "Strength," that is, the capacity of not being overcome.

⁸ "Relish," that is, the pleasure with which an object is enjoyed.

⁹ "Longing," that is, the pleasure with which an absent object of enjoyment is contemplated.

¹⁰ "Desire unopposed to righteousness," for example, eating and drinking for the maintenance of life.

¹¹ "From me," that is, the "qualities" are contained in the "inferior nature" which is their final cause.

¹² "Not I in them," that is, unlike creatures, the Creator is not bound by Nature: the Divine will is absolutely free, and the Divine substance absolutely unconditioned.

"Moods" are states of mind leading to variety in experience. As affected by *satva*, they are unselfishness, truthfulness, and so on; by *rajas*, they are vanity, self-gratulation, and the like; by *tamas*, they are grief, confusion of mind, and similar attributes. The nature of these "qualities" is fully explained in Chapter XIV.

13. The whole world, deluded by these three moods, born of qualities, knows not Me, the unmodifying,¹ as distinct from these.

The world is "deluded" through spiritual blindness; the world does not know the Deity, the spirit of all creatures, and possessed of eternally pure, wise, and unconditioned nature, as really distinct from the causes which in their totality form the "inferior nature." (Cf. John 1 10, 11.)

The path which leads out of delusion is now declared.

14. Because this,² my³ illusive power,⁴ formed of qualities, is so difficult to cross over, — is Divine,⁵ — therefore those cross over this illusive power who seek refuge in Me alone.

Ps lxxi 7, 8
John 1. 12

The last sentence shows that those who, perceiving through faith that the Deity is independent of nature and is its Master, abandon all desire and dedicate to Him the personal will, attain Nirvāna.

Now follows the reason why all men do not seek refuge in the Deity.

15. The worst among men, deluded, workers of evil, bereft of spiritual perception by the illusive power, and resting in demoniac dispositions,⁶ do not seek refuge in Me.

Isa vi 9;
John viii. 43,
44, 47.

¹ "Unmodifying," that is, simple essence

² "This," that is, known to me in its true character.

³ "My," that is, I am its Master.

⁴ "Illusive power," that is, capable of making one thing appear as another, — forming this wondrous world out of darkness

⁵ "Divine," that is, possessed or dominated by the Deity forming the inferior nature.

⁶ "Demoniac dispositions," characterized by cruelty, untruth, and other similar qualities. "Disposition" is a lasting mood.

It may here be added that the holding back of truth from those of "demoniac disposition" is for their own good, because they would cease to be themselves, and in that sense would be destroyed by the reception of truth. Sometimes they would say, "Give us Truth, even if it slay us;" but they say so only because they do not believe that Truth exists; their object is not to obtain Truth, but vainglorious satisfaction in the confirmation of their belief that Truth is not. They get what they seek.

16. Four classes of men, workers of righteousness, worship Me, O Arjuna, — the afflicted,¹ the searchers for Truth,² the desirers of possessions,³ and the wise,⁴ O son of Bharata.

¹ Kings iii. 11

It is possible for every worshipper to cross over this life of illusions, but owing to diversity of motives impelling them, the actual result is not the same.

17. Of them the wise man, eternally illuminated,⁵ devoted exclusively to Me,⁶ is the best. I am, indeed, extremely beloved⁷ of the wise man, and he of Me.⁸

² Kings iii. 10,
³ Cor xiii. 12

18. Excellent indeed are all of them, but the wise man is myself — this is my opinion, because the wise man is, with heart in peace, established on the road to the superiorless goal,⁹ which is even Myself.

¹ "The afflicted" are relieved from their afflictions.

² "Searchers for Truth" obtain it.

³ "Desirers of possessions" gain their desires here or hereafter.

⁴ "The wise," those who have realized that the Deity is the true Ego.

⁵ "Eternally illuminated," by self-knowledge

⁶ "Exclusively to me," perceives no other object in the universe worthy of devotion besides the Supreme Spirit. In the universe of falsity the only truth is the Lord, and I and He are one and the same

⁷ "I am . . . extremely beloved" It is well known that the most beloved object is the self, and the Lord being the Self is the most beloved of the wise, who knows Him to be the Self.

⁸ "He of me" In granting the realization of identity to the wise man, the Deity accepts him as Himself.

⁹ "Superiorless goal," or Nirvāna, which is the very Self of the Deity.

It is not true that the other three classes of worshippers are not dear to me, but they are guilty towards me of the offence of ignorance, which prevents the perfect manifestation of my love to them. Yet it is better to worship the Deity for a selfish object than not to worship Him at all; for the selfish worshipper can at any time become a true worshipper by abandoning selfishness.

19. At the end of many births¹ the wise man finds me as the Vāsudeva who is all this;² such an one, of great soul, is extremely difficult to find.

The reason for the non-recognition of Vāsudeva as the spirit of all now follows.

20. Bereft of discriminating wisdom³ by special desires,⁴ men worship other gods, adopting peculiar modes of worship,⁵ in subordination⁶ to their own hearts.

It is better to worship the true God, even with wrong motives, than to become idolaters; for in the first case a gradual attainment of Nirvāna is possible.

The reason is next given why men do not, through worship of false gods, become fit worshippers of the true God in course of time.

21. Whatever form⁷ a devotee desires to worship in faith, in the same unswerving faith I ordain.

By the tendencies generated during one birth the conduct during the next is regulated, and that in its turn strengthens the same tendencies; and thus the wheel rolls on ceaselessly.

¹ "At the end of many births" From the beginningless past time the great-souled sage has acquired the tendencies on the maturity of which spiritual knowledge arises.

² "Vāsudeva who is all this," or the Supreme Spirit which dwells in all things and yet is apart from all things, it is a name of Krishna.

³ "Discriminating wisdom" as to the true God.

⁴ "Special desires," such as greatness among men, revenge upon enemies, and so on.

⁵ "Peculiar modes of worship," that is, fasting, singing hymns, etc.

⁶ "In subordination," etc., that is, in adopting peculiar rites and ceremonies they are guided by their own natures, or rather characters, formed by the desires and acts in previous births.

⁷ "Form," all gods are the bodies or forms of the true God, who is beyond all form.

Like the tree and the seed, tendencies and acts are perpetuated by the regulating power of the Deity which attaches to each man his previously generated tendencies; this is why idolatry is such an abomination.

22. Joined to that faith, he labors for the worship of the particular god, and gains from him his desires; but really they are ordained by Me.

False gods have no independent power. Whatever power they may seem to possess, it is but the reflection of the almightiness of the true God.

23. The result that comes to them, men of little understanding,¹ is temporary. To the gods the worshippers of the gods go; my worshippers go² to Me.

It is true that the false gods are apparently nearer to men than the true God; but here in the Blessed Lord, the true God, is manifested through His mysterious power. Why is it that men still refuse Him worship?

24. These, devoid of understanding, consider Me, the
John 1:18; unmanifest, as manifested,³ not knowing the
1 Tim. 1:17. supreme condition⁴ of Me, the exhaustless
 and superiorless.⁵

The mystery of the incarnation is misunderstood, and men devoid of understanding think that which is seen of them is God. They know the Christ only in the manner of the flesh.

¹ "Of little understanding," because the same amount of labor in the service of the true God would have yielded endless results

² "Go," this verb is quite appropriate, because as the Deity is omnipresent there is no need to break the rhetorical symmetry which is preserved by the repetition of the verb used before.

³ "Unmanifest as manifested" They think that the God who was unmanifested until the incarnation became changed into the mortal man. Thus the incarnation is made a new ground for idolatry, and the Supreme is degraded to the level of false gods.

⁴ "Supreme condition." Where the absolute God is looked upon in relation to His creatures He stands as the other pole of existence, yet really He is

⁵ "Exhaustless and Superiorless," that is, absolute.

Those who would hold that there was any change of consciousness in the Deity owing to the birth of the babe in the manger, or that the Logos at any time did not know his own true nature, — or, strictly speaking, independence of nature, — would be “of little understanding,” according to the meaning of this last verse.

25. I am not manifest to the world,¹ being wrapped up by the creative power; therefore this deluded world does not recognize Me, the unborn, exhaustless.

26. I know the creatures that are past and that are present as also that are future, O Arjuna, but Me no one² knows.

As the magician causes illusion to all but is not affected by it himself, so though the world is deluded by the qualities, yet I am not affected by them; my omniscience is never impaired.

27. O son of Bharata,³ by the delusion of opposites, arising from attraction and hatred, all creatures at the time of birth⁴ fall into delusion, O harasser of thy foes.

The “opposites” are the species contained in the genus “attraction and hatred.” As they arise, the tranquillity necessary for wisdom is disturbed by the feeling that “I am undergoing change.” The egotism thus strengthened prevents the realization of the true Ego.

28. Men of righteous deeds,⁵ whose sins have come

¹ “Not manifest to the world,” but only to my devotees (Cf. John xvii. 9; Luke viii. 10)

² “No one,” except the wise.

³ “Son of Bharata” and “harasser of thy foes” are epithets intended to call forth all the energies of Arjuna by the recollection of the greatness of his family and his own prowess, in order to emancipate himself from the power of the opposites, heat and cold.

⁴ “At the time of birth;” by attraction towards it, and repulsion from it, the incarnating ego loses its previous knowledge.

⁵ “Righteous deeds” purify the heart.

to an end,¹—they, freed from² the pair of opposites, *Matt x. 22,* and delusion, worship Me, persevering in *Eph. iii. 17-19.* faith.

"Persevering in faith" is having the firm faith that this is the true God whom I worship. He is the nearest and dearest thing to me, being the true Ego; and for His sake I renounce the world and all it contains.

29. Those who for liberation from decay and death strive, depending on Me, they know Brahmā, the whole Adhyātma, as well as all Karma.

The expression "depending on me" teaches that those devotees who have been spoken of before find me as the attributeless Deity, from scriptural declarations, and in consequence are not under the necessity of any action as means for the attainment of the Supreme Spirit. But those who are unable to do so must depend on divine grace and meditate on me, seeking to realize the declaration contained in the succeeding chapter, to which this last and the concluding verse are the introduction. These are the worshippers described before as belonging to the second-mentioned class.

30. Those who know Me together with Adhibhūta,³ Adhidaivata, and Adhiyajna, resting with their hearts in Me, know Me even at the time of death.

Thus ends chapter the seventh, called "REALIZATION OF THE SPIRIT," in the blessed BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ, the sacred lore, the divine wisdom, the book of divine union, the colloquy between the blessed KRISHNA and ARJUNA, and contained in the Bhīshma Parvan of the Blessed MAHĀBHĀRATA, which is a collection of a hundred thousand verses by VYĀSA.

¹ "Whose sins have come to an end," that is, well-nigh exhausted; complete sinlessness is Nivāna.

² "Freed from," etc. This is the consequence of deeds of righteousness and exhaustion of sins.

³ "Adhibhūta" and the other terms are explained in the following chapter.

Those who work out their salvation through mystical meditations, depending on divine grace, not only know that which is mentioned in verse 30, but also those spoken of here, and have no fear of falling away from their state of knowledge at the time of death, when the mind and body are extremely oppressed with agony.

For the highly spiritual this chapter declares the attributeless Deity, who can only be *indicated* by speech.

Salutation to Krishna, whose devotees, striving for liberation, obtain that knowledge which is liberation from this life of bondage.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUPREME SPIRIT NAMED AS OM.

THE preceding chapter declares the Supreme Spirit and His two unsearchable powers, called superior and inferior nature, consciousness and unconsciousness, subject and object. Those who can perceive THAT which the words indicate from the words alone, are beings of the highest order of spirituality. The present chapter is meant for those who believe that Truth is embodied in the words but are yet unable to perceive it.

The seven questions with which the last chapter closes are here answered in such a manner that if they are meditated upon in exclusion of every other object the Truth will be perceived. The acme of meditation is to lose self-consciousness in the object of meditation and thus to become it. It is true that no one can ever *become* the Supreme Spirit, for in reality he is never anything else. To know and to become the Supreme Spirit is really the same thing; the difference in expression is due to the difference in the inner peace of the different classes of devotees.

It is also to be borne in mind that the Supreme Spirit is not in Truth liable to be known as an object. Being nothing but pure consciousness, where is to be found anything else to know it? Nor can consciousness know itself. For to be known is to cease to be consciousness. The purpose of spiritual culture is not intellectually to explain Nature and God, but to purge away our humanity and leave divinity as the *only* Truth and Ego; this is the knowledge of the true God.

Hoping to obtain an explanation of the five words mentioned in the two concluding verses of the last chapter,

ARJUNA said:

1. What is that BRAHMĀ, what is ADHYĀTMA, what is KARMA, O Purushottama, what is ADHIBHŪTA spoken of, and what is called Adhidaivata ?

2. ADHIYAJNA who is in this body, and how, O Slayer of Madhu ; and at the time of death how art thou to be known by souls in meditation fixed ?

Brahmā has two aspects ; namely, with the totality of nature as attribute, and without all and every attribute, as in supreme reality. The first is the Son, who is eternally in the bosom of the Father, is with God, and, as apart from His attributes, is God. The second is the supreme Brahmā, whom no man hath at any time seen and whom no man can see.

"Adhyātma" literally means that which dwells in the body, and thus signifies the senses and organs, as well as the Supreme Spirit, by the mysterious power of illusion appearing as the Spirit dwelling in every man.

"Karma" means religious rites and action in general.

"Purushottama" is literally the Supreme Spirit, and as here used refers to the omniscience of the Blessed Lord.

"Adhibhūta" may mean the Supreme Spirit dwelling in earth, water, and the other elements, and in the whole universe of effects, through the mysterious divine power or illusion.

"Adhidaivata" may mean the highest manifested consciousness, dwelling in the solar orb, or the conscious mind as affected by meditation on the nature of celestial beings.

"Adhiyajna" is literally "the director of a sacrificial ceremony ;" the ceremony here meant is the life of man. Who performs this sacrifice, and who grants the boon to obtain which the sacrifice is instituted ?

The word "how" in the last verse signifies, How does he dwell in the body, inside or outside ; always, or at certain times ? It may also imply, How is he to be known, as identical with or as an attribute of the Supreme Spirit ?

"Madhu" here means honey, — the anticipated pleasure in acts, the fruit of action. He by whom this honey is slain knows all that relates to the nature of action and its consequences.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke*:

3. The Exhaustless is the supreme Brahṁā.¹ OWN-NESS is called Adhyâtma. By Karma is meant the parting with objects for the birth and prosperity of creatures.

Adhyâtma is the same Brahṁā, appearing by its own mysterious power as the individual spirit, the innermost thing in man, the very ownness. If the mind, unfettered by desire or hatred, follows the thing which answers to the word "I," acknowledging and at the same time denying identity with the assemblage of the body and the inner faculties, the pursuit will go on uninterruptedly until it disappears, as appetite disappears by eating. The ultimate reality obtained on the cessation of this pursuit is Adhyâtma, or ownness, which differs from the exhaustless Supreme Brahṁā only in name.

"Karma" here means all the rites and ceremonies which involve the giving up of ownership in anything for the sake of the Deity or gods, where no higher conception of Divinity exists. In the fourth chapter the influence of sacrifices on the prosperity of creatures is explained.

4. Adhibhûta² is the changeful condition. Adhidai-vata is the Purusha. I am the Adhiyajna in this body, O best of those who have a body.

"Purusha" has two meanings, "He who sleeps in the city of nine gates," that is, the body; and "He who is full." Here Purusha is to be taken as the universal consciousness, in relation to which alone exist the power which operates in the senses, organs, mind, egoism, and the power which gives objective reality to mental images. This is the spirit that is said to dwell in the sun, which is the centre of the energy which gives life and activity to the whole system.

5. And at the time of death, whoever goes forth,

¹ "The exhaustless . . . Brahṁā," that is, the attributeless Absolute.

² "Adhibhûta," that which becomes; it excludes all effects and is the causing power.

abandoning the body, meditating upon Me indeed, he attains to my state; ¹ of this no doubt exists.

The right way of approaching the Deity at the time of death is to meditate upon "Me indeed;" that is, upon the Deity as he is, and not in the various aspects here described.

6. Whoever, in consequence of constant meditation on any particular form, ² gives up this body, thinking of that form at the time of death, even to the same form he goes, O son of Kuntī.

The influence of the last thought on the future of the soul is a general truth and not confined to the case of the Deity. At the time of death, when the senses, organs, and internal faculties are in excruciating pain, that thought is entertained which by reason of the greatest familiarity comes with the greatest ease.

7. Therefore at all times ³ meditate on Me and fight; ⁴ thy manas and buddhi being devoted to Me, ⁵ without doubt thou shalt come to Me.

8. With heart that abides in Me alone, and to nothing else wanders, he, O son of Prithā, through proper meditation on the Divine Spirit, goes to it.

The thinking self loses its restlessness and becomes engrossed in the perception of a single object, which in this case is the Deity considered as an object of perception. In order to bring the thinking self to this condition, long, continuous, and loving meditation on the Deity is to be practised again and again.

Proper meditation is that in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures and holy teachers. No religion can be of the highest

¹ "My state," that is, Nirvāna.

² "Form," for example, some inferior god.

³ "At all times," that is, frequently, continuously, and lovingly.

⁴ "And fight," that is, perform thy duty, but yet remember me.

⁵ "Thy manas . . . to me," the whole heart being devoted to the Deity, everything is perceived as a manifestation of Him, the actor, action, and the result thereof being realized as the Deity, the goal after death is necessarily the Deity.

value unless it is founded upon a set of Scriptures the full meaning of which is realized by the teachers of that religion.

The "Divine Spirit" is the Supreme Spirit considered as an object of perception. This is the spirit that is said to dwell in the sun as the source of its power of self-luminousness. The Spirit is described in the succeeding verses.

9. Whoever properly meditates upon the all-wise, the eternal, the supreme ruler, the subtlest¹ of the subtle, the supporter of all, of unthinkable form,² sun-charactered³ by being beyond the darkness.⁴

This verse embodies a Vedic text, "I know that great Spirit, sun-charactered by being beyond the darkness."

10. With mind unwavering, and united to love,⁵ and the power of meditation,⁶ he, at the time of death, perfectly concentrating⁷ his vital powers between the eyebrows, attains to that supreme, refulgent Spirit.⁸

Mere devotion and the power of tranquilizing the heart are not sufficient without knowledge.

11. That which those wise in the Vedas⁹ call exhaust-

¹ "Subtlest," being the cause of all things.

² "Of unthinkable form," that is, though eternally present, no adequate form of Him can be imagined.

³ "Sun-charactered." As the sun requires no extraneous light for its manifestation, so the Divine Spirit, being consciousness, requires nothing to support its existence. The universe, being objective, depends upon consciousness for existence.

⁴ "Darkness," that is, false knowledge or illusion, which is the root cause of the universe; true knowledge is to know the universe as no reality. This true knowledge is not the Delty, inasmuch as He is consciousness.

⁵ "United to love," that is, absorbed in the love of the Deity, who, being the true and only Self, must be the only and absolute love.

⁶ "Power of meditation," that is, the unconscious and irresistible tendency to keep the heart at rest, generated by long-continued and loving practice of meditation.

⁷ "Perfectly concentrating," that is, the self-consciousness being transferred through the fervor of meditation to the Logos in whom the powers of cognition and action are at rest. This is a mystery of the Spirit which is not generally understood.

⁸ "Refulgent Spirit." The Divine Spirit is so called on account of the independence of consciousness of all things.

⁹ "Wise in the Vedas," those who have realized the truth declared in the Vedas.

less,¹ into which enter those who, free from attachments, labor for salvation, desiring which they lead the Brahmachâri's life, — in short, I shall tell thee what makes that known.

The "Brahmachâri" lives under a spiritual master, vowed to celibacy, mendicancy, and other similar observances. Having cast out of his heart all other desires, he "labors for salvation," realizing more and more perfectly the illusive character of the universe, which rests upon non-perception of identity with the Supreme Spirit.

The Pranava is that which "makes that known." How divine knowledge is obtained by comprehending the mystery of this syllable is the subject of many Vedic treatises. This verse is from the Vedas.

The method of worship through this mysterious syllable is next described.

12. Having controlled all the gates,² imprisoned the mind in the heart,³ and having placed the vital powers in the head, at rest in the fixedness of meditation,⁴

13. Repeating the one, exhaustless OM,⁵ whoever departs, abandoning the body,⁶ goes to the supreme goal.

The vital powers are not the production of the mind and egotism alone. Consequently, when the mind is absorbed in the egotism the vital powers are not completely absorbed; they are then drawn into the cause of the egotism, the buddhi, which, according to mystics, is seated between the eyebrows.

But what is to be done by those who are unacquainted with the mystical process by which death is brought under control?

1 "Exhaustless," the name of the Deity independent of all relations.

2 "The gates," that is, senses and organs.

3 "Imprisoned . . . heart," that is, restrained the mind from assuming the form of any object, and thus made it latent in the heart or egotism from which the mind emanates.

4 "Meditation;" that is, while the body is engaged in uttering the sound, the mind is in pursuit of its significance.

5 "Om." This is the name of the one exhaustless Spirit.

6 "Whoever . . . the body," that is, leaves the body without the sense of losing any object of possession.

14. Whoever, with heart that to nothing else turns, constantly and during the whole of life meditates on Me, — for him, the man of yoga, constant in meditation, I am easy of attainment, O son of Prithā.

15. On attaining Me,¹ the great-souled ones, reaching the supreme consummation of being, incur not rapidly-revolving² re-births, the mansion of woe.³

16. All the worlds from the abode of Brahmā are revolving again and again; but, O son of John iii 15. Kuntī, on attaining Me there is no re-birth.

There is no rest in "all the worlds," except in the Deity. Immortality remains a mere word until the identity is fixed on the Supreme Spirit, hence the necessity for man to work out his salvation.

Brahmā is the Deity considered as the creator of personal creatures, not of the Ego which transcends personality. As the body appears as a personal creature by reason of a false attribution of consciousness — which being no object cannot be legitimately attributed to any object — to the body, similarly the universal power of personality, under the false attribution of consciousness, appears as Brahmā.

17. The day of Brahmā is limited by a thousand yugas; ⁴ his night also ends in a thousand yugas; these the knowers of night and day ⁵ know.

¹ "Attaining me," that is, realizing identity with the Supreme Spirit.

² "Rapidly-revolving," the instability of life renders it difficult to perceive its true character as the

³ "Mansion of woe" Not only things in this life are subject to change, but the change is also from agony to agony

⁴ *Yuga* here stands for four-yugas. This computation of time can be shown thus —

1 human year = 1 day and night of the gods.

12000 celestial years = 4 yugas.

1000 four-yugas = 1 day of Brahmā, his night being of equal duration.

360 days and nights of Brahmā = 1 year of Brahmā.

100 years of Brahmā = the term of his life.

⁵ "Knowers of night and day;" not those who are merely versed in the apparent movements of the heavenly bodies, but who through spiritual perception have realised the nature of time.

18. From the unmanifested all the manifested issue. At the approach of the day, at the approach of night, they merge even in that¹ same called the unmanifested.

"Unmanifested" does not here mean the Deity regarded as the cause of the universe, but the power known as the creator Brahmâ's sleep; because it is only at the end of a hundred years of Brahmâ that the universe is reduced into the First Cause. One of the secondary causes is here meant.

19. This assemblage of entities in this manner having become, is destroyed at the approach of night, O son of Prithâ; the same, resistless,² emerges at the coming of day.

Vain are the efforts of man to find any happiness in the world; there is a power which overbears him, and he is chained to the wheel of pain. The powers that constrain him are the consciousness of separateness from the Deity, egotism, attraction and repulsion, and fear of the unknown. These form themselves into the endless stream of cause and effect, which flows on irresistibly; those men alone are wise who perceive this evil and wish not for conditioned existence. The wise must therefore work out their salvation in the way before described.

20. There is yet another unmanifested,³ dissimilar to the preceding, which is the eternal, and which, all things being destroyed, is not destroyed.

The "one, exhaustless" spirit named by the sacred monosyllable is here declared. The subject is resumed after the necessary and contrasting description of the transitoriness of all things in heaven and on earth except the Deity.

¹ "Even in that;" "even" shows that the unmanifested is the basis upon which waves of manifestation appear and disappear.

² "Resistless," because they have not obtained control over nature.

³ "Another unmanifested" The Supreme Spirit is unmanifest because not perceptible by any sense or faculty; yet it is totally unlike and unrelated to the unconscious, material cause of the universe.

21. That called exhaustless,¹ unmanifested, is the same they² term the supreme goal, obtaining which they fall not back, — that is my supreme abode.³

These two verses show that the Supreme Spirit, symbolized by the mysterious monosyllable, is different from all that is comprehended by cause and effect.

22. He is the Supreme⁴ Purusha, attainable by exclusive love ;⁵ all creatures are contained within him,⁶ and by him all this is pervaded.⁷

Acts xvii. 27, 28

All are subject to migratory existence except those who attain to the Supreme Spirit (v. 16).

The path of those who depart from hence never again to return, and of those who go but to come back again to this mortal sphere, are next described.

23. The time when, dying, men of yoga enter into revolving existence and when into non-revolving being, — that time I shall declare, O best of Bharata's sons.

"Time" means the powers that cause change ; the divinities that guide souls to their proper spheres, — the wise devotees to Nirvāna, and others to their temporary celestial abodes.

The eternal life can only be attained through the realization of identity with the Deity, and therefore has nothing to do with the season in which death occurs.

24. Fire, Light, Day, Fortnight of Waxing Moon, and Six months of the Sun's northern circuit, — going on that path, men knowing the Supreme proceed to the Supreme.

¹ "Exhaustless," that is, the Supreme Spirit.

² "They," that is, those versed in the Vedas

³ "My supreme abode," that is, Nirvāna which is not a state, but the very self or being of the Deity. This term is similar to "my consciousness," there is no ego outside the consciousness to possess it

⁴ "Supreme," being the ultimate. The Vedic text declares, "Beyond Purusha there is nothing ; he is the ultimate, he is the supreme goal "

⁵ "Love," the realization that the whole universe is emptiness except the Supreme Spirit ; and I am not different from him

⁶ "Contained within him," as the effect is contained within the cause.

⁷ "All this is pervaded," as the knower of all, that within us which feels that he knows is a mere reflection of the Supreme Spirit.

"Knowing the Supreme," not in the way the spiritually illuminated sage knows him, as described in the preceding chapter, but as those who, having heard from sacred authorities what the Supreme Spirit is, engage in worship in the manner here declared. This is called the "path of the gods."

25. Smoke, Night, also Fortnight of Waning Moon, and Six months of the Sun's southern circuit, — proceeding on this path, the man of action¹ falls back, having obtained the lunar rays.²

Performance of religious and other ceremonies for the sake of the Deity alone, leads to gradual liberation, proceeding from higher to higher spheres. When performed with some special object, they secure a residence in a transitory celestial sphere, where the special object is attained. Doing that which is forbidden by the sacred authorities leads to an abode in hell. The performer of no religious ordinances, who is also wanting in faith, devotion, and spiritual wisdom, goes to the land of shadows and then returns to earth.

This is called the "path of ancestors."

26. White³ and black,⁴ indeed,⁵ are these two paths for the world⁶ eternal, I opine; by one a man goes into non-revolving, by the other he revolves again.

27. Knowing these two paths, O son of Prithā, the man of meditation is not deluded; therefore at all times, O Arjuna, be joined to meditation.

¹ "Man of action," one who fulfils his religious obligations by the performance of all prescribed rites and ceremonies

² "Lunar rays," that is, celestial abodes of enjoyment terminable by re-birth.

³ "White" is the path marked by Fire and the Time gods associated with him, the path of gods, so called from the illumination of knowledge which guides the blessed soul to this path

⁴ "Black" is the path of ancestors, which opens itself out to those who perform religious and moral duties with the expectation of personal gain.

⁵ "Indeed," that is, the paths called in the Vedas and other sacred writings the white and the black path have here been described.

⁶ "For the world," that is, for the worshipper through action and the performer of religious works from selfish desire. All men are not here spoken of; for by the atheist, sceptic, hypocrite, idolater, magician, and scoffer, neither of these two paths is attainable. These paths are eternal because the world is eternal through alternating periods of activity and rest.

He who through fervor of meditation realizes even the nature of these two paths, goes beyond delusion; because when it is vividly impressed upon the soul that by performance of religious works there is no final escape from suffering, unless the motive be exclusively the love of God, there will be no inducement for performing works with any other motive.

"Therefore" if meditation upon the nature of the paths is productive of such good results, how much more beneficial must it be to be joined to the already described meditation, which is a real spiritual entity!

Now listen to the glory of meditation.

28. Whatever meritorious results have been declared¹ to be in the Vedas,² in sacrifices,³ in austerities,⁴ and in gifts,—all that the man of meditation,⁵ knowing this,⁶ transcends, and attains the supreme,⁷ primeval seat.⁸

Thus ends chapter the eighth called, "SUPREME SPIRIT NAMED AS OM," in the blessed BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ, the sacred lore, the divine wisdom, the book of divine union, the colloquy between the blessed KRISHNA and ARJUNA, and contained in the Bhīshma Parvan of the blessed MAHĀ-BHĀRATA, which is a collection of a hundred thousand verses by VYĀSA.

Salutation to Krishna, who is the Lord of the right knowledge of all mysteries, and who has declared the knowledge of the path of meditation by answers to the seven questions.

¹ "Declared" by sacred authorities.

² "In the Vedas," that is, in their study according to prescribed rules.

³ "In sacrifices," performing them without deviating from the sacred injunctions relating to them.

⁴ "In austerities," performed not merely with the body, but with the inner faculties also.

⁵ "Man of meditation," he who worships God in spirit as described before.

⁶ "Knowing this," that is, realizing the truth embodied in the answers to the seven questions set forth in verses 1 and 2.

⁷ "Supreme," being the ultimate.

⁸ "Primeval seat;" because unaffected by the creation and destruction of the world, Nirvāna is so called.

CHAPTER IX.

RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF THE ROYAL MYSTERY.

IN the eighth chapter, those of moderate spirituality are counselled to practise meditation upon the Supreme Spirit in the way described there. The result of such meditation is declared to be the gradual emancipation along the "path of gods." For those whose spiritual condition is lower than that, and who are in consequence unable to restrain the mind to meditate with concentration, what hope is there? The form in which the Deity receives external worship from his faithful devotee is declared in the present chapter

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke* :

1. To thee, unreviling, I shall declare even this¹ most mysterious knowledge, together with realization, knowing which thou shalt escape from evil.²

The use of the superlative degree, "most mysterious," requires at least three objects of the same class. The knowledge regarding physical nature is itself mysterious, more so is the knowledge of the moral nature, and the knowledge of the Spirit is the most mysterious of all.

2. This is the royal knowledge,³ the royal mystery, the excellent sanctifier,⁴ directly realizable,⁵ lawful,⁶ easy to practise,⁷ and exhaustless in result.

1 "This," that is, which thou art able partly to apprehend.

2 "Evil," the bondage of existence.

3 "Knowledge," that is, theoretical knowledge; the way to do a thing.

4 "Excellent sanctifier," that is, capable of removing the accumulated results of acts performed during endless incarnations.

5 "Directly realizable," like pleasure and pain.

6 "Lawful," not opposed to the law of righteousness.

7 "Easy to practise," does not involve great difficulties, or severe asceticism, and yet its result is Nirvāṇa, which knows no end.

3. Men who have no faith in this righteous truth,
O harasser of thy foes, revolve in the way of the death-
dealing world,¹ not finding Me.²

"This righteous truth" is devotion to spiritual knowledge, leading to Nirvāna. Those who have no faith in it are men who believe this body to be the Ego, and that there is no soul whose welfare need give them the least concern, nor any absolute being to aspire to.

4. By Me,³ of unmanifest⁴ form, all this is pervaded;
all creatures are seated in Me,⁵ but I am not seated in them.⁶

5. Nor are creatures seated in Me, behold my divine creative power; supporting all creatures, yet not in any creature, my spirit produces creatures.

In the preceding verse the Blessed Lord said that all creatures are seated in Him, now He declares that even that is mere illusion. And indeed it is; for, as the universe is in reality nothing but the Supreme Spirit, so the relation of container and contained between them is illusive; or in other words the Supreme Spirit while supporting the universe by the Divine power is yet independent of the universe.

Some of the mysterious ways in which the Divine power works are now shown.

6. As air existing in space always goes everywhere,
and is unlimited, so are all things in Me; understand
it to be thus.

¹ "In the way . . . world," that is, revolving through the various births.

² "Me," that is, they do not acquire that faith in me which would ultimately bring them to Nirvāna.

³ "By me," that is, by my superior nature or power of consciousness

⁴ "Unmanifest," that is, not perceptible by the senses nor the understanding.

⁵ "Seated in me," I being the Ego

⁶ "I am not seated in them," that is, as space appears to change and modify into the form of objects it holds, but in reality remains unconditioned, so is consciousness unmodifiable.

The movements of air do not affect space, which contains it. So in the Spirit are contained all things which appear as separate realities by the Divine power of creation.

7. At the end of a kalpa,¹ O son of Kuntī, all things return into my nature,² and then again I project them at the beginning of the kalpa.

8. Dominating my own nature,³ again and again I emanate this whole assemblage of things, resistless on account of subjugation by nature.⁴

It may appear that by reason of exercising His creative energy the Deity may become subject to laws, but that is impossible, on account of the Divine absoluteness which renders Him independent of everything.

9. O conqueror of wealth, those acts do not bind Me, remaining as one indifferent, unattached to those acts.

If the Deity is perfect, and has no desire, no action, then how does creation take place? Who creates, for whose benefit, and how?

10. By reason of my being the onlooker, nature gives birth⁵ to the animate and inanimate universe; for this cause, O son of Kuntī, the universe revolves.

Since nature is unconscious, it is not possible for anything to take place unless there be consciousness somewhere; for things take place only in connection with some "onlooker," or witnessing power. At the same time consciousness has no power of action;

¹ "Kalpa," a day of Brahmā, at the end of a Kalpa comes a Pralaya, or period of rest.

² "Nature," that is, "inferior nature" (Chap VII. v 4); the assemblage of the three qualities, "my" nature, because it is not independent.

³ "My own nature," that is, all the powers of the Deity except that power of wisdom by which Nirvāna is reached, — *avidyā*.

⁴ "By nature," that is, the character of creatures; their beginningless stream of acts and desires.

⁵ "Nature gives birth;" that is, the illusive or creative power; *avidyā*, not *vidyā*.

consequently the Deity cannot be considered as bare consciousness by the inquirer into the mystery of creation. He must take the Deity as possessing the power of witnessing as well as the power of being witnessed. The supervisory power of the Deity is consciousness, — his "sight," or "looking on," — and nature is the other power.

As regards the questions which are before the mind, consideration will show that they can only be proposed under misapprehension; and any answer other than the demonstration of their illegitimacy can only arise in misconception.

Who creates? No one; for nature is unconscious and cannot create; consciousness is incapable of action. Creation is but the fact of the co-existence of nature and consciousness, destruction being another mode of this co-existence. The question assumes that some one conditioned, knowable being has created, of which there can be no proof; and it is thus based upon an error.

For whose benefit? Benefit supposes a conscious enjoyer of the benefit. Now, if there is to be an act (such as creation) for the benefit of some one, one of two conditions must exist, — either the Creator himself is to be benefited, or some other beings are to be so. It is clear, even at first sight, that the latter supposition is untenable, because it supposes the existence of some one not the Creator, who yet exists before creation. On the other hand, if the Creator be the only being in existence, possessing all the powers that are in the universe, it is impossible to imagine a motive for Him to change his condition of inactivity and become active. Hence it is not difficult to see how the question is based upon the erroneous assumption that the universe was created for the benefit of any one. The universe is not a thing, but is the power of the Deity, as burning is the power of fire; in reality the universe is identical with the Deity, but at the same time it must be remembered that the Deity is not the universe.

How was the universe created? The universe never was created, for time is the power of marking change, and therefore is a part of nature in the sense of the totality of Divine powers. Consequently if the universe is supposed to be non-existent (as suppose it we must in order that creation should be possible as a subsequent fact), time itself is non-existent, because no power to mark change can exist where there is no change to be marked. Hence the question is based upon a misconception of the nature of time.

These considerations amply demonstrate that such questions ought not to be entertained, for they are as baseless and irrational as it would be to ask "Why is the human mind made of tin?"

The fact that such questions do arise, and an apparent view of the universe does support them, is to be noted. The cause of this seeming is the creative power of the Deity, which makes a thing appear to be what it is not. To know this affords the only real and legitimate solution of the questions under consideration. Accept it as a mystery, unsearchable by the mind, which is a worthless thing as a guide through the labyrinth of existence. The Vedas therefore say, "Who knows this, who in the universe can speak about it, whence is it come, where is this creation?"

Such is the unsearchableness of the divine mystery, that although the eternally perfect Deity is the only true Ego of all creatures, yet creatures do not know it. The wonder is the greater in this instance, because the mysterious power has manifested a human being on earth who declares what he knows; namely, the identity of the consciousness within us with the Supreme Spirit.

11. The deluded, not knowing my real being, condemn Me, the Supreme Lord of all creatures,
John 1. 10, 11. connected with this human body.

Through delusion men do not believe that the Supreme Spirit, perfect and changeless, can, by the mysterious power of creation, produce a human body devoid of egotism and manifesting the realized identity of the Ego with the Deity. What condition can be more pitiable than to be perfectly ignorant of the Self, which is the only object of real importance and interest? Therefore they are

12. Deluded in hopes, deluded in actions, deluded in knowledge,¹ deluded in reason,² and subjugated by demoniac and impish³ nature, which is deluding.⁴

¹ "Deluded in knowledge," that is, scriptural knowledge.

² "Deluded in reason," that is, deprived of mere ordinary wisdom.

³ "Demoniac and impish;" that is, believing the body to be the Ego. "Demoniac" refers to pride, oppression, in fact, Satanic grandeur of evil. "Impish" implies cruelty, and other mean and abject forms of wickedness.

⁴ "Deluding," that is, tending to the perpetuation of delusion and its consequent evils.

On the other hand, pure-minded men who worship in action, believing through faith in the mystery of Divine nature, and the essential identity of the Deity with the being within man, find final rest in the Deity; and *never come to an evil end*,—such is the power of faith.

13. But the great-souled ones, united¹ to godlike nature, knowing Me² to be the exhaustless origin³ of all things, worship Me with mind that turns to nothing else.

Eph iii 9, 12,
14, 16-19.

The "godlike nature" is characterized by self-restraint, faith, benevolence, etc. The three kinds of nature are due to the predominance of the three qualities of nature, goodness produces godlike nature; passion produces demoniac nature; darkness, impish nature. These qualities and their results are treated of in a succeeding chapter.

How do they worship?

14. Constant⁴ in union with faith they worship, always proclaiming Me,⁵ striving for Me with fixed vows,⁶ and bowing down to Me.⁴

Eph vi 18.

The "striving" is in the sense of aspiring with an unswerving faith that the mode of worship adopted is the best in the universe, and then persevering in it to the death. Every other mode of worship is defective, but not evil, because, after all, it is the Deity who is worshipped.

¹ "Great-souled ones," those whose hearts have been purified from violent desires.

² "Knowing me" Before the one-pointed faith grows, care must be taken properly to study the Scriptures, lest the heart fall into the worship of false gods.

³ "Exhaustless origin," that is, unchanged though causing change.

⁴ "Constant," believing that without faith in the Deity and His nature as declared all else is valueless.

⁵ "Proclaiming Me" as the Supreme Deity revealed to man by the Scriptures.

⁶ "Fixed vows," that is, fidelity to the Deity. This consists in withdrawal of senses from objects, mental and bodily restraint, benevolence, inoffensiveness, and so on, as amplified in concluding chapters.

⁴ "Bowing down to Me," the bosom's Lord.

15. Other devotees worship me in other modes of worship; by sacrifice through knowledge in many ways, — as secondless,¹ as different,² as the Spirit of the universe.³

How the various modes of worship through knowledge are all worship of the Supreme Spirit, though in so many forms.

16. I am the Vedic rite, I am the sacrifice, I am the offering to ancestors, I am food, I am the sacred formula, I am the sacrificial butter, I am the fire, and I am the oblation.

Vedic rites are distinguished from sacrifices resting on non-Vedic authorities, such as the sacred laws. There is nothing which can be known as an act, or the result of an act, or the instrument for the performance of an act, which is not the Deity, because they are merely His power, and power without the powerful is nothing in reality.

17. I am the father⁴ of this universe, the mother,⁵ the regulator,⁶ the grandfather,⁷ the object of knowledge,⁸ the sanctifying syllable Om,⁹ Rik, Sâma, Yajur, and the other:¹⁰

¹ "As secondless," pursuing the knowledge that the Deity is identical with the consciousness within man divested of all attributes that are ascribed to it by Error

² "As different," striving to realize that the One and secondless Deity is life and soul of Sun, Moon, etc.

³ "As the Spirit of the universe," that is, seeking to realize that the universe is the body, of which God is the Spirit Arjuna's vision of the Deity as the Spirit of the universe is described in Chapter XL

⁴ "Father," as the consciousness

⁵ "Mother," as Prakriti, or power

⁶ "Regulator" is the preserver of the sequence of cause and effect

⁷ "Grandfather" is the Deity in whom the distinction of subject and object does not exist.

⁸ "The object of knowledge," that is, he whom the sages seek to know

⁹ "The . . . Om," according to the four Vedas, the Deity can be known, as far as that is possible, by the proper comprehension of the mystery of this sound.

¹⁰ "The other," that is, Atharva Veda, which completes the quaternity of the Vedas.

18. The goal,¹ the nourisher, the lord, the witness,² the place of dwelling,³ the refuge,⁴ the friend,⁵ the source, the end, the place of continuance,⁶ the storehouse,⁷ the eternal seed.⁸

19. I cause heat⁹ and light; I cause rain; I suck in¹⁰ and I throw out;¹¹ I am immortality,¹² and also death,¹³ — also the latent¹⁴ cause and the manifested effect, O Arjuna.

Those who worship the Deity in any of the various ways described in verses 13-18 will reach Nirvāṇa. What happens to those who worship God with some special desire is now declared.

20. Those versed¹⁵ in the Vedas, worshipping Me with sacrifices, sanctified¹⁶ by the drinking of the Soma juice, who desire for passage to celestial abodes, enjoy in heaven heavenly enjoyment,¹⁷ attaining to the abode of Indra¹⁸ as the result of meritorious works.

1 "The goal" is the final result of all labor and striving

2 "The witness" of all that is done

3 "The place of dwelling," that is, he comprehends everything.

4 "The refuge," that is, the place of safety where no trouble can reach.

5 "The friend," the benefactor wishing neither return nor acknowledgment.

6 "Place of continuance" As we are now in God, so we were before the world was, and so shall be even when the world has ceased to be

7 "Storehouse," that is, we are preserved in Him during the universal desolation, as seed in a storehouse for future harvest

8 "Eternal seed," that is, the cause, which is the eternal form of all things.

9 "I cause heat," as the Spirit of the Sun the Deity does all this through His mysterious power

10 "I suck in," that is, evaporate water.

11 "I throw out," that is, precipitate it in rain.

12 "Immortality," which gods are said to enjoy, and

13 "Death," to which men are subject.

14 "The latent," etc. when an effect is produced the reality of the cause is manifested, which until that moment was latent

15 "Versed," studying the Vedas and performing the rites and ceremonies enjoined by them, but with some personal desire

16 "Sanctified," it is an act of great merit to drink the Soma juice at the end of a sacrifice

17 "Heavenly enjoyment;" in heaven a man enjoys the whole class containing every individual object of his desire while on earth.

18 "Abode of Indra," the highest of the celestial spheres.

21. They, having enjoyed that wide celestial realm, enter the sphere of mortals on the exhaustion of their merit; thus those devoted to the law of the three Vedas, and desiring desires, obtain coming and going.¹

"Those devoted to the law of the three Vedas and" *not* "desiring desires obtain" final rest.

22. Of those men, who thinking of Me in identity,² worship Me,—for them, always resting in Me, I bear the burden of acquisition and preservation of possessions.³

23. Even those, the devotees of other gods, who worship in faith, they, O son of Kuntī, worship Me in ignorance.

Although the worship offered to any god in faith goes to the true God, yet the ignorance in which the worship is offered prevents the worshippers from attaining identity with the Deity. The nature of this ignorance is now shown.

24. I am the lord⁴ and enjoyer⁵ of all sacrifices, but they do not know Me in truth; therefore they fall.⁶

The fall is due to their ignorance, but this does not affect their title to the reward which they wish for. They receive whatever they wish for, and it is because of ignorance that they do not wish for liberation, which is the highest good.

25. Those devoted to the gods go to the gods; to the ancestors go those devoted to the ancestors. Those

¹ "Coming and going," and not independence.

² "In identity," that is, recognizing Me as the only Self.

³ "I bear . . . possessions," as they wish for nothing but Me, so I, in consequence of identity, provide them with what they need and prevent their loss.

⁴ "Lord," as the consciousness in the breast of the sacrificer.

⁵ "Enjoyer;" the real enjoyer of them as the consciousness in the gods to whom offerings are made

⁶ "Fall;" that is, they are deprived of the highest fruit of their sacrifices, which is liberation.

that worship the evil spirits go to the evil spirits, and my worshipper also comes to Me.

The result of worshipping the true God is great, yet the mode of worship is not at all difficult. His yoke is light.

26. Whoever in love offers to Me a leaf or flower or fruit,—that, given in love by the pure-hearted, I accept.

Therefore,

27. Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest in sacrifice, whatever thou givest away, whatever austerities thou practisest, O son of Kuntī, commit that to Me.

Col iii 17.
1 Cor x 31.

The yoke of God is very light indeed. None need do any special thing for Him; but in the performance of the ordinary acts of life He is fully worshipped if they are performed for His sake alone, the interior spirit is superior to all works.

28. Thus from bondage of action consisting of good and evil experiences shalt thou escape; with thy heart joined to renunciation¹ and action² thou shalt come to Me.

Thou shalt attain to liberation, which is the cessation of all suffering and the attainment of absolute bliss.

29. I am equal to all creatures; there is none hated or beloved by Me. But those who worship Me in love, they are in Me and in them I am.

Matt. v 45,
Job xxxv 6, 7,
John xiv 23

As the fire warms those who approach it, and not those who are far from it, so God loves those who love Him. He is free from desire Himself. (Cf. James iv. 8.)

¹ "Joined to renunciation," because of absence of desire.

² "And action," because of performance of action for the sake of the Deity.

30. Even if the most evil-conducted man worships Me with exclusive devotion, he is to be considered even as righteous because he is rightly determined.¹

Psalms li. 1-10;
Isaiah i. 18, 19.

Love of God is the only road to salvation for the sinful man.

31. Such an one quickly becomes righteous-souled, for he² comes to perpetual peace. Swear, O son of Kuntī, my devotee never is destroyed.

John v. 24

32. O son of Prithā, having taken refuge in Me, even those who are of evil-womb, women, vaisyas, and sudras, proceed to the supreme goal.

Matt. xxi. 31,
32.

No training or qualification is needed for those who seek refuge in God. Love makes all equal.

33. What then is to be said of holy Brāhmans and devoted kingly sages? Having obtained this transitory, joyless world, worship Me.

The life of man is particularly suited for the growth of love for God on account of our joyless lot. Animals, owing to dulness, and gods through contentment, are not privileged to know this love in such purity of perfection as men.

How God is to be worshipped.

34. Be with heart fixed on Me; loving Me, and worshipping Me, bow down to Me; thus at rest, thou shalt come even to Me the Spirit.

Psalms cxviii. 1-6,
Matt. v. 8.

¹ "Rightly determined," that is, by the acceptance of the true end of life he is established on the right road.

² "For he," etc.; because he attains peace, his previous unrighteousness of life soon comes to an end, having no freshly generated impulses in that direction.

Thus ends chapter the ninth, called the "RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF ROYAL MYSTERY," in the blessed BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ, the sacred lore, the divine wisdom, the book of divine union, the colloquy between the blessed KRISHNA and ARJUNA, and contained in the Bhîshma Parvan of the blessed MAHÂBHÂRATA, which is a collection of one hundred thousand verses by VYÂSA.

In this chapter is declared the supreme attributeless God who is also the God for the adoration of the indifferently spiritual.

Salutation to Krishna, who has declared the wonderful mystery of Divine power as well as the power of love to the Deity.