

# GITA DEVOTIONAL READINGS, PART 1

## CHAPTER X:

### “DEVOTION BY MEANS OF THE UNIVERSAL DIVINE PERFECTIONS”

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KRISHNA:

Hear again, O thou of mighty arms, my supreme words, which unto thee who art well pleased I will declare because I am anxious for thy welfare.

"Neither the assemblage of the Gods nor the Adept Kings know my origin, because I am the origin of all the Gods and of the Adepts. Whosoever knoweth me to be the mighty Ruler of the universe and without birth or beginning, he among men, undeluded, shall be liberated from all his sins.

"Subtle perception, spiritual knowledge, right judgment, patience, truth, self-mastery; pleasure and pain, prosperity and adversity; birth and death, danger and security, fear and equanimity, satisfaction, restraint of body and mind, alms-giving, inoffensiveness, zeal and glory and ignominy, all these the various dispositions of creatures come from me.

"So in former days the seven great Sages and the four Manus who are of my nature were born of my mind, and from them sprang this world. He who knoweth perfectly this permanence and mystic faculty of mine becometh without doubt possessed of unshaken faith. *(Now Krishna speaks cosmically, Ed.) I am the origin of all; all things proceed from me; believing me to be thus, the wise gifted with spiritual wisdom worship me; their very hearts and minds are in me; enlightening one another and constantly speaking of me, they are full of enjoyment and satisfaction. To them thus always devoted to me, who worship me with love, I give that mental devotion by which they come to me. For them do I out of my compassion, standing within their hearts, destroy the darkness which springs from ignorance by the brilliant lamp of spiritual discernment."*

ARJUNA:

"Thou art Parabrahm! (Beyond Brahma) the supreme abode, the great Purification; thou art the Eternal Presence, the divine Being, before all other Gods, holy, primeval, all-pervading, without beginning! (...skipping a short section, to...)

How shall I, constantly thinking of thee, be able to know thee, O mysterious Lord? In what particular forms shall I meditate on thee? O Janardana—besought by mortals—tell me therefore in full thine own powers and forms of manifestation, for I am never sated of drinking of the life-giving water of thy words."

KRISHNA:

"O best of Kurus, blessings be upon thee.<sup>(1)</sup> I will make thee acquainted with the chief of my divine manifestations, for the extent of my nature is infinite.

In the original the first word is one which carries a blessing with it; it is a benediction and means "now then," but this in English conveys no idea of a benediction.

"I am the Ego which is seated in the hearts of all beings; I am the beginning, the middle, and the end of all existing things. Among Adityas<sup>(2)</sup> I am Vishnu, and among luminous bodies I am the sun. I am Mrichi among the Maruts,<sup>‡</sup> and among heavenly mansions I am the moon. Among the *Vedas* I am the *Samaveda*,<sup>‡</sup> and Indra<sup>§</sup> among the Gods; among the senses and organs I am the Manas,<sup>¶</sup> and of creatures the existence. I am Shankara among the Rudras (Lords of the three upper worlds, Ed.); and Vitesseha, the lord of wealth among the Yakshas and Rakshasas.<sup>\*\*</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> In the original the first word is one which carries a blessing with it; it is a benediction and means "now then," but this in English conveys no idea of a benediction.

<sup>(2)</sup> Adityas, the twelve Sun-gods, who at the recurrence of the time for dissolution by fire, bring on the universal conflagration.

‡ The Gods of air.

‡ In Western language this may be said to be the *Veda* of song in the very highest sense of the power of song. Many nations held that song had the power to make even mere matter change and move obedient to the sound.

§ In the original it is "Vasava" which is a name of Indra

¶ The heart or the mind.

Spirits of a sensual nature.

\*\* An order of evil spirits.

# PART 2 OF GITA DEVOTIONAL READINGS

## CHAPTER XI

### VISION OF THE DIVINE FORM AS INCLUDING ALL FORMS

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ARJUNA:

My delusion has been dispersed by the words which thou for my soul's peace hast spoken concerning the mystery of the Adhyâtma - the spirit. For I have heard at full length from thee, O thou whose eyes are like lotus leaves, the origin and dissolution of existing things, and also thy inexhaustible majesty. It is even as thou hast described thyself, O mighty Lord; I now desire to see thy divine form, O sovereign Lord. Wherefore, O Lord, if thou thinkest it may be beheld by me, show me, O Master of devotion, thine inexhaustible Self."

KRISHNA:

"Behold, O son of Pritha, my forms by hundreds and by thousands, of diverse kinds divine, of many shapes and fashions. Behold the Adityas, Vasus, Rudras, Aswins, and the Maruts, see things wonderful never seen before, O son of Bharata. Here in my body now behold, O Gudakesha, the whole universe animate and inanimate gathered here in one, and all things else thou hast a wish to see. But as with thy natural eyes thou art not able to see me, I will give thee the divine eye. Behold my sovereign power and might!"

SANJAYA:

O king, having thus spoken, Hari,<sup>\*(1)</sup> the mighty Lord of mysterious power, showed to the son of Pritha his supreme form; with many mouths and eyes and many wonderful appearances, with many divine ornaments, many celestial weapons upraised; adorned with celestial garlands and robes, anointed with celestial ointments and perfumes, full of every marvelous thing, the eternal god whose face is turned in all directions. The glory and amazing splendor of this mighty Being may be likened to the radiance shed by a thousand suns rising together into the heavens. The son of Pandu then beheld within the body of the God of gods the whole universe in all its vast variety. Overwhelmed with wonder, Dhananjaya,<sup>\*(2)</sup> the possessor of wealth, with hair standing on end, bowed down his head before the Deity, and thus with joined palms<sup>‡</sup> addressed him:

ARJUNA:

"I behold, O god of gods, within thy frame all beings and things of every kind; the Lord Brahmâ on his lotus throne, all the Rishees and the heavenly Serpents.‡ I see thee on all

<sup>\*(1)</sup> *Hari*, an epithet of Krishna, meaning that he has the power to remove all difficulty.

<sup>\*(2)</sup> Arjuna.

‡ This is the Hindu mode of salutation.

‡ These are the *Uragas*, said to be serpents. But it must refer to the great Masters of Wisdom, who were often called Serpents.

sides, of infinite forms, having many arms, stomachs, mouths, and eyes. But I can discover neither thy beginning, thy middle, nor thy end, O universal Lord, form of the universe.

I see thee crowned with a diadem and armed with mace and chakra,<sup>§</sup> a mass of splendor, darting light on all sides; difficult to behold, shining in every direction with light immeasurable, like the burning fire or glowing sun. Thou art the supreme inexhaustible Being, the end of effort, changeless, the Supreme Spirit of this universe, the never-failing guardian of eternal law: I esteem thee Purusha,<sup>\*(3)</sup> I see thee without beginning, middle, or end, of infinite power with arms innumerable, the sun and moon thy eyes, thy mouth a flaming fire, overmastering the whole universe with thy majesty. Space and heaven, and earth and every point around the three regions of the universe are filled with thee alone.

"The triple world is full of fear, O thou mighty Spirit, seeing this thy marvelous form of terror. Of the assemblage of the gods some I see fly to thee for refuge, while some in fear with joined hands sing forth thy praise; the hosts of the Maharshis and Siddhas, great sages and saints, hail thee, saying 'svasti,'<sup>‡(4)</sup> and glorify thee with most excellent hymns. The Rudras, Adityas, the Vasus, and all those beings - the Sadhyas, Vishwas, the Ashwins, Maruts, and Ushmapas, the hosts of Gandharbhas, Yakshas, and Siddhas<sup>\*(5)</sup> —all stand gazing on thee and are amazed. All the worlds alike with me are terrified to behold thy wondrous form gigantic, O thou of mighty arms, with many mouths and eyes, with many arms, thighs and feet, with many stomachs and projecting tusks. For seeing thee thus touching the heavens, shining with such glory, with widely-opened mouths and bright expanded eyes, my inmost soul is troubled and I lose both firmness and tranquility, O Vishnu.

"Beholding thy dreadful teeth and thy face like the burning of death, I can see neither heaven nor earth; I find no peace; have mercy, O Lord of gods, thou Spirit of the universe! The sons of Dhritarâshtra with all these rulers of men, Bhîshma, Drôna and also Karna and our principal warriors, seem to be impetuously precipitating themselves into thy mouths terrible with tusks; some are seen caught between thy teeth, their heads ground down. As the rapid streams of full-flowing rivers roll on to meet the ocean, even so these heroes of the human race rush into thy flaming mouths. As troops of insects carried away by strong impulse find death in the fire, even so do these beings with swelling force pour into thy mouths for their own destruction. Thou involvest and swallowest all these creatures from every side, licking them in thy flaming lips; filling the universe with thy splendor, thy sharp beams burn, O Vishnu. Reverence be unto thee, O best of Gods! Be favorable! I seek to know thee, the Primeval One, for I know not thy work."

§ Among human weapons this would be known as the discus, but here it means the whirling wheels of spiritual will and power.

\*(3) Purusha, the Eternal Person. The same name is also given to man by the Hindus.

‡(4) This cry is supposed to be for the benefit of the world, and has that meaning.

\*(5) All these names refer to different classes of celestial beings, some of which are now called in theosophical literature, "elementals"; the others are explained in H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*.