

श्रीभगवानुवाच

The Blessed Lord said,  
śrī-bhagavān uvāca

इमं विवस्वते योगं

This eternal yoga, unto Vivasvan  
imam vivasvate yogam

प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम्

I once told.  
proktavān aham avyayam

विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह

Vivasvan told it to Manu.  
vivasvān manave prāha

मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत्

Manu told it to Ikshvaku.  
manur ikṣvākave 'bravīt 4.1

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तम्

Received through this succession,  
evam paramparā-prāptam

इमं राजर्षयो विदुः

the royal sages learned it.  
imam rājarṣayo viduḥ

स कालेनेह महता

But over a long time  
sa kāleneha mahatā

योगो नष्टः परन्तप

that yoga was lost, O Arjuna.  
yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa 4.2

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य

Today, unto you I have  
sa evāyam mayā te 'dya

योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः

taught that ancient yoga.  
yogaḥ proktaḥ purātanaḥ

भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति

Because you are my devoted friend,  
bhakto 'si me sakhā ceti

रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम्

this highest secret (was taught).  
rahasyam hyetad uttamam 4.3

अर्जुन उवाच  
Arjuna said,  
arjuna uvāca

अपरं भवतो जन्म  
But your birth was later  
aparam̐ bhavato janma

परं जन्म विवस्वतः  
and Vivasvan's birth was earlier.  
param̐ janma vivasvataḥ

कथमेतद् विजानीयां  
How can it be understood  
katham etad vijānīyām

त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति  
that you taught it first?  
tvam ādau proktavān iti 4.4

श्रीभगवानुवाच  
The Blessed Lord said,  
śrī-bhagavān uvāca

बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि  
I have had many past  
bahūni me vyatītāni  
जन्मानि तव चार्जुन  
lives, as have you, Arjuna.  
janmāni tava cārjuna

तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि  
All of them, I know,  
tānyaham̐ veda sarvāṇi

न त्वं वेत्थ परन्तप  
but you don't know them, O Arjuna.  
na tvam̐ vettha parantapa 4.5

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा  
I am the unborn, eternal,  
ajo 'pi sann avyayātmā

भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन्  
Lord of all beings.  
bhūtānām īśvaro 'pi san

प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय  
Having control over nature,  
prakṛtiṁ svām adhiṣṭhāya

सम्भवाम्यात्ममायया  
I took birth through my own power.  
sambhavāmy ātma-māyayā 4.6

परित्राणाय साधूनां  
To protect good people,  
paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām

विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम्  
to destroy the evil ones,  
vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय  
and to establish righteousness,  
dharma-samsthāpanārthāya

सम्भवामि युगे युगे  
I take birth in each age.  
sambhavāmi yuge yuge 4.8

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य  
Whenever righteousness  
yadā yadā hi dharmasya

ग्लानिर्भवति भारत  
declines, O Arjuna,  
glānir bhavati bhārata

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य  
and unrighteousness increases,  
abhyutthānam adharmasya

तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम्  
I then create myself.  
tadātmānaṁ sṛjāmy aham 4.7

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यम्  
My divine birth and deeds -  
janma karma ca me divyam

एवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः  
one who knows them truly,  
evam yo vetti tattvataḥ

त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म  
after dying, he is not reborn.  
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma

नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन  
He comes to Me, O Arjuna.  
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna 4.9

वीतरागभयक्रोधा

Free from desire, fear and anger,  
vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhā

मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः

absorbed in me, taking refuge in me,  
man-mayā mām upāśritāḥ

बहवो ज्ञानतपसा

purified by the fire of knowledge,  
bahavo jñāna-tapasā

पूता मद्भावमागताः

many such reach my state.  
pūtā mad-bhāvam āgatāḥ 4.10

काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं

Desiring success through rituals,  
kāṅkṣantaḥ karmaṇām siddhim

यजन्त इह देवताः

they worship the gods.  
yajanta iha devatāḥ

क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके

In this mortal world, quickly  
kṣipraṁ hi mānuṣe loke

सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा

does success arise from rituals.  
siddhir bhavati karmajā 4.12

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते

In whatever way they seek me,  
ye yathā mām prapadyante

तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम्

I bless them accordingly.  
tāns tathaiva bhajāmy aham

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते

People seek me  
mama vartmānuvartante

मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः

in many ways, O Arjuna.  
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ 4.11

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं

I created four groups of people  
cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam

गुणकर्मविभागशः

according to their qualities and actions.  
guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ

तस्य कर्तारमपि मां

Even though I am their creator,  
tasya kartāram api mām

विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम्

I am actionless and unchanging.  
viddhy akartāram avyayam 4.13

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति  
Actions do not affect me  
na mām karmāṇi limpanti

न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा  
nor do I desire their results.  
na me karma-phale sprhā

इति मां योऽभिजानाति  
One who knows me thus  
iti mām yo 'bhijānāti

कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते  
is not bound by their actions.  
karmabhir na sa badhyate 4.14

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति  
What is action and inaction?  
kiṁ karma kim akarmeti

कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः  
Even the wise get confused about this.  
kavayo 'py atra mohitāḥ

तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि  
I will teach you about action  
tat te karma pravakṣyāmi

यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात्  
knowing which you will be freed from sin.  
yaj jñātvā mokṣyase 'śubhāt 4.16

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म  
Knowing this, action was done  
evam jñātvā kṛtaṁ karma

पूर्वरपि मुमुक्षुभिः  
by the ancient seekers.  
pūrvair api mumukṣubhiḥ

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं  
Therefore, you should act  
kuru karmaiva tasmāt tvam

पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम्  
like the ancients did long ago.  
pūrvaiḥ pūrvataram kṛtam 4.15

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं  
Action must be understood,  
karmaṇo hyapi boddhavyam

बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः  
wrong action must be understood,  
boddhavyam ca vikarmaṇaḥ

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं  
and inaction must be understood.  
akarmaṇaś ca boddhavyam

गहना कर्मणो गतिः  
Profound is the nature of action.  
gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ 4.17

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येत्  
One who sees inaction in action  
karmaṇy akarma yaḥ paśyed

अकर्मणि च कर्म यः  
and sees action in inaction,  
akarmaṇi ca karma yaḥ

स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु  
he is wise among men.  
sa buddhimān manuṣyeṣu

स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत्  
He is mature and fulfilled.  
sa yuktaḥ kṛtsna-karmakṛt 4.18

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः  
One whose actions  
yasya sarve samārambhāḥ

कामसङ्कल्पवर्जिताः  
are free from willful desire,  
kāma-saṅkalpa-varjitāḥ

ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं  
being destroyed by the fire of wisdom,  
jñānāgni-dagdha-karmāṇam

तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः  
the wise call him a pandit.  
tam āhuḥ paṇḍitaṁ budhāḥ 4.19

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासंगं  
Unattached to the fruits of action,  
tyaktvā karma-phalāsaṅgam

नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः  
always content, free from dependence,  
nitya-tr̥pto nirāśrayaḥ

कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि  
even while engaged in action  
karmaṇy abhipravṛtto 'pi

नैव किञ्चित् करोति सः  
he does no action whatsoever.  
naiva kiñcit karoti saḥ 4.20

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा  
Free from craving, self-controlled,  
nirāśīr yata-cittātmā

त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः  
free from all clinging,  
tyakta-sarva-parigrahaḥ

शारीरं केवलं कर्म  
acting merely to sustain the body,  
śārīraṁ kevalam karma

कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम्  
he incurs no sin.  
kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣam 4.21

यदृच्छलाभसन्तुष्टो

Content with whatever comes,  
yadr̥cchā-lābha-santuṣṭo

द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः

beyond opposites, free from envy,  
dvandvātīto vimatsaraḥ

समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च

equal towards success and failure,  
samaḥ siddhāv asiddhau ca

कृत्वापि न निबध्यते

even while acting, he is not bound.  
kṛtvāpi na nibadhyate 4.22

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्

Brahman is the offering and oblation,  
brahmārpaṇam brahma havir

ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम्

offered into the fire of brahman by brahman.  
brahmāgnau brahmaṇā hutam

ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं

Brahman is reached by one  
brahmaiva tena gantavyam

ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना

who understands all as brahman.  
brahma-karma-samādhinā 4.24

गतसङ्गास्य मुक्तस्य

For one who is unattached, free,  
gata-saṅgasya muktasya

ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः

established in wisdom,  
jñānāvasthita-cetasah

यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म

who acts as a form of worship, his karma  
yajñāyācarataḥ karma

समग्रं प्रविलीयते

is completely destroyed.  
samagram̐ pravilīyate 4.23

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं

Some yogis sacrifice to the gods,  
daivam evāpare yajñam̐

योगिनः पर्युपासते

others meditate,  
yoginaḥ paryupāsate

ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं

into the fire of brahman, others  
brahmāgnāv apare yajñam̐

यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति

make sacrificial offerings.  
yajñenaivopajuhvati 4.25

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये

Senses like hearing, others  
śrotrādīnīndriyāṅy anye

संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति

offer into the fire of self-control.  
saṁyamāgniṣu juhvati

शब्दादीन् विषयानन्य

Sense objects like sounds, others  
śabdādīn viṣayān anyā

इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति

offer into the fire of the senses.  
indriyāgniṣu juhvati 4.26

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा

Sacrificing oblations or austerities,  
dravya-yajñās tapo-yajñā

योगयज्ञास्तथापरे

or sacrificing through yoga,  
yoga-yajñās tathāpare

स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च

or sacrificing through knowledge and study -  
svādhyāya-jñāna-yajñāś ca

यतयः संशितव्रताः

they strive with firm commitment.  
yatayaḥ saṁśita-vratāḥ 4.28

सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि

All sense activities  
sarvāṅīndriya-karmāṇi

प्राणकर्माणि चापरे

and activities of the vital force,  
prāṇa-karmāṇi cāpare

आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ

into the fire of yogic self-control,  
ātma-saṁyama-yogāgnau

जुह्वति ज्ञानदीपिते

ignited by wisdom, others offer.  
juhvati jñāna-dīpīte 4.27

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं

Some offer inhalation into their exhalation,  
apāne juhvati prāṇam

प्राणेऽपानं तथापरे

others offer exhalation into their inhalation.  
prāṇe 'pānam tathāpare

प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा

Regulating the cycle of inhaling and exhaling,  
prāṇāpāna-gatī ruddhvā

प्राणायामपरायणाः

they practice breath control.  
prāṇāyāma-parāyaṇāḥ 4.29



अपरे नियताहाराः

Others control their eating,  
apare niyatāhārāḥ

प्राणान् प्राणेषु जुह्वति

offering food to the vital forces.  
prāṇān prāṇeṣu juhvati

सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो

All of them understand sacrifice  
sarve 'py ete yajñavidō

यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः

and are freed from sin by sacrifice.  
yajña-kṣapita-kalmaṣāḥ 4.30

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा

Many kinds of sacrifice  
evam̐ bahu-vidhā yajñā

वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे

were decreed by the creator.  
vitatā brahmaṇo mukhe

कर्मजान् विद्धि तान् सर्वान्

Understand these all to be born of action.  
karmajān viddhi tān sarvān

एवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे

Knowing thus, you will be liberated.  
evam̐ jñātvā vimokṣyase 4.32

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो

Those who eat the remnants of sacrifice  
yajña-śiṣṭāmṛta-bhujo

यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम्

reach eternal brahman.  
yānti brahma sanātanam

नायं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य

Those who don't sacrifice fail in this life  
nāyam̐ loko 'sty ayajñasya

कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम

and in the next, O Arjuna.  
kuto 'nyaḥ kuru-sattama 4.31

श्रेयान् द्रव्यमयाद् यज्ञाद्

But, better than sacrificing oblations  
śreyān dravya-mayād yajñād

ज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप

is the sacrifice of knowledge, O Arjuna.  
jñāna-yajñaḥ parantapa

सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ

O Arjuna, all actions  
sarvam̐ karmākhilam̐ pārtha

ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते

culminate in knowledge.  
jñāne parisamāpyate 4.33

तद् विद्धि प्रणिपातेन

Gain this knowledge through humility,  
tad viddhi praṇipātena

परिप्रश्नेन सेवया

questioning and service.  
paripraśnena sevayā

उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं

Unto you, knowledge will be imparted  
upadekṣyanti te jñānam

ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः

by the wise seers of truth.  
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ 4.34

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः

Even if you were  
api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ

सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः

the worst of all sinners,  
sarvebhyaḥ pāpakṛt-tamaḥ

सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव

by the boat of knowledge  
sarvaṁ jñāna-plavenaiva

वृजिनं सन्तरिष्यसि

you will cross all sin.  
vṛjinaṁ santariṣyasi 4.36

यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहम्

Gaining this knowledge, no more confusion  
yaj jñātvā na punar moham

एवं यास्यसि पाण्डव

will you undergo, O Arjuna.  
evam yāsyasi pāṇḍava

येन भूतान्यशेषेण

With this knowledge, every single being  
yena bhūtāny aśeṣeṇa

द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि

you will see in yourself and in me.  
drakṣyasy ātmany atho mayi 4.35

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्

Just as a blazing fire  
yathaidhānsi samiddho 'gnir

भस्मसात् कुरुतेऽर्जुन

reduces wood to ashes, O Arjuna,  
bhasmasāt kurute 'rjuna

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि

so too, the fire of knowledge  
jñānāgniḥ sarva-karmāṇi

भस्मसात् कुरुते तथा

destroys all actions.  
bhasmasāt kurute tathā 4.37

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं

Compared to knowledge, nothing  
na hi jñānena sadṛśam

पवित्रमिह विद्यते

in the world as purifying.  
pavitram iha vidyate

तत् स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः

One perfected through yoga  
tat svyam yoga-samsiddhaḥ

कालेनात्मनि विन्दति

eventually discovers it in oneself.  
kālenātmani vindati 4.38

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धधानश्च

One who is ignorant, faithless,  
ajñāś cāśraddadhānaś ca

संशयात्मा विनश्यति

and doubtful gets destroyed.  
saṁśayātmā vinaśyati

नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो

Nothing in this world, the next world,  
nāyam loko 'sti na paro

न सुखं संशयात्मनः

nor happiness is gained by the doubter.  
na sukham saṁśayātmanaḥ 4.40

श्रद्धावालाँ लभते ज्ञानं

Knowledge is gained by one with faith,  
śraddhāvān labhate jñānam

तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः

devotion and self-control.  
tat-paraḥ samyatendriyaḥ

ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिम्

Through this knowledge, supreme peace  
jñānam labdhvā parāṁ śāntim

अचिरेणाधिगच्छति

he gains immediately.  
acireṇādhigacchati 4.39

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं

Renouncing action through yoga,  
yoga-sannyasta-karmāṇam

ज्ञानसञ्छिन्नसंशयम्

removing doubts by knowledge,  
jñāna-sañchinna-saṁśayam

आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि

having discovered the true self,  
ātmavantam na karmāṇi

निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय

actions do not bind him, O Arjuna.  
nibadhnanti dhanañjaya 4.41

तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतं

Therefore, doubts born of ignorance

tasmād ajñāna-sambhūtaṁ

हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः

in one's own heart, with the sword of knowledge

hṛtsthaṁ jñānāsinātmanaḥ

छित्त्वेन संशयं योगम्

severing those doubts, yoga

chittvainaṁ saṁśayaṁ yogam

आतिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत

you should practice. Arise, O Arjuna.

ātiṣṭhottiṣṭha bhārata 4.42