

अर्जुन उवाच

Arjuna said,  
arjuna uvāca

किं तद् ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं

What is brahman? What is atma?  
kiṁ tad brahma kim adhyātmaṁ

किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम

What is action, O Krishna?  
kiṁ karma puruṣottama

अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तम्

What is called matter?  
adhibhūtaṁ ca kiṁ proktaṁ

अधिदैवं किमुच्यते

What is called divine?  
adhidaivaṁ kim ucyate 8.1

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र

Who performs rituals  
adhiyajñaḥ kathaṁ ko 'tra

देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन

dwelling in the body, O Krishna?  
dehe 'smin madhusūdana

प्रयाणकाले च कथं

At death, how are  
prayāṇa-kāle ca kathaṁ

ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः

you to be known by meditators?  
jñeyo 'si niyatātmabhiḥ 8.2

श्रीभगवानुवाच

The Blessed Lord said,  
śrī-bhagavān uvāca

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं

Supreme brahman is the imperishable.  
akṣaram brahma paramam

स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते

Atma is one's true nature.  
svabhāvo 'dhyātmam ucyate

भूतभावोद्भवकरो

Generating all that exists  
bhūta-bhāvodbhava-karo

विसर्गः कर्मसंज्ञितः

is the creative force called karma.  
visargaḥ karma-samjñitaḥ 8.3

अन्तकाले च मामेव

At the time of death,  
anta-kāle ca mām eva

स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम्

meditating on Me, casting off the body,  
smaran muktvā kalevaram

यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं

one goes to My abode.  
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvam

याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः

About this, there is no doubt.  
yāti nāsty atra saṁśayaḥ 8.5

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः

Matter is the perishable.  
adhibhūtam kṣaro bhāvaḥ

पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम्

Divinity is the cosmic being.  
puruṣaś cādhidaivatam

अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र

I perform rituals  
adhiyajño 'ham evātra

देहे देहभृतां वर

dwelling in one's body, O Arjuna.  
dehe deha-bhṛtām vara 8.4

यं यं वापि स्मरन् भावं

Whatever is meditated upon  
yam yam vāpi smaran bhāvam

त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम्

when casting off the body at death,  
tyajaty ante kalevaram

तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय

one reaches that, O Arjuna,  
tam tam evaiti kaunteya

सदा तद्भावभावितः

being constantly absorbed in it.  
sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ 8.6

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु  
Therefore, at all times  
tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu

मामनुस्मर युध्य च  
think of Me and fight.  
mām anusmara yudhya ca

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्  
With mind and intellect fixed on Me,  
mayyarpita-mano-buddhir

मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयः  
you will certainly reach Me.  
mām evaiśyasy asaṁśayaḥ 8.7

कविं पुराणमनुशासितारम्  
One who meditates on the omniscient,  
kaviṁ purāṇam anuśāsītāram

अणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद् यः  
eternal Lord, subtler than subtle,  
aṇor aṇīyāṁsam anusmared yaḥ

सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूपम्  
inconceivable creator of all,  
sarvasya dhātāram acintya-rūpam

आदित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात्  
shining like the sun, beyond darkness...  
āditya-varṇam tamaśaḥ parastāt 8.9

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन  
Through the practice of yoga  
abhyāsa-yoga-yuktena

चेतसा नान्यगामिना  
with a mind that never wanders,  
cetasā nānya-gāminā

परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं  
the supreme, divine being  
paramaṁ puruṣaṁ divyaṁ

याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन्  
one reaches by meditating on it.  
yāti pārthānucintayan 8.8

प्रयाणकाले मनसाचलेन  
...at the time of death, with a firm mind,  
prayāṇa-kāle manasācalena

भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव  
devotion and yogic power,  
bhaktyā yukto yoga-balena caiva

भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक्  
fixing one's prana between the eyebrows,  
bhruvor madhye prāṇam āveśya samyak

स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम्  
one reaches the supreme, divine being.  
sa taṁ param puruṣam upaiti divyam 8.10

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति

The imperishable, declared by the rishis,  
yad akṣaram vedavido vadanti

विशन्ति यद् यतयो वीतरागाः

reached by ascetics free from desire,  
viśanti yad yatayo vīta-rāgāḥ

यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति

sought by chaste students,  
yad icchanto brahmacaryam caranti

तत्ते पदं सङ्ग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये

that goal I will tell you briefly.

tat te padam saṅgrahaṇa pravakṣye 8.11

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य

Controlling the senses,  
sarva-dvārāṇi saṁyamya

मनो हृदि निरुध्य च

fixing the mind in the heart,  
mano hr̥di nirudhya ca

मूर्ध्न्याधायान्मनः प्राणम्

fixing the prana in the head,  
mūrdhnyādhāyātmanah prāṇam

आस्थितो योगधारणाम्

remaining in meditation...

āsthito yoga-dhāraṇām 8.12

ओं इत्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म

...uttering the syllable om,  
om̐ ity ekākṣaram brahma

व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन्

meditating on Me,  
vyāharan mām anusmaran

यः प्रयाति त्यजन् देहं

at death, casting off the body,  
yaḥ prayāti tyajan deham

स याति परमां गतिम्

one reaches the supreme goal.  
sa yāti paramām gatim 8.13

अनन्यचेताः सततं

With a one-pointed mind,  
ananya-cetāḥ satatam

यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः

one who always meditates on Me,  
yo mām smarati nityaśaḥ

तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ

easily attains Me, O Arjuna,  
tasyāham sulabhaḥ pārtha

नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः

being a disciplined yogi.

nitya-yuktasya yoginaḥ 8.14

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म

Having reached Me, rebirth in  
mām upetya punar janma

दुःखालयमशाश्वतम्

the ephemeral world of suffering,  
duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam

नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः

the wise do not undergo,  
nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ

संसिद्धिं परमां गताः

having reached the highest perfection.  
saṁsiddhiṁ paramāṁ gatāḥ 8.15

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तम्

Lasting a thousand eons  
sahasra-yuga-paryantam

अहर्यद् ब्रह्मणो विदुः

is one day of Brahma, they say.  
ahar yad brahmaṇo viduḥ

रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां

Lasting a thousand eons is one night,  
rātriṁ yuga-sahasrāntāṁ

तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः

say those who know day and night.  
te 'ho-rātravidō janāḥ 8.17

आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः

All worlds, up to the highest heaven,  
ābrahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ

पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन

are subject to rebirth, O Arjuna.  
punar āvartino 'rjuna

मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय

But having reached Me, O Arjuna,  
mām upetya tu kaunteya

पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते

there is no rebirth.  
punar janma na vidyate 8.16

अव्यक्ताद् व्यक्तयः सर्वाः

From the unmanifest, all manifestations  
avyaktād vyaktayaḥ sarvāḥ

प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे

arise when day begins.  
prabhavanty ahar-āgame

रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते

When night begins, they all merge  
rātry-āgame praliyante

तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके

into that called the unmanifest.  
tatraivāvyakta-sañjñake 8.18

भूतग्रामः स एवायं  
The multitude of beings,  
bhūta-grāmaḥ sa evāyaṁ

भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते  
born again and again,  
bhūtvā bhūtvā praliyate

रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ  
disappear when night begins, O Arjuna,  
rātry-āgame 'vaśaḥ pārtha

प्रभवत्यहरागमे  
arising again when day begins.  
prabhavaty ahar-āgame 8.19

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तः  
That is the imperishable unmanifest,  
avyakto 'kshara ityuktaḥ

तमाहुः परमां गतिम्  
the supreme goal, they say.  
tam āhuḥ paramāṁ gatim

यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते  
They do not return having reached  
yaṁ prāpya na nivartante

तद्धाम परमं मम  
that supreme abode of Mine.  
tad dhāma paramaṁ mama 8.21

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्यो  
But beyond that unmanifest is another  
paras tasmāt tu bhāvo 'nyo

ऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः  
unmanifest which is eternal.  
'vyakto 'vyaktāt sanātanaḥ

यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु  
When all beings are  
yaḥ sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu

नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति  
destroyed, it is not destroyed.  
naśyatsu na vinaśyati 8.20

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ  
That supreme being, O Arjuna,  
puruṣaḥ sa paraḥ pārtha

भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया  
is reached with steadfast devotion.  
bhaktyā labhyas tvananyayā

यस्यान्तःस्थानि भूतानि  
It abides in all beings  
yasyāntaḥ-sthāni bhūtāni

येन सर्वमिदं ततम्  
and pervades the entire world.  
yena sarvam idaṁ tatam 8.22

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिम्

The time of death at which there is  
yatra kāle tv anāvṛttim

आवृत्तिं चैव योगिनः

return or no return  
āvṛttim caiva yoginaḥ

प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालम्

for yogis who travel on, that time  
prayātā yānti taṁ kālam

वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ

I will describe, O Arjuna.  
vakṣyāmi bharatarṣabha 8.23

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः

Smoke, night, waning moon,  
dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇaḥ

षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम्

six-months of Southern solstice,  
ṣaṇ-māsā dakṣiṇāyanam

तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिर्

dying then, the lunar path  
tatra cāndramasaṁ jyotir

योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते

a yogi travels and returns.  
yogī prāpya nivartate 8.25

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्लः

Fire, light, day, waxing moon,  
agnir jyotir ahaḥ śuklaḥ

षण्मासा उत्तरायणम्

six months of Northern solstice,  
ṣaṇ-māsā uttarāyaṇam

तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति

those who die then reach  
tatra prayātā gacchanti

ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः

brahman, being knowers of brahman.  
brahma brahmavido janāḥ 8.24

शुलकृष्णे गती ह्येते

These bright and dark paths  
śukla-kṛṣṇe gatī hy ete

जगतः शाश्वते मते

of the world are considered eternal.  
jagataḥ śāśvate mate

एकया यात्यनावृत्तिम्

By one, a person goes without return.  
ekayā yāty anāvṛttim

अन्ययावर्तते पुनः

By the other, a person returns again.  
anyayāvartate punaḥ 8.26

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन्

Knowing these two paths, O Arjuna,  
naite sṛtī pārtha jānan

योगी मुह्यति कश्चन

no yogi gets confused.  
yogī muhyati kaścana

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु

Therefore, at all times  
tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu

योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन

be steadfast in yoga, O Arjuna.  
yoga-yukto bhavārjuna 8.27

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव

Vedas, sacrifices, austerities,  
vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu caiva

दानेषु यत् पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम्

and charity - their merits one transcends.  
dāneṣu yat puṇya-phalaṁ pradiṣṭam

अत्येति तत् सर्वमिदं विदित्वा

Having known this, a yogi  
atyeti tat sarvam idaṁ veditvā

योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम्

reaches the supreme, foremost abode.  
yogī param sthānam upaiti cādyam 8.28