

श्रीभगवानुवाच

The Blessed Lord said,  
śrī-bhagavān uvāca

परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि

I will further describe the highest,  
param bhūyaḥ pravakṣyāmi

ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम् ।

best of knowledge of all,  
jñānānām jñānam uttamam

यज्ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे

knowing which all the sages  
yaj jñātvā munayaḥ sarve

परां सिद्धिमितो गताः ॥१॥

reached perfection after this life.  
parām siddhim ito gatāḥ

इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य

Resorting to this knowledge,  
idaṁ jñānam upāśritya

मम साधर्म्यमागताः ।

they reached My nature.  
mama sādharmaṁ āgatāḥ

सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते

They are not reborn, even when the world begins,  
sarge 'pi nopajāyante

प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥२॥

nor do they fear the world's dissolution.  
pralaye na vyathanti ca

मम योनिर्महद् ब्रह्म

Brahman is my womb.  
mama yonir mahad brahma

तस्मिन् गर्भं दधाम्यहम् ।

Within it, I deposit the seed.  
tasmin garbhaṁ dadhāmy aham

सम्भवः सर्वभूतानां

From that, the birth of all creatures  
sambhavaḥ sarva-bhūtānām

ततो भवति भारत ॥३॥

occurs, O Arjuna.  
tato bhavati bhārata

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय

O Arjuna, in all wombs  
sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya

मूर्तयः सम्भवन्ति याः ।

creatures are born.  
mūrtayaḥ sambhavanti yāḥ

तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिर्

For them, the brahman is the womb  
tāsāṃ brahma mahad yonir

अहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥४॥

and I am the seed-bestowing father.  
aham bīja-pradaḥ pitā

तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात्

Sattva, being pure,  
tatra sattvaṃ nirmalatvāt

प्रकाशकमनामयम् ।

shining, and free from affliction,  
prakāśakam anāmayam

सुखसङ्गो बध्नाति

binds one by attachment to happiness  
sukha-saṅgena badhnāti

ज्ञानसङ्गो चानघ ॥६॥

and attachment to knowledge, O Arjuna.  
jñāna-saṅgena cānagha

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति

Sattva, rajas and tamas –  
sattvaṃ rajas tama iti

गुणाः प्रकृतिसम्भवाः ।

these gunas are born of nature.  
guṇāḥ prakṛti-sambhavāḥ

निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो

O Arjuna, they bind  
nibadhnanti mahā-bāho

देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥५॥

the eternal embodied being to the body.  
dehe dehinam avyayam

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि

Know that rajas is of the nature of passion  
rajo rāgātmakam viddhi

तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् ।

born of association with desire.  
tṛṣṇā-saṅga-samudbhavam

तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय

O Arjuna, it binds  
tan nibadhnāti kaunteya

कर्मसङ्गो देहिनम् ॥७॥

an embodied one through attachment to action.  
karma-saṅgena dehinam

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि

Know that tamas is born of ignorance,  
tamas tvajñānajaṃ viddhi

मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम् ।

causing delusion for all embodied ones.  
mohanam sarva-dehinām

प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्

Through negligence, laziness and sleep  
pramādālasya-nidrābhis

तन्निबध्नाति भारत ॥८॥

it binds one, O Arjuna.  
tan nibadhnāti bhārata

रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय

When rajas and tamas are overcome,  
rajas tamaś cābhibhūya

सत्त्वं भवति भारत ।

sattva arises, O Arjuna.  
sattvaṃ bhavati bhārata

रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव

Rajas arises when sattva and tamas are overcome.  
rajaḥ sattvaṃ tamaś caiva

तमः सत्त्वं रजस्तथा ॥१०॥

Tamas arises when sattva and rajas are overcome.  
tamaḥ sattvaṃ rajas tathā

सत्त्वं सुखे सञ्जयति

Sattva causes attachment to happiness.  
sattvaṃ sukhe sañjayati

रजः कर्मणि भारत ।

Rajas causes attachment to action, O Arjuna.  
rajaḥ karmaṇi bhārata

ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः

Tamas, by covering knowledge,  
jñānam āvṛtya tu tamaḥ

प्रमादे सञ्जयत्युत ॥९॥

causes attachment to negligence.  
pramāde sañjayaty uta

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन्

In all sense organs in the body,  
sarva-dvāreṣu dehe 'smin

प्रकाश उपजायते ।

when the light of knowledge arises,  
prakāśa upajāyate

ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याद्

then one should know  
jñānam yadā tadā vidyād

विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत ॥११॥

sattva is predominant.  
vivṛddham sattvam ity uta

लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारम्भः  
Greed, activity, initiating  
lobhaḥ pravṛttir ārambhaḥ

कर्मणामशमः स्पृहा ।  
actions, disquietude, desire –  
karmaṇām aśamaḥ sprhā

रजस्येतानि जायन्ते  
these arise when rajas  
rajasy etāni jāyante

विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥१२॥  
is predominant, O Arjuna.  
vivṛddhe bharatarṣabha

अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च  
Darkness, inactivity,  
aprakāśo 'pravṛttiś ca

प्रमादो मोह एव च ।  
negligence and delusion –  
pramādo moha eva ca

तमस्येतानि जायन्ते  
these arise when tamas  
tamasy etāni jāyante

विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन ॥१३॥  
is predominant, O Arjuna.  
vivṛddhe kuru-nandana

यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे तु  
When sattva predominates,  
yadā sattve pravṛddhe tu

प्रलयं याति देहभृत् ।  
a person who dies  
pralayaṁ yāti deha-bhṛt

तदोत्तमविदां लोकान्  
to the pure, heavenly realms of the enlightened  
tadottama-vidāṁ lokān

अमलान् प्रतिपद्यते ॥१४॥  
he attains.  
amalān pratipadyate

रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा  
Reaching death when rajas predominates,  
rajasi pralayaṁ gatvā

कर्मसङ्गिषु जायते ।  
one is born attached to action.  
karma-saṅgiṣu jāyate

तथा प्रलीनस्तमसि  
Dying when tamas predominates,  
tathā pralīnas tamasi

मूढयोनिषु जायते ॥१५॥  
one is born in wombs of delusion.  
mūḍha-yoniṣu jāyate

कर्मणः सुकृतस्याहुः

For good actions, they say  
karmaṇaḥ sukr̥tasyāhuḥ

सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम् ।

the result is pure and sattvika.  
sāttvikam̐ nirmalam̐ phalam

रजसस्तु फलं दुःखम्

But the result of rajas is suffering,  
rajasas tu phalam̐ duḥkham

अज्ञानं तमसः फलम् ॥१६॥

and the result of tamasa is ignorance.  
ajñānam̐ tamasaḥ phalam

सत्त्वात्सञ्जायते ज्ञानं

Knowledge is born of sattva,  
sattvāt sañjāyate jñānam̐

रजसो लोभ एव च ।

and greed is born of rajas.  
rajaso lobha eva ca

प्रमादमोहौ तमसो

From tamasa, negligence, delusion  
pramāda-mohau tamaso

भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च ॥१७॥

and ignorance are born.  
bhavato 'jñānam eva ca

ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्था

Those established in sattva go upwards.  
ūrdhvam̐ gacchanti sattvasthā

मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः ।

Those with rajas remain in the middle.  
madhye tiṣṭhanti rājasāḥ

जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्था

Those established in the lowest guna,  
jaghanya-guṇa-vṛttisthā

अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥१८॥

in tamasa, go downwards.  
adho gacchanti tāmasāḥ

नान्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्तारं

The agent of action is none other than the gunas –  
nānyam̐ guṇebhyaḥ kartāram̐

यदा द्रष्टानुपश्यति ।

when a person sees this,  
yadā draṣṭānupaśyati

गुणेभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति

and knows what is beyond the gunas,  
guṇebhyaś ca param̐ vetti

मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति ॥१९॥

he reaches My state.  
mad-bhāvam̐ so 'dhigacchati

गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन्

Transcending these three gunas  
guṇān etān atītya trīn

देही देहसमुद्भवान् ।

which are born of the body, a person is freed  
dehī deha-samudbhavān

जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैर्

from the suffering of birth, death, and old age  
janma-mṛtyu-jarā-duḥkhair

विमुक्तोऽमृतमश्नुते ॥२०॥

and attains immortality.  
vimukto 'mṛtam aśnute

अर्जुन उवाच

Arjuna said,  
arjuna uvāca

कैर् लिङ्गैस्त्रीन् गुणानेतान्

By what signs (can I know) one who has these three gunas  
kair liṅgais trīn guṇān etān

अतीतो भवति प्रभो ।

transcended, O Krishna?  
atīto bhavati prabho

किमाचारः कथं चैतांस्

How does he behave? How these  
kim ācāraḥ katham caitāms

त्रीन् गुणानतिवर्तते ॥२१॥

three gunas he transcends?  
trīn guṇān ativartate

श्रीभगवानुवाच

The Blessed Lord said,  
śrī-bhagavān uvāca

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च

Light (sattva), action (rajas),  
prakāśam ca pravṛttim ca

मोहमेव च पाण्डव ।

and delusion (tamas), O Arjuna,  
moham eva ca pāṇḍava

न द्वेषि सम्प्रवृत्तानि

he hates not when they are present  
na dveṣṭi sampravṛttāni

न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥२२॥

nor longs for when they are absent.  
na nivṛttāni kāṅkṣati

उदासीनवदासीनो

As though remaining seated with detachment,  
udāsīnavad āsīno

गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते ।

he is not disturbed by the gunas.  
guṇair yo na vicālyate

गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येवं

Knowing that it is the gunas that act,  
guṇā vartanta ity evaṁ

योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते ॥२३॥

he remains unwavering.  
yo 'vatiṣṭhati neṅgate

समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः

The same toward suffering and pleasure, self-established,  
sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ svasthaḥ

समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ।

the same toward a clod of dirt, a rock and gold,  
sama-loṣṭāśma-kāñcanaḥ

तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्

the same toward the loved and unloved, wise,  
tulya-priyāpriyo dhīras

तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः ॥२४॥

the same toward blame and praise ...  
tulya-nindātma-saṁstutiḥ

मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्

... the same towards respect and disrespect,  
mānāpamānayos tulyas

तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।

the same towards friends and enemies,  
tulyo mitrāri-pakṣayoḥ

सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी

renouncing all undertakings,  
sarvārambha-parityāgī

गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥२५॥

he is said to transcend the gunas.  
guṇātītaḥ sa ucyate

मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण  
He who, with unwavering  
mām ca yo 'vyabhicāreṇa

भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।  
devotion worships Me,  
bhakti-yogena sevate

स गुणान् समतीत्यैतान्  
transcending these gunas, he  
sa guṇān samatītyaitān

ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥२६॥  
becomes fit for absorption in brahman.  
brahma-bhūyāya kalpate

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहम्  
I am the foundation of brahman,  
brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham

अमृतस्याव्ययस्य च ।  
of the immortal and imperishable,  
amṛtasyāvyayasya ca

शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य  
of the eternal dharma,  
śāśvatasya ca dharmasya

सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥२७॥  
and of absolute happiness.  
sukhasyaikāntikasya ca