

Bhagavad Gita

Chapter 4

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 ॥१॥

Manu told it to Ikshvaku.
manur ikṣvākave 'bravīt

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तम्

Thus received through succession,
evam paramparā-prāptam

इमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।

the royal sages learned this.
imam rājarṣayo viduḥ

स कालेनेह महता

Over a long time here
sa kāleneha mahatā

योगो नष्टः परन्तप ॥२॥

that yoga was lost, O Arjuna.
yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य

Today, told by Me to you
sa evāyaṁ mayā te 'dya

योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।

is this ancient yoga.
yogaḥ proktaḥ purātaṇaḥ

भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति

Because you are My devotee and friend,
bhakto 'si me sakhā ceti

रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥३॥

this highest secret (is told).
rahasyaṁ hyetad uttamam

अर्जुन उवाच

Arjuna said,
arjuna uvāca

अपरं भवतो जन्म

Your birth was later
aparaṁ bhavato janma

परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।

and Vivasvan's birth was earlier.
paraṁ janma vivasvataḥ

कथमेतद् विजानीयां

How is this to be understood
katham etad vijānīyāṁ

त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥४॥

that You taught it first?
tvam ādau proktavān iti

श्रीभगवानुवाच

The Blessed Lord said,
śrī-bhagavān uvāca

बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि

For Me, there have been many past
bahūni me vyatītāni

जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।

lives, and for you also, Arjuna.
janmāni tava cārjuna

तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि

I know them all
tānyahaṁ veda sarvāṇi

न त्वं वेत्थ परन्तप ॥५॥

but you do not know, O Arjuna.
na tvaṁ vettha parantapa

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा

Although I am unborn, eternal,
ajo 'pi sann avyayātmā

भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।

and Lord of all beings,
bhūtānām īśvaro 'pi san

प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय

holding nature under My control
prakṛtiṁ svām adhiṣṭhāya

सम्भवाम्यात्ममायया ॥६॥

I take birth through My own power.
sambhavāmy ātma-māyayā

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य

Whenever righteousness
yadā yadā hi dharmasya

ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।

undergoes decline, O Arjuna,
glānir bhavati bhārata

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य

and unrighteousness increases,
abhyutthānam adharmasya

तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥७॥

then I create Myself.
tadātmānaṁ sṛjāmy aham

परित्राणाय साधूनां

To protect good people
paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām

विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

and to destroy the evil,
vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय

to establish righteousness,
dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya

सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥८॥

I take birth in each age.
sambhavāmi yuge yuge

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

एवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
one who knows them truly,
evaṁ yo veti tattvataḥ

त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म
giving up his body, to another birth
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma

नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥९॥
he goes not; he comes to Me, O Arjuna.
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna

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

मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।
absorbed in Me, resorting to Me,
man-mayā mām upāśritāḥ

बहवो ज्ञानतपसा
by the fire of knowledge
bahavo jñāna-tapasā

पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥१०॥
purified, they all reach My state.
pūtā mad-bhāvam āgatāḥ

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते
In whatever way they seek Me,
ye yathā mām prapadyante

तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
I bless them accordingly.
tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते
People follow My path
mama vartmānuvartante

मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥११॥
in many ways, O Arjuna.
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ

काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं
Desiring success through rituals
kāṅkṣantaḥ karmaṇāṁ siddhim

यजन्त इह देवताः ।
they worship the gods here.
yajanta iha devatāḥ

क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके
In this world of men, quickly
kṣipraṁ hi mānuṣe loke

सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥१२॥
does success arise from rituals.
siddhir bhavati karmajā

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं

The world created by Me has four groups
cātur-varṇyaṁ mayā sṛṣṭaṁ

गुणकर्मविभागशः ।

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

तस्य कर्तारमपि मां

Even though I am their creator,
tasya kartāram api mām

विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥१३॥

know Me to be the eternal non-doer.
viddhy akartāram avyayam

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति

Actions do not affect Me
na mām karmāṇi limpanti

न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।

nor do I have desire for their results.
na me karma-phale sprhā

इति मां योऽभिजानाति

One who knows Me thus
iti mām yo 'bhijānāti

कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते ॥१४॥

is not bound by actions.
karmabhir na sa badhyate

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म

Knowing thus, action was done
evaṁ jñātvā kṛtaṁ karma

पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।

even by ancient seekers.
pūrvair api mumukṣubhiḥ

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं

Therefore, you should do action
kuru karmaiva tasmāt tvam

पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥१५॥

as was done long ago by the ancients.
pūrvaiḥ pūrvataram kṛtam

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति

What is action and what is inaction?
kiṁ karma kim akarmeti

कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।

Even wise ones are confused about this.
kavayo 'py atra mohitāḥ

तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि

About that karma I will tell you
tat te karma pravakṣyāmi

यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥१६॥

knowing which you will be free from sin.
yaj jñātvā mokṣyase 'śubhāt

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं

Action is to be understood,
karmaṇo hyapi boddhavyaṁ

बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।

and wrong action is to be understood,
boddhavyaṁ ca vikarmaṇaḥ

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं

and inaction is to be understood.
akarmaṇaś ca boddhavyaṁ

गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥१७॥

Profound is the manner of action.
gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येत्

One who sees inaction in action
karmaṇy akarma yaḥ paśyed

अकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।

and action in inaction,
akarmaṇi ca karma yaḥ

स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु

that person is wise among men.
sa buddhimān manuṣyeṣu

स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥१८॥

That person is mature and accomplished.
sa yuktaḥ kṛtsna-karmakṛt

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः

One for whom all undertakings
yasya sarve samārambhāḥ

कामसङ्कल्पवर्जिताः ।

are free from willful desire,
kāma-saṅkalpa- varjitāḥ

ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं

whose actions have been destroyed by the fire of wisdom
jñānāgni-dagdha-karmāṇaṁ

तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥१९॥

the wise call him a pandit.
tam āhuḥ paṇḍitaṁ budhāḥ

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासंगं

Giving up attachment for the fruits of action,
tyaktvā karma-phalāsaṅgaṁ

नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।

always content, free from dependence,
nitya-tṛpto nirāśrayaḥ

कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि

even when engaged in action
karmaṇy abhipravṛtto 'pi

नैव किञ्चित् करोति सः ॥२०॥

he does no action whatsoever.
naiva kiñcit karoti saḥ

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा

Free from longing, having a controlled mind,
nirāśīr yata-cittātmā

त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।

giving up all grasping,
tyakta-sarva-parigrahaḥ

शारीरं केवलं कर्म

acting merely to sustain the body,
śārīraṁ kevalaṁ karma

कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥२१॥

he incurs no sin.
kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣam

यदृच्छालाभसन्तुष्टो

Content with whatever is gained,
yadṛcchā-lābha-santuṣṭo

द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः ।

beyond opposites, free from envy,
dvandvātīto vimatsaraḥ

समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च

same in success and failure,
samaḥ siddhāv asiddhau ca

कृत्वापि न निबध्यते ॥२२॥

even though acting, he is not bound.
kṛtvāpi na nibadhyate

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य

For one free from attachment, liberated,
gata-saṅgasya muktasya

ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।

whose mind is established in wisdom,
jñānāvasthita-cetasah

यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म

action done as worship
yajñāyācarataḥ karma

समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥२३॥

completely melts away.
samagraṁ pravilīyate

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविः

The offering is brahman, the oblation is brahman,
brahmārpaṇaṁ brahma havir

ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।

into the fire of brahman, it is offered by brahman.
brahmāgnau brahmaṇā hutam

ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं

Brahman is reached
brahmaiva tena gantavyaṁ

ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥२४॥

by one who contemplates upon action as brahman.
brahma-karma-samādhinā

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं

Some yogis sacrifice to gods,
daivam evāpare yajñam

योगिनः पर्युपासते ।

others meditate,
yoginaḥ paryupāsate

ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं

others sacrifice into the fire of brahman,
brahmāgnāv apare yajñam

यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति ॥२५॥

offering through sacrifice alone.
yajñenaivopajuhvati

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये

The senses like hearing, others
śrotrādīnīndriyaṅnye

संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति ।

offer into the fire of self-control.
saṁyamāgniṣu juhvati

शब्दादीन् विषयानन्य

Sense objects like sounds, others
śabdādīn viṣayān anya

इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति ॥२६॥

offer into the fire of the senses.
indriyāgniṣu juhvati

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 ॥२७॥

bright with wisdom, others offer.
juhvati jñāna-dīpīte

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा

Those who sacrifice oblations or austerities,
dravya-yajñās tapo-yajñā

योगयज्ञास्तथापरे ।

others who sacrifice through yoga,
yoga-yajñās tathāpare

स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च

and those who sacrifice through knowledge and study,
svādhyāya-jñāna-yajñāś ca

यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥२८॥

those aspirants are intensely committed.
yatayaḥ saṁśita-vratāḥ

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं

Some offer inhalation into the exhalation,
apāne juhvati prāṇam

प्राणेऽपानं तथापरे ।

others offer exhalation into the inhalation.
prāṇe 'pānam tathāpare

प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा

Controlling the flow of inhalation and exhalation,
prāṇāpāna-gatī ruddhvā

प्राणायामपरायणाः ॥२९॥

their focus is breath control.
prāṇāyāma-parāyaṇāḥ

अपरे नियताहाराः

Others control their eating,
apare niyatahārāḥ

प्राणान् प्राणेषु जुह्वति ।

offering vital forces into the vital forces.
prāṇān prāṇeṣu juhvati

सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो

All of them understand sacrifice
sarve 'py ete yajñavidō

यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः ॥३०॥

and through sacrifice are freed from sin.
yajña-kṣapita-kalmaṣāḥ

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो

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

यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।

reach eternal brahman.
yānti brahma sanātanam

नायं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य

This world is not for those who fail to sacrifice.
nāyam loko 'sty ayajñasya

कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम ॥३१॥

How then the other world, O Arjuna?
kuto 'nyaḥ kuru-sattama

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा

Thus many kinds of sacrifice
evam bahu-vidhā yajñā

वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।

spread forth from the creator's mouth.
vitatā brahmaṇo mukhe

कर्मजान् विद्धि तान् सर्वान्

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

एवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥३२॥

Knowing thus, you will be free.
evam jñātvā vimokṣyase

श्रेयान् द्रव्यमयाद् यज्ञाद्

Better than sacrifice of oblations
śreyān dravya-mayād yajñād

ज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप ।

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

सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ

O Arjuna, all actions
sarvaṁ karmākhilam pārtha

ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥३३॥

culminate in knowledge.
jñāne parisamāpyate

तद् विद्धि प्रणिपातेन

Understand this through humility,
tad viddhi praṇipātena

परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।

through questioning, through service.
paripraśnena sevayā

उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं

They will impart knowledge unto you –
upadekṣyanti te jñānam

ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥३४॥

the wise seers of truth.
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ

यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहम्

Knowing this, no further confusion
yaj jñātvā na punar moham

एवं यास्यसि पाण्डव ।

will you undergo, O Arjuna.
evam yāsyasi pāṇḍava

येन भूतान्यशेषाणि

Through this (knowledge), all beings, without exception
yena bhūtāny aśeṣāṇi

द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ॥३५॥

you will see in yourself and in Me.
drakṣyasy ātmany atho mayi

अपि चेदसि पापूभ्यः

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 ॥३६॥

you will cross all sin.
vṛjinaṁ santariṣyasi

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर

Just as a kindled fire
yathaidhānsi samiddho 'gnir

भस्मसात् कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।

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

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि

the fire of knowledge
jñānāgniḥ sarva-karmāṇi

भस्मसात् कुरुते तथा ॥३७॥

reduces all actions to ashes.
bhasmasāt kurute tathā

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं

Compared with knowledge, there is nothing
na hi jñānena sadṛśam

पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।

in the world as purifying.
pavitrām iha vidyate

तत् स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः

One perfected through yoga
tat svayaṁ yoga-samsiddhaḥ

कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥३८॥

eventually finds that (knowledge) in oneself.
kālenātmani vindati

श्रद्धावाँ लभते ज्ञानं

One with faith gains knowledge,
śraddhāvān labhate jñānam

तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।

who is devoted and has restrained his senses.
tat-paraḥ samyatendriyaḥ

ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिम्

Having gained knowledge, supreme peace
jñānam labdhvā parāṁ śāntim

अचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥३९॥

he attains immediately.
acireṇādhigacchati

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धानश्च

One who is ignorant, faithless,
ajñāś cāśraddadhānaś ca

संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।

and doubtful is destroyed.
saṁśayātmā vinaśyati

नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो

Neither this world, nor the next,
nāyaṁ loko 'sti na paro

न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥४०॥

nor happiness is for the doubter.
na sukhaṁ saṁśayātmanaḥ

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं

One who has renounced action through yoga,
yoga-sannyasta-karmāṇam

ज्ञानसञ्छिन्नसंशयम् ।

whose doubts have been removed by knowledge,
jñāna-sañchinna-saṁśayam

आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि

who has discovered oneself, actions
ātmavantam na karmāṇi

निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ॥४१॥

do not bind him, O Arjuna.
nibadhnanti dhanañjaya

तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतं

Therefore, doubts born of ignorance
tasmād ajñāna-sambhūtam

हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।

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

छित्त्वेनं संशयं योगम्

severing those doubts, yoga
chittvainaṁ saṁśayam yogam

आतिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥४२॥

you should practice. Arise, O Arjuna.
ātiṣṭhottiṣṭha bhārata