

अर्जुन उवाच

Arjuna said,  
arjuna uvāca

किं तद् ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं

What is brahman? What is atma?  
kim tad brahma kim adhyātman

किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।

What is action, O Krishna?  
kim karma puruṣottama

अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तम्

What is said about the world?  
adhibhūtam ca kim proktam

अधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥१॥

What is said about the gods?  
adhidaivam kim ucyate

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र

What about rituals?  
adhiyajñah katham ko 'tra

देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन ।

O Krishna, when this body  
dehe 'smin madhusūdana

प्रयाणकाले च कथं

reaches death, how  
prayāṇa-kāle ca katham

ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥२॥

are you to be known by the self-controlled?  
jñeyo 'si niyatātmabhiḥ

श्रीभगवानुवाच

The Blessed Lord said,  
śrī-bhagavān uvāca

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं

Brahman is supreme, imperishable.  
akṣaram brahma paramam

स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।

One's own nature, atma is called.  
svabhāvo 'dhyātmam ucyate

भूतभावोद्भवकरो

Causing the origin of all things,  
bhūta-bhāvodbhava-karo

विसर्गः कर्मसंज्ञितः ॥३॥

the creative force is called karma.  
visargaḥ karma-samjñitaḥ

अन्तकाले च मामेव

At the end of life,  
anta-kāle ca mām eva

स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।

remembering me, giving up the body,  
smaran muktvā kalevaram

यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं

the dying one, to my state  
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvam

याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥५॥

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

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः

The world is perishable existence.  
adhibhūtam kṣaro bhāvaḥ

पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।

The divine being is the gods.  
puruṣaś cādhidaivatam

अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र

I am the rituals  
adhiyajño 'ham evātra

देहे देहभृतां वर ॥४॥

in the body of the embodied, O Arjuna.  
dehe deha-bhṛtām vara

यं यं वापि स्मरन् भावं

Whatever state is remembered  
yam yam vāpi smaran bhāvam

त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।

when giving up one's body at death,  
tyajaty ante kalevaram

तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय

one goes to that very state, O Arjuna,  
tam tam evaiti kaunteya

सदा तद्भावभावितः ॥६॥

always transformed into that state.  
sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु  
Therefore, at all times  
tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu

मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।  
remember me and fight.  
mām anusmara yudhya ca

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्  
With mind and intellect devoted to me,  
mayyarpita-mano-buddhir

मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयः ॥७॥  
one will certainly reach me.  
mām evaiṣyasy asaṁśayaḥ

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन  
Engaged in the practice of yoga  
abhyāsa-yoga-yuktena

चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।  
with a mind that wanders not,  
cetasā nānya-gāminā

परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं  
the supreme, divine being  
paramaṁ puruṣaṁ divyaṁ

याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन् ॥८॥  
one reaches, contemplating on it.  
yāti pārthānucintayan

कविं पुराणमनुशासितारम्  
Omniscient, ancient, master,  
kaviṁ purāṇam anuśāsītāram

अणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद् यः ।  
smaller than small – one who contemplates  
aṇor aṇīyāṁsam anusmared yaḥ

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

आदित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥९॥  
shining like the sun beyond darkness...  
āditya-varṇaṁ tamaśaḥ parastāt

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

भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।  
with devotion, endowed with yogic strength,  
bhaktyā yukto yoga-balena caiva

भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक्  
placing the prana between the eyebrows,  
bhruvor madhye prāṇam āveśya samyak

स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥१०॥  
he reaches that supreme, divine being.  
sa taṁ param puruṣam upaiti divyam

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति

The imperishable, described by the rishis,  
yad akṣaram vedavidō vadanti

विशन्ति यद् यतयो वीतरागाः ।

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

यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति

desired by students living in chastity –  
yad icchanto brahmacaryam caranti

तत्ते पदं सङ्ग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये ॥११॥

that state I will briefly tell you.  
tat te padam saṅgrahaṇa pravakṣye

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य

Controlling all the senses,  
sarva-dvārāṇi saṁyamya

मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।

merging the mind into the heart,  
mano hr̥di nirudhya ca

मूर्ध्न्याधायात्मनः प्राणम्

placing the prana in the head,  
mūrdhnyādhāyātmanah prāṇam

आस्थितो योगधारणाम् ॥१२॥

established in meditation...  
āsthito yoga-dhāraṇām

ओं इत्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म

...the one-syllable brahman, "om"  
om̐ ity ekākṣaram brahma

व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।

uttering, contemplating on me,  
vyāharan mām anusmaran

यः प्रयाति त्यजन् देहं

dying, giving up the body,  
yaḥ prayāti tyajan deham

स याति परमां गतिम् ॥१३॥

he reaches the supreme goal.  
sa yāti paramām gatim

अनन्यचेताः सततं

With a one-pointed mind,  
ananya-cetāḥ satatam

यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः ।

one who remembers me continually,  
yo mām smarati nityaśaḥ

तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ

for him, I am easily attained, O Arjuna,  
tasyāham sulabhaḥ pārtha

नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥१४॥

for that disciplined yogi.  
nitya-yuktasya yoginaḥ

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म

Having reached me, rebirth –  
mām upetya punar janma

दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।

the abode of suffering, impermanent –  
duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam

नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः

the wise will not undergo  
nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ

संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥१५॥

having reached supreme perfection.  
saṁsiddhim paramām gatāḥ

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तम्

Lasting a thousand eons  
sahasra-yuga-paryantam

अहर्यद् ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।

is one day of Brahmaji – thus they know.  
ahar yad brahmaṇo viduḥ

रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां

One night lasts a thousand eons  
rātrim yuga-sahasrāntām

तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः ॥१७॥

according to those who understand day and night.  
te 'ho-rātravidō janāḥ

आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः

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

पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।

are places of rebirth, O Arjuna.  
punar āvartino 'rjuna

मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय

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

पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥१६॥

there is no rebirth.  
punar janma na vidyate

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 disappear  
rātry-āgame praliyante

तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥१८॥

into that called unmanifest.  
tatraivāvyakta-saṁjñake

भूतग्रामः स एवायं

This multitude of beings,  
bhūta-grāmaḥ sa evāyam

भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।

arising again and again, disappear  
bhūtvā bhūtvā praliyate

रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ

when night begins, O Arjuna.  
rātry-āgame 'vaśaḥ pārtha

प्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥१९॥

They arise when day begins.  
prabhavaty ahar-āgame

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तः

The imperishable unmanifest it is called,  
avyakto 'kshara ityuktaḥ

तमाहुः परमां गतिम् ।

they call it the supreme goal,  
tam āhuḥ paramāṁ gatim

यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते

they do not return having reached it,  
yaṁ prāpya na nivartante

तद्धाम परमं मम ॥२१॥

that supreme abode of mine.  
tad dhāma paramaṁ mama

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्यो

But beyond that is another existence,  
paras tasmāt tu bhāvo 'nyo

ऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः ।

more unmanifest than the unmanifest, eternal.  
'vyakto 'vyaktāt sanātanaḥ

यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु

When all beings  
yaḥ sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu

नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥२०॥

are destroyed, it is not destroyed.  
naśyatsu na vinaśyati

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ

That supreme being, O Arjuna,  
puruṣaḥ sa paraḥ pārtha

भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।

is reached with unwavering devotion –  
bhaktyā labhyas tvananyayā

यस्यान्तःस्थानि भूतानि

that which abides in all beings  
yasyāntaḥ-sthāni bhūtāni

येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥२२॥

and by which the world is pervaded.  
yena sarvam idaṁ tatam

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिम्

The time when there is no return  
yatra kāle tv anāvṛttim

आवृत्तिं चैव योगिनः ।

and the time when there is return for yogis  
āvṛttim caiva yoginaḥ

प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालम्

who die and depart, that time  
prayātā yānti taṁ kālam

वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥२३॥

I will describe, O Arjuna.  
vakṣyāmi bharatarṣabha

अग्निज्योतिरहः शुक्लः

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

षण्मासा उत्तरायणम् ।

six months of northern sun –  
ṣaṇ-māsā uttarāyaṇam

तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति

those who die at that time reach  
tatra prayātā gacchanti

ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ॥२४॥

brahman according to knowers of brahman.  
brahma brahmavido janāḥ

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः

Smoke, night, waning moon,  
dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇaḥ

षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम् ।

six-months of southern sun –  
ṣaṇ-māsā dakṣiṇāyanam

तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिर्

dying then, the light of the moon  
tatra cāndramasaṁ jyotir

योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥२५॥

a yogi gains and returns.  
yogī prāpya nivartate

शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते

These light 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

अन्यथावर्तते पुनः ॥२६॥

By the other, a person returns again.  
anyayāvartate punaḥ

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन्

Not knowing these two paths, O Arjuna,  
naite sṛtī pārtha jānan

योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।

any yogi becomes confused.  
yogī muhyati kaścana

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु

Therefore, at all times  
tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu

योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥२७॥

be engaged in yoga, O Arjuna.  
yoga-yukto bhavārjuna

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव

In the Vedas, sacrifices, austerities,  
vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu caiva

दानेषु यत् पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।

and charity, the merits ordained  
dāneṣu yat puṇya-phalam pradiṣṭam

अत्येति तत् सर्वमिदं विदित्वा

he transcends, knowing all this.  
atyeti tat sarvam idam veditvā

योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ॥२८॥

The yogi reaches the supreme, original abode.  
yogī param sthānam upaiti cādyam