





The Nature of God & Why Worship

The Bhagavad Gita
“The Song of the Lord”

THE LIVING GITA

THE COMPLETE
BHAGAVAD GITA

A commentary for modern readers

by Sri Swami Satchidananda

Whatever is offered to me with true devotion –
if only a leaf, a flower, a fruit or a sip of water –
I accept it because it is given with love. Whatever
you do, Arjuna, make an offering. Whether it is
fighting, sacrificing yourself, giving help, or even y

Slokas

7:8 Arjuna, I am the taste in pure water;
the radiance in the sun and moon;
in all scriptures, the sacred word OM;
the sound in the silence;
and the virility in men (fecundity in women)

7:9 I am the fragrance of the earth;
the brilliance in fire,
the life in all beings,
and the purifying force in austerity.

7:10 Know me, Arjuna,

forever present as the origin of all beings.

I am intelligence in those who are wise,

and splendor in all that is beautiful.

7:11 I am the power in strength,
that is untainted by passion or personal desire.
In fact, I am the desire in all beings, Arjuna,
when desire is in accord with *dharma*.

7:12 The qualities of nature (the gunas)

come out of me;

they are my manifestations.

Yet I am not contained in them.

7:13 Most people fail to look beyond
the three qualities of my *prakriti*.

People see only these changing qualities,
and don't see me, the transcendent One.

In the midst of all that changes,
I am what doesn't change.

Albert Einstein

- A human being is part of the whole,
called by us “universe,”
a part limited in time and space.
- He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings,
as something separate from the rest –
a kind of optical delusion of consciousness.

- This delusion is a kind of prison for us,
restricting us to our personal desires
and to affection for a few persons nearest to us.

- Our task must be to free ourselves
from this prison
by widening our circle of compassion
to embrace all living creatures
and the whole of nature in its beauty.

Slokas

7:14 No doubt it is hard to see through this,
my divine illusion (*maya*),
comprised of the *gunas*.

But those who take refuge in me
absolutely pass over this illusion.

7:15 Others, still deluded by *maya*,
lose their discrimination
and sink to their lower nature.
Thus, they do evil things,
feel no devotion to me,
and don't seek refuge in me.

7:16 Good people worship me, Arjuna,

for four basic reasons:

to be relieved of suffering,

to understand life,

to rise from poverty to wealth,

and just because they are wise already.

Commentary

- Here Lord Krishna speaks of four types of people who become devotees of God.
- All four worship God, but for different reasons.

- The first is suffering.
- When everything else fails,
then the seeker calls, “Oh God!”
- That’s one form of devotion.
- It’s good.
- The Lord doesn’t criticize that.
- At least when everything fails, you turn to God.

- The second is the person
who seeks knowledge of worldly things.
- “I want to know this and that.
God please show me.
Tell me the secret.”

- Third is one who is
neither interested in knowledge
nor in distress,
but worships for worldly wealth.
- We see these types in the world.

- The fourth devotee is already wise.
- He or she worships
just for the joy of worshipping.
- This devotee doesn't *need* to, but feels,
“There's nothing else to do;
let me just worship.
Let me occupy myself this way.” ...



Om, Shanti