

# CHAPTER III

### Chapter III

#### Study of character building and its various aspects in Sanskrit literature

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##### General

Sanskrit language exhibits its presence from *Veda* Sacred and the earliest scripture of *Sanātana dharma* of *Hindus* and *Vedic* pertaining to *Veda* literature. The literature from medieval period and recent publication of classics and books, are also rich source of material from which the attributes of Character Building can be drawn. *Prasthānatrayī* happens to be the core material encompassing knowledge and wisdom, consisting of *Brahmasūtras*, *Gītā* and *Upaniṣads*. *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata*, *Aṣṭādaśapurāṇas* and *Nītiśāstrās* individually or collectively also contribute to the aspect Character Building.

##### Source of material for the study

It was a Herculean task to harness Character Building material from Sanskrit Literature. After surfing through some of these vast areas of treasure, it was decided that out of *Prasthānatrayī*, *Gītā* and *Upaniṣads* were appropriate material for study. For overall development of personality, consisting of Physical, Mental, Spiritual and ethical development, following material was chosen for study.

- (a) *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* of Vyāsa
- (b) *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* of Adi Śaṅkarācārya
- (c) Selected *Upaniṣads*
- (d) *Nītiśatakam* of Bhartṛhari

##### Additional sources

Though the material for study has been short listed, some more references from other Sanskrit Literature is used as an additional input. Classical epics like *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* are full with these Character Building attributes. Even *Āyurveda*, *Subhāṣitāni* (Epigrams) and Daily routine rituals and Prayers are rich source of material for Character Building.

##### III.1.1 Importance of *Gītā* in character building

The most important point in choosing *Bhagavadgītā* amongst the vast ocean of Sanskrit literature as a guiding material for study of Character Building is its universal appeal and covering the basic philosophy of human behavioral science. *Gītā* is an authoritative treatise

which covers the salient philosophy of *Vedānta*. It is also widely respected and accepted as a spiritual back bone for guidance to mankind. It being epitome of *Sanskrit* literature, the study of the same would-be apt beginning to identify and elaborate the aspects of Character Building. Spirituality is the single most virtue which should be the base of all advancement and even world is looking forward for the guidance from India on this aspect. *Gītā* is a ready reckoner, working manual and fundamental text book for all and especially for those who are in state of confusion, victim of lust and immorality. India has made significant progress in almost all the fields but has stagnated and in fact retrograded on the aspect of spirituality and morality.

### III.1.2 Background information

There is total eighteen chapter of *Gītā*. The first chapter is entitled as *Arjunaviṣādayoga*. This opening chapter briefly describes the mighty assemblage of both the warring faction, namely *Kauravās* and *Pāṇḍavās*. The main theme of the chapter as the title suggests, is to demonstrate despondency, confusion and helplessness prevailing in the mind of Arjuna. This state of despondency is not only applicable to Arjuna but can be applied to those who have sunk in the state of depression, including society and Nation.

The brief overview of epic *Mahābhārata* is essential before embarking on the subject matter. The central theme of *Mahābhārata* is the exposition of conflict between two warring factions, namely the *Pāṇḍavās* and *Kauravās*. It is in fact ideological differences between moral and immoral tendencies prevailing in the society. This situation is experienced between positive and negative forces interplaying in the battlefield of human mind. *Bhagavadgītā* is a divine song, a dialogue between Lord Kṛṣṇa and Prince Arjuna, wherein universal truth is disclosed.

Prince Arjuna who was declared as Commander in Chief of *Pāṇḍavā*'s forces chose Lord Kṛṣṇa as his charioteer, whereas Duryodhana the *Senāpati* (Commander) of *Kauravās* chose mighty *senā* (Armed forces) of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna's *Vivekabuddhi* (discretion) is obvious in selecting Kṛṣṇa as his charioteer, whereas Duryodhana's choice of Armed forces, is a sign of lack of vision and foresight. Though Duryodhana was contemporary to Arjuna in age and experience, he never realized that Kṛṣṇa was *Avatara* (a God incarnate) a master strategist, planner and diplomat. He was swayed away with the thought of mighty army of Kṛṣṇa and never realized the importance of strategic planning in warfare as well as taking any decision in life. Therefore, *Vivekabuddhi* is one of the important attributes of Character Building.

The most important lesson brought out from *Mahābhārata* is that settlement of all disputes and differences should be solved through discussion and negotiation. However, when talks failed

between the warring factions, the decision was taken to settle the issue by use of force i.e., resorting to war.

Arguments put forward by Prince Arjuna against fighting war are very convincing. Untold miseries, destruction of life and property and break down of social fabric are the results of war. Fighting war is also against scriptural advice where in the message of peace and universal brotherhood is preached.

First chapter of *Gītā* highlights the matured personality of Arjuna, who thinks of avoidance of conflict and worst after effects of war, which are detrimental to the society. At the same time, it portrays the despondency of Arjuna and his confused mind on the eve of the battle. It brings home the personal traits of human mind interplaying during the crisis. His mental and physical state is miserable with the idea of fighting with his own Kith and Kin. The emotional state of Arjuna can be summed as follows.

- (a) Compassionate and considerate personality, to foresee that the society does not suffer because of the severe after effects of the war.
- (b) Matured personality, exhibiting sensible and grown-up attitude in crisis.
- (c) A tendency of despondency and dejection, exhibited as natural emotional phase when mind is corrupted due to unjust compassion and pity.
- (d) Sacrificial attitude, of giving up everything at the cost of protecting his kith and kin.

For any philosophical thought there must be reason and possible answer. The first chapter exhibits the reason and subsequent chapters offers the answer.

### **III.1.3 Wake-up call (Ch 2.3 &37)**

Having witnessed his dejected state of Arjun, Lord Kṛṣṇa gives him a wakeup call to give up unmanliness, shed the weakness of heart and rise to fight the battle. Swami Vivekananda and many learned personalities has given such call to the youth from time to time. Fighting for the right cause and achieving ultimate goal should be the objective of all. This advice of Lord Kṛṣṇa is required to be developed amongst youths to fight against evil forces and protect the sovereignty of the country

### **III.1.4 Path to be followed**

For accomplishment of any mission successfully, one has to decide as to what should be the approach. The golden path recommended in scripture are equally applicable in all situation.

There are three paths namely *Jñānayogaḥ* (Path of knowledge), *Karmayogaḥ* (Path of action) and *Bhaktiyoga* (Path of devotion) given in order of their preference. These are not exclusive nor advocated to be followed independently. They are interdependent and mutually supportive. In fact, their adoption is in reverse order i.e., *Bhaktiyogaḥ*, *Karmayogaḥ* and *Jñānayogaḥ* respectively are proposed for normal *Sādhaka*. There is exception like Ādi Śaṅkarācārya whose main emphasis was on *Jñānamārg* but he gave equal importance to other two paths and Saint Meerabai the *Bhaktimārg* and both of them achieved their destination, irrespective the path chosen, there is no doubt that the discretion plays an important role, as disposition should be fruitful and that is why the Lord Kṛṣṇa open ups his address with *Sāṃkhyayoga*. These golden paths are required to be followed in combination by everybody, irrespective of their profession, in all field of activities. More so for the students, who should follow teaching of their parents, elders and teachers with utmost devotion and unflinching faith. Secondly, work hard as far as possible in the field of their choice and follow the path of knowledge and wisdom to reach to the goal set for. Lord Kṛṣṇa spells out in one sentence that the Path of knowledge is for Realization, whereas the path Action is for Ascetic. The *Yogi* as far as this study is concerned is a person whose lifestyle is based on the scriptural advice. Though the definition of *Yogi* and *Sanyasi* is elaborated in Gita which will be covered subsequently.

### III.1.5 The universal application and structure of *Gītā*

There is no other treatise in the world which can match the philosophical excellence covered in Gita for application under all situation. Though seemingly appearing as religious book, it provides guidance to all, covering common man to ascetics and politicians, kings to the professionals from all walks of life. The relevant doctrines pertaining to the Character Building from this divine song is extracted. All the Chapters of *Gītā* are suffixed by the word *Yoga*, implying that practicing this philosophy, one is on the path of joining/merging with almighty, which is supposed to be the ultimate aim of human life. According to one of the recognized commentator Shri A. Partha sarathi, who has divided eighteen Chapters of *Gītā* in to three sets of six Chapters each stating that “These three sets actually represent and elaborate the divine aphorism of *Vedānta* – *Tat tvam asi* (That thou art). The first six chapters explain *tvam* (thou), the middle six, *Tat* (that), meaning God and last six, *asi* (art), the oneness of you and God<sup>1</sup>.” This is a one of the best descriptions but it is felt that it requires to be supplemented with the following.

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<sup>1</sup> Parthasarthi A, Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Vol.1, Introduction, p.10

- (a) First six Chapters: The first chapter describes the war scenario of *Mahābhārata* and despondent state of Prince Arjun. The next five Chapters are in fact combination of *Jnana yoga* and *Karm yoga*, the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> giving the aspects of renunciation and 6<sup>th</sup> one, covering the meditation. Lord Kṛṣṇa all along Gita gives preference to *Karmayoga* as he wants Arjun to take action, moreover path of action is a basic nature of human beings and only through that, one can achieve its objective. Even in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter entitled *Sāṃkhyayoga*, Kṛṣṇa time and again reminds Arjuna to take up arm and fight. (BG 2.31 to 2.33, 2.37, 38, 40 & 48)
- (b) The middle six chapters: These chapters mainly cover the knowledge of Supreme in absolute and mystic form. It is very essential that the *Sādhaka* should know his goal and progressively start his journey with devotion without any inhibition, so the chapter 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. The 12<sup>th</sup> chapter deals with *Bhakti yoga* and the qualities of devotee without leaving any doubt in his mind of Arjuna that main motive Kṛṣṇa is to inspire Arjuna to fight. (BG 8.7, 11.33, 11.34)
- (c) Last six Chapters: The last chapter is a conclusion, offering more or less the essence of *Gītajñāna* (knowledge covered in Gita). All the other five chapters cover the important aspects as follows from which the attributes of Character Building are picked up.
- (i) The 13<sup>th</sup> chapter: Qualities of *Jnani* and enumeration of certain *Vedantic* terms.
  - (ii) The 14<sup>th</sup> chapter: The interplay of *Guṇāḥ* (Qualities) and consequent development of character of a person.
  - (iii) The 15<sup>th</sup> Chapter: The most popular and recited chapter of *Gita* by devotees, describing the *Puruṣottam* (The Supreme)
  - (iv) The 16<sup>th</sup> chapter: The God like qualities visa a visa Demonic tendency.
  - (v) The 17<sup>th</sup> chapter: The chapter covering single most quality of Character Development, the *Śraddhā* (श्रद्धा the unflinching faith).

### III.1.6 The traits of Character building picked from *Gītā*

- a) The mature person should not assume to the sympathy and pity of ill.
- b) *Sāṃkhyayoga*
- c) *Karmayoga*

- d) Importance of Renunciation and Ascetic attitude in *Karmyoga* and all action to be performed in *yjñah* (sacrifices) fashion.
- e) The qualities of *Yogi* and *Sannyasi*.
- f) Importance of Meditation in Character Development. The concept of *Brahman* in Character Development.
- g) How one can reach the stage of *Brahman*.
- h) The secret of Royal knowledge.
- i) The *sādhana* () for acquisition of qualities of *Brahman*.
- j) The *Svarūpa* of Supreme
- k) *Bhaktiyoga*
- l) Field and knower of the field
- m) Three qualities
- n) *Puruṣottama*
- o) *Śraddhā*

### III.2 *Sāmkhyayoga*

The second Chapter of *Gītā* entitled *Sāmkhyayoga*, wherein Kṛṣṇa in the beginning strikes at the vulnerable and weak point of the Arjuna to shake him up, by asking him to give up unmanliness and fight for the right cause. As *kṣatriya* (a warrior class, whose duty is to protect and fight for the kingdom) it is his obligatory duty to safeguard the sovereignty of the country (BG 2.31). Further he imparts hard core knowledge which spells out indestructibility of soul and perishable nature of human body (BG 2.13 to 2.18). Skill in action is *Yoga - Yogaḥ Karmasu kauśalam* (BG 2.50). Perfection in work is *yoga - Sthitaprajña* (steady fast/perfect person) is however one of the most important aspect of Character Building is propounded by pronouncing that Balancing act and Equanimity in all walks of life as an essential attribute - *Samatvam Yoga Ucyate* (BG 2.48). Lord Kṛṣṇa further defines another important topic of Character Building which is covered in this Chapter (BG 2.55 to 2.72). In fact, the Chapter 2 covers some of the important aspects of Path of action, which spells out the attributes of Character Building. (BG 2.31 to 2.33, 2.37, 2.38, 2.40, and 2.48).

#### III.2.1 Cause and purpose is must for action (BG 2.11 to 2.30)

Kṛṣṇa starts his address in *Gītā* with well-known doctrine which spells out the indestructibility of soul and tells Arjuna that it is eternal. Lord tries to convince the Arjuna that he need not grieve on a death of his kin and kith. One must have firm conviction in the cause before taking

any action. Therefore, without caring for extremes, like victory and defeat, pleasure and pain, heat and cold, students must pursue their goal so long as their cause is legitimate.

### **III.2.2 Duty is Paramount (BG 2.31 to 2.40)**

The beauty of *Gītā* is that, one concept propounded, in most of the case is enough to mold Character of a person. Following *Svadharmā* (own duty) is one such attribute, which when adopted revolutionizes the life of a person. *Svadharmā* varies with age group, profession and disposition. However certain obligatory duties are universal and mandatory, these will be discussed in chapter on Application of Character Building. Veteran *Bhūdāna* (gift of land) movement leader and one of the expert commentators on *Gītā* Vinobajee has time and again emphasized the importance of *Svadharmā* in everybody's life. He has put down *Svadharmā* in a simplest language as "A child's *Svadharmā* is to seek all-round development. A young man's *Svadharmā* is to use his abundant energy for service to the society. *Svadharmā* of a matured adult man is to give others the benefit of his knowledge<sup>2</sup>." This is only true when the child is brought up in as per the theme of this dissertations. What Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna in this context is universal and equally applicable in shaping the Character of a person as follows.

- (a) Performance of obligatory duties is a privilege and honor of every citizen. (BG 2.32)
- (b) Those who stay away from these duties is amounting to committing sin. (BG 2.33)
- (c) By not abiding to perform these duties, one brings dishonor to the self and the country. (BG 2.34)
- (d) When one runs away from doing his duty is labeled as coward. (BG 2.35)
- (e) The people disgrace you, if you do not follow *Svadharmā*. (BG 2.36)

### **III.2.3 Knowledge as prerequisite to path of action.**

Philosophy has no meaning unless followed by action. Imparting knowledge to the extent of motivating Arjuna to act, Lord Kṛṣṇa now turns over to *Karmayoga* and before that tells him following things. (2.39 to 2.41). These are so relevant even present day, that their adoption is an essential requirement.

- (a) The rituals and practices should not be blindly followed. (B G 2.42 to 2.44)

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<sup>2</sup> TALKS ON GITA, VINOBA, P-287, Published by Dr.Parag Cholkar, Permdham Prakashan, Pawanar, Wardha – 42111, 20<sup>th</sup> Edition, May 2011.



- (b) Stay away from extreme two opposite entities *Nirvadaṇaḥ* like pleasure and pain, be always in company of serenity and poise *Nityasattvastha* and free from worldly affairs *Niryogakṣemaḥ*. (B G 2.45)
- (c) Scriptural knowledge even from Vedas are no longer relevant when one practices their essence in real life. (BG 2.46)

### III.2.4 Balancing act and equanimity in all walks of life

Initialization path of action, with no expectation of return nor any attachment, the Lord Kṛṣṇa gives practical and outstanding advice – *Samatvam yoga ucyate* Treating success and failure with the same yard stick, this balancing and equanimity act, takes *Sādhaka* to his destination. This balancing act and equanimity, especially in the case of success and failure, is most important. In broader sense it is key to the path of action in resolving any issue. With this landmark statement all action terminates in to logical end. All the conflicts, disagreement and violent situation can be avoided with this golden principle. The Balancing act and Equanimity in all walks of life is an essential trait for each individual to be successful. This is a practical advice given to the students in fulfilling the aspiration and ambitions in life.

### III.2.5 Objection to the non-expectation of fruit of action

The BG verse 2.47 is important and commonly quoted but is equally controversial because the doubt arises as to how one can be motivated to take action without expectation of fruit. Normally one who performs the action, expects rewards and how can anyone do action without expecting the fruits for his action. That way all the noble sacrificial and renunciation action are questionable but they defiantly have a significance in civilized society having higher spiritual goal. Doing action without expectation of fruit and other implication of this verse are as follows.

- a) You have right over an action.
- b) You shed your Ego while performing, as fruit of action is not your objective.
- c) Action done is without stress.

### III.2.6 skill in action is yoga - *yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*

The path of knowledge is definitely superior to path of action (BG 2.49) and those with intellect, perform the action with skill, are always successful in their mission (BG 2.50). Path to followed for success in life is covered in para 2.4 of this chapter. The most important point to be followed in pursuing *Karmayoga* covered in this chapter are as follows.

- (a) Action to be based on intellect
- (b) Discard all good and bad action from the mind as they create *Vasana* (वासना the impression on mind created because of past good or bad action) (B G 2.50).
- (c) The performer of action should not get attached to the expectation of reward nor sit back with inaction (B G 2. 47)
- (d) All action done with skill result in ease of completion of task, saving of time and energy.

Adopt ‘*Yoga karamsu kauśalam*’ as a logo, icon and motto to perform all work with the skill. For example, using digital technology, one can find ease when commands are executed with skill. Similarly, Sportsman depends upon skill rather than employing brute force. This again is the most important attribute which student should inculcate in their Character Building.

### **III.2.7 Person with steady wisdom – a perfect soul (BG 2.55 to 2.72)**

Once having convinced the purpose behind the action, the *Sādhaka* is anxious to know, how he can pursue his goal. Last 18 verses of *Sāmkhayoga*, narrates the qualities of a person steady in wisdom, which when established, happens to be the virtues of the man of Character. These 18 verses are in fact the summary of 18 Chapters of Gita. To begin with, the definition of *Sthitprajña* which is covered in one sentence, as the one who has cast off all his desires and satisfied with himself, having faith in his consciousness. (B G 2.55). Self-consciousness, is one the important virtue which everyone must listen to. Anything done wrong, haunts the righteous individual till it is corrected.

### **III.2.8 The attributes of the *sthitaprajña***

The personality of a person is associated with his bearing, nature, thought process and behavioral pattern. On inquiry the Lord answers the query of Arjuna with qualities of *Sthitaprajña* which are subliminal as well as evolved or developed. These attributes are exhibited by his appearance, conduct, body language and attitude. These qualities of a perfect man are often repeated throughout the discourse which are summarized below.

- (a) Dispassionate and not disturbed by the extreme entities like sorrow and joy. He should also stay away from desire, fear and anger. (B G 2.56 and 2.57)
- (b) Cultivate the self-control from sensual pleasures and guard against the worldly temptation. (B G 2.58, 2.59, 2.60, 2.61, 2.64, 2.67, 2.68, 2.70)

- (c) Tranquility of mind, piece and contentment are the hall-mark of a nature of an intellectual person, who even in crises takes right decision. (B G 2.65, 2.66)
- (d) This is an ultimate and important aspect of Character Building which Krishna has highlighted of a perfect man, one sheds the egoism and I-ness. (B G 2.71)

In-between, Lord explains how the intellect of a person gets corrupted. With attachment giving rise to the desire, from desire arises frustration and anger. From anger arises confusion, from confusion arises corruption of memory and with confusion in a memory happens the loss of intellect. (B G 2.62, 2.63). Another thing which he wants to convey is that when everybody is resting at night the Self-controlled soul is awake and at day time when world is awake the saint experiences night. This metaphor though intriguing and interpreted differently by the commentators, the literary meaning is, what night to all, it is a day for realized soul and vice a versa. Another very important interpretation is that the saintly personalities are exceptionally different than normal human beings and that is why when world is sleeping at night the saints are awake and vice a verse. This in real life is demonstrated by the soldiers of Armed forces, who are guarding the borders. When the citizens are resting, they are guarding the borders. When soldiers are back on holidays with their family or to the training to piece establishment, they are rejuvenating for next task (B G 2.69). *Sāṃkhya* which deals with Knowledge, though not what is understood in common language, the importance of the same cannot be denied as a prerequisite in all situation. Therefore, Lord in summing up in last verse proclaims virtues of *Sthitaprajña* by asking *Sādhaka* to attain *Brahmanatva* (ब्रह्मनत्व Merging with God) with almighty even at the end of once journey.

### III.3 KARMAYOGA

The third Chapter designated as *karmayoga* is an appeal to Arjuna to perform his obligatory duty to fight for the right cause. *Karmayoga* is a universal appeal covering basic nature of human beings, to execute that what is prompted by his conscious mind. Appeal for Right action and Technique to achieve the desired result is elucidated. Lord Kṛṣṇa answers the query of Prince Arjuna by stating that, though path of Knowledge is superior, the path of Action is appropriate under the present circumstances. Your role as Commander in Chief of Pāṇḍavās forces and being *kṣatriya* the Path of taking action is essential. This appeal entices Arjuna to rise and shake up his despondency. Lord Kṛṣṇa employs the diplomatic technique of Logical, Intellectual and Emotional appeal to convince Arjuna to perform.

### **III.3.1 The influence of qualities on path of action**

The Lord prescribes the path of action is born out of individuals nature i.e., combination of qualities. The qualities no doubt manifest different personality and temperament but even environmental qualities influence to enhance or degrade the performance of individual. For example, early morning time known as *Brāhma muhūrtam* is best for nurturing serene poised thought like Yoga and Study. Day time for performing professional, bread earning and *Vidyābhyāsa* (Study) activities, like performance of daily and obligatory duties. Entertaining and relaxing activities as sports, music and sleeping are advocated during evening and night. This routine results in regeneration of mental and physical faculties for the next day activities. More elaboration of this is offered in Chapter dealing with the implementation of Character Building.

### **III.3.2 The psychological and emotional appeal**

All the conflicts are really fought on psychological background, though their manifestation is visible in terms of compromise or violence by use of force. The surrender of Pakistan Army on Eastern front during 1971 operation, was in fact victory of Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, whose diplomacy and emotional appeal played a major role in emergence of new nation Bangladesh. Lord Kṛṣṇa was a seasoned diplomat who through persuasion, convinces Prince Arjuna to rise and perform his obligatory duties. This technique though known and applied to the child right from the infant days but in a negative way by either appeasement, gifts, admonishment, punishment and so on. Therefore, it requires a technique, which is offered by Gita and will be elaborated when implementable strategy of Character Building is discussed. The methodology of these appeals can be classified as follows.

- (a) An Intellectual appeal
- (b) Emotional appeal (B G 3.4 to 3.24)

### **III.3.3 Intellectual appeal (BG 3. 4 to 19)**

The intellectual and emotional appeal will vary, depending upon the level of intelligence and age of a person. Arjun was very intelligent, grown up and responsible person. However, Lord Kṛṣṇa in Gita spells out the basic definition of path of action and leaves us the approach depending upon situation, circumstance and type of personality. The basic aspects of intelligent appeal are covered are as follows.

- (a) Action is part of one's nature, they are involuntary or consciously performed. Involuntary action is those, where the response is instant like closing of eyelid in case of anticipating the approaching danger. Consciously performed action are more relevant wherein discretion plays an important role. (B G 3.5)
- (b) None can remain inactive even for a moment without action. It is therefore imperative, that action is always meaningful and beneficial to all. (B G 3.5)
- (c) The one who controls the action by restraining his organs but mentally carve for the sensuous pleasure is a hypocrite. (B G 3.6)
- (d) Actions which are done with attachment do not carry the satisfaction of motive. Rewards or selfish motives should not be involved in taking action. (B G 3.7)
- (e) Perform your obligatory function as *kṣatriya*. (B G 3.8)
- (f) Even your body will stop functioning without action, hence Arjuna pick up your bow and get ready for the battle with the adversaries. (B G 3.8)
- (g) Do the action in the spirit of *Yajña*. (B G 3.9, The concept of *yajña* is elaborated in great details while dealing with B G 6.3 and 6.4)

### III.3.4 Emotional appeal (BG 3.20 to 24)

- (a) In selection of an action, follow the reputed and accomplished personalities whose life has been devoted for the welfare of the world. (BG 3.20)
- (b) Follow the elders and standard laid down by them. (BG 3.21)
- (c) Set up self-example by leading from the front. (BG 3.22, 23)
- (d) Emotional appeal concludes with a threat that consequences of not taking action will result into anarchy. Kṛṣṇa sites his own example that if he does not take action, the world will come to an end. (BG 3.24)

### III.3.5 The technique of right action

- (a) Do not sermonize to unsettle the mind of ignorant. (B G 3.26)
- (b) Action is generated or prompted by the basic quality. Desire and Anger (क्रोध) are the greatest enemy, they lead to committing sinful activities and annihilation of the mankind. The rise of these enemies is due to the passionate nature of men and can be prevented through yogic practices. (B G 3.27,28, 29 and 37)
- (c) Take up the action without any inhibition (B G 3.30)
- (d) Take up the action with unflinching faith. (B G 3.31)

- (e) Learned person even acts as per his nature, so no external force like restraint can do anything to modify his action for good. Implying that the chemistry of the qualities has to undergo change if the person has to change his habits. (B G 3.33)
- (f) Affection and dislike which has been nurtured should not dominate your action as those are your enemies. (B G 3.34)
- (g) One of the very important technique to be followed and cultivated, in the mind of a *Sādhaka* right from the childhood is enumerated in a concluding verse (स्वधर्मो निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः). This advice is offered so that the subject should be groomed and brought up as per his/her basic nature and not pushed up by the extrinsic influence. (B G 3.35)

### III.3.6 Practical advice for implementation of *karmayoga*

- (a) Do action for higher ideals such as welfare of the people. (B G 3.20 & 25)
- (b) Lead from the front and set an example (B G 3.20)
- (c) Do not sermonize especially those who are ignorant. For motivating the *Sādhaka* to take right Action, it should be made *Joṣayet* (attractive and appealing). Parental and teacher's role is important, as both of them admonish the children as to 'don't do this and that' without proper technique of convincing. (B G 3.26 & 29)
- (d) Do all action with unflinching faith and with utmost dedication. (श्रद्धावन्तो अनसूयन्ते) (B G 3.31)
- (e) Do not be hypocrite by exhibiting restraint over sense organs when the mind is engrossed and harboring sensuous pleasures. (B G 3.6)

### III.4 *Jñāna* and *karma* as an instrument for renunciation

All the activities performed by individual as brought out earlier must have base of knowledge. Lord attaches third dimension to these, by proclaiming that they are also required to be performed in the spirit of *Yajña* (a sacrificial mode). *Yajña* is a sacrificial act of worship for any pious and devotional act. The concept of *Āhūti* (offering) to the Fire God which symbolizes sacrificial attitude to Fire God for burning up all the desires, cleaning up all thoughts and submission to almighty. This assumes most importance, especially to the youngsters who should perform all their activities in *Yajña* mode, which is going to help themselves in particular and society at large in development of a Nation. Before introducing the novel concept of *Yajña* which are applied to all the thoughts and action, the Lord advices two important aspect

to be followed i.e., traditional practices and resurgence of *Avatār* (incarnation), whenever the world is on the brink of anarchy and chaos.

#### **III.4.1 The importance of following *paramparā***

Traditional practices play very important role in shaping the personality of individual. One of the strong reasons of downfall in Indian traditional system is attributed to the breakdown in passing the wisdom and practices by the Elders, Ruling authorities and Saints to the next generation (परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः). The result was disappearance of moral values and professional skills. To have glimpse as to what a colossal loss incurred due not following *Parampara* can be realized by just knowing or understanding it's meaning as follows.

- (a) Traditional practice, like daily routine activities of starting day with prayer and yogic exercises.
- (b) Follow the traditional practices like, age old glory of history, offering respect to the elders and abiding to etiquettes and rituals.
- (c) Transfer of knowledge and skills from generation to generation.
- (d) Performing obligatory duties towards society and family.
- (e) Following *Guru – Shishya paramparā* (teacher student relationship).

The shining examples can still be found in the field of Arts and Crafts, especially in Hindustani classical music, by preserving and promoting Gharānā system (A Hindi language word - belonging to particular legendary personality and family, whose innovative composition, skill and place of origin, influences the art, craft, skills and even educational practices) by the *Sādhaka* adhering to *Guru – Shisha* relationship and following and practicing the traditional knowledge.

#### **III.4.2 The significance of *avatāra***

The truth of Vedic philosophy and its permanent nature is a treasure preserved for time memorable. It is reminder to the society, whenever the anarchy prevails and wicked tendency creeps up, the *Avatāra* takes birth to help the suffering masses. This truth can be experienced even in recent times by the great magnetic personalities, who appeared on the face of earth to protect the *Dharma* (here is not implied as religion but observing obligatory and prescribed duties in scriptures). To name the few eminent personalities like Adi Śaṅkarācārya, Jesus Christ and Gautama Buddha, are the incarnation of God or his messengers. In fact, this thesis is an

effort towards rediscovery and bringing out the teaching of these personalities for the younger generation.

### III.4.3 The concept of *yajña*

*Yajña* means a sacrificial and devotional attitude, enacted for pious and welfare purpose. It is also an act of worshipping the God for achieving the peace, prosperity and overall development. (Nature, environment and flora - fauna). The rituals consisting of elaborative process of offering *Āhūti* (Sacrificial offering, symbolic or actual to Fire God), the catalyst or kindling agent and materials which generates the Fire. This is associated with chanting of *Mantra*h, prayers and disclosing the purpose for which the *Yajña* is being performed.

The concept of *Yajña*, is so beautifully portrayed in *Bhagavadgītā*, that it has no parallel in any other Sanskrit literature, especially for understanding and following by all concerned. It encompasses the total gambit of behavioral science covering all activities of human endeavor, for all class of people and welfare of humanity. In *Gītā* there are twelve *Yajñas* which have been prescribed out of them first two are conventional and widely elaborated and discussed in scriptures, where as other ten are notional and invention of Lord Kṛṣṇa. There cannot be anything extras other than these as attributes of Character Building.

Another beautiful definition of *Yajña* given by Shri Vinoba Bhave, though in different context, it can easily be understood as “The *Gītā* is suggesting here a program whereby they can operate in efficient manner to make the life happy. The first of these is the body which warps us. The vast world, the whole creation around us, of which we are part, is the second one. The third one is the society. We should selflessly discharge our inborn duties towards these three orders. These duties are to be discharged. But how? Through *yajña* (sacrifice), *dāna* (charity), and *tapas* (penance and austerities) – these three together comprise the scheme for the purpose. *Yajña* is intended to reimburse, to put back what we have taken from nature. Another purpose is to purify the things. The harm thus caused should be undone; so, we should clean its surroundings. Production of something is third aspect of *yajña*. Dana has been prescribed to discharge our debt to the society. *Tapas* has been prescribed to remove defects and distortion that arise in the body and to purify it. The Gita has broadened the meaning of *Yajña*<sup>3</sup>.”

The concept of *Yajña* by Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Gītā* and their interpretation subsequently by eminent scholars, has opened up the door to *Sādhaka*, to find right path for ultimate salvation. Can there be any other visionary in the world who has spelled out such a message, especially for present

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<sup>3</sup> Bhave, Vinoba, *Talks on Gītā*, Permdham Prakashan, Pawanar, Wardha, 2011, pp.261-262



generation, to protect world and human race seating on the bank of disastrous annihilation? Just to glance of the alarming condition of this aspect a brief of a prevailing highlights is covered below.

- (a) The unscrupulous harnessing of the natural resources from mother earth.
- (b) Alarming atmospheric pollution, contamination of water sources and deforestation.
- (c) Non utilization of natural energy sources and methods for improving quality of life.
- (d) Not utilizing judiciously, the funds for welfare of the society.
- (e) Deterioration of health, hygiene and general cleanliness.
- (f) Proliferation of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical warfare.

#### III.4.4 The twelve *yajñas* as propounded in *Gītā*

In *Gītā* there are twelve *yajñas* which have been prescribed, out of them first two are conventional and widely elaborated and discussed in scriptures, where as other ten are notional and brainchild of Lord Kṛṣṇa. There cannot be anything extra guide other than these, as attributes for the Character Building.

- (a) First *Yajña*: Conventional as prescribed in scriptures for prosperity, peace, wealth, power, mitigation of natural disaster and calamities and preservation of nature and environment. Elaborate procedure, mantras and rituals are laid down. Normally they are in for praise and prayer to the designated God and Goddess to bless the performer and society for which the endeavor takes place. (BG 4.25)
- (a) Second *Yajña*: This *yajña* is performed by total surrender to the almighty, where the self in sacrificial mode, offer his *Sāadhanā* (accomplishment/worship) to the *Brahmagnau*. This *Yajña* is in pursuit of realization by *Yogis*, though equally applicable to the devoted person in pursuit his goal in day-to-day life. The first *yajña* is performed by host or community where as the second is performed by a realized in effort to to merge with almighty. (BG 4.25)
- (b) Third *Yajña*: Third onwards *yajñas* are those which has no rituals but exemplary excellence in life style of *Sādhaka* is expected. They aim at building character of an individual irrespective of his position, status and disposition. They are explained with basic concept of performance of traditional *Yajña* with Offering, Kindling agent and Fire in the *yajñakuṇḍa* (the built in encloser for fire). It can be represented by the model as given below. (BG 4.26)

Offerings ↔ Catalyst/Kindling ↔ Fire God

In this verse the Lord starts with concept of Self-restraint of organs of knowledge (श्रोत्रदीनीन्द्रियाणि संयमाग्निषु जुहति) as follows.

- (i) Ear (श्रोत्रः) ↔ Sound (शब्दः) ↔ Fire of Self-restraint (संयमाग्निः)
  - (ii) Nose (घ्राणम्) ↔ Smell/Odor (गन्धः) ↔ Fire of Self-restraint (संयमाग्निः)
  - (iii) Eyes (चक्षुः) ↔ The vision/perception (दृष्टिः) ↔ Fire of Self-restraint (संयमाग्निः)
  - (iv) Tongue (जिह्वा) ↔ Test (आस्वाद) ↔ Fire of Self-restraint (संयमाग्निः)
  - (v) Skin (त्वचा) ↔ Ignites the feeling (स्पर्श) ↔ Fire of Self-restraint (संयमाग्निः)
- (c) The fourth *Yajana* is a complementary to the third, wherein the experienced impulses are analyzed by mind, which has to be controlled by respective perceptive knowledge organs (ज्ञानेन्द्रियाणि) judiciously (शब्दादीन्विषयानन्य इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुहति). Subtle entities called *Tanmātra* (designated as subtle properties of the knowledge organs) are referred here as offering. The phenomenon is explained as follows. (B G 4.26)
- (i) The spoken words (शब्दः) ↔ The perceptible sound (शाब्दबोधः) ↔ Control and taming of Senses (इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुहति i.e., श्रोत्रः - Ears)
  - (ii) Experiencing the test (रसः) ↔ The desire generated (रसास्वादः) ↔ Control and taming of Senses (इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुहति i.e., जिह्वा - Tongue)
  - (iii) The appearance (रूपम्) ↔ The perception by the senses (रूपबोधः) ↔ Control and taming of Senses (इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुहति i.e., चक्षुः - Eyes)
  - (iv) The smell/odor (गन्धः) ↔ Fragrance of an object (गन्धबोधः) ↔ Control and taming of Senses (इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुहति i.e., घ्राणं - Nose)
  - (v) Feeling generated by contact with skin (स्पर्श) ↔ rousing of emotion due to touch (स्पर्शज्ञानम्) ↔ Control and taming of Senses (इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुहति i.e., त्वचा - Skin)

Commented [SD1]:

This concept can be understood with the help of Mahatma Gandhi's three monkey story as "The phrase 'see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil' first emerged in Japan in 17<sup>th</sup> Century and later adopted worldwide as a message of peace and tolerance due to Mahatma Gandhi's visual metaphor of three monkeys, with one covering eyes, the second his mouth and third his ear"

- (d) Fifth *Yajña*: The fifth *yajña* is Self-control of functional organ of action and vital life force. Moreover, kindling fire is with the wisdom as follows. (BG 4.27)
- All the organs of the body working for intended cause and the vital force which keeps the body alive (आहुति) ↔ Intelligent and judicious motive (समिधा) ↔ in the fire of self-control (अग्निदेवता)

In nutshell, the Lord directs to act with vigor and for fruitful outcome, self-control (आत्मसंयम) encompasses consciousness and not compulsion. All the action from student therefor is expected to follow this dictum in their normal life.

(e) Sixth to ninth *yajña*: These *yajñas* are self-explanatory from their title as given below.

(B G 4.28)

- |                                   |   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| (i) The sixth: <i>Dravyayajña</i> | } | - For benefit to Society |
| (ii) Seventh: <i>Tapoyajña</i>    |   | - For individual         |
| (iii) Eighth: <i>Yogayajña</i>    |   | development              |
| (iv) Ninth: <i>Svādhyāyayajña</i> |   |                          |

(f) Tenth and eleventh *Yajña*: Both these *Yajñas* fall into same category of sustaining vital life force, one is with natural breathing, where as other one is with deliberate control over the cycle of breathing, with variation in their mode of practices, to fit in to our model of *Yajña*, they can be represented as follows. (B G 4.29)

(i) Tenth *Yajña*: Cycle of Inhalation and Exhalation ↔ vital life force ↔ Natural breathing.

(ii) Eleventh *Yajña*: Cycle of Inhalation and Exhalation ↔ Vital life force with control/regulated breathing ↔ Pranayama.

(g) Twelfth *yajña*: This *yajña* deals with the regulating food intake (नियताहारः). The intake of food is not just the filling of stomach but should be treated as *yajña*. This being last prescribed *yajña*, the Lord sums up, when all activities are performed with full knowledge (यज्ञविदः knowledge about the purpose and procedural details for which the *yajña* being performed) in *yajña* mode, results into washing away all misdeeds (यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषः). Though, the appropriate meaning would be achieving the purpose for which the *yajña* is undertaken. (BG 4.30)

### III.4.5 The importance of faith in character building

Having Unflinching faith in the traditional customs, elders, teachers and proven system, is the greatest virtue enunciated in Gita all along. Its proclamation first time it is empathetically pronounced in BG 4.39, wherein Lord says the person having Faith and conquest over sensuous pleasures, is bestowed with the knowledge (श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः) and having acquired this knowledge the mind of s rests in peace). *Jñānam* here though referred to is the absolute truth leading to the realization, there is no harm if the same is implied for the students to acquire the knowledge of their chosen field and

profession. More elaboration of this attribute of Unflinching faith is covered when 17<sup>th</sup> Chapter of *Gītā* entitled *śraddhātrayavibhāgayoga* and the commanding views of Swami Vivekananda on this topic is reflected in next chapter of this thesis. (BG 4.40)

### III.5 Aspirant as classified by *Gītā*

The *Yogī*, *Sanyāsī* and *Jñānī* are the three types of *Sādhaka* which has been deliberated in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> *Adhyāya* of *Gītā*, entitled *Karmasannyāsayoga* and *Dhyānayoga* respectively. This categorization is not exclusive, nor practiced as separate entities. First path as *Karma-yogī*, is advocated to be followed by everybody to the preference to other two categories. The path chosen by *Karma-yogī* has to practice renunciation and acquisition of knowledge as his *sādhana*, which leads to the same destination i.e., desired goal or realization. Therefore, the qualities of *Yogī* will be extracted from this chapter as an attribute of Character Building.

#### III.5.1 Strive to be *Yogi* as a man of character

It has been repeatedly emphasized in *Gītā* the preference to *karmayoga* by Lord kṛṣṇa, however he never wants to give up the virtues of *Bhaktiyoga* and *Jñānayoga* to the success of the mission. The attributes of Character Building covered earlier are repeated and restated, though with the new perceptive as an essential quality of *Yogī*, *Sanyāsī* and *Jñānī*. The characteristic basically of the *Karmayogī* which are attributes of Character Building for normal student are summarized below.

- (a) Stay away from extreme two opposite entities (निर्वन्दः), like pleasure and pain. (BG 5.3) – (Hyper link with page 10, para 4.3 (b) - Attributes of *Sanyāsī*.)
- (b) The *Jñānī* is the one who is *sākṣī* (साक्षी - witnessing the happening in the world as an observer and not necessarily getting involved) to all the action performed but does not get attached nor claims that he is doer of action. He has shed the ego and offered his life to the almighty. (B G 5.8 and 5.9) – Attributes of *Jñānī*.
- (c) Perform the action with non-attachment and for self-purification by body, conscious mind and intellect (कायेन मनसा बुद्धि) (BG 5.11) – Attributes of *Yogī*
- (d) The *Yogī* with his knowledge and modesty, treat all living world with equal compassion and caring. This includes animal kingdom as well flora and fauna. (BG 5.18)
- (e) The *yogī* keeps away from worldly desires and anger. (BG 5.23 and 5.26)

- (f) The regular and habitual practice of meditation is recommended for every human being. A separate Chapter No 6, entitled *Dhyānayoga* in *Gītā* is devoted on this aspect. The benefits and usefulness of meditation are covered in the Chapter dealing with Application of Character Building of this thesis. (BG 5.27 and 5.28)

### III.6 Meditations as an attribute of character building

How brilliantly great philosopher and *Vedāntī*, A. Parthasarthy<sup>4</sup> has described the essence of *Gītā* in one *Mahāvākya* (A great philosophical preposition from the Vedic literature ‘*Tattvamasi* - तत्त्वमसि’) can be realized when Lord suddenly and without any warning or background, switches from, the subject of *Yogi* and *Sannyāsi*, to the Meditation and that too in the midst of battlefield. It signifies the importance of the topic as well as it’s manifestation in life.

One of the important aspects of Character Building is controlling and training of mind. However, one cannot start the exercise, without any background, preparation and proper training through *Guru* (*Guru* implied here is not just a teacher but a spiritual preceptor – who has a knowledge of *vedāntic* philosophy, especially in behavioral science). Now it is up to *Sādhaka* and his Mentor (*Gurū*) to proceed through the combination of three established path and *yogic sādhanā* to the destination which is implied here as Character Building. Student should inculcate those attributes which are essential in practicing meditation, from the <sup>5</sup>basic qualities discussed earlier and they are more or less repeated in the sixth chapter of *Gita*, before giving out the procedural details to be followed.

Commented [SD2]:

#### III.6.1 Prerequisite for meditational practices

- (a) Do your duties without expectation of fruits (अनश्रितः कर्मफलं) (B G 6.1)
- (b) Renunciation of materialistic desires (संन्यस्तसंकल्प) (B G 6.2)
- (c) Tranquility and mental calmness (शमः) are essential prerequisite of meditation, knowledge and coaching can help; the self itself is a friend and also enemy in accomplishing any endeavor. (आत्मेव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः) (B G 6.5 and 6.6), (These two verses can be shifted to the chapter dealing with application of Character Development)

<sup>4</sup> Parthasarthy, A, Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Vols. 1,2,3, Lannd send, Bombay, 1992

<sup>5</sup> Basic qualities such as *śauca* (cleanliness) of body and mind, calmness of mind and so on.

- (d) To achieve success in life one has to develop Suitable intellect or approach to deal with all types of people. Some of these categories are listed in the verse B G 6.9 these are - magnanimous and kind hearted persons (सुहृद्), the friends (मित्रम्), the foes (अरिः) those especially harboring six enemies in their mind (षड्रिपुः), indifferent (उदासीनः), impartial and neutral persons (मध्यस्थः), abhorrent and malignant persons (द्वेषः), relatives (बन्धु); also, those who are righteous (साधुः) and sinful (पापी) people. How to identify these people and what is the approach to deal with them? Million-dollar question, though not spelled out here, the scriptural advice is that each soul is divine and pure. With this fundamental principle one should proceed and the answer would be emerging which can be achieved by practicing *yoga* (योगारूढस्य) (B G 6.3)
- (e) One has to make an effort to lift himself, no other external aid like book, formal education and even Guru, can help you to elevate. The self is a friend as well as enemy in advancement of one's effort (B G 6.5)

### III.6.2 Brief details about the meditational practices

The procedure for following meditational practice is explained in simple language. However, it has to be learnt through accomplished *Guru*. Without going into minor detail, as it is a separate topic by itself, a brief description covered in *Gītā* is given below.

- (a) Having developed the basic characteristic of *yogī* as described earlier, he should be composed with calmness, be self-confident and free from worldly attachments. (B G 6.10)
- (b) For meditation one should select clean and pleasant environment; and establish himself in comfortable seat. (B G 6.11)
- (c) B G 6.12 to 6.15 verses gives the exact procedure of getting into meditation with concentrated and serene mind but as stated earlier it has to be practiced initially under the accomplished *Guru*. (Attachment in the form of annexure or appendix on meditational practices is planned to be included)
- (d) Next two verses qualify do and don'ts for practitioner of meditation as follows
- (i) Moderate food intake (युक्ताहार).
  - (ii) Adequate sleep and no day dreaming (युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य).
  - (iii) Appropriate recreational and touring activities (युक्तविहारस्य).

(iv) Engaging oneself in constructive and positive activities (युक्तचेष्टस्य). (B G 6.17)

(e) The verses B G 6.18 onwards kṛṣṇa explains the state of meditation wherein the controlled mind is fully established in the core of self. He further advises to *Sādhaka* to practice meditation with determination, (B G 6.23) regular practice, (BG 6.35) and unflinching faith in almighty (B G 6.47) In fact if this state has to be realized, nobody even Yogī, *Sanyāsī* or *Jñānī* can claim to describe this state but has to be experienced by *Sādhaka* himself.

(f) Kṛṣṇa clarifies the doubt of Arjuna with acceptance that mind is defiantly restless and difficult to control, however he advises that it can be regulated through the meditational and *yogic* practices which has been elaborated above. (B G 6.35, 6.45)

### III.7 The clarity and target for undertaking a task

The *Sādhaka* should be aware about his mission in life. Unless he is clear about the task, why should he undertake this task and what will be his targets; otherwise, the motivation in performing will not be there. Here the example from the 1971 war operation can be sighted. The Indian troops were well aware about the atrocities unleashed by Pakistani Armed forces and the Government to the Eastern Pakistani population-Bangladeshi. They were also briefed about intention of Indian Government to free these Bangladeshi from the atrocities inflicted by Pakistani Forces. The basic character of Indian troops being so molded to perform and protect the innocent and follow the *Svadharmā*, there was no dearth of their valorous fighting spirit to defeat the adversaries. The 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Gita more or less deals with the *Svarūpa* of almighty, his prowess, mysterious and imperishable form. These Chapters educates the *Sādhaka* to have clarity in achieving his goal. Following are the title of these Chapters with brief description as far as the Character-Building aspects are concerned.

- (a) The 7<sup>th</sup> chapter - *Jñānviññānāyoga*
- (b) The 8<sup>th</sup> chapter - *Akṣarabrahmayoga*
- (c) The 9<sup>th</sup> chapter - *Rajavidyārājguhyayoga*
- (d) The 10<sup>th</sup> chapter - *Vibhūtiyoga*
- (e) The 11<sup>th</sup> chapter - *Viśvarūpadarśanayoga*

### III.7.1 *Jñānavijñānayoga*

*Jñāna* and *Vijñāna* have different meaning in scriptural language which has been elaborated earlier. It is reiterated that *Jñāna* is the knowledge which when acquired and practiced takes *Sādhaka* to the realization (Sacred knowledge; especially knowledge derived from meditation on the higher truths of religion and philosophy which teaches man how to understand his own nature and how he may be reunited to the Supreme spirit. – Ref the S S-E D by VSA page 223). However, for the purpose of our convenience it can be accepted as what is understood by general dictionary meaning as information or awareness gained through experience or education and *Vijñāna*, as something more than *Jñāna*, conveying practicing the knowledge with dedication and applying it with Wisdom. *Vijñāna* has known, in common as science subjects like Physics, Chemistry Biology, etc. wherein principle of theory or knowledge is applied by practical application. A Parthasarathi in Vol 2 of *gītā* has beautifully portrayed the *Jñānavijñānayoga* for the student community while commenting on BG 7.2 that knowledge can be given by Guru but not wisdom. He further clarifies that if one who wants to graduate in knowledge and wisdom has to clear three deficiencies as follows

- (a) Lack of knowledge by *śravaṇa* (Listening)
- (b) Lack of understanding by *Manana* (Reflection)
- (c) Lack of experience by *Nididhyāsana* (Meditation or concentration)

### III.7.2 The importance of knowledge and wisdom

The importance of knowledge and wisdom for a student community cannot be over emphasized. The 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of Gita is entitled *Jñānavijñāna yoga*, deals with knowledge for achieving *mokṣa* (realization), however the same doctrine can be applied for acquisition of knowledge. Lord Kṛṣṇa reiterates the composition of *Prakṛti* (Universe) and human body, constituting of eight basic elements. Eightfold elements are namely Earth, Space, Air, Fire and Water; Mind, Intellect, and Ego) with varied quantum of *Guṇās*, so that the human behavioral pattern is best understood. The implication of *Jñānavijñāna* however for the purpose Students can be interpreted as Knowledge and Wisdom. The attributes of Character Building can be derived from this Chapter of *Gītā* are listed below.

- (a) Practicing *Yoga*. Following *aṣṭāṅgayoga* (eight constituent of *yoga sādhanā*) will be more appropriate in our context (B G 7.1)
- (b) Try for the perfection of knowledge (Try for perfection). Perfection in subject specific knowledge, will be essential element for the students (B G 7.3)



(c) Be strong, devoid of desire and passion; and do not act against *Dharma*. Knowledge acquired should be for the betterment of society (BG 7.11)

(d) There are four kinds of *Sādhakas*, these are (BG 7.16, 17, 18, 19, 20)

(i) Distressed

(ii) The inquisitive

(iii) The seeker of wealth

(iv) The wise

(e) *Śraddhā* assumes one the greatest attribute of Character Building. The elaboration of this attribute along with the discourse of Swami Vivekananda on this subject is covered subsequently. What is highlighted here, is that student should pursue his study with faith so that the desired results are assured. (B G 7.21 & 7.22)

(f) A new dimension is offered wherein desire (इच्छा) and hatred (वैष) are portrayed differently by often repeated doctrine of 'not to fall prey to the pairs opposites (द्वन्द्वमोहेन)'. One should avoid this temptation right from the beginning of *sadhana*. (B G 7.27 & 7.28)

### III.7.3 Eightfold elements of nature and human body

The eightfold constituents of Universe as well as human body has been elaborated in simplest language in Chapter 7<sup>th</sup> of Gita. These along with their significance is required to be understood, as they form the basic constituent of the living organism especially of our interest in understanding of functioning of human behavioral science. These elements are as follows.

(a) Earth

(b) Water

(c) Fire

(d) Air

(e) Space

(f) Mind

(g) Intellect

(h) Ego

Out of these first five are material elements forming the Universe, however their constituent traces are also part of human body. This fact also can be further substantiated by the people of certain region, exhibiting particular traits, nature or personality. Whereas other three which are

subtle. One of the major differences in eightfold elements of nature can be noticed in *Gītā* and *Sāṃkhya* is that the mind is replaced by *mūlaprakṛti* the life only springs up when bottom three are combined with upper five elements. Hence the importance of Mind, Intellect and Ego constitute the important factors in Character Building. (BG 7.4)

### III.8 Akṣarabrahmayoga

*Akṣarabrahmayoga* where the qualities of unperishable *Brahman* the supreme spirit have been narrated. Arjuna in the beginning asks the meanings of the terms which are in fact the attributes of *Brahman* the lord describes them in brief terminology and leaves elaborative aspect to *S*. The applicability of these for student can be drawn as follows.

- (a) What is *Adhyātma*? The basic nature of the imperishable *Brahman* is *Adhyātma*. Though literary meaning is ‘belonging to self’, it implies theosophical or metaphysical knowledge, especially covered in our scriptures. Being *Ādhyātmika* is a greatest virtue in Character. (BG 8.3)
- (b) What is *Karma*? The action is Karma, however here the Lord comes up with the action as a creative force by which the *śṛṣṭi* is born (BG 8.3). Creativity is another important virtue which can be drawn for the student Character Building.
- (c) What is *Adhibhūtam*, *Adhidaivam* and *adhiyajña*? All these terms which have *Adhi* as prefix connote the over and above, firstly Supreme among all the living organism, secondly among all the Gods and lastly omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. These characteristics though not directly attributed to *S* but are highest peak for his *sādhana*. (BG 8.4)

### III.9 Rājavidyārājaguhya yoga

There are two categories which are always referred in undertaking *Sadhana* or Character Building they are *S* and Student. Though synonymous but first one is for *Jñānī* or *Sannyāsi* and the second one for *Yogī* as far as this presentation is concerned. Again, for developing this status, these qualities are not sacrosanct nor exclusive, but they are intermixed for the best result. Student for us, as has been earlier stated, is a *Yogi* abiding to the normal behavioral pattern, whereas *S* following ascetic life but ultimately both leading to destination of salvation. The royal knowledge and secret are essentially for *S* but some salient points for Character Building for a Student can be drawn as follows.

- (a) Follow the righteous path with *Śraddhā* and *Dharma*. (BG 9.3 and 9.23)

- (b) The unprofitable and aimless hopes, action and knowledge leads to disaster. These are the characteristics of people with evil mind. (BG 9.12)
- (c) Destroy the ignorance, in the fire of knowledge (ज्ञानयज्ञेन मामुपासते) (BG 9.15)
- (d) Whatever action performed offer it to God almighty. (BG 9.27)

The supreme secret knowledge which further deals with the hardcore issues of *Vedanta*, which has to be realized and recognized by the *S* himself, and no external aids are useful.

### III.10 *Vibhūtiyoga*

*Vibhūtiyoga* deals with the Supreme personality and union with it. In this case Lord kṛṣṇa declares that he himself is in this personality and Prince Arjuna is convinced and asks him to recount the details of *Vibhūtiyoga* (कथय विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिं च जनार्दन) which Lord complies with. These details are covered earlier also, however in the beginning this chapter itself he recounts the qualities of *Vibhūti*, which are originated from him, listed in the verses BG 10.4 and 10.5 and they are listed below. All these attributes are self-explanatory, however a brief note is given against some, where elaboration is required.

- (a) *Buddhi* (Intellect)
- (b) *Jñāna* (Knowledge)
- (c) *Asaṁmoha* (No infatuation – No fascination or ignorance, somewhat nearer to *Sthitaprajñā*)
- (d) *Kṣamā* (Forgiveness)
- (e) *Satyam* (Truth)
- (f) *Damaḥ* (Physical control – Physical control over five organs of sensuous pleasure is indicated.) (निग्रहो बाह्यव्रतीनामं दमः इत्यभिधीयते)
- (g) *Śamaḥ* (Mental control – Control over mind and tranquility is implied.)
- (h) *Sukham duḥkham* (Pleasure and Suffering - Extreme two opposite entities should not affect the performance.)
- (i) *Bhavo'bhāvo* (likes and dislikes - Stay away from extreme two opposite entities.)
- (j) *Ahiṁsā* (Nonviolence)
- (k) *Samatā* (Equanimity – Very important aspect of Character Building covered under *Samatvam yoga ucyate*.)
- (l) *Tustiḥ* (Contentment)
- (m) *Tapah* (Austerity)

(n) *Dānam* (Gift)

(o) *Yaśo 'yaśo* (Victory and defeat. Stay away from extreme two opposite entities  
– The best example in support of this attribute can be cited from the field of Sports, where win or loss does not matter so long as one has offered his best; for his self-improvement, team spirit and without harboring revenge)

### III.11 *Viśvarūpadarśanayogaḥ*

Though the *Viśvarūpadarśana* (cosmic form) has no direct relevance with Character Building but it brings out the insignificant and infinitesimal existence of an individual, earth itself in cosmos is not even a small dot when compared with the celestial bodies of the Universe. In short it signifies that mankind has to preserve this Earth with utmost humility and dexterity, where attributes of Character Building are relevant. The mystic and grand cosmic form exhibited by kṛṣṇa to convince Arjuna was the ultimate reality projected in Gita which portrays beyond doubt the Omnipresence of Almighty. What has been revealed to Arjuna was just a trailer than what really is an endless form, with no beginning and end (त्वां सर्वतो अनन्तरूपम् नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तद्विद् BG11.16) This particular aspect was an essential doctrine to convince the wide cross section of devotees ranging from *Jnanis* to *yogis* in their *Sādhana*. It is possible for each *Sādhaka* to acquire this vision, by lying down on moonless night with clear sky and open up his divine *Cakṣuḥ* (the faculty of perceptive vision) to visualize millions of Stars and Galaxies and experience the grandeur of Universe. The *ṛṣi-Muni* had acquired this vision, otherwise how could they perceive the knowledge about our Solar system, constellation and sign of zodiacs, without any aid of modern technology and telescope.

### III. 12 The path of devotion

The path to be followed for achieving success in any endeavor has been discussed earlier. Now Lord explains Path of devotion but before that he wants certain concepts to be cleared so that the *S* has no doubt about his enroute journey to the destination. These are listed below.

(a) *Śraddhā*: To begin with he advises the *S* to be always be firm on his mission with unflinching faith (BG 12.2).

(b) It is difficult to comprehend which is not manifested: It is always better to start one's task with clear perception to begin with, the matter may appear too complex and intriguing. Today because of competitive environment, social and parental pressure and amongst the subjects being taught at school the child having some disliking, leads to

the confusion in the mind of a child. Lot more can be done to overcome this situation with appropriate methodology and training aids which is the concept behind Idol worshipping.

Though this advice is for realization where in one should start his *Sadhana* through the perceptible form of God as his Omnipresence and formless entity is difficult to be comprehended (क्लेशः अधिकतरः....अवाप्यते BG 12.5). This truth should rest all doubts heaped on *Sanātana Dharma* of Hindu on the controversy pertaining to the *mūrtipūjā* (Idol worship).

(c) *Sadhana* to be based on individual aptitude and practice: Concentration and sustained practice is required to be enunciated to achieve integrated progress in *Sadhana* to complete the mission successfully. These are briefly elaborated as a progressive step to suite our aim of Character Building.

- (i) Concentrate the mind and intellect, without having any doubt on the completion of task/study (मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धि निवेशय). (BG 12.8)
- (ii) If one is not able to concentrate as given above then follow Practicing regularly as a part of *Dinacaryā* (Regular daily routine starting with prayer, as one gets up in the morning and following up with the planned activities as a prerequisite of Student's life). A guideline on *Dinacaryā* for Student is covered in subsequent chapter. (BG 12.9)
- (iii) If practicing as explained above is not helpful then surrender to almighty and act for the sake of cause for which the study has been undertaken (मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि) (BG 12.10)
- (iv) If above is also not possible, then resort to renouncing and self-control. This in fact is a tall order, where in Student has to brace himself for acquisition of knowledge and not worrying about the rewards and grads but strive to be perfectionist in his field. (सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान्). (BG 12.11)

All these alternative suggested by Kṛṣṇa are intriguing to the *S*, however the attempt has been made further to understand and interpret as suitable for the student's life.

### III.12.1 The importance of four interwoven elements of *sādhana*

The four elements of *Sadhana* which are spelled out are extremely important for students. These are dug out from the summarized verse of BG 12.12. The alternatives stated from BG 12.8 to 12.11 are complex and intriguing. However, having known the *naṭakhaṭa* (mischievous

and playful) nature of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the attempt has been made to interpret those in positive manner. Summarizing this advice, Lord Kṛṣṇa in BG 12.12 states “श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासज्ज्ञानाध्यानं विशिष्यते by emphasizing that better is the knowledge than practicing, better is the meditation than knowledge, still better is the renunciation of fruit of Action than meditation and ultimately practice renunciation so that the peace is assured. (BG 12.12). In mathematical term, it can be represented as follows where sign > represents Greater than Peace > Renunciation > Meditation > Knowledge > Practicing. These four attributes of Character Building are essential to have satisfying career, tranquility and peace. Indoctrination of these is recommended at different stages of growth of the child as follows.

### III.12.2 The different stages of growth

The development of character of an individual is not an overnight concept. These stages are designed in conformity with present educational system prevailing in the country. The stages envisaged at which the type of character-Building aspects can be indoctrinated for this study are given below. These stages are not sacrosanct and even child of advance age will be recommended for indoctrination.

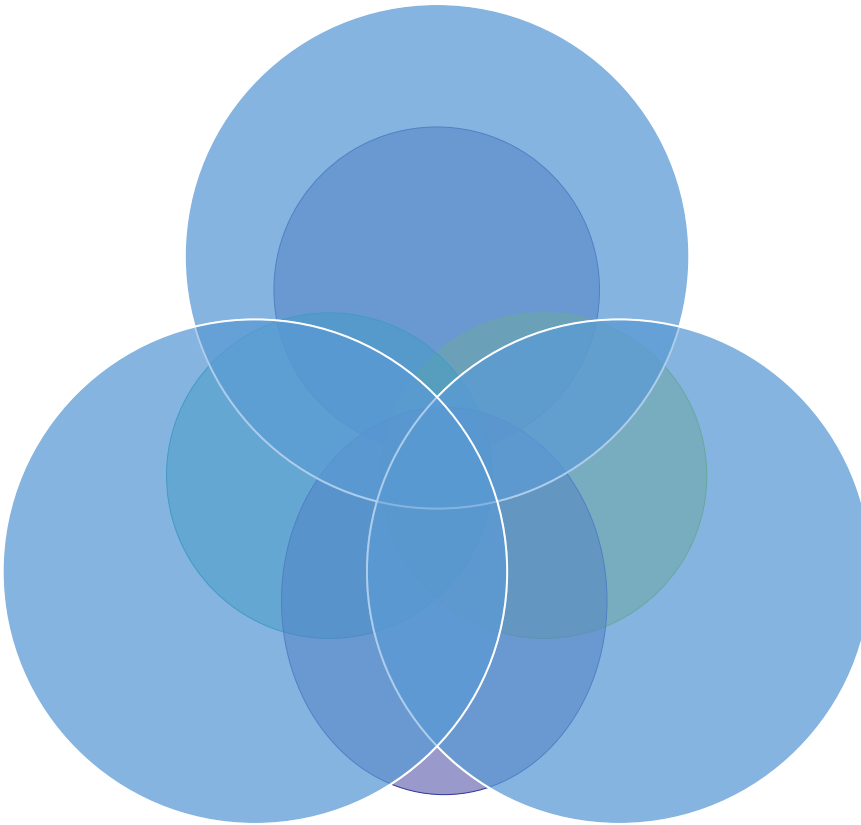
- (a) Embryonic stage: - 9 to 0 month.
- (b) Nascent stage: 0 to 5 years.
- (c) Primary stage: 5 to 12 years.
- (d) Secondary stage: 12 to 17 years.
- (e) College/University stage: 17 to 20 years.
- (f) Adult stage: > 20 years.

### III.12.3 Interpretation of BG 12.8 to 12.12 by Euler model

Though seemingly intriguing advice, it can be very well understood to begin with Vane /Euler diagram model, where in all possible suggested methods are followed at varied stages of growth of a child. There are four circles intersecting each other as shown in figure below. Each circle representing the attribute of Character Building as, Southern - *Tyāgaḥ*, Western – *Abhyāsa*, Eastern – *Dhyāna* and Northern – *Jñāna* with centroid as *śāntiḥ*.

- (a) *Karmafalatyāgaḥ* – It starts in four stages, embryonic phase and nascent phase – Primary and Secondary phase – College and Adult phase – with apex culminating in to ultimate destination *śāntiḥ*.

- (b) Similarly, *Abhyāsa*, *Dhyāna* and *Jñāna* progressing left to right, right to left and top to bottom, respectively with apex culminating in to ultimate destination, in four stages as above.



- (c) There is total thirteen regions as shown in the figure, 1 to 4 basic attributes, 5 to 8 representing combination of two element, 9 to 12 representing combination of three elements and 13<sup>th</sup> representing the ultimate destination i.e., *śāntiḥ*. Euler diagram exhibits four basic attributes. These are interpreted to be adopted in in four stages of human life span, besides their interaction with other three attributes. The four stages of human life span are grouped as follows.

- (d) Different stages as defined in para 10.2 are regrouped as follows.

- (i) Foundation stage - Embryonic to primary: -9 month to 12 years.

- (ii) Secondary stage: 12years to 17 years.
- (iii) Adult stage: 17 years to 20 years.
- (iv) Advanced stage: 20 years and above.

Thirteen regions designated in Euler diagram are listed below. These regions are deliberately exhibited because no single characteristic of Character Building is sufficient to mold the character of a person but it is combination of virtues which are nurtured throughout his life depending on his chosen profession and disposition. Similarly, any one characteristic cannot be imbibed right from the birth of a child but it has to be introduced in phased manner. For example, *Jñāna* (knowledge) for Student can be introduced in four stages, as mentioned above and that too depending on the subject of his chosen field.

1. *Abhyāsa* (A) – Starts with Embryonic phase.
2. *Jñāna* (J) – Starts with foundation stage.
3. *Dhyāna* (D) – Starts with Secondary stage.
4. *Tyāgaḥ* (T) Starts with Secondary stage.

Methodology of induction of these at various stages are covered in the Chapter dealing with the Application of Character Building.

### **III.12.4 Character building attributes listed in *Bhaktimārg* (BG 12.13 TO 12.20)**

The path devotion – *Bhaktimārga* is the fundamental and basic which is to be practiced in combination of other two i.e., *karmamārga* and *Jñānamārga*. The attributes of Character Building in Chapter 12 *Bhaktiyoga* from verse BG 12.13 to 12.20 are listed below with brief explanatory note wherever required.

1. *Adveṣṭā sarva bhūtānām* (Not hating anybody) – It is applicable to all wherein no distinction is made between cast, creed and profession. Even this is applicable to all living kingdom.
2. *Maitraḥ* (Friends to all, just not friend but kind and helping.)
3. *Karuṇaḥ* (Compassionate. Sensitive to the suffering of all and be proactive to mitigate their problems.)
4. *Nirmama* (Having no attachment with worldly possessions)
5. *Nirahaṅkāraḥ* (Do not be egoist)
6. *Samaduḥkhasukhaḥ* (Do not get swayed by pleasure and pain, both to be treated with same yard stick)
7. *Kṣamā* (Nurture the habit of forgiveness especially in developing relationship)



8. *Sanṭuṣṭaḥ satatam* (Be always contented and satisfied)
9. *Yogī* (योगी – Be follower and practitioner of philosophy of Yoga)
10. *Yatātmā* (The one who has full control over his soul. *Yat* + *Atman* is to be interpreted as a soul having sum total characteristic of perfect personality. Develop control over body and mind)
11. *Druḍhaniścayaḥ* (Having firm conviction, determination and resolution.)
12. *Mayyarpīṭamanobuddhīryo* (Dedicate self to the cause with mind and body)
13. *Ysmat no dvijate lokaḥ* (Behave in such manner that people around you not offended, agitated and disturbed are.)
14. *Lokāt na dvijate ca yah* (Conversely don't get agitated by the manner in which the people behave or react. Very difficult but try and it will be great experience)
15. *Harśa amarṣa bhaya udvegaiḥ muktaḥ* (Be free from pleasure, exultation, fear and jealousy low esteem, and anxiety.)
16. *Anapekṣaḥ* (Be free from any desire and expectation.)
17. *Śuciḥ* (Be hygienic and healthy, bodily as well as with mind.)
18. *Dakṣaḥ* (Be conscious always to face any eventuality.)
19. *Udāsīnaḥ* (Indifferent or dispassionate to the happenings around but adhering to the qualities where awareness, like be Compassionate and other mentioned as a helping attitude are followed)
20. *Gatavyathaḥ* Not thinking or brooding over past, but living in present with positive attitude.)
21. *Sarva ārambhaparityāgī* Stay away from all the limelight and all occasions, which are not useful for self-development or for social and national interest.)
22. *Na hr̥ṣyati, na dveṣṭi, na śocati, na kāṅkṣati* (Stays away from pleasure, not envying, do not grieve and do not indulge in day dreaming or pleasurable thoughts nor carve for desires.)
23. *Śubha aśubha parityāgī* (Renouncing as well staying away from glamorous and evil events. In short, shedding personal interest irrespective of good or bad happenings.) 29
24. *Śamaḥ śatrau ca mitre ca tathā manāpmānayoḥ* (Develop balance personality by treating foe and friend, respect and disrespect.) 30
25. *Śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkheṣu samaḥ Saṅgavivarjitaḥ* (treat cold and heat, joy and sorrow alike; also stay aloof from similar worldly attachments and experiences) 31
26. *Tulyanindāstutiḥ* (Treat censure and praise as equal) 32

27. *Maunī* (Silent. Be *mitabhāṣī* (only speak when absolutely necessary and that too with a point) which may be more appropriate) 33
28. *Santuṣṭaḥ yena kenacit* (Be satisfied and contented always) 34
29. *Aniketaḥ* (Homeless. Having no fixed abode, treat this world itself as home, having no materialistic desires and be *parivrājakaḥ* (A wandering monk or ascetic.) is what probably meant by Lord as *Aniketa*) 35
30. *Sthirmati* (Steady minded with *kaya vācā* and *manas* (Offer yourself by body, speech and mind) 36 (BG 12.19)

All these qualities enumerated are equally applicable for Character Building, especially for students. They will be further grouped in manageable categories so that they may not appear so much complicated and unachievable.

### III.12.5 Advice to the aspirants - *bhakti*

*Bhakti* that is devotion, starts with *śraddhā* as an unflinching faith, without any doubt or question. However, the chosen field of *bhakti*/profession/study has to be selected with utmost care where *Svadharmah*, parents, opportunities and *Guru* playing an important role. *Bhakti* is a simplest path, provided the aspirant follows the prerequisites given below.

- (a) *Bhakta* is described by Lord Kṛṣṇa as the one whose mind is fixed intensely with absolute faith - *Śraddhā*, who is firm with his conviction - *Nityayuktāḥ* (steadfast) and *Yuktātamā*) most perfect individual, *tamah* is superlative to *yukta*). (BG 12.2)
- (b) Kṛṣṇa says “One who achieved control over his sense organs *Sanniyamyendriyagrāmam* and is even minded in all condition *Sarvatra samabuddhayaḥ*” is dear to him. This quality is often repeated even while defining *Yoga* when it is said *Samatvam yoga ucyate*. (BG 12.4)
- (c) Lastly, he declares that those who abide by the *Dharma* (*Dharma* here is not connoted as any religion but virtues such as *Ahimsā*, *Sadācārah*, and so on) with *śraddhā* is dear to him. (BG 12.20)
- (d) All these qualities befitting devotee can be considered as virtues which can shape the youth of today. Controlling sense organs, firm mind, unflinching faith, concentration etc. are considered to be back bone in shaping the personality of human being, both spiritual and mantle. Mentally stable person can stand for himself, for his fellow beings as well as for the country. This is most wanted to

enrich younger generation into value system. This is how and where character is shaped.

### III.13 The field and the knower of the field

The Chapter of BG 13 onwards mainly deals with the philosophy of implementation of what is so far has been covered, with some supplement of understanding the functioning of human body and mind. The title of the 13<sup>th</sup> Chapter is *Kṣetrakṣetrajñānavibhāgayogaḥ* (The field and knower of the field) which defines certain terms like *kṣetra*, *kṣetrajña*, *Guṇaḥ*, *Prakṛti*, *Puruṣa* etc. The best slimily can be offered here from the game of Cricket, where Master craftsman (Captain of the team) has to know the pitch, the environmental condition, the strength and weakness of own team and adversaries for deciding the success.

#### III.13.1 *Kṣetra and kṣetrajña*

The concept of Field and Knower of the field, is to enlighten *Sādhka* the *Jñāna* which is the ultimate in Indian philosophy. *Kṣetra* and *Kṣetrajña* is metaphysical body, wherein *kṣetra* is the field/matter/Body and *kṣetrajña* is residing in this body which is a knowledge and that is nothing but Supreme. In short, look within and Supreme will be reviled. All the virtues are kindled when Supreme within awakens and that is what exactly is the Character Building. The five elements which constitute the world and also inhabits in the body – *Pañcabhūtāni*. Further nineteen elements - five senses of perception, five organs of perception and five of action, one each mind, intellect, ego and unmanifest. Thus, these twenty-four elements constitute the *Ksetra*, however they generate seven instincts in human psyche which are added as follows. (BG 13.7)

- (a) *Ichā* (Desire)
- (b) *Dveṣa* (Hatred)
- (c) *Sukham* (Pleasure)
- (d) *Duḥkham* (Pain or miseries)
- (e) *Saṅghātaḥ* (Most of the commentator have interpreted meaning, as the body of the individual but meaning of the word is ‘Assemblage’ and mankind being a social creature and generally inhabit in communal environment, it can also be interpreted as the assemblage (of family, friends and social circles) affecting the mental faculty of the individual and thereby his actions)

(f) *Cetanā* (Sense, consciousness, Intelligence, in short, the mind which interplay and reacts to the stimuli is *Cetanā*)

(g) *Dhṛti* (Firmness) BG 13.6

These seven elements are self-explanatory but not constituent of a body. They are not physical nor inherent part of *Kṣetra* but they spring up as a result of interaction between basic twenty-four elements enumerated above and manifest into behavior of the individual.

### III.13.2 The attributes of *jñānī*

The attributes envisaged for *Jnani* are more or less repetition with some of them reworded, suggesting their higher level. Few such cases are illustrated in analyzing their superlative nature. These attributes are listed below with some explanatory note wherever required

(a) *Amānitvam* (Being modest and humble, not proud.) 1 (BG 13.8)

(b) *Adambhitvam* (Not trying to be more important or better than what you are - Unpretentiousness) 2

(c) *Ahimsā* (Non violence) 3

(g) *Kṣānti* (Having patience, forbearing and forgiveness.) 4

(e) *Ārjavm* (Straight forwardness, uprightness and simplicity) 5

(f) *Ācāryopāsanaṁ* (Worshipping and serving the *Guru*. The importance of *Guru* – *śiṣya* relationship.) 6

(g) *Śaucam* (The cleanliness of body, mind and surroundings) 7

(h) *Sthairyam* (Be Composed, cool and steady under all circumstances, as well as having firm and solid base in your conviction) 8

(i) *Ātmavinigrahaṁ* (Control over the faculties, ensuring moderation and regulation in all activities, commensurate with your age, profession, hobbies, intake of food and so on.) 9 (BG13.8)

(j) *Indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam* (Developing dispassion towards pleasure seeking objects and comfort zone.) 10

(k) *Anaḥṅkāraḥ* (Keeping away from egoism and self-love) 11

(l) *Janma, Mṛtyu, Jarā, Vyādhī, Dukha, doṣa anudarśanaṁ* (Realizing the facts of life that the birth, death, old age, sufferings and miseries are the weak points life, one should look at it as *Sakṣi* (witness not getting involved or affected). This was realized by Gautama Buddha, who deserted his kingdom and family to find the answer to overcome these miseries. Lord hear wants to convey to his *S*, that no one has control over these events and one should learn and combat over these to make life easy.) 12

(m) *Āsakti, Anbhiṣvaṅgaḥ putraḥ, dāraḥ, gṛhaḥ aḍiṣu* (Detachment and non-infatuation with son, wife, home etc.) 13 and 14

(n) *Nityam ca samacittam iṣṭa aniṣṭa upapattiṣu* (Having a balancing mind without caring for agreeable or unagreeable things happening around.) 15

(o) *Ananyaayogena bhaktiḥ Avyabhicāriṇi* (the *jnani* performs his task with devotion and unflinching zeal) 16

(p) *Vivikta deśa sevītvam* (select the secluded place for staying so that *sadhana* can be better performed. It is possible that even in urban and apartment such a solitary place can be created. Normally *jnani* would prefer the secluded place at country side, along the banks of river, see shores, mountains or forest.) 17

(q) *Aratiḥ janasaṁsadi* (Avoid and distaste crowded places there are various reasons and they are even relevant today.) 18

(r) *Adyatmajnananīyatvam* (regularly be engrossed in state of acquisition of knowledge especially of Religious and *Dharmic* nature.) 19

(t) *Tattavajñānārthadaṣṇam* (तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् knowledge which is reviled by scriptures and saints has to adopted and practiced.) The Lord after proclaiming these qualities of *Jnani* as knowledge declares that anything else or rest, is ignorance. 20

### III.14 *Guṇāḥ* (qualities - *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*)

One of the significant aspects covered earlier is (प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्मणि सर्वशः B G 3.27) that all action in the Universe is generated through *Guṇāḥ* (Qualities) and these three *Guṇāḥ* binds the soul with the body of human being by default (B G 14.5). What are these three *Guṇāḥ* and how they affect human behavior, is covered in this 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Gita, which is important from the point of view of Character Building. The silent points covered in this chapter to mold the character of an individual are given succeeding paragraphs.

#### III.14.1 The three *Guṇāḥ*

(a) *Sattvam* (Trans active-purity of action)

(b) *Rajas* (Active-with sensual pleasures)

(c) *Tamas* (Inactive-having inert symptoms)

*Satva* is a state of equanimity, serene and poised thoughts, *Rajas* is a state of passion, desire and agitation whereas *Tamas* is a state of ignorance and inertia.

### III.14.2 Special significance related *Guṇāḥ*

Gita as well as scriptural literature describes the *Guṇāḥ* in a fascinating and aptly manner in Sanskrit. It is almost difficult to describe it in English, never the less, attempt has been made here so that they are better understood for development of Character of an individual. Some of the words and phrases mentioned in Gita related to *Guṇāḥ* are elucidated below.

- (a) *Sattvam – Tatra sattvam nirmalatvat prakāśakam anāmayam sukhasaṅgena badhnāti jñānasaṅgena* (B G 14.6).
  - (i) *Nirmalatvāt*: Spotless, stainless and sinless implying Virtuous personality.
  - (ii) *Prakāśakam* Illuminating, luminous and enlightening the surrounding environment.
  - (iii) *Anāmayam* Healthy disposition radiating positive energy.
  - (iv) *Sukhasaṅgena badhnāti jñānasaṅgena ca Sattvam* envelops the body with happiness and knowledge. (B G 14.6)
- (b) *Rajas – Is Rāgātmakam* and known for its thirst of attachment for materialistic prosperity. *Rāgātmakam* is longing of desire for sensuous pleasures and fame. (BG 14.7)
- (c) *Tamas – Is described as consisting of*
  - (i) *Ajñānam* (ignorance)
  - (ii) *Mohanam* (longing for worldly pleasure.)
  - (iii) *Pramāda* (Insanity and madness. Also, tendency towards violence and misbehavior)
  - (iv) *Ālasya* (laziness. This habit mainly creeps in because of inactiveness, disinterest in life and wrong dieting regime. There are few more reasons like not having good friend circle and not having good hobbies.)
  - (v) *Nidrā* (Sleep. Normal healthy body requires 6 to 8 hours of sound sleep. Getting up early morning and retiring early. No sleep during afternoon especially for younger generation. Late night and late rising is against advice. These bad habits on the pretext of study and work is not acceptable. Resetting of clock and time management with healthy habits is the solution.

### III.14.3 Influence of the *Guṇāḥ* on the personality

*Sattvam* is attached with happiness, *Rajasa* the action and *Tamas* with insanity and madness (BG 14.9). When *Sattvam* predominates it opens up and enlightens all the avenues of body, so that wisdom and tranquility flows (B G 14.11). With the predominance of *Rajas*, greediness

prevails and the person gets involved in activities mainly related to prosperity and full filling the sensuous and other unfulfilled desires (B G 14.12). Lastly when *Tamas* predominates, it is related to darkness, inertness, insanity, anger and so on (B G 14.13). Individual is engulfed in varied proportion of these *Guṇāḥ*, depending upon his sublimely embedded and inherited *Guṇah* and nurtured habits developed through the upbringing. It is beyond doubt, that development of *Sātvika Guṇah* in all walks of life are essential requirement for the student. These are mainly in the field of *Āhāra* and *vihāra*, *Swādhyāya* and *Yogic practices*. In nutshell the key for development of Character, is nurturing the *Sātvika Guṇah*. Lord *K* in the same 14 Chapter of Gita talks about the state which is *Guṇātīta (Guṇāḥ)* but normal person should not worry as it is meant for Ascetics and Sanyasis, though the same attributes of Character Development are reinstated by Krishna with superlative degree.

#### III.14.4 Transcending beyond the guṇāḥ

S having known the significance of *Guṇāḥ* goes beyond it by adopting the following dictums.

- (a) *Na dveṣṭi saṁprvṛttāni kaṅkṣati* (Enlightened soul does not have hatred towards anybody nor longs for favors as he is beyond the causative effect of *Guṇāḥ*) B G 14.22
- (b) *Udāsīnavadāsīno guṇairyo na vicālyate* (Unconcerned and not disturbed by *Guṇāḥ* inhabited or inherited. The *guṇātīta* is not affected and disturbed on account of having knowledge that the happening around and behavior of any person is because of inheritance of *Guṇah*)
- (c) *Nirdvandva* in following aspects and relinquishing all undertaking is recognized as *Guṇātīta*. (BG 14.24 & 14.25)
  - (i) For him joy and sorrow is same.
  - (ii) To him lump of clay, stone and gold have same value.
  - (iii) Dear and unpleasant things are alike to him.
  - (iv) He is steady and courageous, to whom the criticism and praise is alike.
  - (v) The honor and dishonor are same to him.
  - (vi) No undue attachments with friends and no hostility towards enemies.

#### III.15 Know the supreme and try to emulate him

The 15<sup>th</sup> Chapter: The most popular and recited chapter of *Gita* by devotees, describing the *Puruṣottama* (The Supreme). It starts with metaphoric description of universal scenario, where Supreme is at the apex and spreading its expanse below in the form knowledge, like having

roots of *Aśvtttha* (Pīpala tree) above and its branches below whose leaves are the hymns of *Vedas*.

### III. 15.1 Qualities highlighted for a perfect person

Attaining perfection is goal of all irrespective of the field in which the person engaged. The qualities which are required to develop this perfection are briefly covered below.

- (a) *Nirmānamohā* (The person who is not after projecting himself for publicity and does not fall prey to worldly temptation.)
- (b) *Jitsaṅgadosā* (the one who has identified and conquered the self-short comings)
- (c) *Adhyātmamityā* (the one who is always engaged and engrossed in theosophical, metaphysical and doctrines propagated by scriptural texts.)
- (d) *Vinivṛttakamāḥ* (विनिवृत्तकामाः: the one whose desire of worldly things has vanished.)
- (e) *Dvandvairvimuktāḥ sukhaduḥsmjñaiḥ gaccanti amūḍhāḥ* (the one who is liberated from the pairs of opposite like pleasure and sorrow carries on with not being perplexed or infatuated.) BG 15.5

He further advises the *S* to act/see through *Jñānacakṣuṣaḥ* (eyes of wisdom) so that right decisions are taken. Normally a person enjoys sensual pleasures through organs of senses – Ears, eyes, organ of touch, organ of taste and organ of smell however the Lord advises that intelligent should see and understand their futility with analyzing through the Eyes of wisdom. (BG 15.9 & 15.10)

### III.16 Divine and demoniac tendency of a person

#### (a) Divine tendency

1. *Abhayam* (free from fear. Overcoming the fear is by training the mind and not indulging in activities which bites your conscious.)
2. *Sattvasamśuddhiḥ* (having perfect and pure cognitive perception without prejudice and malice.)



3. *Jñānayogavyavasthitaḥ* (having perfect and essential knowledge of the subject. Important attribute of Character Development for the Student.)
4. *Dānam* (Charity. Discussed earlier also that charity should be *Satpātrī* (charity to be given to worthy and deserving, without having any attachment.)
5. *Damaḥ* (self-restraint. This is accomplished through subduing and curbing the passions. *Nigraho bāhyavṛttinām damaḥ ityabhidhīyate* (It is the cultivated habit of controlling the external passions with training.). In fact, the restraint bottles up as an emotional volcano, which has to be controlled by training and not by deliberate denial.
6. *Yajñāḥ* (यज्ञः: Already discussed in details, all the activities are to be performed in *yajña* fashion and mode)
7. *Svādhyāyaḥ* (Importance *svādhyāya* have also been earlier discussed.)
8. *Tapas* (Austerity. It is meditational and sincere effort to achieve desired goal.)
9. *Ārjavam* (Uprightness) (BG 16.1)
10. *Ahiṃsā* (Resorting no harm or hurt in thought, words or deeds.)
11. *Satyam* (Truth)
12. *Akrodhaḥ* (Free from anger – self-explanatory.)
13. *Tyāgaḥ* (Renunciation. It is a deliberate self-denial, either to gain mastery over your passion or by contributing to charity.)
14. *Śāntiḥ* (Peace – self-explanatory.)
15. *Apaiśunam* (not indulging in slanderous and harmful statement. There is a tendency of intentionally or unknowingly, hurt the other person in conversation. Even many have habit of satirical comments to create humor, which should be avoided.)
16. *Dayā bhūteṣu* (Mercy and compassion towards all. To help suffering soul and judiciously giving help, is one of the great virtue the students should cultivate.)

17. *Aloluptvam* (do not be covetous as it creates unending desire and carving for worldly glamorous attraction. Even mental indulgence will result in loss of peace of mind.)
18. *Mardavam* (gentleness in one's behavioral pattern and disposition is pleasing experience. This quality can be best understood in the company of saintly personality and is natural to the ladies.)
19. *Hrīḥ* (to be modest and humble. Irrespective of your social and professional position the person with modesty is recognized and respected. Approachability is considered as one of the important qualities of person occupying the responsible position in public life.)
20. *Acāpalam* (Absence of fickle mind. Decisive and firm mind, not wandering with changing perception is an important virtue.) (BG 16.2)
21. *Tejas* (Bright and exhibiting strength of character. The aura of a magnetic personality is reflected in his physical appearance, knowledge and conduct.)
22. *Kṣamā* (Forgiveness especially towards those who are amenable for correction and amending their wrong deeds.)
23. *Dhṛtiḥ* (Firmness, steadiness and consistency. Best understood from the example of sports like batting performance of Sachin Tendulkar.)
24. *Śaucam* (Cleanliness of body as well as mind.)
25. *Adrohaḥ* (Absence from malice and not indulging in to conspiracy and injury against a person or a body, with whom you detest or have developed hatred.)
26. *Na atimānitā* (Absence of pride. Have no egoistic tendency. The suffix connotes self-imposed excess and undue honor or respect.) (BG 16.3)

(b) Demonic tendencies

- (i) *Dambhaḥ* (Arrogance and ostentation. This tendency is invariably exhibited by a person who is Dominic.)
- (ii) *Darpaḥ* (Conceit and insolence is associated with Dominic person)

(iii) *Abhimāna* (Pride but not taken in good sense. It is sum total of दम्भः and दर्पः.)

(iv) *Krodhaḥ* (Anger)

(v) *Pāruṣyam* (Harshness associated with cruelty. Using abusive insulting language.)

(vi) *Ajñānam* (Ignorance of knowledge)

The Demonic tendencies though described briefly; they are in fact can be comprehended by just reversing (opposite of) the virtues of Divine personality. For example, धृतिः for Divine, is अधृतिः for Dominic personality. The Lord Krishna sums up this chapter of Gita with very important advice that “Resort to the teaching and conduct given in our religious and sacred treatise, which will guide and will determine how one should lead fruitful and successful life (तस्मात्तच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ)” (BG 15.24)

### III.16.1 UNFLINCHING FAITH – ONE OF GREATEST VIRTUE

*Śraddhā* (unflinching faith), one of the greatest virtues which is exclusively enunciated in Chapter 17<sup>th</sup> of Gita, covers the most of the aspects for development of a person. Even the Lord proclaims that the one who is engulfed with *Śraddhā* in me, verily exhibits his inherent talents according to his nature (श्रद्धामयो अयं पुरुषो यः यत् श्रद्धः स एव सः). B G 17.3. The word *Śraddhā* itself is originated from prefix of *śrat* (श्रत्) a declination to the *Dhātu Dhā*. This genesis connotes trust, faith, belief and confidence. It conveys an unflinching faith, unswerving belief and bliss deposited. However, this *Śraddhā* is manifested as per nature of the *S* in association with *Sāttvika*, *Rājasika*, and *Tāmasika Guṇāḥ*. *Śraddhā* is not just having a blind faith but has to be according to the *śāstra* (these are written or preserved treasures with the traditional houses on the subject of philosophy, religion, vocational, craft and skills, arts, science, commerce, engineering and so on. (B G 17.1 and 17.5).

### III.17 Personality manifested with varied *Guṇāḥ*

The activities of Food intake (आहारः), sacrificial act (यज्ञः), Austerity (तपः) and Gift (दानः) are dealt in this chapter with varied level of Faith – *śraddhā* depending upon divergent temperament and tendencies of the seeker. After having classified *Shraddhā* in to three

categories of *Sāttvika* (Hyperactive), *Rājasika* (राजसिकः - Active) and *Tāmasika* (Dull), Lord Krishna explains the preference of food intake (आहारः) in each of these categories. Food intake has an immense significance as far as physical body (कोषः sheaths) are concerned. Without explaining as to what is meant by qualities (गुणः), the understanding of *shraddha* will not be complete. The type of any activities depends on qualities of *Vāsanās* (Imprints on mind) promoting them. The *Guṇāḥ* refer to the three types of *vāsanās* as follows –

- (a) *Sattva* (सत्त्व) - Trans active and purity of action
- (b) *Rajas* (रजस) - Active with sensual pleasures.
- (c) *Tamas* (तमस) - Inactive leading to the corrupt practices and acting against *Dharmaḥ*.

*Sattva* is a state of Equanimous, serene and poised thoughts; *Rajas* is a state of passion, desire and agitation whereas *Tamas* is a state of ignorance and inertia.

Coming back to our topic of *śraddhā*, Arjuna who is quite intelligent himself, asks Lord Krishna in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Gita “As to those who worship against the dictates of scripture with *śraddha*, what is their state; belonging to qualities of *Sāttvika*, *Rājasika* or *Tāmasika*?” By asking this question, Arjun is aware of these three personalities, however he is not aware or ignorant about how *śraddhā* which is motivating force in our life is related to these three *guṇāḥ*. Lord Kṛṣṇa answers his question by confirming that *Shraddha* itself is threefold, depending upon the inherent nature of the individual, *Samskāras* and *Vāsanās*, namely *Sāttvika*, *Rājasika* and *Tāmasika*. In any individual these *guṇāḥ* are in varied proportion. So, the *śraddhā* with which the individual performs his tasks will exhibit the category to which he belongs.

### III.17.1 Worshiping or Idolization

- (a) *Sāttvika* worship God. Every individual normally has a faith in some deity or personality, depending on his inherent nature and upbringing. This category of person worships God who is epitome of good qualities. They even idolize the legendary personalities and follow their life and teachings.
- (b) *Rājasika* worships demi God. This category of person is hypocrite, he exhibits his interest by externally showing to be pious. This will be clearer as we proceed to examine the characteristic of *Rājasika* person.

- (c) *Tāmasika* worship ghosts and host of spirit. The person of this category Worships and follow the personality of demonic tendency, who in present contest can be identified as radicles who are responsible for spreading terrorism, unrest, communalism and so on. B G 17.4

### III.17.2 *Āhāra* - The eating habit

- (a) The person with *Sāttvika* nature will prefer *sātvika* food. This habit also helps in developing *sāttvika* nature. It promotes longevity and fruitful life, disease free healthy life, vital mental and physical power, contented and happy life, love and affection towards all. The detail of *āhāra* is a subject by itself of *Ayurveda*. B G 17.8
- (b) *Rājasika* prefers the food which is spicy, fatty, oily, toxic, beverages causing false elation, fast food and on. These type of food causes unhealthy life style, where pain, grief and diseases are the outcome. Sleepless night, anxiety, fear, insecurity is some of the side effects of this type of food. (BG 17.9)
- (c) Gita states that *Tāmasika* prefers stale, test less, putrid and rotten food. However, having known the temperament of *Tāmasika*, efforts will be made to ascertain their food habits from *Āyurveda*. (B G 17.10). There is subtle difference between *Sāttvika/Rājasika* and *Tāmasika* food habits, as brought out by the author A. Parthasarthi. The food of the *Sāttvika/Rājasika* is worded as *Āhāra* which is plural and *Bhojanam* for *Tāmasika* is singular.<sup>6</sup>“The choice of the word *āhāra* for foods suggests merely the food consumed by the *Sāttvika* and *rajasika*. While *bhojanam* (from root *bhuj* to enjoy) suggests indulgence by *tamasika* consumers. “Again, use of the plural for food in verses 8 and 9 and the singular in this 10th verse further suggests the choice of *Sāttvika* and *rajasika* to be of a general nature while the *tamasika* are particular in demand”.

### III.17.3 THE *YAJÑA* - SACRIFICIAL ATTITUDE,

- (a) *Sāttvika* – Sacrificial offering without expecting any fruits {(अफलकाङ्क्षिभिर्यज्ञो - performance of *Yajña* with no expectation of fruits) and (विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते - performance as laid down in scriptures)} (BG 17.11)

<sup>6</sup> A, Parthasarthi, *Śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā*, Vol.3, pp.156-157

- (b) *Rajasika* – Sacrificial offering expecting fruits and performed to show off (अभिसंधाय तु फलमं दम्भार्थमपि - performance of *Yajña* to show off and with expectation of fruits) (BG 17.12)
- (c) *Tamasika* – Offering or performance *Yajña* against the standard religious practices and procedures विधिहीनम् - against the procedural practices, असृष्टान्नम् - not looking after and not offering food to the guests and religious priests, मन्त्रहीनम् - not performing *Yajña* as per requirement of prescribed hymns and prayer, अदक्षिणम् performance without offering remuneration, gift or donation especially to the religious priest, as expected from the host performing *Yajña* and performance without having any faith in the religious philosophy and customs (BG 17.12)

### III.17.4 THE TAPAH - AUSTERITY

Firstly, definition of *tapas* is given. It is Worshiping God, *Brahman*, *Guru* and learned and intelligent personalities. The one who bodily and mentally observes purity, uprightness, *brahmacharya* (continence) and *Ahimsa* is a *Tapasvī*. In Mythological stories the instance of *Tapas* with bodily penance for acquisition of some *siddhi*, *Vidyā* natural power or super power are at galore but it is not scripturally supported. Even BG prohibits any self-inflicted torture for performance of *Tapas* which is labeled as *Tāmasika*. (BG 17.14). The person having knowledge of *Vedānta-vāṇmaya* and practicing and studying the same is *Tapasvī*. The speech or spoken language of such a person is always welcome. The person whose speech does not offend anybody, who speaks the truth, whose talks are pleasant, educating and beneficial is designated as *Tapasvī*. (BG 17.15). Similarly, Austerity of mind of a person is that who's mind always cheerful, gentle, quiet, composed and full with compassion. (BG 17.16). The observance of *Tapas* by a person having predominance of any of these three *Guṇāḥ* is given below.

- (a) *Sāttvika* – The *Sattvika* is identified by performance of *Tapas* with *Śraddhā* bodily, mentally and vocally (speech) without expecting any return. (BG 17.17)
- (b) *Rājasika* – The *Rājasika* exhibits Austerity to show off and out of hypocrisy, which has no permanent effect on development of character and it is of transitory in nature. (BG 17.18)

- (c) *Tāmasika* – For *Tāmasika* it may not be correct to say that the way he performs *Tapas* for acquisition of some materialistic gain or super power with the selfish motive as Austerity. Though by definition he may be undergoing same procedure and observing the rules and achieving his aim. The classic example is of Rāvaṇa the king of Sri Lanka. He was *Brāhmin* himself who through dedicated *Sadhana*, acquired some *siddhi* for his evil design, which cannot fall in the category as *tapas*. BG elaborates that bodily penance for acquisition of some *siddhi*, *Vidyā*, natural power or super power, with intention of harming or for the purpose of destroying something is a characteristic of the *Tāmasika*. (17.19)

### III.17.5 The *Dānam* – charity

Charity is the gift, present or donation offered to the recipient for the noble cause with no expectation of return. (BG 17.20)

- (a) *Sāttvika* - *Dānam* is offered at appropriate time and place to benefit recipient. As stated earlier it should be *Satpātrī* (BG 17.20)
- (b) *Rājasika* - *Rājasika* offers charity reluctantly or for personal favors (BG17.21)
- (c) *Tāmasika* - Gift given which not *satpātrī* and to lower the image or harming the recipient is *Tāmasikavṛtti*. (BG17.22)

### III. 18 Synoptic and concluding advice of *Gītā*

The Lord Kṛṣṇa sums up the essence of Gita in a most practical way by answering the query of Arjuna and highlighting the essential characteristics which are ought to be followed by sincerely.

### III.18 The two types of personalities

Kṛṣṇa elucidates the distinction between *sannyāsaḥ* and *tyāgaḥ*. Here it is clarified by the almighty that the clear differentiation between the two is as follows

- (a) *Sannyāsī* – The one who has renounced the worldly and sensuous pleasures.
- (b) *Tyāgī* - The one who follows the natural law of universe of carrying out *Svadharmā* with renunciation of fruit of action.

*Sannyāsīn* who is either born or adopts *Sannyāsaḥ* as his way of life, which is complete renunciation and abandonment of worldly affairs. A *Tyagi* is an ascetic choosing to live without pleasures or luxuries by renouncing the fruit of his action. It should be now be very clear that man of Character has to be from these two categories. The one who is *Sannyāsīn* who in spite of renunciation serves the mankind, for example Aadi Śāṅkarācārya. The other is *Tyagi*, in spite of his renunciation, is a house hold personality, a Saint, an Industrialist, a Professional, a politician, an artisan and so on. Numerous examples from recent times can be sited of *Tyagi* such as Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam and Nelson Mandela. The category of *Sannyāsaḥ* is understood by Omniscient, whereas the *Tyāgaḥ* is by wise and intellectuals. (BG 18.2)

### III.18.1 The practices to be followed

The *Manīṣiṇaḥ* (learned intellectuals and pandits) have advocated that all *Doṣavat action* (faulty and evil action) should be discarded. A Parthasarthi a commentator, has interpreted the same in a different way “Some philosophers declare thus action should be relinquished as evil<sup>7</sup>”. To substantiate his interpretation he clarifies that, it is meant for advanced spiritual seeker, where in all action are to be relinquished. However, this interpretation apparently seems to be questionable because the second part of the verse reiterates that *Yajña, Dana* and *Tapah* should be practiced and not to be discarded. (B G 18.3)

### III.18.2 THE FIVE ENTITIES WHICH PROPELS THE ACTION

The main motive of Kṛṣṇa was to wake up Arjuna from slumber and despondency, for which the emphasis was in action. He therefore recapitulates the *Sankhy* doctrine of five causes of action namely *Adhiṣṭhānam, Kartā, Karaṇam, Ceṣṭā* and *daivam* (the seat of action, the one who performs or doer, instrument and destiny). It can further elaborate with explanation and siting examples.

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<sup>7</sup> Op. cit., pp.183-184



- (a) *Adhiṣṭhānam* - The action as related to the individual in our case, the seat of action is the body and its organs. The Earth can also be seat of action where phenomenon like volcanic eruption and sustenance of life is possible. For Arjuna to take action, his cognitive faculty is main seat of action. Other bodily function like breathing and digestive system will also have seat of action.
- (b) *Kartā* – *Secondly* for driving the car driver is required which is Karta. As per Indian philosophical thought, it is not a person or any of the organ of his are driving car but it is soul/atman which in driver's seat as seen in the model of Chariot and Rider.
- (c) *Karaṇam* – Thirdly for doing action instrument/ implements are required like for tightening the screw, screwdriver is required, similarly five *jñānendriyas*, five *karmendriyas* and mind is required as an instrument for performance of work. It is not necessary all them are required at a time like painter requires mind, eyes and hand as instruments, whereas some mechanical type of work mind may not be required.
- (d) *Ceṣṭa* – Fourthly the functioning and movement of the above-mentioned instruments is essential as in the case of tightening of the screw, the rotational movement of screwdriver is required. If one has to climb the staircase, he has to synchronize the feet movement. This rotational and synchronization feet movement is known as *cesta*.
- (e) *Daivam* – Lastly it is faith or destiny which takes *S* to his destination. It is a controversial and debatable issue. Many times success or failure depends on this, but never the less, sincere effort is the duty of *S* without worrying about fruit of action.

### III.18.3. Reminder for action

Following points are highlighted again to encourage and motivate Arjuna to take up arm and fight for the right cause. (B G 18.13 to 18.28)

- (a) Self is not a doer. It is mechanism which has been established by *Sāṃkhya* philosophical thought performs the action. (B G 18.16)
- (b) The soul is indestructible. This was to remind Arjun, when he became emotional with the thought of harming his kith and kin. (B G 18.17)
- (c) The threefold impulses which stimulate the action are Knowledge, known and knower. (B G 18.18). The action which is contemplated will have motive which needs to be full filled. Kṛṣṇa in the second line of the same verse mentions only three causes action as *karaṇam*, *Karma* (action or movement) and *Kartā* because probably one has no control over *Adhiṣṭhānam* and *Daivam*. In fact, *Adhiṣṭhānam* is an important cause for evaluation and analysis of action. Following are the three elements which student should bear in mind for mission to be successful.
  - (i) *Jñānam* (basic and general knowledge)
  - (ii) *Jñeyam* (knowledge of the particular field which is chosen for action)
  - (iii) *Parijñātā* (knowledge which specific to the operation where the individual has a competence)

The three *Guṇāḥ* plays important role on threefold constituents of action. These constituents are Knowledge, Action or *Cesta* and Doer or actor. (B G 18.18). Again, threefold categories of personalities i.e., *Sātvika*, *Rājasika* and *Tāmasika* in each of the field of *Jñānam* (knowledge), *Karma* (action) and *Kartā* (doer) is elaborated. (B G 18.20 to 18.28).

### III.18.3.1 knowledge-Jñānam

- (a) *Sātvika-jñānam* – *Sātvika-jñānam* is one, looking to everybody with same dispassionate way or experiencing Supreme in all living being. The Veteran philosopher A Parthasarathi has seen this knowledge as ‘unity in Diversity’. Equanimity is another expression for *Sātvika-jñānam* (B G 18.20)
- (b) *Rajasika-jñānam* – It is opposite of *Sātvika*, i.e., making differentiation and distinction between class, creed and casts. (B G 18.21)

- (c) *Tāmasika-jñānam* – The half-cooked knowledge is *Tāmasika*, like not studying all aspects but clinging to one facet or knowledge, not based any solid reasoning and foundation of truth. (B G 18.22)

### III.18.3.2 The Action-karma

- (a) *Sāttvika-karma* - The action performed without any attachments irrespective of likes and dislikes and not expecting the fruit is *Sāttvika* (BG 18.23)
- (b) *Rājasika-karma* – The action prompted by craving for sensuous pleasure, Worldly possession and fame with egoistic tendency is *Rājasika-karma*. It also involves the much more efforts in terms sleepless nights, ill health and loss of peace. (BG18.24)
- (c) *Tāmasika-karma* – The action taken under the influence of delusion without considering, the consequences of loss and injury or capacity and ability *Pauruṣam* (manliness) are *Tāmasika-karma*. (BG18.25)

### III.18.3.3 The doer-kartā

- (a) *Sāttvika-Kartā* - The one who is free from any bondage, not egoist, firm in his conviction, enthusiastic in his disposition, *nīrdvandvaḥ* and *nīrvikāraḥ* not affected or disturbed by any happening which may come across his *Sādhana* is called a *Sāttvika-Kartā*. (BG 18.26)
- (b) *Rājasika-Kartā* – The one who is passionate, desirous of *karmafalm*, greedy and injurious to other, especially to those who comes across his ambitions is called *Rājasika-Kartā* (BG 18.27)
- (c) *Tāmasika-kartā* - The one is Vagabond, uncultivated and vulgar, senseless and obstinate, cheater, malicious, lazy and slothful, pessimistic, and conspirator is called *Tāmasika-kartā*. (BG18.28)

### III.18.4 Interplay of *guṇāḥ* with intellect, firmness and happiness

The importance and elaboration given to describe the three *Guṇāḥ* in *Bhagavad-gītā* is phenomenal and mind boggling. The verse BG 18.29 to 18.32 reiterates importance with new

dimension. There are three basic categories, namely *Sāttvika*, *Rājasika* and *Tāmasika* whose aptitude has been related to various function like *āhāra*, *tapas*, and so on. This concept is further applied having varied intellect, firmness, and happiness depending upon the variance of *guṇāḥ*. It can be explained as, every personality having a natural attitude and accordingly the obligatory function are carried out. For example, *Sāttvika* will prefer the food, which can be classified as *sāttvika*. However, he will have judicial approach, based on his intellect and firmness. For example, a *Sāttvika* invited in a ceremonial party, where he is offered lunch or dinner. He will select correct food (based on his intellect) and decide on whether some compromise can be made (based on his firmness) so that sentiment of host is not hurt. This firmness is discretionary, depending upon the conscious of individual. For example, the discretionary power bestowed on President of India, whether to condone death penalty promulgated by judiciary or not. It is prerogative of learned President, based on his intellect, concealing of his advisers and firmness with which he wants to dispose of the matter. This way one comes across innumerable personalities in real world. Off course, everyone has to strive to upgrade to *Sāttvika* in all fields of life. Interestingly the Lord Kṛṣṇa rounds up these threefold categories of *guṇāḥ* by defining the criteria of happiness for each in a very simple term. The one who is engrossed and habituated with traditional practices, such as *yoga* meditation and *sāttvika* tendencies, enjoys happiness and bliss all along, whereas the one who acts contrary, though in happy state momentary, ends up in misery in long run. (B G 18.36)

#### III.18.4.1 Intellect and three *Guṇāḥ*

- (a) *Sāttvika* – The *sāttvika* personality with his intellect can decide on what action is required under *pravṛttiṃ ca nivṛttiṃ* (conduct or behavior and renunciation), *kāryākārye* (what is duty and what not to be done), *bhayam abhayam* (Fear towards evil doing and fearlessness in doing righteous things) and *bandham mokṣam* (bondage and liberation). In short *Sāttvika* acts per his *Vivekbuddhi* to deal with the situation. (BG 18.30)
- (b) *Rājasika* – The *Rājasika* because of his wrong perception of intellect does not differentiate between *dharmam adharmam* (the obligatory or righteous and unethical aspects) and *kāryam akāryam* (right and wrong action). In short it can say that *Rajasika* because of the lack of *Vivekabuddhi* or perception acts contrary to the traditional norms. (BG 18.31)

- (c) *Tāmasika* – Whereas because his perverted nature and wrong education, *saṃskāraḥ* (संस्कारः) and background, *Tāmasika* accepts *adharmā* as *dharma* and conducts himself accordingly. *Tāmasika* intellect leads to violence, corruption and utilization of talent for destruction. (BG 18.32)

#### III.18.4.2 Firmness and three *Guṇāḥ*

The firmness which is implied here is how much resolutely the individual carries out his task. In case of failures, difficulties and obstruction, the one who does not suspend his effort is denoted here as *dhṛtiḥ* (firmness). The one who proceeds in spite of such difficulties resolutely is regarded as individual acting with firmness.

- (a) *Sāttvika* – The one having firmness and control over his cognitive functions by *Yoga*, is regarded as *Sāttvika* having unswerving steadfastness. B G 18.33
- (b) *Rājasika* - The one with firmness clings to *dharma*, *kāma* and *artha* with expectation of fruit. *Dharma* generally having understood as a pious concept. The Duty or virtue are the other interpretation/meaning given by some commentators. Hence the one who clings to these three aspects irrespective of its propriety for the sensuous pleasure and wealth can be regarded as *Rājasika*. (B G 18.34)
- (c) *Tāmasika* – The one, who clings with firmness by day dreaming, fear, grief, despair and arrogance because of his steadfast misplaced intellect is regarded as *Tāmasika*. (B G 18.35)

#### III.18.4.3 The happiness and three *Guṇāḥ*

Interestingly the Lord Kṛṣṇa rounds up the threefold categories by defining the criteria of happiness for each in a very simple term. The one who is engrossed and habituated with traditional practices, such as yoga meditation and *sāttvika* tendencies enjoys happiness and bliss all along, whereas the one who acts contrary, though in happy state momentary, ends up in misery in long run. (B G 18.36)

- (a) *Sāttvika* – Practicing and getting used to traditional wisdom, initially appears to be burdensome but with right intellect he enjoys the eternal bliss. B G 18.37
- (b) *Rājasika* – Whereas *Rājasika* enjoys the pleasure of wealth and sensual happiness but prolonging these moments he ends up in misery. B G 18.38
- (c) *Tāmasika* – He enjoys, is happy and infatuated with *Nidrā*, *Ālasya* and *Pramāda* ending up in misery. B G 18.39

The key to the happiness spelled out in few words above is greatest blessing offered by almighty especially to the young student community, who can lead a useful, enjoyable and satisfying life if they follow *Sāttvika* tendency in every walk of life.

### III.18.5 The system which operates for a welfare state

One of the most important concepts which has been widely discussed and argued is of *Cāturvarṇyam* (Four classes in a society based on their *Guṇāḥ*, skills, *svadharma*, *saṃskāraḥ*, upbringing and necessities. These are (a class which is well versed with religious practices), (a worrier class), (a class dealing with trade) (a class dealing with services). All of them have one in think in common i.e., they follow the Hindu Sanātana *Dharma* as religion and class is not necessarily assigned by birth). This has to be properly understood. Some wasted interest as well as so called elites and learned personalities, have deliberately misconstrued the concept to safeguard their kingdom, knowledge and proprietary over the downtrodden and suppressed class.

The definition of *Caturvarṇam* is purely dependent on profession – *karmāṇi* one chooses and is influenced by individual nature – *svabhāva* and the qualities – *guṇāḥ* which are nurtured and inherited. (B G 18.41). No doubt to certain extent, it was prerogative of some to safeguard their professional skills and grandeur associated with it for preserving the entity of their Class. However, one class or other have been victim of untouchability or oppressive, discriminative and abusive treatment, depending upon the dominance of one class or taking advantage of any political and circumstantial situation. More convincing reasons of composition and nature of these four classes, and not castes, based on Gita for a welfare of the state are attempted below.

(a) *Brāhmaṇa*– The class which who is by their nature and upbringing is engaged in *Brahmakarma* (at the service of Supreme). In caste system it is called *Brāhmaṇa* whose characteristic are as follows. These are repeated being a concluding chapter of Gita.

- (i) *Śamaḥ* (calm, tranquil and composed.)
- (ii) *Damaḥ* (command and firmness of mind.)
- (iii) *Tapah* (observing austerity or carrying out any task with utmost sincerity and hard work.)
- (iv) *Śaucam* (cleanliness of body and mind.)
- (v) *Kṣāntiḥ* (patience and forbearing.)
- (vi) *Ārvjavam* (straight forwardness, honesty simplicity and humility.)
- (vii) *Jñānam* (knowledge.)
- (viii) *Vijñānam* (Knowledge with wisdom.)
- (ix) *Āstikyam* (believer in sacred tradition, pious and faithful.)

(b) *Kṣatriya* - A warrior class engaged in protection of sovereignty of state and security of the people. Their characteristics are listed below.

- (i) *Śauryam* (Valor)
- (ii) *Tejas*
- (iii) *Dhṛtiḥ* (study fast and firmness)
- (iv) *Dakṣatā* (alert and attentive)
- (v) *Apaylāyanam* (not running away from battlefield. Do not be a coward.)
- (vi) *Dānam* (be charitable)
- (vii) *Īśvarabhāva* (have faith in almighty)

(c) *Vaiśya* (business community) – Agriculture, Cattle rearing, Business and trading are the activities. Their clan, progeny and children also pick up the expertise in basic acumen and hereditary traits. It is a trait observed in all class of profession. Though Gita does not spell out the virtues of this class they are listed below

(i) Business acumen

(ii) Excellence in development of relationship.

(iii) Competency observed even in children with business related subjects like Mathematics, Commerce, Economics and trade practices.

(iv) Togetherness in family in business for growth.

(v) Promotion and help for own clan in business ventures.

(vi) Thrifty and calculative.

(vii) *Dānam* (be charitable)

(d) *Śūdra - Paricaryātmakam karma* (it is service and attendance type of work or profession carried out or adopted) is a definition given by Gita. It is a natural *svabhāvajam* tendency of Sudra, to offer service-oriented facilities to the community. No doubt the menial, scavenging and disrespectful jobs were offered to downtrodden and poor, who were recognized as Sudra and were subjected to abusive and ill treatment. Such menial service-oriented jobs were probably not existing during Vedic period. Their requirement at a later stage by others, was because of exploitation, poor condition and lack education to this class. Today with modernization, especially in the technology, these so-called menial jobs are undergoing sea change, without having stigma attached with it. Harijan (The one who belongs to God almighty) was the name given for this caste by Mahatma Gandhi. Political will and education are the measures required to lift this class of people and remove the stigma attached to it.

The importance of this service class as a farm laborer, industrial worker, communication, tourism and scores of other sectors cannot be over emphasized. Moreover, no particular profession or work is propriety of any caste creed or gender. It is only change of mind set of certain wasted interest and radicals are required to be



undertaken. This change is visible in most of the sectors today like Armed forces, Medical and Educational and medical profession, the employment for all communities of class and caste. In fact, Kṛṣṇa in Gita, advocates even transformation of sinners and ignorant (BG 4.36 and 9.29, 30, 31) in the interest of welfare, then how can anybody even think about discrimination, ill treatment and suffering of these people.

### **III.18.6 Significance of composite class in present environment**

The significance of this holiest concept for Character Building assumes most important, as all avenues are open to the student now, depending upon his *svabhāvajam* (as per self-wish combined with ability, capacity and interest.); *—Saṃskārah* and upbringing. Parental, educational and societal role is very important in development of a child. The children inherit certain skills and even imitate their parents. The role of educational and society in child development, cannot be over emphasized. *Gurukul* system should be also reintroduced with modification. These aspects will be briefly covered in succeeding chapter. All-rounder approach like Leadership, Batting, Bowling and Fielding as in the game of Cricket is the requirement of today and all the requisite attributes from each class, depending on the demand is essential for any successful mission. For example, service-oriented approach, business acumen, fighting spirit and spirituality is the backbone of Character Development.

### **III.18.7 Reaching to the stage of *Brāhmaṇa***

This being a concluding chapter of Gita Lord Kṛṣṇa emphasizes the three path of realization and recapitulate the concept of Brahman. However, he begins with karma yoga, to remind and rejuvenate Arjuna to pick up his arm to lead his armed forces.

### III.18.7.1 Karma-yoga

Kṛṣṇa reminds Arjuna that the action should be as per one's own designated role (Arjuna as Commander Chief of *Paṇḍava's* Army) and nature (also expert strategist and Archer of par excellence) to complete the expected mission (BG18.45). The perfection is achieved by worshipping the God almighty, who governs this universe and one can through his own action and nature, will fulfill the desired goal (as warrior exhibiting *śaurya*, *Tejas* and *Dhṛtiḥ*) BG18.46. The *karma* chosen is as per *Svadharmā* (obligatory duties) and not according to *Paradharmā* (BG18.47). If the action (*karma*) is spontaneous and natural, but by chance if it happens to be faulty, don't relinquish it, as the real fire is shrouded with smoke. It will be stepping stone for success and learning lesson for the future. (BG18.48)

### III.18.7.2 Jñānayoga

*Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* (gets action less on attaining the realization) is achieved when the intellect is channelized in the right direction to spirituality and mind is liberated from sensual passions having achieved the state of *Sanyasi*. Nobody can even survive without action but *Sannyasi* who has achieved perfection in *siddhis* is beyond all these worldly requirements (BG18.49). To attain perfection to reach ultimate goal, an absolute devotion and attachment to the cause is essential which called *Niṣṭhā* (devoted intention or unquestionable faith). The *niṣṭhā* is inescapable necessity than even knowledge - *jñānam*, as *S's* total attention is then towards accomplishment of task. Mere *jñānam* is of no use, unless practiced and followed with *niṣṭhā* (BG18.50). Though these attributes of Character Development are covered earlier in *Jñānamārga* they are reworded in summarizing the essence as follows.

- (a) *Buddhyā viśuddhyāyuto* (The intellect to be enveloped with apt knowledge and practiced by unblemished intention)
- (b) *Dhṛtyātmānam niyamyā* (The control with firmness and self-consciousness)
- (c) *Śabdādīn viśayān tyaktvā* (This is the fourth *yajñah* propounded by Kṛṣṇa where *Tanmātra* - to be offered to the Fire God complete control over five sensual organs).
- (d) *Rāga dveṣau vyudasya* (go beyond love and hatred)
- (e) *Viviktasevī* (be in solitude in meditative condition always)

- (f) *Laghvāsī* (moderate intake of *sātvika* food and regular fasting as a habit)
- (g) *Yatvākkāyamānasah* (having control over speech body and mind)
- (h) *Dhyānayogaparo Nityam* (be always in the state of dhyanyoga)
- (i) *Vairāgya samutsarītā* (dispassionate and absence from worldly desires)
- (j) *Vimucya ahñkāram, bālam, darpam, kāmam, krodham, parigraham ca* (keeping away or free from ego, power, arrogance, desire, anger and accepting any gratis)
- (k) *Nirmamaḥ* (out off or free from I-ness. Be modest and don't always keep on claiming that I have carried this job and responsible for its success)
- (l) *Śāntaḥ* (tranquil and calm)

### III.18.7.3 Bhaktiyoga

Path of devotion which is normally beginning of *Sadhana*, it is listed at third place by Lord Kṛṣṇa because his S Arjuna is a knowledgeable student. He wants to wake him up from slumber of despondency and take action, so the first is *karmayoga*. Never the less he also wants to graduate him in the art of essential attributes of *Jnanayoga* and *Bhaktiyoga* to excel in his leadership and as a virtuous man with complete competence. *Na śocati na kañkṣati* (न शोचति न काङ्क्षति do not brood over or does not except anything from anybody), these two attributes contribute to the *ekāgrī* (concentration) of *s*, in whichever task he is engaged into. (BG 18.54)

### III.18.7.4 Select best course of action

The three-path outlined are not exclusive of each other but they coexist and are complementary to each other. One has to judiciously choose depending on his *sāadhanā*, inherent capacity, circumstances, and age. Whatever action is undertaken should be with consciousness and reasoning, without any attachment and endowed with intellect.

### III.18.8 Concluding message of śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā

Kṛṣṇa at the end his discourse, offers last word to Arjuna that he should listen to him without egoism and being emotional. Follow your *svadharma* and *svabhāva* and pass on this most valuable divine message to all mankind for better world order. Arjuna responds spontaneously and zealously - *Nas̥to mohaḥ smṛtir labdhvā tvat prasāddan mayā acyuta sthito'asmi gatasandehaḥ kariṣye vacanam tava* (Arjuna surrenders to Almighty lord Sri Kṛṣṇa by declaring that “My delusion has vanished with your blessings and I am now composed. All doubts are now cleared and I am ready to act and obey as per your sacred command and advice”).

### III.19 Preamble - *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*

The *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* of Adi Śankarācārya is basically selected to highlight and understand, one the most important aspect of Character Building that is Spirituality. Though lot of literature and commentaries, are available on this subject, the most appropriate description appears to be in *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*. There is total 580 verses of *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* and each one of them is master piece on the thoughts of Vedanta unfolded in most lucid manner. However, for the purpose of understanding the aspect of spirituality and Character Building, some verses of *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* are chosen to benefit the *Sādhaka*.

#### III.19.1 Planet earth an abode tranquility

Śaṅkara, as henceforth will be referred to the Adi Shankaracharya as he is lovingly known by his devotees and admirers. He starts with how important and fortunate are we as a human being that having taken birth on this wonderful planet earth. He describes the purpose of the individual who has been blessed and bestowed with the environs of planet earth. Advises, not get entangled with rituals like *pūjā* (worshiping with standard rituals and procedures), *arcā* (worshiping), bathing with holy water, doing *pranayama* etc. without having background of spirituality and identifying self with *Brāhmaṇa*. V.2, 3, 4, 5, 13

#### III.19.2 SPIRITUALITY

Spiritual discipline has been propagated in scriptures but their togetherness in the form of four-fold spiritual discipline *Sāadhanā-catustaya* (four aspects of effectively and efficiently proceeding to carry out the accomplishment. It could be for any task but here it is related to

spirituality) have been beautifully portrayed by Śaṅkara. In fact, the practicing of these *Sādhana* – *catuṣṭaya* is total development of spirituality. Many a time the question is asked as to what spirituality and what is spiritual growth? Here is an answer given by Śaṅkara in a very simple and lucid language. If this fourfold discipline is properly understood and practiced then nothing can be beyond these.

### III.19.3 The four essential qualification

- (a) *Vivekaḥ* (Discrimination)
- (b) *Viraktaḥ* (Freedom from worldly attachments)
- (c) *Śamādiḡuṇaśāliṇaḥ* (Six virtues exhibiting modesty in adopting those qualities like tranquility and peace)
- (d) *Mumukṣutvam* (The intense desire for realization)

All these four qualifiers have been prescribed and elaborated for *S*. The same are applicable for the students for the purpose of Character Building. V.17

### III.19.4 *Sādhana*catuṣṭayam

Śaṅkara opens up his thoughts on *Sādhana* by announcing that there are four attributes which *S* should follow with earnest *niṣṭhā*, which will facilitate to accomplish his mission. Though they have been spelled out earlier in scripture, Śaṅkara groups them in four categories, so that the *S* is not confused with scores of virtues which has been listed throughout and concentrate on the aspects to begin with.

- (a) *Vivekaḥ* - Discrimination between what is real and unreal, good and bad, correct and incorrect, appropriate and inappropriate; and acting accordingly is the essence of this attribute. To cultivate this *Vivekabuddhi*, one has to make sincere effort by *Svādhyāya* and learning *śāstra* (the skills and knowledge of any discipline, especially enumerated in traditional studies, like Mathematics, Grammar, Astronomy and so on) through Guru.
- (b) *Falabhogavirāgaḥ* (Detachment from the fruit of action – very often repeated dictum and elaborated in detail. *Viraktiḥ* or *Vairāgyam* are the words which further convey the meaning of this attribute.
- (c) *Śamādiṣaṭkasampattiḥ* (six treasure, tranquility and the rest).

Six treasures -

- (i) *Śamaḥ* (tranquility – understand and avoid the objects of pleasure influencing the individual by keeping the mind composed and concentrating on the goal is *Śamaḥ*)
  - (ii) *Damaḥ* (self-restraint from the objects of pleasure through control of sensory organs.)
  - (iii) *Uparati* (absenting from the influence of external stimuli like glamor and ceremonial acts)
  - (iv) *Titikṣā* (patience and tolerance by bearing all the miseries without worrying and making hue and cry. Patience, is a time and perfection related aspect. In the present environ of fast life and hurry, the student has to be aware of this aspect. The best way is to divert the mind in the intervening period and to get engaged in the activities which will calm down the mind like sports, music, and reading and be with nature)
  - (v) *Śraddhā* (unflinching faith) - It conveys an unflinching faith, unswerving belief and bliss deposited. However, this *Śraddhā* is manifested as per nature of the *S* in association with *Satvika*, *Rājasika*, and *Tāmasika Guṇāḥ*. *Śraddhā* is not just having a blind faith but has to be according to the *śāstra*.
  - (vi) *Samādhānam* (satisfaction – steadiness, composure and satisfaction). It is slightly an abstract concept, whether the satisfaction is to be accepted because of non-achievable goal or imperfection? Therefore, it is more of a state of mind where the one is in composed state in spite of some physical and psychological discomfort.
- (d) *Mumukṣutā* (desire of liberation) – This desire is also an abstract as far as students are concerned. It connotes intense desire to pursue the *Svadharmā* for the student. Developing proficiency in his field of study, caring for the society and family are some of the aspects which are expected. The igniting mind and burning desire for welfare of state is the *Mumukṣutā* for students and young population.

### III.19.5 The Indian leadership in field of spirituality

India is a continent of conglomerate, having diverse cultural set up. It requires great personalities having intellectual power, spiritual strength and intense dynamism to sustain and propagate spirituality. There is various conflicting system of thoughts in India, politically as well as socially, philosophically as well as religiously. Therefore, there is requirement of central rallying point for understanding and practicing Indian thought. Śāṅkara's philosophical

thoughts on spirituality and his work is a guiding factor in that direction. Diversity connotes richness but when it destroys the central unifying cord, the situation becomes chaotic and divisive forces crop up their head to retrograde the progress of the state.

### **III.20 Preamble – *Upaniṣads***

*Upaniṣads* are the elaboration by patriarchal sages and saints, about the secret of Vedas as enunciated by the Supreme. The commandments of Vedas are elaborated and simplified by the *Upaniṣads*. There are about 112 or more *Upaniṣads*, out of which ten or eleven are widely recognized as major ones mainly because Bhāṣyam (commentary) on them has been written by learned personalities (Master *Acharyas*). These ten are listed at Appendix 'C'. All of them contain hard core Indian philosophical thought in understandable Sanskrit, supported and illustrated in form of verses, dialogue and stories which were studied and assimilated by the aspirant, with the traditional *Guru-śiṣya* relationship. They are available now in the form of commentaries by the experts, however the student has to groom himself for the purpose and acquire the fundamental knowledge to assimilate them. Few concepts of Character Building with their stories are illustrated here without going in to hardcore philosophy of Vedanta. Few anecdotes and two Santi mantra are described to highlight the magnanimity of Sanskrit literature.

#### **III.20.1 Naciketā in *Kaṭhōpaniṣad***

One of most important attributes of Character Building which has been explicitly covered in *Bhagvad-gītā* is *Śraddhā*. *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* narrates how *Śraddhā* engulfed the heart of Naciketā. He was disheartened by the vain attempt by his father, the king Guatama by his act of giving away the worthless cows and horses as a sacrificial gift. At this juncture, he in disgust, asked his father as to whom shall he offer his son Naciketā as a sacrificial goat. The king in feet of anger, explodes that you will be given to the God of Death that is Yama. The young Naciketā accepted this challenge and convinced himself that he is superior to many and with this boldness and went ahead to challenge the Death. It was this brave Naciketā, waiting in the house of Death, starving for food for three days, pleased the Yama and obtained what he desired. The conciseness to obey his father and self-confidence displayed here is implied as *Śraddhā*. The character of Naciketā woven in this *Kathā* (story), is an example to be followed by present young generation.

### III.20.2 Uma in *Kenopaniṣad*

The story of Uma appears in *kenopaniṣad*. Once the Gods were delighted about their victory over Devils. Vedanta however teaches us, that we are just instrument in the hands of the Almighty who is really in control of situation. In order to illustrate this philosophy, a Supreme Brahman in the form of *Yakṣa* (a demi God) appears and challenge them to destroy a blade of grass which he puts before them. Even the powerful God *Agni* could not burn it nor could God *Vāyu* blow it. At this stage *Yakṣa* disappears and the victorious Gods ask the king Indra to find out who the *Yakṣa* was and he is confronted with the Goddess Uma the daughter of Himālaya. This Uma is the messenger of very spirit of Supreme Brahman, which generates the power in fire and wind God and all the creatures in the Universe. The *Vedāntic* philosophy of omnipresence of almighty is very well established in this small but effective elaborated story.

### III.20.3 Yājñavalkya in *Bṛhadāranyaka-upaniṣad*

As a student Yājñavalkya was the most brilliant disciple of his Guru Vaiśampāyana. Once when differed on some aspects of *Vedāntic* issue with his Guru, he did not give in submissively and consequently, Guru asks his disciple to give back the knowledge. Yājñavalkya vomits this knowledge which happens to be *śukla Yajurveda*. It is an excellent example how student should be upright and not just yes man.

### III.20.4 *Śāntimantra*

*Śāntimantras* are the couplet of peace invocation recited before the study of particular *Upaniṣad*s by *Guru-śiṣya*. They are number of them and each is quoted at the beginning of *Upaniṣadic* text. Each one of them have a powerful meaning and tone that the atmosphere gets charged with serenity and calm to proceed with the study with vigor and concentration. Two very popular *Śāntimantras* with their text and meaning are given. It is strongly recommended the first one to be chanted at the beginning of study and second one after the completion of study session.

#### III.20.4.1 Inculcating team spirit and togetherness

The text of *Kaṭhopaniṣad* and few others, begin with the following *Śāntimantra*. It is also recited by traditional Families together before the meals, as well by the speaker before religious discourses or meetings.

ॐ सह नावतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहे ।



तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु । मा विद्विषावहे ॥

ॐ शान्तिः । शान्तिः । शान्तिः ।

**OM** (A sacred syllable of Sanskrit which has lot of physical and psychological significance. Its pronunciation from the abdominal cavity, travelling through glottal tract and ending with the vibrating effect in the brain cavity has tremendous resonance effect.), (O God!) Protect us (from all evil), may we enjoy together (सह नौ भुनक्तु – the word भुनक्तु has a origin from dhatu भुज् which means eating as well enjoying), may we perform all our action with velour and energy, May we together with brilliance and radiance explore (the secret of this universe and our endeavor), Never there should be any malignancy between us (nor with anybody). OM, (offer us) peace (and tranquility); (offer us) peace (and tranquility); (offer us) peace (and tranquility).

### III.20.4.2 The Universal Truth

The text of *Iśāvāsyopaniṣad* and few others, begin with the following *Śāntimantra*. It is also recited by traditional Families together after the completion of any event such *Yogābhyāsa*, as well by the speaker after religious discourses or meetings. For understanding of this Mantra, Sanskrit grammar and Indian philosophical thought is essential, however the efforts are made here to simplify the multiple meaning as perceived and appealing to the normal aspirant who has no background of these prerequisites.

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं । पुर्णत्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।

पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

ॐ शान्तिः । शान्तिः । शान्तिः ।

- (a) OM. The God Almighty! (Who is complete, perfect and omnipresent), whose actions are perfect. Even though occupied completely accommodates all (out of Perfect the Perfect only comes out or the Perfect one will never misguide you). Even after emptying full, the Perfect remains perfect (the Perfect one in spite of its benevolence remains Perfect). OM peace; peace; peace.
- (b) OM, the God Almighty! (The rest is equally applicable to the Soul of human being which is pure and perfect.)
- (c) OM, the God Almighty! (The rest is equally applicable to Universe where energy and matter cannot be destroyed nor created.)

### III.21 Bhartṛhari's *Nīṣatakam*

Bhartṛhari's *Nīṣatakam* is one of the master piece on *Nīti* is a policy which dictates morality, ethics and behavioral science. It is elaborated in hundred verses, which are useful for conveying good value system across all the section of society irrespective of age and educational background. The poet, in the body of *ślokāḥ* itself illustrates the value-based attributes by sighting examples from day-to-day activities, the nature and behavior pattern of animals, analogical treatment, using metaphors and similes, satirical and witty treatment to the text. Moreover, the language itself is so simple and bound in popular meter so that it can be recited, quoted, understood and assimilated by the students. These *slokas* cover the wide aspects of human behavior, some of them are quoted below as an example.

#### III.21.1 The person lacking in intelligence

To begin with Bhartṛhari starts with the Characteristics of *Mūrkhaḥ* (stupid, ignorant and not knowledgeable person)

##### III.21.1.1 The Hypocrite

The naive person can be easily convinced of right things but hypocrite (ज्ञानलवदुर्विदग्धम्) cannot be convinced even if God comes to admonish him. (BHNS 3)

##### III.21.1.2 The arrogant

One can snatch pearl struck in the jaw of a crocodile, one may also swim cross the mighty turbulent oceanic waves and may also take angry snake as a head crown but will never be able conquer the mind of a stupid man (मुखजनचित्तं न आराधयेत्). (BHNS 4)

##### III.21.1.3 The lazy person

One may get oil from grinding sand, may quench his thirst with just looking at mirage and may even locate a horn of a rabbit but can never get train the mind of a stupid man who does not attempt or try to work for his own success. This *sloka* can be also interpreted in a positive way, like if one makes an earnest and sincere effort, then he is likely to succeed in his mission or endeavor. In the field of adventurism, the example can be sited of the Indian Naval Woman's team undertaking a trans-oceanic voyage or a paraplegic conquering the Mount Everest. (BHNS 5)

#### **III.21.1.4 The person acting without discretion**

The importance of river Ganges in the history of Indian psychic cannot be overemphasized. Bhartṛhari beautifully recounts how the Celestial Goddess Ganga descended on the head of Shiva and flowed through lofty and mighty Himalaya. It further enriched fertile floodplains of Indian peninsula and ultimately merging with mighty ocean passing through the delta of *Sundarban* (Bhartṛhari has not stated this, expect that the river merges with the ocean, but if he was to witness today the downfall of Ganges, his *śloka* would be most appropriate and effective). Downfall of Ganga from the heaven to the terrestrial body is compared with the person who perpetually experiences downfall because of acting again and again without sense and discretion. (BH NS 10)

#### **III.21.2 The intelligent man**

Bhartṛhari's *ślokas* on the characteristics of intelligent, learned, and educated persons having a competence in traditional subject are not only important for Character Building but for the Educationist and Governing bodies to respect and make use of the competent teacher community for welfare of the state. This aspect of availability of trained manpower of competent teacher especially in traditional subject is a necessity. The modern tools and concept, no doubt has to be associated in the present environment for Character Building.

##### **III.21.2.1 The characteristic of a teacher and duty of state**

The person whose speech has been refined by traditional grammar and allied *śāstram* and has deep and appropriate knowledge of concerned subject to teach and impart the knowledge, should not be living in bad state and neglect. The society and authorities in power are to be blamed for their neglect, as these personalities are jewels of the society. For neglect of these people is the fault lies with examiner of the jewels and not of the learned personalities. (BHNS 11).

##### **III.21.2.2 The importance of knowledge**

*Vidyā* (Knowledge) is one of the greatest virtues of mankind. It bestows respectable living condition, successful carrier and happiness. It is master of all masters. It is a great asset when visiting foreign land. It is supreme treasure which is sought after by the *Rājāmahārājā*

(राजमहाराजा the ruling kings and dynasties). The person without or devoid of *Vidya*, virtually belongs to animal category. (BHNS 16)

### III.21.2.3 Qualities

The qualities with which the intelligent and knowledgeable person is recognized are narrated in the exclamatory expression by most convincing manner as follows.

- (a) If person has a virtue of forgiveness, then what is the requirement of protective armor? Forgiveness is virtue of a knowledgeable man.
- (b) If the anger is weak point of a person, then what is the requirement of having additional enemies? Anger is the greatest enemy of man.
- (c) If man has trustworthy relationship, then where is requirement of *Agni*? (Fire, anxiety, jealousy and anger) Good relationship is an asset.
- (d) If you have true friend then where is requirement of excellent medicine? Always develop a healthy friendship which keeps the person in happy state.
- (e) If you have company of bad people then where is requirement of serpent? Serpent is supposed to deadliest creature which the people are afraid off. Be always in good company of people.
- (f) If you have *niṣkalam vidyā* (the knowledge having no blemish) then where is requirement of having plenty of wealth? *Vidya* is a supreme than having plenty of wealth. Even the knowledge used for selfish gain and harming anyone is derogatory.
- (g) If one has modesty then where is requirement of having precious ornaments? Modesty is one of the greatest virtues of man. Simplicity and natural beauty give an individual a good personality.
- (h) If person is equipped with *Kāvya* (poetic mind) then where is requirement of having Kingdom? Have a poetic mind and develop the sense of appreciating the beauty of nature, music, art and culture. (BHNS 17)

### III.21.3 The other topics covered in *Nīṣatakam*

Other topics which are related to Character Development in similar fashion are briefly indicated below.

- (a) Behavior - The behavioral pattern expected from the learned man towards varied people is given. For example, politeness towards own clan, compassion and kindness to the strangers.

- (b) The aspects of self-respect and valor - The upright man should always act as per his position and aptitude. For example, Bhartṛhari asks “Whether old and hungry lion will eat grass?”
- (c) Have a sense financial acumen.
- (d) The characteristic of vicious and bad person is recounted.
- (e) The characteristic of respected personalities is to be emulated.
- (f) The quality of *dhairya* (fortitude and courage) to be part of life.
- (g) Destiny is one which has to be taken in to account in evaluating the situation.
- (h) The importance of *Karma* (Action). Lastly to just give an example how beautifully Bhartṛhari has portrayed that the action performed in previous birth and affects the result in present life. No beautiful and handsome figure nor noble birth, nor character, nor education, nor service may bear the fruits. However, like tree planted now offers the fruits to the next generation, the man is rewarded of fruits at appropriate time for his past action.

### III.22 Conclusions

The expanse of Sanskrit literature on Character Building especially in Vedic literature, rituals and traditional customs is woven and reflected in the form of treatises, epics, *sāhitya*, poetry, prayer, and story books. They are so rich in its literary content and values that a separate large scale institutional approach may be required to understand, propagate and implementation. This exercise is mainly targeted towards Student community and also for layman as first stepping stone. Some concepts, phrases and words are highlighted below to summarize the essence of Gita with respect to Character Building.

#### III.22.1 Phrases

- (a) Wakeup Call, time and again is given to Arjuna though out in BG by Kṛṣṇa, to motivate him and follow the obligatory duties.
  - (i) *Kṣudram hṛdayadaurbalyam tyaktvā uttiṣṭha*. Parantapa is Arjuna, to whom Lord Kṛṣṇa addresses that he should shed off this insignificant weakness of heart and wake up) (BG 2.03)
  - (ii) *Tasmāt uttiṣṭha Kaunteya yudhāya kṛata niścayaḥ* (Kuanteya is Arjunah, he has been reminded again to wake up and get ready to lead his fighting forces with firm conviction.) (BG 2.37)

- (b) The often-repeated slogan in BG is “The action is your birth right but never act in the interest of expectation for fruit.” *Karmaṇyevādhikārste mā faleşu kadācana* (you are the master and authority as far as taking action is concerned but never with the expectation of return) (BG 2.47)
- (c) Balancing act, acting with evenness and treating all with same yard stick is called Yoga. This is one of the important attributes of Character Building. *Samatvam yoga ucyate* (BG 2.48)
- (d) Yoga promotes skill in action. *Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalm* (BG 2.50)
- (e) *Yat yat ācarati śreśthas tat tat eva itara janaḥ* the people follow elder, wise and learned.) (BG 3.21)
- (f) *Prkṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇisarvaśaḥ* (this nature is *triguṇātmaka* which also influences action of a person and reflect his Character) (BG 3.27, 4.7&8)
- (g) *Yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānirbhavati Bhārta*  
*Abhyutthānam adharmasya tadātmānam sṛjāmyaham* BG 4.7

Whenever *adharma* and anarchy spreads or is rampant I manifest. In the form of *Avatāra* to uplift the mankind and set the things right.

- (h) *Bhoktāram yjñatapasām sarvalokamaheśvaram* the one who is engaged in *yajña* and *tapas* is the supreme amongst all. This phrase is from BG is quoted here to highlight that all action to be undertaken as performance of *Yajña* and *tapas*, for tranquility, peace and success.) (BG 5.29)
- (i) *Uddhared ātmanātmānām nātmānamavasādayet*  
*Ātmaiva hyātmano bandhurātmaiva ripurātmanaḥ* BG 6.5  
Self has to uplift himself; he should not allow himself to fall. He himself is his friend as well as enemy. This verse is incorporated in conclusion to highlight and emphasize that one has to wake up and take action to improve himself and no other thing or anybody can help.
- (j) *Jñānam te'ham savijñāna midam vakṣyāmyaśeṣataḥ* Krishna declares that Knowledge together with wisdom will be told to you (Arjun) in totality. Hear for purpose the students the meaning of *Vijñānam* is something more than knowledge, which can be labeled as wisdom. The knowledge shall be utilized for *lokasaṅgraham* (welfare of the people and it should be put in to practice. Otherwise, only knowledge have no meaning or value.) (BG 7.2)

### III.22.2 Words

The words in Sanskrit because of their etymological base in the womb of the verbal roots and derivatives accomplished by prefix or suffix of varied elements and then flourishing and blooming under grammatical marvel and traditional uses having multiplicity and contextual meanings. The word itself conveys meaning and exhibit the essence in front of your eyes. Few of such words are listed below along with their meaning through translation and explanation but still they are matter of self-realization.

- (a) *Sthitaprajñah* (the person who is steady fast in his knowledge) (BG 2.54)
- (b) *Nistha* (path or unquestionable faith and dedication) (BG 3.3)
- (c) *Śarīrayātra* (maintenance body) (BG 3.8)
- (d) *Iṣṭakāmadhuk* (it is milking of cow Kamdhenu of sage Vasiṣṭha who grants the desired wish, which here is compared with performance of *Yajña*. By performance of *yajña* the wishes are full filled.) (BG 3.10)
- (e) *Lokasaṅgraham* (welfare of the society, kingdom or mankind) (BG 3.20)
- (f) *Śraddhā* (unflinching faith) (BG 3.31)
- (g) *Svadharmā* (obligatory and self-imposed duties as per *Dharmā*) (BG 3.35)
- (h) *Vidyā vinaya sampanne* (the person with knowledge and humility. Such person possesses the highest quality amongst human beings) (BG 5.18)
- (i) *Duḥkḥayonayaḥ* (wombs of miseries. This word is used in the context of the sorrows originating from external stimulus and harboring in the minds of an aspirants. They further give rise to other means of enjoyment and push the *S* in the valley of miseries) (BG 5.22)
- (j) *Ādhyātmika* is one the greatest virtue in Character Building. (BG 8.4)
- (k) *Jñānayajñah* (performance of *Yajña* where in with the fire of knowledge the ignorance is destroyed.)
- (l) *Nirmalatva* (Spotless, stainless and sinless implying Virtuous personality. When the lady is said to have a virtue of *Nirmalatva* any of the above given meanings in English are not adequate.)
- (m) *Jñānacakṣuṣaḥ* (eyes of wisdom)
- (n) *Śūdra - Paricaryātmakam karma* (it is service and attendance type of work or profession carried out or adopted is a definition given by *Gītā*)

### III.22.3 Concepts

- (a) The *Ātman* (soul) is eternal, indestructible and not bounded but the body in which it resides is subjected to a destruction.
- (b) The child is born with the subliminal impression which are called *Samskāra* which are Firmware of cognitive system.
- (c) *Guṇāḥ* - *Sattva* is a state of equanimity, serene and poised thoughts, *Rajas* is a state of passion, desire and agitation, whereas *Tamas* is a state of ignorance and inertia. The universe, living organisms and flora and fauna are outcome or influenced by these *Guṇāḥ*. The journey should be always towards *Satvika*.
- (d) Modification in the basic attributes of field - Kṛṣṇa added five more aspects than twenty-four listed for *kṣetraas* *Ichā* (Desire), *Dveṣa* (Hatred), *Sukham* (Pleasure), *Duḥkham* (Pain or miseries) and *Sanḥātāḥ*. These have been elaborated earlier.
- (e) Signification of *Avatāra* - This thesis is an effort towards rediscovery and bringing out the teaching of great personalities for the younger generation.

### III.24 Spirituality

Yoga and Spirituality are two important aspects of Character Building they are both strong point and core competency of Indian subcontinent. The leadership in these can change the present chaotic world scenario. Śaṅkara has beautifully covered the aspect of spiritually with his gift of 'Sādhana-catustaya'. Also, his vision of establishment of four monistic center is an eye opener to the present generation to adopt this model for overall development

### III.25 Upaniṣadic Message

*Upaniṣads* are collectively accepted as a simplified Vedic literature. Some *Vedānta* Concept and anecdotes, in simple language and story form, to be prepared and passed on to the younger generation of primary phase by parents and school authorities. The *śāntimantras* along with some prayers are suggested in daily routine which are elaborated in subsequent Chapter to be recited at appropriate time and occasion, as habit for building team spirit, togetherness, vigor, tranquility and magnanimity of Supreme.

### III.26 Nītiśatakam

As in the case of *Upaniṣads* the *Nītiśatakam* of Bhartṛhari to be in a curriculum at secondary level with verses demonstrated with stories and animated video projection. Similar efforts also



required in case of ‘*Amaracitrakathā* (a very popular Comic amongst the Indian children)’ and other Comic publication, which were very popular with children, between the age group of five to twelve year. Their decline was mainly due the lack of competent and creative team for publication. The Sanskrit literature have plenty of material in the form of stories, episodes and anecdotes from Vedanta, Puranas, Epics, Classics, History and so on, which can be harnessed and remodulated for entertaining the young minds, for their growth.

### **III.27 The Sanskrit Literature**

It can say while wounding up this Chapter that Sanskrit literature on Character Building can be stated in one word ‘पुर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते’.

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