

JĪVA, ITS COURSE OF LIFE AND YOGA

What is Jīvatman, Ātma and Jīva and Their Relationship

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On the basis of **Suddha** teachings, that what is termed “**Para-Prakriti**” in the **Bhagavad Gīta** is **Jīva**. Its status and course of life also came in for incidental mention therein. Let us discuss these in detail in this article. Since everyone of us is a **Jīvatman**, undergoing a course of evolutionary and involutionary existence in this **samsāric** world process, within the ambit of a helpless birth and death; and as such we would like to get out of it or control it, only if we can know how to go about it. That, for whatever light available herein and as such we are indebted to the **Suddha** teachings, need hardly be reiterated. To the Great ones of the **Mandalam**, therefore our **pranāms** are due for the knowledge.

1. What is Jīvatman?

When **Jīva**, or **Jīvatman** to be more precise—the living soul—was equated with “**Para-Prakriti**” or **Higher Matter**, it was with a view to point out the un-differentiable nature of **Spirit** and **Matter**, while with a name and form in the world process and performing various kinds of activities. **Jīvatman** is **Para-Prakriti** looked at from the **prakritic** or matter point of view and **Para-Prakriti** is **Jīvatman** so seen from the **Ātmic** or spirit point of view. The difference between spirit and matter is very thin in the high state of '**avyaktam**'—non-differentiated. This is the highest yogic height. And from this yogic point of view, it is **Brahma-Shakti** functioning in togetherness—**Spirit** and **Matter** ceasing to be as such.

Its being present in the lower levels also is for the purpose of protecting and upholding the universe—*Yā yedam dhāryatē Jagat*—Let us look at it a little closer. The term '**Para-Prakriti**' stands for **Paramātma's Prakriti**. **Paramātma**, the Over-lord of the **Cosmos** functions through this **Prakriti**. This **Prakriti** is given out to be very subtle in its nature and is known also by the terms '**Dhyow**'—sky—and '**antariksham**'—space. Technically they are known by the name of '**aditi**'—*aditir dhyow aditir antariksham*—according to **Taitreya Upanishad**. **Paramātma**, who is deemed to abide in this **prakritic** vehicle known as '**aditi**' thus comes to be known by the name of '**Aditiya**' or **Sūrya-Nārāyana**; which when translated literally would mean **Sun**. That this term '**aditi**' is also applied to '**Jīva**', which has for its mainstay '**Prāna**' or life force, is what we learn from **Katopanishad**—*Yā prānena sambhavat aditi devatamayī*. This is another proof to demonstrate that **Jīva** is **Para-Prakriti**.

The significance, we learn from the above is, that what constitutes material vehicle for **Paramātma** for his functioning is nothing else than all these **Jīvātmans** put together. And, as such, the initiative for all kinds of actions in the world process emanates from **Paramātma** and **Jīvātmans** have nothing on their own. This is well-instanced in the **Bhagavad Gīta** in the Lord's exhortation to **Arjuna** to become alive to this fact and fight with the consciousness of his being

merely an **Agent**—*nimittamatram bhava savyasāchin*. Herein is posited the pantomimic nature of all **Jīvātman**s, as mere material in the hands of **Paramātma**; which when **Arjuna** forgot, overcome by a sense of his own pseudo individuality, the Lord admonished him with his great sermon.

That the **Jivatman**, nevertheless, has individuality of its own, is there, commanding a true status and about which we shall be referring to presently. This pseudonymous-individuality of the **Jivatman**, which is, in other words, make-believe, is by virtue of its reflection through **Ahaṅkāra**, one of the eight-fold emanations of what is called **Apara**, or **Lower Prakriti** in the **Gīta**, also known as: **Ashta-Mahā-Prakriti**—the **Eight-Great-Matter**. By this projection through **Ahaṅkāra** in the sphere of actions, the true nature of **Jīvātma** is submerged and gets into background and the body made up of the constituents of this **Lower-Prakriti** gets into prominence endowed with a name and a form, thus causing complete separativity in life existences.

The true individuality of **Jivatman** is **Ātmic** or spiritual, which is *bhava swabhāva*—of the nature of **Absolute Being**. Exclusive spiritual nature, free from any kind of material tinge is **Ātma**—the life principle, the ‘**Jivatman**’ or life thereof, being supplied by **Shakti** with **prakritic** or material association. This ideal state of **Ātman** is conceived as being completely detached from the material body of all gradations but just abiding in it as a **witness**—*Sākshī*; and while associated with body-consciousness, it is **Jivatman**. It is held that the **Ātman** takes a body only for the sake of enjoyment—*Ātma bhogāyatanam śarīram*—Hence **Jivatman** is described as that which lives and sports—*Jīvyati krīdat iti Jīvātmā*. Its enjoyment, when with the body, results in association and attachment with the fruits of action—*karma phala bhoktā Jīva eva vāchyahā*. It is this attachment that causes its bondage. **Ātman**, the **Life-Principle**, by virtue of its state of spiritual being is a **Total-Individuality**, the fountainhead of all the individual **Jīvātman**s and free from attachment. Hence **Jivatman** should be deemed as a part of **Ātman** and not as **Ātman** itself. It has to grow into becoming **Ātman**. And in the human body consisting of the four **tatwa-khootas**—**Avyakta**, **Mahat**, **Manas** and **Indriya**—its jurisdiction is confined to the sphere of **Manas** or mind-emotion only, which is deemed to be in conjunction with the five knowledge-organs, **Jñānendriyas**—ears, eyes, nose, tongue, and skin—of the body.

The **Gīta-śloka**, bearing this out, is: *Mamaivāṁśo Jīvalokae Jīvabhūtaḥ Sanātanaḥ Manas śhashthānīndriyāni prakṛti sthāni karshati*—meaning, even a fragment of mine, the **Jīva** of eternal nature, functions in the world-process through the five senses and the mind, manifested from **Avyakta-Prakriti**. The limiting adjunct of the **Jivatman** is thus evident. However its being hailed as ‘**Īshwara**’ in the next **śloka** of the **Gīta**, is not because of its capacity to multiply its desires and perpetuate its enjoyment in bondage to **Prakriti** and undergo a repeated course of birth and death, but because of its ability when awakened about its true nature, to overcome the allurements of **prakritic** life and regain the lost **Ātmic** consciousness. As **Jīva**, the **Ātman** is **aśuddha** or impure; it is pure, when freed from its attachment to **Prakriti** and it is in this state, it is **Īshwara**.

2. Ātma and Jīva and Their Relationship

As **Īshwara** the **Ātman** is just a witness of all material happenings, but uninfluenced or conditioned by them. The description of this glorious **Ātman** in the **Śvetāśwatara Upanishad** is arrestingly educative—*Eko devahā sarvabhūteshu gūdhaha, sarvavyāpī sarva bhūtāntarātma karmādhyakshaha sarvabhūtādhivāsahā Sākshī, Chetā, Kevalo Nirgunā cha*—The one Lord secret in all elemental bodies, pervasive, the inner ruler in all, that presides over all actions, the abider in all bodies, witness, consciousness, isolated and free from qualities.

In this **śloka**, while the **Ātman** is stated as witness of outer actions, that he is an active ruler of the subjective state of individuals is clearly brought about. Nor this witness hood of **Ātman** is to be deemed as a static condition and the external actions of **Jīvatman** as dynamic, because the entire actions of **Prakriti** are due to its presence—*mayādhyakshēṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyatē sa-carācaram*. The so-called dynamic action of the **Jīvatman** is merely a make-believe, even as its own status is. Real, dynamic actions are those of **Paramātman**, to which state, **Ātman** the apparently passive witness raises, when, as the Over-Lord of all cosmic conditions, he is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of all. And it is with this cosmic consciousness, the **Paramātman** descends as **Avatāra-puruṣha**—Divine incarnation for the purpose of helping the **Jīvātman**s to shake off the bondage. The actions set afoot by the Lord in this sphere have no binding hold on him, as fully explained in the **Gīta**. It is this that is known as **Śuddhātmic** method of actions. When the **Jīvatman**, consequent on its awakening to its real nature gets free from the bondage resting influences of **Prakriti**, it is said to adopt this method of functioning which is the one advocated in the **Gīta**. And this is real **swatantra**—freedom. And so long **Jīvatman** is not awakened it is deemed ignorant. Birth, old age and death, in repeated transmigratory existences are the fruits of this ignorance and they are its afflictions as well.

The course of life, which this **Jīvatman** leads, while in the bondage of ignorance and, that which it does after acquiring higher knowledge, is known as its **Gati**. And before, we examine it, let us get an idea of this **Jīvatman**, from a still higher point of view viz. **Brahman**, since according to **Mahāvākya**: Everything is **Brahm**—*Sarvam tat Kalvidam Brahm*.

The term '**Jīva**' means **life**. **Life** as a principle—**jīvatatwa** is different from its manifestation. As a principle it may be termed '**latent power**' looked at from our activity point of view. Principle is a thing or state or what you will, in itself and has to be conceived so. In this state, there is a complete cessation and withdrawal from manifested activities. This latent power to abide as a principle in itself goes by the name of **Brahma-Shakti** or **power of Brahm**. The actual act of withdrawal is known as **Pralaya**—deluge. It also goes by the name of **Upasambhāra**. The withdrawal is termed 'deluge' because the activities are given the go-by and are made to stop. **Brahm**, that mysterious something, which had ever been the subject, and object of the highest philosophical and yogic researches, and yet declared to be never known merely by naming it **Brahm**, because it is always '**Neti Neti**', not this, not this, a purely negative state in its ultimate, is still the conceptual idea as the originator of the cosmic world-processes and their activities.

And since **Brahm** is within the range of concept as the highest, in that category, what is termed as **Yoga-Brahma-Vidya** is come to be looked upon as a necessary study for man, in its aspect of one and many.

Now, the activities of **Brahm** in regard to creation are because of its inherent **shaktic** nature. The actual act of projection of **Cosmos** and its infinite variations is known as **sarga**—creation, it also goes by the name of **Upakrama**. Consequent on this, what is termed '**life**' gets manifested, which is nothing more than the latent **Brahma-Shakti**, becoming patent through infinite forms, and phases. This is **Brahma-Shakti** functioning. It is not as if that, this **Shakti**, operates or could operate without being so impelled by **Brahm**, nor that **Brahm** ceases to abide in the activities of **Shakti**. They always abide together forever in all conditions and this is the secrecy of their eternal **yogic** state in everything created. And it is in their **yogic** state, the activities, the durations and terminations of all life are carried on by **Brahma-Shakti**. What is termed **Prakriti** or matter is nothing else than **Brahma-Shakti** in gross state—a change of state of the latter into former in the course of creative functioning. So then, from the knowledge point of view, it is **Brahma-Shakti** in its aspect of life and form, that is to be known and not **Brahm** in itself, since it is always an inviolable secret. It follows that the principle of life—“**Jivatatwa**”, either as latent or patent in terms of ‘**Sarga**’ and ‘**Pralaya**’ is in **Brahma-Shakti** in its functioning, and in having known it, it may be stated that **Brahm** becomes known. The negative or the absolute state to which **Brahm** relapses, transcending concepts could never be a basis of knowing and hence all reference to it has to be just a reference and no more. Such is the state of the **Ultimate Absolute**.

3. **Brahma-Shakti and its Powers**

The activities of **Brahma-Shakti** regard to creation, etc., are deemed to be due to what is termed as the ideation of **Brahm** to multiply itself into many. The **Shruti-Mahāvākya**, which embodies this ideation of **saṅkalpa** as it is called, is stated to be thus—*Ekham Bahu syām prajāyēyeti*—I am one, let me become many beings. As a result of this **Saṅkalpa**, the infinities in the shape of innumerable cosmological world-processes with their lives and forms have sprung into existence. In so far all things spring up from this ideation of **Brahm**, all are said to partake of the very nature of **Brahm** and consequently all activities have their root in it. Thus we have the three great **Mahāvākyas** embodying this ideation of **Brahm** viz. *Sarvam tat Kalvidam Brahm*—everything is **Brahm**—*Sarvam Brahma Swabhāvajam*—everything is of the nature of **Brahm**, *Sarvam Āvaśyakam*—everything is necessity.

These three **Mahāvākyas** constitute a perfect synthesis in **Brahm** and all analysis to be valid should have this basis and also should terminate there. This analysis is not so much the determination of causal factors and the ‘why’ of things, as it is, to know the intrinsic nature of existence and how it works out, in the field of multiplicity as taught by those that know. The grand ‘why’ of the various conflicting, contradicting, cruel and opposite forces operating in the individuals and the world can fully be answered only in a state of resignation as being a result of the **saṅkalpa** of **Brahm** in terms of **Swabhāvajam**—naturally born, even as the elimination of

these forces and, attaining the state of equanimity, peace and poise through applied endeavor, constitute a necessity in the scheme of life. Life springing up in the world forgets its source and clings to forms by identifying with them and this is its root ignorance, and hence conflicts.

What is termed as '**Saṅkalpa**' or ideation or resolution could be very well recognized as mental activity. It has its roots in desire—**Ichhā**. **Brahm** is said to have desired—*tātikshata*—it desired; and hence the **Saṅkalpa** to multiply itself into many. **Ichhā** or desire is also a mental act. In itself, it may be deemed as an indefinable something—a sort of force gathering momentum. In the language of the **Yogis**, this **Ichhā** of **Brahm** is equated to **Kāla**—Time—*Brahma Ichchōpādhikaḥ Kāla iti tatwavidām madam*. Being so, **Time** is conceived as the **Cause of all causes**. And so **Time** is **Brahm** in the grip of **Ichhā**, which resolves through the **Saṅkalpa** aforesaid, for action. This action is just multiplying itself into many. Hence **Saṅkalpa** is a dynamic force, ready to take the necessary direction and thus start the momentum. Because **saṅkalpa** is, in other words, a power translating the desire of **Brahm**, it is known as the **power of transformation**, and the special name of '**Māyā**' is attributed to it. So **Māyā** is not illusion, as it is current with some who do not realize its scope; but **Brahma-Shakti** in action. It has to be so understood which is in fact cognizing the **saṅkalpa** of **Brahma**. The **Yogis** and the Great Beings, who continue to abide though not in the gaze of the multitude, through an adoration of this '**Māyā**' come to know the **Saṅkalpa** of **Brahm** and thus become co-operators in the execution of the **Plan** of the world-process. And therefore, '**Māyā**' or the **Divine Mother** is hailed as *saṅkalpa niyantrī*—the guider of **Brahma-Saṅkalpa**. And students of **Yoga Brahma Vidyā** are asked to direct their devotion to this **Divine Mother**—**Māyā**, so that, they may also, through her grace, know the **divine plan**, in respect of their own individual placement in it; for there is not a single detail in this world, small or great which is outside this plan. All have to fit in it, at one time or the other consciously. And until this knowledge dawns there is no cessation of the transmigratory course of life to the individuals.

Whereas **Ichhā** is the cause, with **Saṅkalpa** as the result, **Ichhā** itself, when gets intensified is known as **Kāma**. Like so many incorrect meanings given to terms, **Kāma** stated as passion is said to be highly condemnable. This is a wrong view. Extolled as a **Puruṣhārtha**—aim of man, **Kāma** is to be understood, strived for and attained. *Dharma avirrūdhō bhūtēshu kāmosmi*—I am **Kāma** of beings, which is not repugnant to a legitimate way of life, says **Gīta**. This **Kāma** as a principle of the greatest portent and potency embodies in itself the highest propelling dynamic power, which, **Brahm** acquires for itself to give shape to its own resolution—**Saṅkalpa**, of multiplying into many. So it is said that in this **Kāma**, the action power is associated with desire. That is to say what is known as **Ichhā-Shakti**—the power of desire and as **Kriyā-Shakti**—the power of action is **Kāma** and as a principle in its relation to the world processes individually and collectively it is elevated to the status of the very **Life Principle** itself viz., **Ātman**—*Kāmaścha ātma bhavēt*, as **Bhagavan Nārāyana** says in **Yoga Dīpikā**, to posit the seed-state of **Brahm** which is no other than **Ātman**; and hence it is called **Brahma-Swarūpa**, as the **Great-Cause of all**.

4. Ātma—The Īshwara

Ātman as such is stated to be **Jñāna vighrahā**—Image of knowledge. This knowledge of Ātman primarily consists in what it is in itself and that is, its state of oneness, *Ekoham*—I am one. The ‘**Saṅkalpa**’ to become many, carries with it also the knowledge of the way in which the multiplication is to be carried out. This is called its **Jñāna-vyavasāya**—knowledge functioning. And so it is declared that such knowledge is always with a view to action and that there is no such thing as abstract knowledge at all. The term *Aham*—or “I” in the **saṅkalpa** brings out the seed state which is Ātman, in form, both as a cause and also what it intends to be as a result, and this result is one dividing itself into Many.

Thus we see that the Ātman which is the image of **Brahm** embodying in itself the three primal **Shākties** known as **Jñāna**, **icchā**, and **Kriyā** and called **Guṇamayee-Shākties** of **Brahm** project the entire world-processes, and its contents always functioning in these three realms of **Shākties** and also directing them. And since it is the Ātman that assumes the supreme role in directing the **saṅkalpa** of **Brahm**, it is called *saṅkalpa-nāyaka*—**Lord of Saṅkalpa**. All these, however, are pre-creational if this term could be applied with any advantage, for purposes of knowledge. And with the dawn of ‘**saṅkalpa**’ the power of transformation, the material necessary to make the one look as many gets created in that; this aspect of **Brahma-Shakti** gets transformed into **matter** or **Prakriti**. That is why the notion always persists that matter and energy go together. Science also has proved that there is no difference between matter and energy. In **Prakriti** or matter is known as **Mūla-Prakriti**—**Root matter**. In so far **Shakti** cannot function by itself, except in close union with Ātman in respect of this transformation the presence of Ātman in all conditions is there and always. And hence **Brahma-Shakti** is said to carry always with it the one seed, so as to transform it into many seeds in virtue of its supplying the necessary matter in various forms and shapes, and thus make the many a possibility. This is a ceaseless project set afoot, and thus we see the never-ending creational activity in **Jagat**, which will stop at no one’s bidding.

And in this act of disbursal of the one seed into many, the potencies of the said seed get submerged in the vesture of various shape and forms, which the material **Prakriti** brings into being. And so it is said that the one Ātman gets itself submerged in the world and its forms thus becoming known as **Jīvatman**—*Lokān adhishtito Ātmā Jīva ityuchyate*—**Jīva** is Ātman in the **loka**, which means **deha** or body as well. Such disbursal and transformation being the work of **Brahma-Shakti**, which is creation called ‘**Sarga**’, said already, we find **Jīvātma** being given to Ātman. Ātman the static entity becomes **Jīva** the active entity. What is called activity is not more than an exertion, which consists in not only carrying on the **saṅkalpa** of **Brahm** but also to discover one’s own state, which is lost when transformed. For in the process of transformation the original consciousness is lost. And the entire activities of all **Jīvas** may be termed only as an exertion either as expressed or implied to discover their own state. Clothed as it is in a limited vesture or body, the consciousness of **Jīvatman** thus becomes limited to that vehicle and hence its feeling of bondage. So, it is said, **Ātma** is the cause and **Jīva** the seeker of results. It is,

however, held that all the **Jīvas** are so many fiery sparks of **Brahma-Shakti**—*Brahma-Shakti spulingāścha sarvae jīvādayo madhā*. This statement brings out the truth, that since all the **Jīvas** which are parts of the one **Ātman** get multiplied so, through **Brahm-Shakti** as **Prakriti**, the **Jīvas** are said to be sparks coming out of it. And in so far **Brahma-Shakti** transforms after receiving in itself the one seed into many, it is declared to be feminine. **Shakti** is also known as neutral when it is merely mechanical, as it is seen operating in the machines without any life creative functioning and consists in holding on to the unitary ideal in the field of many. For, **Puruṣha**, which is **Brahm** in its highest state, transcends its own **Ātmic** state. The **Ātmic** state is in relation to the created and other activities of the world process. **Puruṣha** transcends all and beyond which there is only nothingness—*Puruṣhān na Param kiñchit sā kāshthā sā parā gatih*—beyond **Puruṣha** there is nothing; that is the end and goal. Thus we are all **Jīvātmans**—partial manifestations of **Ātman** caused by **Brahma-Shakti** with limited capabilities. It is with a view to shred the incapacities congenital to **Jīvātman** and overcome the subjection caused by matter that ‘**Ātmopāsana**’—worship of **Ātman**, and that of **Brahma-Shakti** is prescribed. Through the former we get into a remembrance of our own true inner state and through the latter a release from **prakritic** bondage becomes possible.

5. Jīva’s Course of Life in This World

Now let us get to understand what **Jīva's Gati** or course of life is here and hereafter. '**Gati**' means **course of life**. The course of life, which **Jīvātman** leads, both while in life in this world, and also in the post mortem state in the other worlds, is denominated as '**Gati**'. This course of life has three modes each way. The three modes of life of the **Jīvas** in this world are:

1. **Pravṛtti** or objective functioning.
2. **Nivṛtti** or withdrawal therefrom aiming at subjective functioning.
3. **Śuddha** or that mode of inner and outer functioning, free from the concept of "**I-ness**" and "**Mine-ness**", in a spirit of service with worship of **Divinity** as **Self** or **Ātman** immanent in all with a view to reach it and also for overcoming trans-migratory existence, as the goal.

This life as **Śuddha** is pure in opposition to the other two—**Pravṛtti** and **Nivṛtti**, which are declared impure or **aśuddha**, because of the persistence of **Ahaṅkāra** in these two modes of life. Between **Pravṛtti** and **Nivṛtti**, the latter is deemed pure since in this, there is the intention to realize **Self** through withdrawal within. But both are impure from the **Śuddha** point of view, for the reason aforesaid.

Similarly in the post-mortem course of life, there are three modes:

1. **Kṛṣṇa-gati** or the dark path.
2. **Śukla-gati** or white path.
3. **Parāyaṇa-gati** or the path leading to the very high, as compared with the other two which are stated to be lower because of their limitations.

These modes of life and **Parāyaṇa-gati** have not reached general understanding still in spite of **Gīta** teachings thereon, with any. Generally speaking the teachings of **Veda** relate to the **Pravṛtti** mode of functioning in terms of **Varṇa** or Caste; and those of **Vedānta** to **Nivṛtti** and the **Āśrama** order or stages of life connected therewith. What are termed as **Kṛṣṇa-Śākhā** (dark) and **Śukla-Śākhā** (white) attributed to **Vedas** respectively treat about these two modes. And correspondingly the former is called '**Karma-mārga**', that is the doing of sacrificial rites, purificatory baths in various rivers, worship of **Arcā-mūrti** in shrines and so on, and the latter named '**Jñāna-mārga**' has for it mainly an enquiry into **Brahm** as **Ātman**, with the giving up of **karmas**. The **Nivṛtti-mārga** is declared to be the path of **Mukti** or release from transmigratory existence as **Vedānta** holds it; and enjoined as a necessary corollary to **Pravṛtti**, enlarged in the **Vedas**, which do not advocate the said release since they enjoy sacrificial rites for pleasurable life in higher worlds. However treading the path of **Mukti** is not an actual attainment of it; nor does it mean so either in the post-mortem existence because the soul is said to travel along the **Śukla-gati** or white path. According to **Gīta**-teachings, this idea, attributed by **Vedānta**, is denied.

Jīvatman, conditioned by the **prakritic** vehicle of its own body in which it is encased, has only repeated and helpless Transmigratory existences as birth and death. Its life is subject to **karmic** bondage caused by **Prakriti**. This involved life of **Jīvatman** is not complete until the **Ātmic** nature of itself is realized, which state is the peak of the involuted (not evolved) state of **Brahm** and called its '**Upasamhāra**'. It is only after the realization of its **Ātmic** state, by **Jīvatman**, there commences its further progress into the **Paramātmic** realm, unbroken and undisturbed by the frequencies of birth and death.

Therefore the terms "**evolution**" and "**involution**" have different significances. In "**Pravṛtti**" life, **evolution** consists in fulfillment of world life in various ways, aiming faculty development and '**death**' marks its '**involution**' that is a cessation of outer activities. In "**Nivṛtti**" life, '**involution**' consists in a purposeful contraction from world activities for soul realization, and '**evolution**' is a partial awakening of the soul-state which is intervened also with, the appearance of death, over which there is no control as yet. In the **Śuddha** path there is a complete soul-awakening with a corresponding control over the physical vehicle, and as a result thereof true evolutionary course of life commences in the **Paramātmic** realm as was already stated from the very beginning. Its purposiveness is spoken of in the **Gīta** in the **śloka**—*Jara marana mokshaya māmasritya yatenti yae taē*—meaning, those that seek refuge in Me, striving for release from old age and death, know **Brahman**, the **Ātman**, and the whole field of action (or entire **Karmas**).

Of the three post-mortem **gatis**—**Kṛṣṇa**, **Śukla** and **Parāyaṇa**, each enables the returning **Jīva** traveling in it to reach a destination to which it leads to. **Kṛṣṇa-gati** is said to be the dark path or the **Southern path**—**Dakṣiṇāyana**. The souls that travel this path reach as per the teachings of **Gīta**, the world of **Moon**—*Chandramasam Jyōtī*. **Moon** symbolically represents **Mind**. As such, the world of **Moon** signifies **mental heaven**. This path is also hailed as **Pitryāṇa**—the path leading to the abode of dead ancestors. Those that tread it reach **Pitṛloka**. Men leading

virtuous life in the world are said to reach this world as a reward therefore after death and after the exhaustion of their merit, they are reborn again into this world, for further true evolutionary progress in the path of the Highest. **Sin** and **Merit** accrue in the world-process while treading the **Pravṛtti-mārga**, therein with one's gaze turned towards the material objective life only. The virtuous go to the aforesaid **loka**, after their demise, whereas the wicked are said to go to **hell**. Going to **hell** consists, after the death in the human body, in being born in the lower order of beasts and insects. After undergoing the period of punishment they are again reborn as human beings with improved faculties for doing good, and with it the possibility to tread the higher evolutionary path also gets opened. Thus exclusive **Pravṛtti-mārga** leads to repeated birth and death only.

Śukla-gati, known as **white path** or **northern path** or **Uttarāyaṇa**, also goes by the name of **Devayāna** or the path that leads to the abode of **Gods**. It is also called **Arcirādi-mārga** or the path of fire, which **Gīta** explains as *agnir jyotir ahaḥ śukla* etc. in contradistinction to the path of smoke, etc. *dhūmo rātrau* etc., which, the **Kṛṣṇa-gati** is, as also stated therein. According to **Śuddha** teachings this **Arcirādi-mārga** is known as **Mahā-Śuddha-Loka** or the abode of fire. The lower world thereof is known as **Śuddha Loka** or the abode of water. Further lower down is the **Pṛthvī-loka**. The **Gīta** calls upon **Arjuna** to discard the path of **Nivṛtti** also and to take up to the path of **Yoga** or **Śuddha gati** at all times because the path of **Nivṛtti** and the corresponding **Śukla-gati** leads only to rebirth, even after reaching **Brahma-loka**.

6. Parāyaṇa-Gati—The Śuddha Path of Yoga

The third one—the path of **Śuddha**, tread, during the course of world-life and leading to **Parāyaṇa** or **Brahmāyana** is spoken of in the **Gīta** thus—*tasmāt sarvēṣhu kālēṣhu yogayukto bhavārjuna*—hence, **Arjuna**, be always governed by yogic ideal. The entire teachings of **Gīta** go to amplify this statement. They are entirely different from the **Veda** and **Vedāntic** ideals. The **Yogic** mode of life taught herein as **Sāmya-yoga**, is in terms of **Dharma**—**Śuddha Dharma**, as we learn it so in a fresh light from the **Śuddha** revelations. The **Śuddha Dharma** teachers have crystallized the teachings of **Gīta** into definite acts, which, the ones desiring to tread the path of **Yoga** are expected to follow during the course of world-life. Such mode of **Yoga** does not mean breathing exercises or **āsanas** or demonstrations of **thaumaturgy** feats but a regulated way of life exclusively undemonstrative and within the aim being to orient the inner nature of man towards **God-head**, through a kind of mental poise. The essential features of this **yogi** method consist in *asaktabuddhi*—a detached intellect, *Jīvatman*—an overcoming of mental passioning, *vigataspruha*—non-grasping nature—while engaged in objective life which leads to **Samatwa** or **equability** with a corresponding overcoming of **guṇas**—**Sattwa**, **Rajas** and **Tamas**—resulting in successful fulfillment of world-life and leading to higher spiritual-development. It is attachment that generates ‘**mine-ness**’ in respect of men and objects.

By thus overcoming the allurements of all material objects, one attains **Brāhmī-sthiti**, which the **Yogī**, of the order of **Paramahansa** achieves in full. The term ‘**Brāhmī**’ connotes the primary

power of **Ātman**—**Ātma-śakti**, in its aspect of **Jñāna** or knowledge. For a further progress in this direction, the quality of **Ahiṃsā**—non-injury in thought, word, and deed, of **Satyavacana**—true speech, of **lokakainkarya**—service to the world and of **Ātmopāsanā**—devotion to the immanent **Ātman** in all, is prescribed. This is deemed as the auxiliaries to the actual **Yogic** practice—which is explained in full in the **Yoga-ṣhaṭka** or the six chapters on **Yoga** of **Śrī Bhagavad Gīta S.D.M. Śrī Hamsa Yogī** in epitomizing the contents of each of these six chapters explains, that the knowing of the nature of **Śuddhātman** in terms of five **Brahmaswarūpas** already mentioned as **Puruṣha**, **Paramātma**, **Ātman**, **Jīvatman** and **Akṣharātma**, brought about through **Sanyāsa** and **Tyāga** is dealt with in the chapter **Ātma-Gīta**; that a full working knowledge of the inner nature of all human beings through ‘**vairāgya**’ is obtained, as taught in the next chapter **Prakriti-Gīta**; that the next one **Karma-Gīta** enjoins the performance of all necessary acts; that the next **Jñāna-Gīta** stresses the knowledge of **Brahm** in its five-fold aspect and **Prakriti** in its twofold forms of **Para** and **Apara**; that the next **Bhakti-Gīta** stresses the adoration of the highest **Brahm** and that the last **Rāja-Yoga** chapter summarizes the whole teaching.

7. Two Kinds of Liberated Souls

Of those **Yogis** that attain **Mukti** by treading the **Śuddha-path**, there are two kinds **Jīvanmuktas** and **Videhamuktas**—that is, those that have attained release, while even with life and those that attain it in the post-mortem state after the body is vacated respectively. Those that are **Jīvanmuktas** achieve longevity of life in this world itself and become source of inspiration and help to those that come across them. Leading a life either as a **Jñānī** or **Bhaktā** or **Karmāthā** or **Yogī** of a higher order, they abide and adhere to the injunctions of their **Gurus** whose commandments they carry out unquestioningly because their motive is always governed by good-will for all without exception. In the full awareness that all is **Vāsudeva**—*Vāsudēvam Sarvam*, they rise up to the status of **Mahātmās** endowed with **Daivī Prakriti**—the highest status possible to the evolving **Jīvas** in this world. **Videhamuktas**, on the other hand, choose to discard their physical body. In the post mortem state, if it is to be so called in their case, they also are said to immediately acquire the body endowed with **Daivī-Prakriti**. This body, the **Jīvanmuktas** acquire after a long practice. Clothed in this body they are engaged in the great work of helping all other **Jīvas** to rise up. Both these **Jīvanmuktas** and **Videhamuktas** are beyond the necessity of rebirth. The difference between **Jīvanmuktas** and **Videhamuktas** is due to their own preference for action in the world-process or otherwise.

In respect of **Mukti** or release, four varieties thereof are tabulated generally. They are **Sālokya**, **Sāyujya**, **Sārūpya** and **Sāmīpya**. **Sālokya** is what is called **Jñāna-Kaivalya**. The capacity to travel and roam at will over the worlds, seen and unseen is the natural fruition thereof. **Sāyujya** or **Bhakti-Kaivalya** is what is realized by **Bhaktas** or devotees. These are the privileged to accompany the **Avatāra-puruṣhas** in their great mission when they descend into the world. **Karmāthas** achieve **Sārūpya** or **Karma-Kaivalya**, which bestows on them a seat in the **Hierarchy** engaged in the act of world governance. The fourth one is **Sāmīpya**, also known as

Yoga-Kaivalya. This is what the **Yogīs** strive for and get. Their **Kaivalya** is one of nearer-ending approximation to **Brahm**, which, due to the constant nature of its achievement, gets to be known as **Brahma-Prāpti** or the highest **Puruṣhārtha**. This **Kaivalya** is the one achieved by the **Śuddha-Yogīs**, who lead a life of either **Jñānī** or **Bhaktā** or **Karmāthā** of the **Śuddha-Sāṅkhya** class of aspirants or **Yogīs** of the **Śuddha-yoga** order. In the former, **yoga** is deemed to be yet in its womb—**Yoga garbhatwa**. But all are **Yogīs** of various degrees. However true **yoga** commences with the attainment of **Ātma-yoga**, which forms part of **Rāja-yoga** discipline. This is successfully tread through the aid of **Dikṣhas** given by **Śuddha Dharma Mandalam**. The four orders of aspirants and those that are higher up, their ways of life, their hall-marks, the different stages to which they reach in their progress, the corresponding **vibhutīs** they get are elaborately dealt with in **Sanātana Dharma Dīpikā** Volume III **Khaṇḍa V** of **Hamsa Yogī**, an English translation of which had appeared already. **Jīvātmans** pursuing exclusively the **Prakritic** or **Ātmic** path are said to be **Paratantras** and as such are deemed to be in bondage; through treading **Śuddha path** and buttressed by **Sanyāsa** and **Tyāga**, they attain **Swatantra**—freedom in respect of their entire course of life.

It is through **Śuddha** teachings alone we get to know the vast implications and full scope of **Gītopadeśa** as brought out in its 26 chapters and 745 **ślokas**. As such, it is the greatest heritage to **Humanity** and the one **Gospel** to all without any exception whatsoever. This cannot be better expressed than in that cryptic and forceful eulogy by **Sage Vaiśampāyana**—*Gītāsu gītā kartavyā kimanyaiḥ śhāstra vistāraiḥ*—The melody of **Gīta** consists in living it; of what use explaining other **Śhāstras**.