

THE HIGHEST SERVICE TO GOD, AND THE BEST CHARITY

The one who shall propagate this supreme secret philosophy (or the transcendental knowledge of the Gita) amongst My devotees, shall be performing the highest devotional service to Me, and shall certainly come to Me. No other person shall do a more pleasing service to Me, and no one on the earth shall be more dear to Me. (18.68-69)

Ignorance is the mother of all sins. All negative qualities such as lust, anger, and greed are nothing but a manifestation of ignorance only. The giving of the gift of knowledge is the best charity. It is equivalent to giving the whole world in charity (MB 12.209.113). The best welfare is to help others discover their real nature that is the source of everlasting happiness rather than provide material goods and comforts for temporary happiness. The Bible says: Whoever obeys the law, and teaches others to do the same, will be great in the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 5.19). Happiness is not attained through wealth and sense gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy cause (Helen Keller).

GRACE OF THE GITA

Those who shall study this sacred dialogue of ours shall worship me with Knowledge-sacrifice. This is My promise. (18.70)

God and His words are one and the same. The study of Gita is equivalent to worship of God. Life in modern society is all work and no spirituality. Swami Harihar says: "Daily study of only a few verses of the Gita will recharge mental batteries and add meaning to the dull routine life of modern society." For serious students, daily study of one chapter of the Gita, or several verses from the forty selected verses given in the end of this book is highly recommended.

Whoever hears this sacred dialogue with faith and without cavil becomes free from sin, and attains heaven $\frac{3}{4}$ the higher worlds of those whose actions are pure and virtuous. (18.71)

A summary of the "Glory of the Gita" as elaborated in the scriptures is given below. Reading this glory of the Gita generates faith and devotion in the heart that is essential for reaping the benefits of the study of the Gita.

The goal of human birth is to master the mind and senses and reach one's destiny. A regular study of the Gita is sure to help achieve this noble goal. One who is regular in the study of the Gita becomes happy, peaceful, prosperous, and free from the bondage of Karma though engaged in the performance of worldly duties. The one who studies even few verses of the Gita every day is not tainted by sin just as water does not stain a lotus leaf. The Gita is the best abode of Lord Krishna. The spiritual potency of the Lord abides in every verse of the Gita. The Bhagavad-Gita is the storehouse of spiritual knowledge. The Lord Himself spoke this supreme science of the Absolute containing the essence of

all the scriptures for the benefit of humanity. All the Upanishads are the cows; Arjuna is the calf; Krishna is the milker; the nectar of the Gita is the milk; and the persons of purified intellects are the drinkers. One need not study any other scripture if he or she seriously studies the Gita, contemplates on the meaning of the verses, and practices its teachings in one's daily life.

The affairs of the world run by the first commandment of the creator — the teachings of selfless service — so beautifully expounded in the Gita. The sacred knowledge of doing one's duty without looking for a reward is the original teaching that alone can lead to salvation. The Gita is like a ship by which one can easily cross the ocean of transmigration, and attain liberation. It is said that wherever the Gita is chanted or read with love and devotion, Lord makes Himself present there to listen and enjoy the company of His devotees. Going to a place where Gita is regularly chanted or taught is like going to a holy place of pilgrimage. Lord Himself comes to take the devotee to His Supreme Abode when one leaves the physical body contemplating on the knowledge of the Gita. The one who regularly reads, recites to others, hears and follows the sacred knowledge contained in the Gita is sure to attain liberation from the bondage of Karma and attain Nirvana.

Though engaged in the performance of worldly duties, one who is regular in the study of the Gita becomes happy, and free from Karmic bondage. Sins do not taint who is regular in the study of the Gita. All the sacred centers of pilgrimage, gods, sages, and great souls dwell in the place where the Gita is kept, and read. Help during troubles comes quickly where Gita is recited, and Lord dwells where it is read, heard, taught, and contemplated upon. By repeated reading of the Gita, one attains bliss and liberation. The one who contemplates on the teachings of the Gita at the time of death becomes free from sin and attains salvation. Lord Krishna Himself comes to take the person to His Supreme Abode.

The grace of Gita cannot be described. Its teachings are simple as well as abstruse and profound. New and deeper meanings are revealed to a serious student of the Gita, and the teachings remain ever inspirational. The interest in a serious study of the Gita is not available to all but to those with good Karma only. One should be very earnest in the study of the Gita.

Gita is the heart, the soul, the breath, and the voice form of the Lord. No austerity, penance, sacrifice, charity, pilgrimage, vow, fasting, and continence equals the study of Gita. It is difficult for any ordinary person like us, or even for the great sages and scholars, to understand the deep and secret meaning of the Gita. To understand Gita completely is like a fish trying to fathom the extent of the ocean, or a bird trying to measure the sky. Gita is the deep ocean of the knowledge of the Absolute; only the Lord has a complete understanding of it. Nobody, other than Lord Krishna should claim authority on the Gita.

O Arjuna, did you listen to this with single-minded attention? Has your delusion born of ignorance been completely destroyed? (18.72)

Arjuna said: By Your grace my delusion is destroyed, I have gained Self-knowledge, my confusion with regard to body and Spirit is dispelled and I shall obey Your command.
(18.73)

When one realizes Him by His grace, the knots of ignorance are loosened, all doubts and confusion are dispelled, and all Karma is exhausted (MuU 2.02.08). The true knowledge of the Supreme Being comes only by His grace