

# PRINCIPLES OF A HIGHER ORDER OF LIFE

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by

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## The Import of the Gita's First Chapter

The war of life which's Gita's song  
Is spread on Kurukshetra's field,  
The arena that this world is,  
A house disjointed, 'gainst itself.

The seer and the seen do stand  
Opposed to each other, how strange!  
Else how would seer run to seen  
If seen is not apart, afar.

To grab, to pound, annihilate  
The seen's existence out and out,  
By love or hatred as the means  
Is seer's purpose throughout life.

In love the seen is pulled, absorbed,  
And made one's own, nay, one's own self,  
So that the seen is all destroyed  
And seer ever reigns supreme.

In hatred does the seer clinch  
The life and substance of the seen  
By abrogation, cutting off  
The very soul and being seen's.

This confrontation is all life,  
The good and evil are all here -  
The high and low and great and small  
Are all within this battlefield.

Eternal is this painful hold  
Which seer exerts on the seen,  
Ambivalent as love-hate grip  
Of seer-seen, Bharata war.

The Pandavas and Kauravas  
Descend from single family;

Dvaipayana, the divine sage,  
Was source of all this warring fold.

So does the range of seer-seen  
Is transcendent in origin,  
For even conflict is on ground  
Which's common both to contenders.

This supreme ground, the ground of grounds,  
Is Gita's gospel's highest ground,  
The ground of action as worship,  
And ground to unite God and soul.

The warrior hates his opponents  
And raises arms to tear and kill;  
This is the scene where objects seen  
Are treated as other than self.

But love erupts and pity wails  
For warrior-chief is also friend  
And brother-born to outside world  
In secret connection to things.

Lo, men kill men by waging wars,  
But wars are waged for peace of men -  
Contradiction is life on earth,  
It's hard to know what's right and wrong.

Thus Arjuna bewails his fate,  
He loves and hates the Kauravas,  
As all do love in zest the world,  
And also cry that world is hell.

The past, present and future's men  
Are represented her in one  
As symbol of eternal man,  
The soul that ensouled Arjuna.

Who is the generalissimo  
Of impending armageddon  
Now weeps in deepest affection  
For what he hates on other side.

Do people love all this mankind,  
For whose welfare is service done?  
And yet to protect man from man  
Law courts and soldiers are deployed.

This wisdom's anguish is the theme  
Of first of chapters in the text,  
The section first which though a wail  
Is Yoga called of dejection.

It's Yoga, sure, for here, in this  
Are dug up seeds of illusion  
Which keeps the soul bound hard to earth  
Through love as well as hate of all.

The mystery is seeker's grief,  
The first condition of ascent  
To freedom gain from thralldom life's  
By surrender and detachment.

In supreme disillusioning  
Of one's own role and world's status,  
Thus humbly reached in careful search,  
The path is cleared for light to dawn.

Renounce in hate or cling in love  
Is not the choice in Yoga's core;  
Immense and subtle is this way,  
For none can live as an island.

Renunciation does not click  
Since renouncer is closely linked  
With renounced things and all the world,

For all creation stands as whole.

Nor has attachment any sense  
For none can cling to one's own self,  
And objects loved in secret bonds  
Are in the heart of him who loves.

To do or not to do an act  
All singly none can clearly know,  
Unless the far-reaching results  
Are weighed on balance carefully.

This question is equivalent  
To be or not to be here;  
The world is vast, creation big,  
Where none is free to raise one's voice.

Interconnected are all things;  
This is the reason why no one  
Can safely say or do a deed  
With no repercussions on things.

That is the good which clears the heart  
Of tensions born of suppressed wish  
By treatment method out to it  
As sickness heal physicians.

In this the great enactment world's  
No one approaches one-sided,  
The drama is wholesomely full,  
No act in it is by itself.

To throw the bow and arrows down  
In resentment through confusion,  
By wrenching oneself from the whole,  
Is not a cure to aches of life.

## The Import of the Gita's Second Chapter

The highest wisdom and solace,  
The Divine Song, the Gita called,  
Condenses knowledge in practice,  
And thrills the soul to fullness' peaks.

The Lord declares that no one dies  
But forms are shed for soul's ascent,  
That deathless soul pervades all space,  
Immortal is the soul of man.

Many have died and gone to winds  
And none is spared from ending thus;  
So grief on death behoves us not  
Since death is law of every life.

'Tis natural that beings die,  
Unnatural they breathe and live;  
For ocean's tide is life's turmoil  
And not a drop fixed remains.

In such a sea of movement this,  
Who can afford to stand unmoved;  
All stasis forms seemingly don  
Illusion's fantastic joke.

All speed and transit is this world,  
A flux, a wisp, a puff of wind;  
But steady none is ever posed;  
All things are seen removed from truth;

Becoming though is all this life  
And nothing is as being's core,  
Yet one is there that knows the flux  
Which itself is outside the flow.

Immortal soul, the Atman, here  
Permeates all, the flowing stream;

Eternal, deathless, transcendent  
Is self of all this universe.

Involved in earth, in plant and mind  
The soul rises to reason's form  
To think and act as human will  
By cycles of evolution.

Since all the seeds of variants  
Are hidden well in all species,  
The worst can one day best become  
And none is lowly anywhere.

If this is so, there are no norms,  
Either aesthetic or ethic,  
In all the world at any time,  
Except within a framework's fence.

By contrast and comparison  
The codes behavioural thrive;  
An absolutely right or wrong  
No one can pinpoint forever.

The finely forms or ugly looks  
Are also not by themselves there;  
These are the modes of reaction  
Of conditioned mention's moods.

The pains and pleasures filling life  
Are also psycho-physical;  
Adjustments, maladjustments made  
With Nature are pleasures and pains.

Hence duty and not right is law  
Since all demands are out of tune  
With law integral which is world;  
The world is law rather than things.

To do one's duty one has right,  
But not to covet fruits of deeds;  
Be not attached to ends of works,  
Not also cleave to inaction.

Action incumbent reigns all worlds,  
Since action is evolution  
To higher goals' integration  
To culminate in Godhead's reach.

Balance is health, is Yoga known,  
Participation is the rule,  
Attachments lose their meaning here  
Where all the world is self-contained.

Desires cease for want of things  
That stand outside the knower's field;  
The consciousness is firmly poised  
In Yoga which is attention.

Rooted in itself is the world,  
Its knowledge is its being's self;  
To plant oneself in such a state  
Is yoga's peak where sorrow melts.

As winds hurry the boats in sea,  
The senses drive the reason out;  
Hence, reason balanced his remains  
Who restrains senses in the self.

As world of senses which see light  
Is night of darkness for the sage;  
The realm of light where sages live  
Is dark abyss to passion's rage.

In subdued states of Yoga's heights  
Desires merge in liquid mass  
As rivers lose identity

In ocean's fullness, vast and deep.

This is the state of Brahman great,  
In this established no one grieves;  
Fixed thus even at end of life  
Brahman's beatitude attains.

## The Import of the Gita's Third Chapter

Knowledge and action are the rule,  
The twain which constitute the world;  
These twin approaches single aimed  
Are not divided as opposed.

The eye of knowledge or of deed  
Is hard to see since roots of things  
Are screened from human perception  
Which dual envisions the world.

As waves and ocean are not two,  
Action and knowledge are the same;  
As sun and light, or seed and oil,  
Knowledge and action are combined.

Though Brahman-all is act and science  
In one compass undivided,  
In lesser levels deeds proceed  
From subjects confronting objects.

An action is the relation  
Obtaining fluidly moving  
Between the seer and the seen -  
Reciprocation ensouls deeds.

As one descends to lower realms  
Cutting the seer from the seen,  
Actions become the binding chains  
Keeping the gulf a chronic ill.

The force of deeds gets mellowed down  
When seer-seen approximate  
To greater friendship and union,  
Till vanish they in communion.

When knowledge sees its object there  
As sundered from its subjectness,

Action becomes imperative  
To thought and content harmonise.

Action is that which holds intact  
The subject-object relation  
In harmony and perfection,  
For soul of all is harmony.

The soul's universality  
Compels the performance of acts  
So that its law of harmony  
Is manifest in daily life.

Thus action itself is knowledge  
Since union is its ambition  
Where deed and doer merge in one  
To form the higher soul of life.

The welfare works of society  
Or actions for one's well-being,  
Inward or outward, all move straight  
Towards the Soul universal.

When soul the soul to itself pulls,  
They call it love or selfless deed;  
Nothing but soul there ever is,  
Which haunts the world as men and things.

No one can exist without work,  
For movement is the condition  
Of all relative forms of life,  
Whether on earth or in heaven.

Since thought is action finally,  
Physical restraint is not poise  
While mind revels in thoughts of deeds  
Which connect it with world of sense.

The body's actions are not deeds  
When mind to body is not tied  
And lofty reaches contemplates  
Within to contact soul of things.

Except as Yajna, sacrifice,  
All deeds are binding in this world;  
But what is Yajna, know this well  
By careful thought in reason's calm.

When God created fields of life  
He ordained then the role of works  
Which gravitate to sacrifice,  
So that all deeds are Deity's home.

The doer and the end of deed  
Are bound together as a whole  
By glorious Deity transcendent  
To both the agent and the work.

Thus none can work by oneself free  
As urge to acts is well ordained  
By that which holds the two in one  
Unseen by both as soul awake.

As triangle doer, deed and soul,  
The soul ruling from high above,  
Perform the scene of experience;  
And none is owner in this play.

Obligation to one's duty  
Refers to stages of Selfhood,  
Wherein the balance in between  
The seer-seen is clear maintained.

Oneself, society, nation, world,  
The universe and Being's height

Are rising levels to the Self,  
Through which perfection is attained.

The higher stage to lower stands  
As Deity inclusive and real;  
The Yajna is the higher goal  
When to it lower is offered.

The lower isolation self's  
Which opposed looks to its object  
Is sacrificed in Yajna high  
That integrates the sundered poles.

The Deity includes and transcends  
The lower cleavage of the self  
From its own object, though severed  
Does still belong to widened self.

By sacrifice union is reached  
With higher forms of wider self;  
This divine cow which yields all wish  
Is here at hand with everyone.

Who worships Deity in this way  
Has all the wishes quick fulfilled,  
To self the Deity stands good stead  
In mutual graced recognition.

He is a thief who thinks he owns  
Or does by himself deeds alone;  
While all the wealth is Deity's form  
And Deity rules ever supreme.

Here none is owner, share-holder,  
For all belongs to Brahman great  
Which is the Self of universe  
And owns it indivisibly.

From That which is one alone  
A cosmic impulse emanates;  
From this the self-alienation  
And desires' rains on crops of greed.

The world and body then emerge  
And so the cycle continues  
Of give and take which is this life,  
The wheel of empirical law.

Since all is thus with all entwined,  
All action though perennial,  
Is no action in truest sense;  
The deed is no deed binding none.

The mendicants though well detached  
Are also in this cycle bound,  
For who could expect alms of good  
If none there is to offer alms.

But one who grounds himself afirm  
In all-pervading Self of all  
Does fear none and has no needs  
Nor does depend on others' grace.

He does nothing while doing all,  
Nor does he gain by doing deeds;  
Actions done or not done here  
Affect him not, nor disturb poise.

He disturbs not the ignorant  
Who have their faiths illiterate,  
But follows suit with environment,  
Maintaining rule of harmony.

To disrupt minds is no teaching;  
The sage with child as child behaves;

His presence thus is no presence  
As sugar sweet in milk dissolved.

As wave collides with wave in sea  
Senses with objects commingle,  
Since sense and object both are formed  
Of same substance universal.

Thus actions or performances  
Are all of cosmic origin,  
And none can claim a single act  
As one's own move or claim its fruits.

Egoism, the arch-devil,  
Does wrongly show that someone acts,  
While acts are Nature's purposes  
Which comprehend all history.

The duty each one's in the world  
Depends on one's circumstances;  
And no one unfit for a work  
Can render that as duty's role.

The total of capacity  
Determines work as duty-bound;  
The body's strength and mental make  
Do proclivity works' decide.

None takes from world what one gives not;  
Here Karma Yoga sums up work;  
Else, social balance gets disturbed  
And chain of Karma binds one hard.

The other's duty is that work  
For which one is not fitted best;  
And one's own duty each shall choose  
To bring to life stability.

Passion and anger are the foes  
Which distort duty and prevent  
The basic goodness of the soul  
To rule one's life for commonweal.

These fiery forces, instincts dark,  
Should get subdued by force of mind,  
By force of reason and of soul,  
Which surpasses all puissance.

By contemplation on the Self  
The reason moves the mind aright,  
And senses home of urges low  
Get restrained well for Yoga's way.

## The Import of the Gita's Fourth Chapter

The hands of God feel everywhere,  
As Incarnations mighty come  
To rid the earth of dissension  
And free all souls from sorrow's pangs.

As four-dimensioned transcendent  
In three-dimensioned forms abides,  
The Supermental Infinite  
Takes up the role of finitudes.

As conflagrations hide in sparks  
God-Absolute as glory hails  
As excellences seen in life  
In great and grand and wondrous forms.

The harmonise extremes in life,  
To Kingdom God's proclaim on earth,  
To heal the sick and raise the low,  
To trample ego God descends.

Of righteousness to plant the roots,  
The universal justice fix  
As forms of all performances  
The Divine fingers operate.

As law unseen wakes up to work  
When forms and things set up revolts,  
The Arms of God are uplifted  
As thunderbolt to ego's strikes.

As we approach the facts of life  
So facts react to pay our dues;  
However does one God adore  
One reaps benefits in that way.

The social order is fitted  
To enable the souls to rise

Above the finite involvements  
To freedom's peak par excellence.

The wisdom's head and strength of arms,  
Cooperative give and take,  
And labour for life's sustenance  
Sum up the pattern survival's.

As life exceeds mere survival  
Reason has supreme part to play  
In rooting every adventure  
Firmly in Spirit's wide domain.

As social norms cannot negate  
The needs of individuals,  
They do arrange for gradual growth  
By scales in life's experience.

To study and restrain senses,  
To household keep and train passions,  
To secluded as recluse live  
And wisdom reach are steps levelled.

No action binds if intention  
Does not connect the act with self;  
And acts are done to free oneself  
From impulses which compel acts.

Physical acts are no more acts  
If acting mind is not attached;  
And acts performed release the self  
From subjection to life's instincts.

The greed for wealth and progeny  
And world-renown are instincts called;  
By means of them one transcends them.  
This wisdom everyone should gain.

In sacrifice actions dissolve,  
Whereby the self offers itself  
In knowledge-fire burning all sins,  
The all-inclusive Godhead's light.

Actor, action and action's goal,  
Are waves in one abounding sea;  
Here none does act and none fruits reaps  
As all is just tumult of waves.

To adore gods, senses subdue,  
Behold the One in sense-contacts,  
Restrain all functions entirely,  
Are some of Yoga's various ways.

To give material charity,  
And offer gifts of belonging;  
To fire create within oneself  
By Tapas done, are Yoga's forms.

To drown oneself in scripture's lore,  
To learning reach for clearing doubts,  
To breath control in harmony  
Are also Yoga's multi-limbs.

The highest sacrifice, Tapas,  
Is union with universals,  
Until the Great Universal  
In meditation is attained.

By Yoga freed from action's bond,  
By knowledge having dispelled doubts,  
Rooted in all-pervading Self,  
Forces act not on such a sage.

## The Cosmic Form Speaks

“Behold this Form that myriad-faced here radiant includes  
all,  
With all their facets, all conditions and all times inone.

Behold the gods and all the heavens, regions and all things,  
The sun and moon and all the stars and all-pervading space.

Behold the beauty, grandeur, terror and the varieties,  
Which all creation holds in bosom here and now at once.

The past and present and the future and all history  
Do behold with the eye integral, flesh can never know.”

Then, thus declaring Yoga's Lord revealed that mighty  
wondrous form  
With marvels untold stunning thought and passing reason's  
sharpest reach.

The glory passing understanding, magnificence risen high,  
With faces turned in all directions, everywhere its mouths  
and ears.

In every speck of space its eyes did twinkle as if flames  
No atom lived in all creation where it missed to dwell.

Lo, Wonder's heart in full blossom, all marvel's secrets' high  
relief,  
That was Sri Krishna as he stood to represent the God of  
gods.

As million suns may rise suddenly darting forth their  
flooding rays,  
Sri Krishna's Person rose to heights that dazzled glory  
eternal.

The dirt and evil, ugliness, the darkest hell that threaten life,  
There in that wondrous Frame of God did shine as rays  
eternal sun's.

Distances flew, time took to heels and worlds got rounded  
into one,  
In that miracle, timeless, spaceless, mind and reason glowed  
as flame.

No persons, things and regions there except as fiery limbs of  
God,  
Where it did end or where began, none outside it could  
comprehend.

It new Itself, none else can know, It knowing-being was in  
one,  
The hardest earth and worst of creatures melting rose to God  
adorn.

And every speck and particle did dance around that central  
core,  
Which excelled beauty's beauteous heart, all eyes did gaze in  
rapture love's.

The death of all who lived by ego, non-relenting icy hand  
To everything that stood by finite mortal's value however  
grand.

What was, what is and what shall be were all displayed as  
here and now,  
In that eternal magnitude in single grasp of consciousness.

The boundless splendour of that all, who that is born can  
ever gauge,  
The Archetype of archetypes which range transcendent  
beyond forms.

As acts and deeds are objects posed to consciousness which  
is the truth,  
No act can touch or act as means to reach this glory beyond  
time.

The Mighty Being, Subject Sole, as all-pervading truth of  
truths  
Can scarce be reached by acts mundane which rise from non-  
subjective modes.

How can the knower be the known, the All-Subject defies  
objects;  
Thus casting knowledge empirical out of ken as shadows'  
fare.

Hence scriptures, works of charity, philanthropy, or sacrifice,  
Austerity or study's lore, can none attain this vision's light.

When heart and reason surge in one as non-objective total  
soul,  
The God beholds God everywhere, as no one else can behold  
God.

Doing all deeds for Its own sake, depending on It solely, lone,  
Devoted to It in one's heart, and sundered from all  
attachment;

To none ever bearing ill-will, to man or beast or bird or life,  
That blessed one does reach the Glory of the Absolute, the  
Great.