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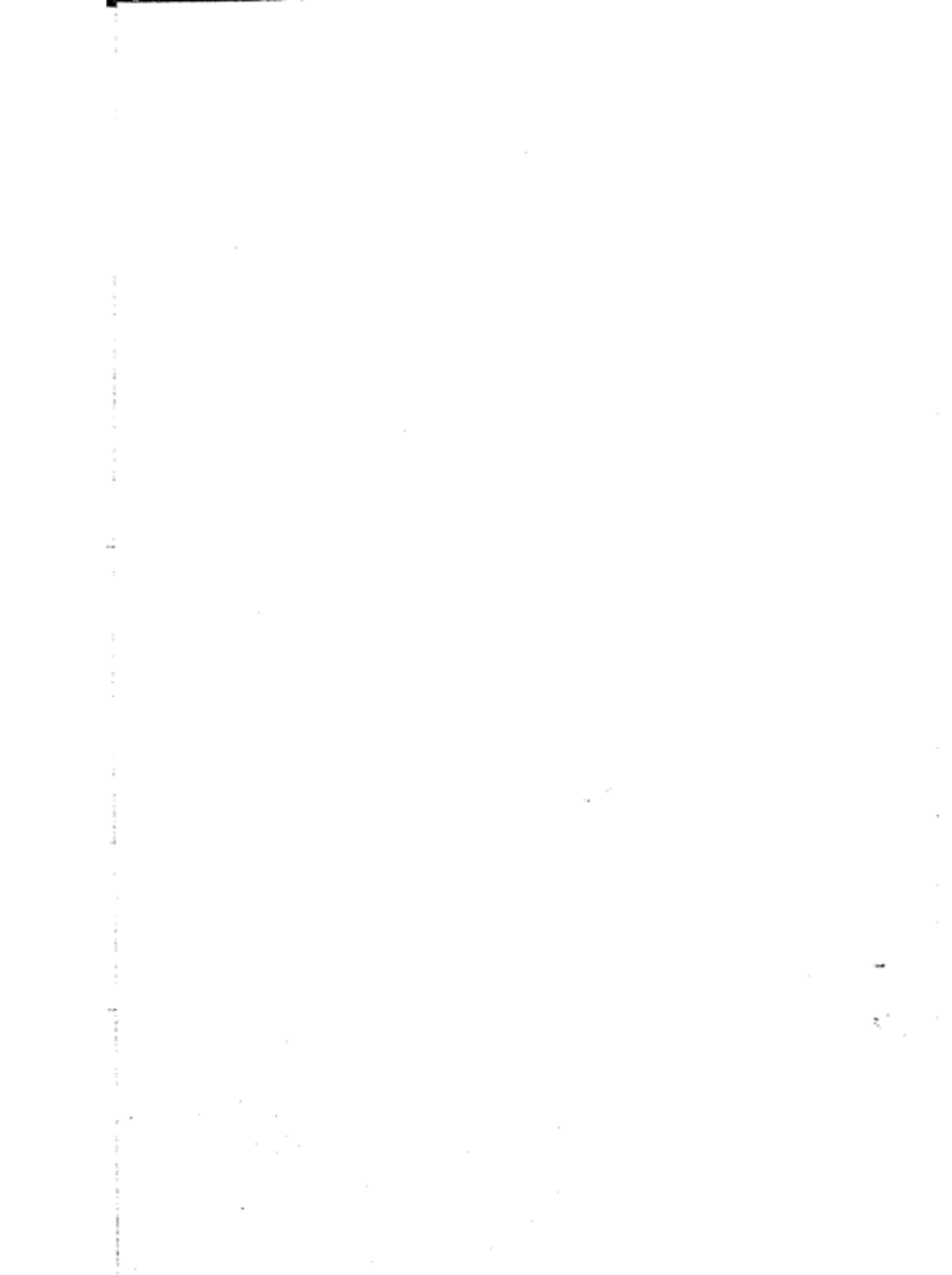
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# THE GĪTĀ & THE QUR'ĀN

A COMPARATIVE STUDY

*(An Approach to National Integration)*

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DR. MOHAMMAD KHAN DURRANY



NAG PUBLISHERS

Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 110007.

*Published with the financial assistance from the Ministry of  
Education & Culture, Government of India, New Delhi.*

## **NAG PUBLISHERS**

1. 8A/U.A. 3 Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-110007.
2. 11A/U.A. Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-110007.
3. Jalalpurmafi (Chunar, Mirzapur) U.P.



**DR. M.K. DURRANY**

*First Edition*

*1982*

*Price*

**Rs 32 - 00**

*Printed in India*

Published by Nag Sharan Singh for Nag Publishers, Jawahar  
Nagar, Delhi-110007 and printed at VRN Composing Agency,  
E-103 Jhilmil Colony, Shahdara, Delhi-110032.

प्रधान मंत्री भवन

PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE  
NEW DELHI

June 3, 1980

प्रदत्ति संख्या

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दिनांक

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नई दिल्ली

केन्द्रीय पुस्तकालय

Dear Dr. Durrany,

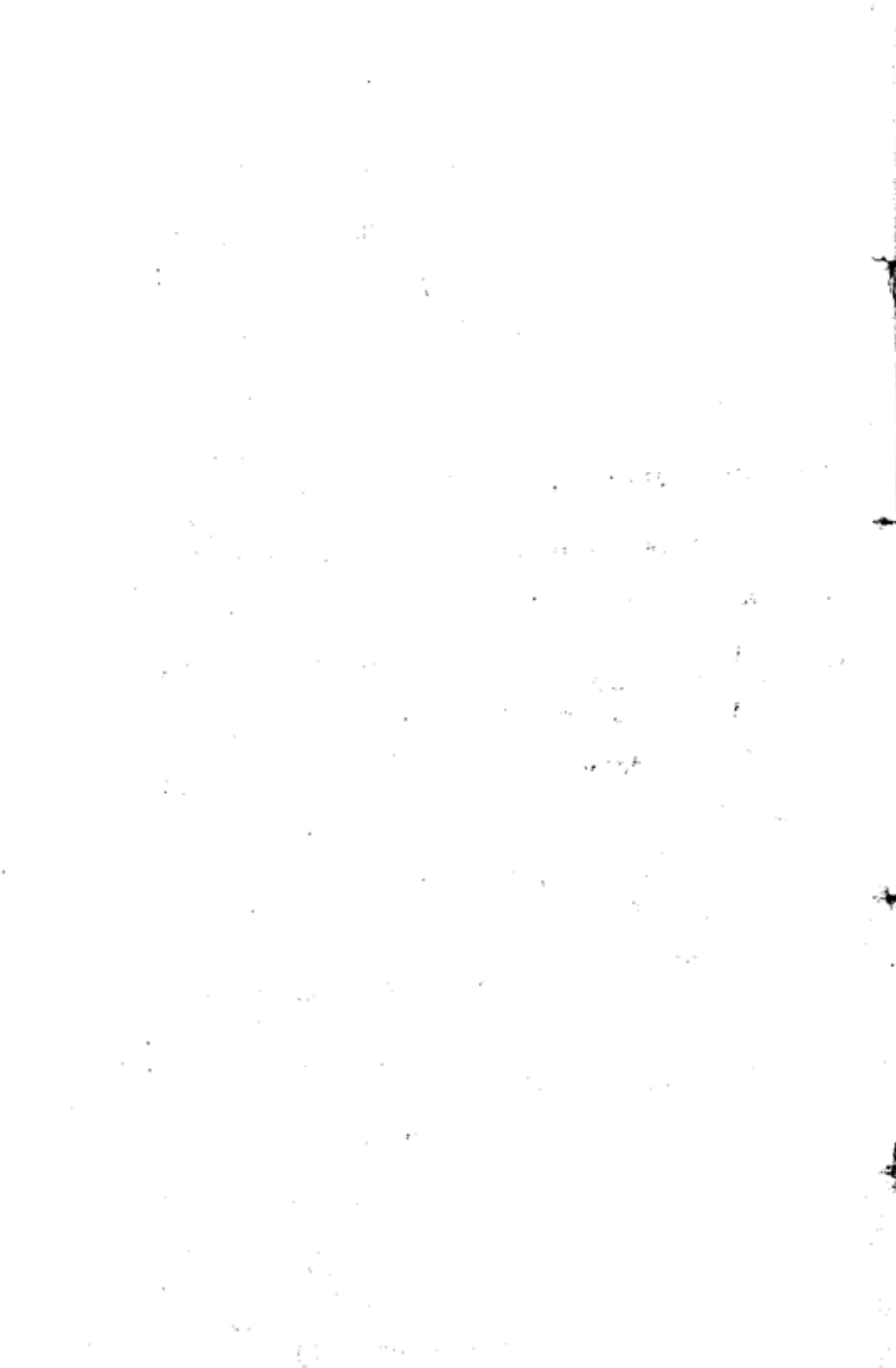
I have received your letter and am glad to learn that you propose to publish your study of the Bhagavad-Gita and the Quran, two books which have provided guidance to countless millions of people for centuries.

You have my good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

*Indira Gandhi*

(Indira Gandhi)



*DEDICATED TO*

*the Sacred Memories of  
my father Muhtaram Kaleem Khan Durrany  
and  
my mother Muhtaramah Begum Saeeda Durrany*



## PREFACE

Once in my early childhood I happened to listen to a discussion on a great bloodshed of Hindus and Muslims in a communal riot. On my remark, "Why did Hindus' Bhagavān and Muslims' Allāh not stop them from beings perished through fighting each other?" A Maulana explained to me in detail that Allāh is only One, Who created all human beings including Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and others and also clarified that He has different names in different religions and languages. Then I started questioning innocently : 'While Hindus and Muslims are created by the same God, why do they fight or kill each other ? Are they not real brothers as there is no doubt about their creator, who is the father of all in the real sense ? Who created various religions and which one is the best ? While only Islam is the best religion why God created bad religions also, as you say Allāh never creates an irrelevant thing?' The Maulana could not satisfy me with his answers instead he doubted my sincerity. Even he got irritated on my asking, "Had God given you birth in a Hindu-home could you deny it?"

According to the Gītā and the Qur'ān God Himself chooses religions for all human beings, therefore all should stick to their respective religions. However if a person wants to improve his religion, he should do so as all religions are badly in



need of being improved. All things of the creation without exception are bound to change under the natural pressure of time, place and circumstances. Therefore, those who oppose even a suitable change in their religious faiths are sure to face downfall. For instance, radio, television, telephone, banking establishments involving usury and very many more scientific and technological inventions of the modern era were prohibited yesterday, while a nation cannot prosper without them today, hence they are permitted silencing the religious trouble-makers. Nothing can stop the speed of change under compulsion of time. Whosoever will try to do so will be crushed under its weight. The change emanates from God.

Similarly placing women behind the curse of veil (Pardah) or permitting polygamy or frequent divorces is not only harmful, but also suicidal today. What a pity, almost half a population of a nation was made handicapped in the prisons of Pardah! After all why should women hide their faces? Are they noseleft or ugly or doers of shameful acts? Why should lions ask their lionesses to behave like stupid creatures by covering their faces even before the jackals? They should be taught to face an evil attempt of a rowdy with boldness and to extract an eye with a lustful gaze. Let a loose character die a natural death on seeing an excellent beauty. Why should women protect him by covering their faces? Let him restrain his own evil desires or shut up his own eyes. Women are no other than men's mothers, sisters, grandmothers, wives and even beloveds. Let all men fight for women's emancipation. Is there female population four-fold to male's in any country? If not, why four wives to anyone depriving others of having even a single wife? The psychological and the humanitarian considerations are also ignored in practising polygamy. For example, an affectionate father brought up his darling daughter with a loving care and gave her in marriage to a deserving boy with high hopes for her decent settlement in life. But after a few years he married another woman, then third and fourth. Think impartially with the God-given intellect how can a woman live in peace in an

atmosphere of many wives of her husband ? Such a home is certainly a hell for her. The sooner this wrongful practice is done away, the better.

In spite of my pondering on the injunctions of various scriptures, I sometimes find myself without a solution and hence wandering. Should I believe in what I see with my own eyes or what is written in the scriptures ? For example, a helpless woman was weeping in tears on her husband's marrying two or three more women. Should I believe that she was laughing in joy for her husband's doing something within the framework of Sharī'at? Elsewhere, another woman was crying with folded hands while being dragged for being burnt at her dead husband's burning pyre. Should I believe that she was singing for being sati for the sake of her Dharma ? One should utilize one's God-given intellect for solving a problem of conflict of duties with the firm faith that the essence of religion rests in the service of humanity rather than that of God, Who is not at all in such a necessity. God loves those who serve His created beings. A good intellect with a foresight is certainly a divine revelation and a supreme scripture !

With these reformatory ideas fluttering in my mind in search of reality, I read the Gītā and the Qur'ān extensively and came to the conclusion that human race, religion and relation is only one all over the surface of the earth—the visible difference is on account of the time, place and circumstances. Fighting or killing on the basis of religion is an act of madness on the part of human beings and hence a great sin. With a view to strengthen the thread of national integration and universal brotherhood for a deeper understanding, I had decided to bring out a comparative study of the Gītā and the Qur'ān—the two major scriptures of the two major communities in a book-form.

At the time of this publication I shall be failing in my duty if I do not remember with indebtedness my revered teachers Dr. R.S. Tripathi, Professor and Head of the Deptt., Dr. G.L. Shastri, Prof. P.S. Gupta, Dr. G.N. Shukla, Dr. P. Anand, Dr. S.S. Sharma Rakesh as well as Prof. Saed Ahmed Akbarabadi, Prof. A. Aleem, Prof. Nazir

Ahmad, Prof. K.A. Nizami and Prof. S. Nurul Hasan of the Departments of Sanskrit, Theology and Comparative Religion, Islamic Studies, Arabic, Persian and History of the A.M.U. Aligarh, who always offered their earnest advice concerning my plans for working on the lines of national integration.

My best gratitude is due to the Govt. Of India, which sanctioned an adequate grant for the publication of this book. My sincere thanks are also due to M/s Nag Publishers, who took keen interest and pains in brining out this work into light within a short span of time.

I express my sincere thanks to the learned scholar and philosopher Dr. Lajpat Rai, who took pains in making corrections at the time of its printing.

Besides, my best thanks are due to Prof. Dr. R.V. Joshi and Prof. Dr. Satyavrata Shastri of Delhi University as well as Dr. R.N. Dandekar of the Bhandarkar Research Institute of Poona for their sincerity and fair-mindedness towards me.

Lastly I would like to recognise with loving thanks the painstaking help rendered to me by my only daughter Sara Durrany and both the sons - Dara Durrany and Agha Durrany in going through the proofs. In spite of the best attention paid to the task of proof-reading a few errors are left unnoticed. Patient readers may kindly bear with me for this and convey to me their views and suggestions for the improvement and enrichment of this book.

Durrany Villa,  
Mohan Garden,  
New Delhi-110059  
India  
March 10, 1982

M. K. DURRANY

## INTRODUCTION

In this volume an attempt has been made to present a picture of a comparative study of the human duties with their classifications according to the Gītā and the Qur'ān. These two scriptures preached originally in India and Arabia respectively play an important role in the field of religion, philosophy, ethics, culture and civilization, politics and the social advancement of the whole world. These are, in fact, by virtue of their cosmopolitan views, representatives of the divine messages came to mankind occasionally under the compulsion of time, place and circumstances. Neither the Gītā is preached only for the Hindus nor the Qur'ān for the Muslims, yet they are misunderstood to be the scriptures of the Hindus and the Muslims respectively. This misunderstanding is on account of the non-conveyance of the messages of both these scriptures to the public at large. The Gītā and the Qur'ān both are very widely accepted to be the sacred volumes of the world and hence intensively studied and variously commented, yet there remains so much work to be done in connection with them.

It is quite improper that the Hindus prefer only to strive for reading and understanding the Gītā and the Muslims, in the same way, like only to read and understand the message of the Qur'ān neglecting the former, while God repeatedly declares in the Qur'ān to believe in all the sacred books preached before to be true.<sup>1</sup> The Gītā also, likewise, maintains the same spirit by proclaiming, 'Whenever, there is decline of

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1. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 177 etc.

righteousness and unrighteousness is in the ascendant, then God bodies Himself forth for the protection of the virtuous, for the destruction of the evil doers and for establishing Dharma on a firm footing.<sup>1</sup>

It should be borne in mind that by this divine statement depicted in the Gītā, 'I body Myself forth for establishing Dharma,' as reflected in 7th and 8th verses of the 4th Chapter of the Gītā, is not meant that God Himself takes birth in the human form, while He is Unborn, Eternal and Indestructible, according to the Gītā and the Qur'ān both.<sup>2</sup> But in the times of distress to the virtuous, He sends His apostles, specially endowed with his reformatory calibre as His representatives to act on His behalf. God is absolutely devoid of taking birth and dying, but His messengers or representatives are put to the cycle of birth and death as Lord Śrīkrṣṇa Himself admits that He has passed through many births.<sup>3</sup> The reader is requested to see my commentary on this point in the 8th Chapter of this work.

A great majority of the people can be available in the world which may be well versed in either the Qur'ān or the Gītā or the Bible or any other scripture of the world. But there can be found a very few persons who may be specialized in the comparative studies of the two or more scriptures. God Himself passes laws and regulations for every community for judging mankind according to their respective codes. Had God willed, He could turn all mankind into one community. But He does not do so knowingly, so that He may judge prejudiced or non-prejudiced views of mankind towards their various communities set forth by Himself.<sup>4</sup> The Gītā also enjoins the same thing in this respect by pronouncing, 'Even those devotees, who endowed with faith, worship other gods, they too worship God alone, though not in accordance with divine rules.'<sup>5</sup> God further declares in the Gītā that I am equally

1. Bhagavadgītā-4 : 7,8.

2. Ibid., 7 : 24-26, and Brhadāranyakopaiṣad, 4 : 4.20 The Holy Qur'ān : Al-Tauhid : 1-4.

3. Bhagavadgītā 4 : 5.

4. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Māidah : 48.

5. Bhagavadgītā-9 : 23.

present in all beings, there is none hateful or dear to Me, they, however, who devoutly worship Me, abide in Me, and I also stand revealed in them. Even if the vilest sinner worships Me with exclusive devotion, he should be considered a saint, as he has rightly resolved.<sup>1</sup> Women folk, Vaiśyas, Śūdras and even those who are born of the womb of sin, such as the pariah, taking refuge in Me, they too reach the Supreme Abode.<sup>2</sup> This statement is intended by the Divine Lord for instigating mankind to be aloof from communal feelings towards each other. The Qur'ān also appears to be very keen on this point in its preaching, 'Those who believe in that which is revealed to the prophet Muḥammad or those who are Jews or Christians or Sabaeans and believe in Allāh and the Last Day and do meritorious deeds, their reward is certain with their Lord and there shall be no fear to come upon them neither shall they grieve.'<sup>3</sup>

Though all the sacred books of the world, by virtue of their being preached through some divine agency, are basically similar as to their divine imports, but I am, at present, directly concerned only with the Gītā and the Qur'ān in connection with the human duties depicted in them, therefore, I concern myself wholly to deal with them.

The religious role of a country depends upon the followers of a particular scripture. As regards the religious life in India, the followers of the Gītā, that is Hindus and those of the Qur'ān say Muslims are in majority and they, due to their lack of comparative knowledge of both these scriptures, consider themselves to be a different folk and taking the grounds of divergence in their religions mistakenly stand hostile to each other. Thus, the hostility between the Hindus and the Muslims is basically caused by lacking knowledge of the Gītā and the Qur'ān at the same time. It is, undoubtedly, admittable that the prejudiced views of the generality of the Hindus and Muslims should come to an end after minutely

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1. Bhagavadgītā 9 : 29, 30.

2. Ibid., 32.

3. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 62 etc.

going through a comparative study of the human duties as enjoined in the Gītā and the Qur'ān. This is the sole purpose in devoting myself for bringing out the chief perspectives of the Gītā and the Qur'ān in the light of their comparative study of the human duties in a book-form.

For facilitating understanding of this volume, it is divided into two broad divisions containing eight chapters. The first four chapters of part one are devoted to the preliminary discourse on the Gītā and the Qur'ān along with their backgrounds and the next four chapters of part two to the main theme thereof as systematised hereunder :

In the first and second chapters the pre-Gitaic and the pre-Quranic ages are reflected in the light of historical, social, political, cultural and religious backgrounds. A few glimpses of the religious system of the Arabs prevailing during the time of ignorance before the revelation of the Qur'ān are even traceable in the Qur'ān itself, bearing the confirmatory seal of the prophet of Islam. Most of the pre-Gitaic systems of religious performances are corroborated by the Blessed Lord in the Gītā also. A summary of the biographies of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Prophet Muḥammad have also been affixed respectively at the end of these two chapters.

An attempt has also been made to introduce the Gītā and the Qur'ān in the III and IV Chapters in the plain manner, in order to bring out a brief sketch of the teachings of both these scriptures. In these chapters, mainly the translations of the original verses of the Gītā and the Qur'ān are given in the rearranged way gathering them from the scattered passages for co-ordinating the link of ideas. The authenticity of the Gītā and the subject matter thereof based on the lines of Sāṃkhya-yoga or the Yoga of knowledge, Karmayoga or the Yoga of action, Bhaktiyoga or the Yoga of devotion, the prohibitions, the concept of God, previous scriptures, the concept of salvation, reincarnation of Ātman, rules for self-control, divine and demoniacal properties, three Guṇas of nature embracing the whole system of the Universe etc. are briefly reflected in the third chapter.

Likewise, the fourth chapter deals with the authenticity of the Qur'ān, its preservation and the subject-matter based on the concepts of God, soul, revelation, salvation, judgment, heaven and hell, the jinns, the angels, the scriptures and divine decrees, pilgrimage, Taqwā, or piety and so on. The Islamic Code of life covering the domestic and social rules, concerning marriage, dower, divorce, suckling the babies, political laws in connection with the warfare, slavery, captives etc., criminal laws, civil regulations and ceremonial legislation regarding ablution and lawful and unlawful food etc are all reflected.

The second part of this work begins from chapter V which serves as an introductory before entering into the main topic thereof. It gives a picture of the concept of duty as broadly defined and widely accepted.

The chapters VI and VII are devoted to the human duties and their classifications in both the scriptures. An attempt has also been made to put forth a detailed and a critical account of the human duties, classifying them accordingly, in the light of the Gītā and the Qur'ān.

The chapter VIII deals with the comparison of the human duties, as laid down in the two scriptures. The discovered points of similarities based on proving Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa to be a God's messenger like Muḥammad and the Gītā to be a divine book like the Qur'ān, as well as on finding proofs of similarities between the Gītā and the Qur'ān concerning death, hereafter, dissolution of the current creation, doomsday, resurrection and the new creation etc., are dealt with. There can be found no point of dissimilarity between these two sacred books, by virtue of the intentions of their preachings being to be the same. As concerns the dissimilarity between these two scriptures, it may occur in several points. But this dissimilarity would be just like that of the two real brothers who may appear to be unreal by virtue of their being born under the compulsion of some special circumstances having regard of time, place and geographical changes. It is true, that if there is any dissimilarity between the Gītā and the Qur'ān, it is because of



their time, place and circumstances in which they were originally preached.

As regards the sources of information in bringing out this work into light, a large number of books of various authors, which are enlisted under the head 'Bibliography' attached to the end of this book are consulted. So far as the textual meaning of the Gītā and the Qur'ān is concerned I generally translated the original verses of the Gītā myself and on confronting any difficulty I consulted the Gītās translated by Jai Dayal Goyandka, B.G. Tilak, Aurbindo Ghosh, Satvalekar, S. Radhakrishnan, F.T. Brooks and others. Concerning the meaning of the Qur'ān I relied upon the Urdu translations such as the Qur'āns translated and commented by Syed Rafiuddin, Ashraf Thanvi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Qazi Sana Ullah Panipati, Syed Moḥammad Rashid, Abdul Hameed and so on. But on arising any difficulty in presenting a befitting translation, I also consulted the English translations and commentaries of Moḥammad Marmaduke Pickthall, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Maulvi Moḥammad Ali, A.J. Arberry, George Sale and others.

Having gone through these two scriptures minutely, one may easily realise that the ideas of the two books are not systematically linked in accordance with the subject-matter. However, the theme of the Gītā is comparatively systematised by virtue of its bulk being many a times smaller than the Qur'ān. The Quranic passages are tremendously scattered throughout the volume, which are very carefully gathered to bring them into harmony with the subject matter.

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## Pre-Gitaic Age

With a view to understanding the gradual development of the Hindu society, it seems advisable to cast a glance upon the pre-historic ages down to the times of the Gītā, the Song Divine sung by Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa Himself.

### *Pre-Historic Races*

The peoples of Pre-historic India may, in their broad outline, be classified into seven categories labelled as :

1. Mongoloids
2. Indo-Aryans
3. Dravidians
4. Mongolo-Dravidians
5. Arya-Dravidians
6. Scytho-Dravidians
7. Turko-Iranians<sup>1</sup>

Another view in this direction came into existence in 1933 A.D. when a statement as to the race-cum-language-cum-culture sequence in India was proposed. According to this view, we have the arrival of the following peoples in India from other

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1. The Vedic Age—Vol.1—Bharatiya Itihas Samiti, Bombay p. 141.

lands, whose names are being given in an approximate order of their advent :

1. *Negritos* : These are the oldest people came to India from Africa, now surviving in the Andaman Islands and in Malaya and their racial germs seem to occur among the Nagas in Assam and certain tribes in South India.

2. *Proto-Australoids* : They seem to be an early offshoot of the Mediterranean race came from Palestine. But on their actual basis they are of the Early Mediterranean Proto-Australoid origin.

3. *Early Mediterraneans* : These brought with them the earlier forms of the Austric speech.

4. *Advanced Mediterraneans* : These became the 'Dravidians' in India.

5. *Armenoids* : Most probably these came with the 'Dravidians' as both of them spoke common language.

6. *Alpines* : They were the earlier people than Vedic Aryans, but haply spoke the Aryan dialects. Their racial germs are found in Bengal and Gujarat.

7. *Vedic Aryans* : They brought with them the Vedic Aryan speech known as Sanskrit.

8. *Mongoloids* : They approached only the northern and eastern parts of India and are not of greater importance.<sup>1</sup>

The most recent and authoritative view signalizes six main races with nine sub-types, as given below :

1. The Negritos
2. The Proto-Australoids
3. The Mongoloids

These are of two types :

- (i) Palaeo Mongoloids consisting of
  - (a) Long-headed
  - (b) broad-headed
- (ii) Tibeto-Mongoloids.
4. The Mediterraneans comprising :
  - (i) Palaeo-Mediterraneans

1. The Vedic Age. Vol I Bharatiya Itihas Samiti, Bombay, pp. 142-143.  
— and also see

Ancient India and Indian Civilization by Masson—Oursel pp. 9-10

(ii) Mediterraneans

(iii) The Oriental Type.

5. The Western Brachycephals, embracing ;

(i) The Alpinoids

(ii) The Dinarics

(iii) The Armenoids

6. The Nordics

Of the above divisions the Negritos are almost diminished on the soil of India, yet a few are still surviving in Andaman, Cochin and Travancore Hills etc. The Negritos seem to have been intermingled with other races.

The Proto-Australoids came from the West, their germs are found in a large number of the inhabitants of to-day India. These peoples still live as the lower castes.

The various groups of Mongoloids are found in Assam and Indo-Burmese borders, Chittagong Hills, Sikkim and Bhutan.<sup>1</sup>

The ugly peoples belonging to Mediterranean race are found in Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam tracts, while the superior ones in the Punjab and Upper Gangetic Valley. They represent the civilized Pre-Aryan Dravidians and Northern Indians who became Aryanized in speech and contributed a great deal to the evolution of the Hindu society and culture of North India. The peoples of oriental type generally mis-named as Semitic or Jewish are seen in the Punjab, Sind, Rajasthan and Western U.P.

The Brachycephal race with its various groups is found in the Asian mountain regions. Brachycephalic peoples seem to have settled over the greater part of India. The Dinaric type is well marked in Bengal, Orissa, Kathiawar, Kannada, Coorg and Tamil regions. Alpinoid group is predominantly found in Gujarat. The broad-headed peoples are still found along the west coast of India, except Malabar. Another line of Brachycephalic group is found along the Himalayas, from Chitral and Gilgit to Western Nepal. The Parsis of Bombay belong to the Brachycephalic line allied to the Armenoids.

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1. Ancient India—Radha Kumud Mukherjee, 1856, pp. 21-31.



They stand on the contrasting line to the long-headed Iranian Zoroastrians still surviving in Persia.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, we have the Nordics, the Aryan speaking group, who seem to have been characterised in the Eurasian steppe lands and they entered India sometime during the second half of the millennium before Christ. The germs of Nordic people are seen in predominance in the north-west border of India, especially in the vicinity of the Indus, the Swat, the Panjkora, the Kunar, the Chitral rivers and in the southern part of the Hindu Kush Hills. The Nordic elements are present in the Punjab, Rajputana and in the Upper Gangetic Valley.<sup>2</sup>

These six different types of human races with their various divisions, as sketched above, which have formed the people of India, are now numbered with one of the four speech-making families—The Austric, so called Kol or Munda, the Tibeto-Chinese or Sino-Tibetan, the Dravidian and the Indo-European. The dwellers of Chhota Nagpur and the Austric peoples are within the fold of a common culture, as regards the language, religion, racial usage and custom etc. Thus the common Indian culture has been framed after two and a half millennia of close interaction of the various peoples of pre-historic times.

## ANCIENT INDIAN CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

### *The Sources of Information :*

The sources of information as to the ancient Indian culture and civilization rest on the firm footing of the old inscriptions, anthropology, theology, sociology, pre-historic archaeology, linguistics, oral traditions and other sciences.

The Negritos of pre-historic India were the first human inhabitants, who are now almost disappeared from the soil of India. They were, in the early stage of culture, the food-gatherers rather than the food-producers. They appear to have been either killed by the later emigrants—the Proto-Australoids or absorbed in them.<sup>3</sup> Their

1. The Vedic Age, Vol. I—Bombay, p. 144.

2. Ibid, p. 144.

3. Ibid. p. 146.

settlement in Andaman Islands witnessed a certain amount of advancement in culture—as they were skilled in crossing the sea. First of all they came to be familiarized with the bow and arrow and the playing on pipe, but on the whole, they do not appear to have contributed anything of importance to the Indian civilization. The Negrito people seem to have originated a certain ideology about the souls of the dead and the path of the dead to paradise under the captivity of an avenging demon called Yama. But they were not in a position to influence the language.

### THE AUSTRIC AND THE DRAVIDIAN

The Austric and the Dravidian people dominated over the Negritos in speech.

The Proto-Australoids, who succeeded the Negritos, were modified both within and beyond by an admixture with other tribes. Their contribution to the primitive culture of India includes the pottery, which would seem to have been unknown to the Negritos. They also introduced the use of the boomerang and blowing-gun and the ideology of totemism in theology. The art of hoeing and digging the land for the production of the rice crops was introduced on the soil of India by the Proto-Australoids, while the Melanesians originated the custom of disposal of the dead by exposure and the art of boating.

The Indo-Aryans borrowed the words from the Austric people, which particularly refer to the items of flora and fauna of India. They also refer to the culture plants known to the Austric speakers. Thus Aryans entered Iran and India with the knowledge of barley and wheat, as barley occurs in Sanskrit as *Yava* and in Greek as *Zea*, and wheat as *God-hūma*, while in Persian it occurs as *Gandum*.<sup>1</sup>

Similarity, certain words commonly refer to the fruits and vegetables, which appear to have been cultivated by the Austric speakers. The words referring to Sanskrit and other Aryan names are of Austric origin. Moreover, the manufacture of sugar is originally presumed to be the gift of the

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1. The Vedic Age—Bombay, p. 149.

Austrie-speaking-Proto-Australoid people, and most probably the use of vermillion and turmeric in the performance of the religious and social life, embracing some mystic notions of here-after transmigration and some legendary, mythological, religious as well as romantic notions seem to have originated from the same origin. They also invented the wearing of the cotton clothes and the domestication of the elephants.<sup>1</sup>

### *Mysticism*

The Austrie peoples also introduced certain magico-religious rituals, such as the removal of the evil eye by the rite known as *Nichāwara* which have a firm footing in Hindu society from the pre-historic times. The notion of 'Taboo' would appear to be another trait derived from the mentality of the Proto-Australoids or Austrie speakers. The cosmic myths and notions were adopted into the cosmopolitan Hindu religion and legend.<sup>2</sup>

The phases of the moon affecting the days were very early enumerated by the Hindu society and has still been retained in ritualistic calendar of Hindu people. A number of Austrie ideas and tales seem to have retained in the mythical and the legendary domain based on the *Purāṇas* and the old Hinduism. The legends based on the creation of the world from egg, incarnations of Viṣṇu, serpent spirits of the waters and the underworld etc. also appear to have invented by the Austrie speakers. The honour of a black stone as the symbol of divinity is also of Austrie as well as Dravidian origin. Some fairy tales along with the Zoomorphic deities would also go to the same source. The idea of snake deities along with the tortoise, the crocodile and the monkey gods and Lord Gaṇeśa with the elephant's head etc. seem to have originated by Austrie as well as Dravidian peoples.

The Austrie temperament was surpassingly gregarious, combining with superstitions and to some extent timidness. They are ever cheerful and lover of simple music. So far as the language is concerned the Austrie family is divided into two groups—Austronesian and Austro-Asiatic.

1. *The Vedic Age*—Bombay. p. 150.

2. *Rgveda* : X. 129.

Munda or Kol belongs to the Finno-Ugrian-speech race, which embraces Magyar or Hungarian. When the Aryans first met the Austric Proto-Australoids in the Indus and Ganges Valleys, they were known as 'Niṣādas'. The Aryan speech dominated their tongue and it came to be affected in phonetics, vocabulary, morphology and syntax.

So far as the cultural world of the Dravidians is concerned, all the three modifications of the Mediterranean race would seem to have been speakers of the Dravidian tongue, as they came to India with a fairly high level of civilization. These Dravidian-speaking Mediterranean tribes represent a city-culture as against the Proto-Australoids or Austrics whose culture was mainly a village-culture. These two different language-cultures contributed a lot to the Aryan language, which a few centuries afterwards had been established in the Punjab, spreading over a greater part of eastern India, depriving the early pre-Aryan dialects, with its extension more or less to the whole of India.<sup>1</sup>

The Aryan conquerors found in India three groups of people—'*Dāsas*', '*Dasyus*' and '*Niṣādas*', which were then in the state of backwardness. All the better elements in Hinduism and Hindu culture as regards its deeper philosophy, excellent literature and other arts came from the Aryans. The Dravidians also contributed a noteworthy factor of the paramount importance to the evolution of the Hindu civilization. The Pre-Aryans of Mohanjo-daro and Harappa certainly had possessed a higher material culture than what the semi-nomadic Aryans could represent. The approximate date for the Mohanjo-daro culture goes back to the third millennium B.C.

#### THE RELIGION AND CIVILIZATION OF MOHANJO-DARO AND HARAPPA PEOPLE.

It is interesting to note that the Indus Valley finds do not consist of any positive religious material—shrines, altars or any definite cult objects, yet religion has always played a dominant

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1. The Vedic Age—Bombay. pp. 155-56.

part in ancient cultures of India. The religious predominance is witnessed by the stone-images, figurines, seals and sealings. Here we refer to a few religious ideas of great importance.

The deity of the Mother Goddess is the most important as regards the gradations of the various cults. A number of deities of different shapes—the pottery idol of woman's form, occasionally with different ornamentations, the smoke-stained figures etc. These figures appear to have been to represent the mother or the Nature Goddess. This concept of the motherhood of Almighty and of Divinity of Nature is equally found among the primitive races of the world. The Mother Goddess is variously known as 'Grāma-Devatā', 'Mātā', 'Ambā', 'Ammā', 'Kālī', 'Karālī', etc. 'Pṛthvī' and 'Aditi' are also akin to the Mother Goddess.<sup>1</sup>

A more interesting deity of Harappa is traced by a sealing showing a naked female figure, turned down side, with outspread legs and a plant growing from the womb. Another side has a male with a sickle-shaped knife in his hand and a woman seated on the ground with her hands joining together in supplication. This is obvious to indicate the human sacrifice to the Mother Goddess. The plant issuing out of the woman's womb appears to be the branch of a Pīpala tree depicting the Mother Goddess. This tree is honoured by the Bhagavadgītā and is still held as sacred in India.<sup>2</sup> To this Goddess the animal sacrifice was also offered. The survival of the goat sacrifice to 'Śakti' is caused by the time of the Indus Valley civilization.

Among the male deities we find on a seal a three-faced god, dressed with a horned crown, seated cross-legged on a throne and surrounded by a tiger, a deer, an elephant, a buffalo etc. is the most remarkable. This representation gives a three-fold concept—he is Trimukha (three faced), Paśupati (lord of animals) and Yogīśvara (Lord of Yogīs). It has also been established hereby that the present Śiva-Cult was borrowed by the Indo-Aryans from the Indus civilization. But the point of confusion arises as to the testimony of the Rgveda.

1. Ancient India—R.K. Mukherjee—1956 p. 66.

2. Bhagavadgītā—14 : 1—6.

providing Śiva-Concept of no later period in the Hindu Pantheon.

Moreover, a few Indus seals witness that there was existence of a vegetation god, having link with Śiva, who personifies the reproductive powers of nature, and the divine hunter, an aspect of God Śiva. Undoubtedly, Śiva was one of the chief deities of the Indus people. The worship of the cylindrical stone probably symbolizes 'Śiva-Linga' denoting human fertility. The worship of 'Yoni', the female organ of generation is suggested by a ring stone.<sup>1</sup> Thus we see that the Vedic religion was originally aniconic and the idol-worship arose afterwards. The Indus seals and sealings suggest that the zoolatry formed a part of the religion. The animals are of three categories—

1. Mythical animals e.g. Semi-Human creatures.
2. Ambiguous animals, e.g. an imaginary and strange animal or animals figuring as official genie.
3. The actual animals, such as tiger, lion, buffalo, elephant etc. Some of these animals were regarded as the 'Vāhanas' or the 'Divine Vehicles'.

No birds seem to be the object of worship. It appears, however, that the 'dove' was regarded to be sacred.

The worship of fire, water, tree, etc. appears to have been in practice. The 'Pīpala'-tree-worship, as cited above is distinctly witnessed by a few Harappan seals. It is, however, difficult to state whether the actual trees were worshipped or their imaginary spirits.

Agnīśālā or the Vedic sacrificial altar of a rectangular shape suggests that the offerings were given to fire and other mythical deities.

The ceremonial ablution surviving to-day originally evolved from the old practice in the daily life of the Indus people as their taking bath, irrigating their fields etc. Similarly, survival of the crocodile-cult in Sind suggests the Great Bath at the temple of the River-God.

We can now very well imagine from the Svastika and the Wheel mark on the Indus seals and coins that the sun-worship was also in vogue. These marks still held as sacred or magical.

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1. The Vedic Age—Bombay, pp: 167-69.

symbols. Similarly, the Nāga-worship is also strongly witnessed in the Indus age.

### FUNERAL RITES

Three principal forms of burial customs have been traced to Mohanjo-daro:

1. *Total burials* e.g. the burial of the whole body. This rite is performed ceremonially in various forms with the grave decoration, offerings etc.

2. *Fractional burials* e.g. the burial of a collection of bones after the exposure of the body to wild beasts and birds. The best specimen of such burials were five in number.<sup>1</sup> A variety of small objects including shell-spoons, bits of ivory, beads, balls etc. were kept with the dead.

3. *The Post-Cremation burials*--This type of burials has been inferred from the finds of large wide-mouthed vessels containing a variety of smaller urns, animal-bones and the bones of birds or fish and a number of beads, bangles etc. It seems noteworthy to state that the human bones are seldom found. These are mainly the bones of goats, lambs etc.<sup>2</sup>

### THE INDUS SCRIPT

The Indus script, as characterised by eminent scholars appears to have been as pictographic, representing various kinds of men, women, animals and birds etc. No development has been made in the form of the letters during the Mohanjo-daro-Occupation. The distinguishing features of the Indus script are its clarity and the variety of its signs. A large number of signs precludes the possibility of the script to be alphabetic. Most of the signs have become standardized for syllables and the remaining ones stood as ideograms.

From the recurrence of certain symptoms the facing of the animals and other indications it has rightly been concluded that the direction of writing is from the right to the left, though a few inscriptions suggest it to be from left to right. It seems to be much resemblance between some features of the Indus script and those of the Sumerian, Proto-Elamite, Hittite,

1. The Vedic Age—Bombay, p. 198.

2. Rigvedic Culture—Abinas Chandra Das, 1929, pp. 405—9.

Cretan, Egyptian and Chinese scripts. But it is quite difficult to determine precisely the language of the script. Some scholars, however, take it to be Sanskrit or Dravidian.<sup>1</sup>

### EXTENT OF THE ANCIENT HISTORY

Here, it seems noteworthy that the traditional history of Purāṇas suggests that the ancient Indian history comes to a close with the Mahābhārata War, which was fought in B.C. 1400, just after the Great Flood. It is universally believed that a period of 1,000 years upto B.C. 1,500 falls into a hiatus in the Indian culture. It has also been inferred with authenticity that the Indus Valley civilization has traced back the history of India to the period 3,000—2,500 B.C.<sup>2</sup>

### ECONOMIC CONDITION OF HARAPPA PEOPLE

The main occupation of the Harappa people was cultivation. The specimens of the food-grains such as wheat, barley etc. found in the Indus Valley ruins indicate the agriculture to be on its extensive scale. Their chief dietary was wheat, barley, rice, milk, fruits and various vegetables, beef, pork, mutton, poultry, the Gharial flesh, turtle, tortoise and fish. Besides the above mentioned food-grains, Harappans cultivated peas and very many kinds of pulses. They had also earned their livelihood from the cattle-breeding, fowl-fighting, fishery, hunting and so on.

### SOCIAL LIFE

So far as the dress of the Harappa people is concerned, no actual specimens of ancient clothing have been recovered, therefore we rely on the indication supplied by the Indus Valley idols and statuary. It has been inferred that two garments were worn—a shawl-like garment and a lower garment resembling with modern '*Dhoti*'. Probably, these attires were of cotton and wool and the finds of needles show that these garments were sewn. These dresses were also worn by men and women alike. The Harappa people seem to have been much fashionable, the males know the various styles of hair-dressing,

1. The Vedic Age—Bombay p. 190.

2. Ibid : p. 197.



but nothing can be said about the female head-hair, as they appear to prevent their hair from being seen. The men wore long hair on their heads with short beards and some of them being clean shaven too.

Both men and women wore ornaments of different shapes. These were made of gold, silver, copper, oyster etc. It has also been appeared that the Mohanjo-daro women were familiar with the use of face-paint, collyrium and other cosmetics. The Chanhu-daro finds witness the use of lipsticks too.

The kitchen articles such as cake-moulds, flesh-rublers, breakers, dippers, dishes, bowls, goblets, basins, pans, heaters, saucers, jar-stands etc. indicate the prosperity of the Indus culture. The discovery of the lamps of copper, shell and pottery, pottery-candle-sticks, balls, marbles, dice etc., for games, pottery, rams, various measurements, scales and weights, medicines, war weapons such as swords, spears, daggers, bows, arrows, maces, slings etc. made chiefly of bronze and copper stand for the strong testimony for the advancement of the Indus prosperity in culture.

### LINGUISTIC BACKGROUND

A number of languages such as Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Persian, Gothic, Celthic etc. which lay the foundation of the science of comparative philology are variously known as Indo-European or Indo-Germanic. The Rgvedic language is definitely no more different from that of the Avestan Gathas. The language of Gathas and the old Persian inscriptions of the sixth century B.C. cannot be better determined than Gothic and old High German. From the linguistic point of view the Rgveda in its present form cannot be dated much earlier than 1,000 years B.C. As regards the Indo-European syntax and grammar, like Sanskrit, Greek has a vast non-Indo-European vocabulary. The reason of this similarity is that the Indo-European invaders found a pre-existing non-Aryan race-Dravidians and Minoans respectively.

### VEDIC LITERATURE

The Vedas, in their broad outline, are classified into two categories—Samhitā and Brāhmaṇa. The collection of Mantras are named as 'Samhitā'. The Brāhmaṇas are nothing but a detailed

description of these Mantras. The Brāhmaṇa literature consist of Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads. The Brāhmaṇa treatises deal chiefly with the domestic laws and rituals, while the Āraṇyakas are beneficent for the forest-dwellers or Vāṇāprasthas. Upaniṣads, the latest division of the Vedic literature, deal mainly with the divine knowledge. This is, therefore, named as Vedānta. Undoubtedly, the Bhagavadgītā is the essence of various Upaniṣads. As regards the subject matter of the Vedas, these are divided into Karmakāṇḍa and Jñānakāṇḍa. Upaniṣads, Brahma-Sūtra and Bhagavadgītā are collectively known as 'Prasthānatrayī'. Like the Bhagavadgītā, Saṁhitā, Brāhmaṇa and Āraṇyaka represent in particular, the predominance of action. Therefore these come into the boundary of Karmakāṇḍa while Upaniṣads are the best testimonials of Jñānakāṇḍa.<sup>1</sup>

### *The Vedas*

The phrase pertaining to the praise of certain god is called 'Mantra' and a collection of Mantras is designated as 'Saṁhitā'—these are four in number—Rk, Yajus, Sāma and Atharva. The great sage Vedavyāsa had recollected these Sāmhitas for the necessity of the sacrifices. The four Ṛtviks or requirements are necessary for the performance of sacrifices :

1. Hotā or reciter of the Mantras.
2. Adhvāryu or the performer of the sacrifice with an accuracy.
3. Udgātā or the singer of the Vedic Ṛcās with loud musical notes.
4. Brahmā or the inspector of sacrificial performances.

### *Trayī*

The Veda is variously known as 'Saṁhitā' or 'Trayī', while the poetic Mantras are known as 'Rk' or 'Rcā'. The recitation of these Ṛcās is named as 'Sāma', whereas its prose-phrases are asserted as 'Yajus'. Thus we see that the Veda has been

1 The Theory of Government in Ancient India—Beni Prasad, 1927, pp. 11-12 and

Sanskrit Sāhitya Kā Itihāsa by Baldeva Upādhyāya p. 39.

divided into three divisions—Ṛk, Sāma and Yajuṣ. This is why the Veda has also been named Trayī.

## VEDIC SAMHITĀS

### *The Ṛgveda*

The Ṛgveda Samhitā is universally accepted as the oldest of all the four Samhitās. It may be determined to be of about 1,000 B.C., while Prof. Max Müller assigns its completion in near about 1,150 B.C. Even after the valuable researches the exact date of the Vedas has not yet been authenticated. This is because of only a few westerners took this point into consideration and the orthodox Hindus did not bother to pay any attention in this direction as they were firm in holding the Vedas to be of divine origin.

### *The Sāmaveda*

The Sāmaveda is nothing but a collection of melodies enshrined in the Vedas. The musical notes herein are drawn from the Ṛgveda. It is consisted of 1,549 Ṛcās, of which only 75 Ṛcās are independent being not found in the Ṛgveda. It is two-fold—Pūrvārcika and Uttarārcika. The subject matter of the former is four-fold :—

1. *Āgneya Parva*; containing Mantras pertaining to fire.
2. *Aindra Parva*; dealing with the praise of the god Indra.
3. *Pavamān Parva*; containing mantras on Soma—utility.
4. *Āranyaka Parva*; pertaining to the laws and directions for a forest-dweller.

The Uttarārcika is divided into Daśarātra; Samvatsar, Aikah, Ahin, Satra, Prāyaścitta and Kṣudra.

### *The Yajurveda*

The Yajurveda is mainly a ritual Veda, standing essentially as a guide book for the performance of sacrifices—particularly the sacrifices to expiate for the sin of the excessive indulgence in Soma-Juice and the horse-sacrifice. It is two-fold—the White Yajurveda and the Black Yajurveda. The Vājasaneyī-Samhitā or White Yajurveda suggests that the White Yajurveda represents the original tradition of which the Black

Yajurveda is a later variation.<sup>1</sup> The White Yajurveda is consisted merely of Mantras, whereas the Black Yajurveda is a mixture of musical mantras and prose-phrases. The White Yajurveda is also again two-fold—Madhyāndin and Kaṇva containing 40 chapters.

Of a variety of categories of the Black Yajurveda, only four are available now :

1. *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, with seven Kāṇḍas known as Aṣṭakas or Khaṇḍa, each containing several chapters entitled Praśnas or Prapāṭhakas, divided into very many Anuvākas.
2. *Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā*) These two are similar to Taittirīya
3. *Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā* ) Saṁhitā, having a slight difference in their order.
4. *Kaṭha—Kapiṣṭhala Saṁhitā* : It is yet half available.

The Black Yajurveda also deals with the performance of sacrifices.

#### *The Atharvaveda*

The Atharvaveda is entirely different from the other three Vedas. It does not recognize the rituals of the Soma-Cult, it is indeed a prayer book for the folk of ordinary status. It deals mainly with the secrets of the various corruptions. It is divided into 20 'Kāṇḍas' known as 'Kāṇḍas'. The Kāṇḍas are consisted of Prapāṭhakas, Anuvākas, Sūktas and Mantras. Thus the Atharvaveda contains 20 Kāṇḍas, 34 Prapāṭhakas, 111 Anuvākas, 731 Sūktas and 5,849 Mantras. Near about 1,200 R̥cās are borrowed from the Ṛgveda. The 1/6 portion of this Veda provides a good specimen of the ancient prose. There are Mantras in the ending Kāṇḍas, on the matrimonial matters and on the matters of Soma-sacrifice, Śrāddha (feeding the spirits of the dead) etc.

#### *Devatās*

There are hymns to various gods in the Ṛgveda. As

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1. The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa 1.29.

regards the respective localities of the R̥gvedic gods, they are divided into three categories:

1. *Pr̥thivi-gods*— The fire-god is the chief deity of this category.
2. *Antarik̥ṣa-gods*--Among the Antarik̥ṣa-dwelling gods Indra is the foremost.
3. *Dyu-gods*— The gods of this class are the Solar gods--Sūrya, Savitā or Viṣṇu etc. Among these gods, the place of Varuṇa as a law-making deity is the highest. He is the only law-maker, care-taker and fruit-giver. Indra is mainly the god of raining. Viṣṇu is the representative of the Sun-god. Uṣā' is the Vedic goddess of the poetic imaginations.<sup>1</sup>

The Aryans, having been inspired by the natural objects formed the idea of the various gods. The Vedic R̥ṣis realised the existence of One Supreme Soul or God long long ago.

### BRĀHMAṆA LITERATURE

The Brāhmaṇas are related to the sacrifices. These are also consisted of many ancient fables, the tales of kings or R̥ṣis, specimens of the original linguistic vocabulary etc. Thus there are germs of various Vedāṅgas in these volumes. The Brāhmaṇas along with the Āraṇyakas, according to the Vedic Śākhās, are variously attached to different Vedas. The R̥gveda contains two Brāhmaṇas – Aitareya and Kauṣītakī. The most popular Aitareya Brāhmaṇa contains 40 chapters. These chapters are divided into the groups of five. The Kauṣītakī Brāhmaṇa is consisted of 30 chapters. The R̥gveda has also two Āraṇyakas—Aitareya and Sāṅkhyāyana. Various Brāhmaṇas are related to the Sāmaveda, of which 'Tāṇḍya' is the most famous. The Tāṇḍya is also called the 'Pañcaviṃśa' as it contain 25 chapters. The Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa and the Taittiriya Āraṇyakas are related to the Black Yajurveda. The Brāhmaṇa of the White Yajurveda is 'Śatapatha' containing 100 chapters. It has obtained the highest position after the R̥gveda. The

1. India's Past—A.A. Macdonell, 1956, pp. 12-17.

Atharvaveda also has a Brāhmaṇa named as 'Gopatha' containing two Khaṇḍas divided into 5 and 6 chapters respectively. The 'Gopatha Brāhmaṇa' is considered to be the latest contribution to the Brāhmaṇa literature.

### UPANIṢAD LITERATURE

The Upaniṣads deal with the divine knowledge. On account of their being described at the end of the Vedic literature, they are also named as Vedānta. The Muktikopaniṣad holds evidently the existence of 108 Upaniṣads, of which 10 are related to the R̥gveda, 19 to White Yajurveda, 32 to Black Yajurveda, 16 to the Sāmaveda and 31 to the Atharvaveda. The number of Upaniṣads is even more increased than this, but the most famous Upaniṣads are 11 in number. They are—Īśa, Kena, Kaṭha, Praśna, Muṇḍaka, Māṇḍūkya, Taittirīya, Aitareya, Chāndogya, Vṛhadāraṇyaka and Śvetāśvatara. Their exact date has not yet been ascertained, except that they had been completed long before the advent of the Buddhist faith. The subject matter of some Upaniṣads is Vedānta, wherein the features of Brahman and Ātman and their relationship to each other have been depicted. A large number of Upaniṣads deal mainly with the worship of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Śakti, while a few are related to the Yogic practices. According to Upaniṣads, the soul and God can never be separated. Brahman is of two qualities—Saguṇa (with qualities) and Nirguṇa (without qualities). As the Saguṇa Brahman, He is the Creator, Supporter and the Destroyer of the universe. But His Nirguṇa form is decidedly better.

According to Vedic religion, there are three principal volumes in Hindu philosophy. These are given below with a view to their proper gradation :

1. The Upaniṣads,
2. The Bhagavadgītā
3. The Brahma-Sūtras

Thus we see that the true spirit of the Gītā and the Brahma-Sūtras has been borrowed from the Upaniṣads. As mentioned above, these are called collectively as Prasthānatrayi.

### THE VEDĀṄGA LITERATURE

As it is evident from its very meaning, the Vedāṅgas are the

parts of the Vedas. These are six in number—Śikṣā, K alpa, Chanda, Nirukta, Jyotiṣa and Vyākaraṇa.

*Śikṣā-Granthas* : They stand as a guide volumes to the Vedic pronunciation. In the recitation of the Vedas, the melodious tunes are of a great importance. Every Veda has got its own Śikṣā, such as the Śikṣā of the Yajurveda is named as the Yājñyavalkya-Śikṣā, while that of the Sāmaveda is called the Nārada-Śikṣā and another being as 'Pāṇinīya-Śikṣā'.

*Kalpa-Sūtras* : They deal with the proper knowledge of performing sacrifices, these are of two types—Śrauta-Sūtra and Smārta-Sūtra. Again the Smārta-Sūtras are also two-fold—Gṛhya-Sūtra and Dharma-Sūtra. The Śrauta-Sūtras deal with the Vedic rituals and sacrifices. These describe mainly the Soma-sacrifices and animal-sacrifices with the four-fold Iṣṭis—Ādhāna, Agnihotra, Darśa and Pūrṇamāsa of the three-fold fires—Ahavanīya, Gārhapatya and Dakṣiṇāgni. A detailed description of the sixteen sacraments has been depicted in the Gṛhya-Sūtras. The social, religious, economic, customary and cultural conditions of ancient times can be well imagined by going through these volumes. The Dharma-Sūtras cast a glance upon the religious structure of ancient India. They also bring forth an apparent picture of the respective rights and duties of the ruler and the ruled as well as the people of four Varṇas—Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras, along with the proper guidance to the people passing through the four Āśramas—Brahmacarya, Gārhaṣṭhya, Vānaprastha and Sanyāsa. The Śmṛtis were originated from these Dharma-Sūtras. The Śulba-Sūtras are the parts of the Kalpa-Sūtras, being directly related to the Śrauta-Sūtras. The Śulba-Sūtras deal with the scaling and the measurements of the ritualistic and sacrificial *Vedīs*. These Sūtras are the earliest specimen of the ancient Indian geometry.

1. The Kalpa-Sūtras of the R̥gveda are Āśvalāyana and Sāṅkhyāyana. Both of these are consisted of Śrauta-Sūtras and Dharma-Sūtras.

2. The Kātyāyana Śrauta-Sūtra, the Pāraskara Gṛhya-Sūtra and the Kātyāyana-Śulba-Sūtra are the Kalpa-Sūtras of the White Yajurveda. The Kalpa-Sūtras of the Baudhāyana and Āpastamba-Śākhās of the Black Yajurveda are wholly of a

great importance, as they are consisted of all the four types of Sūtras—Śrauta, Gṛhya, Dharma and Śulba.

3. The Kalpa-Sūtras related to the Sāmaveda are the Śrauta-Sūtras of Lāṭyāyana and Drāhyāyana. Gṛhya-Sūtras of Khādīra and Gomila and the Jaiminiya-Śrauta-Sūtras and Gṛhya-Sūtras related to the Jaiminiya-Śākhā. The Ārṣeya-Kalpa or the Maśaka-Kalpa-Sūtra containing melodies and musical notes is also numbered into the Sāmaveda. It is related to the Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa and appears to have been older than the Śrauta-Sūtras of Lāṭyāyana.

The Kalpa-Sūtras of the Atharvaveda are divided into two volumes :

1. *Vaitāna Śrauta-Sūtra* —It is not considered to be too old.
2. *Kauśika-Sūtra* —Being a Gṛhya-Sūtra it deals mainly with the rituals relating to various corruptions mentioned in the Atharvaveda. This is the unique volume for the knowledge of the ancient Indian corruptions and depravities.

## CHANDA OR PROSODY

Without the knowledge of *Chanda* or prosody the proper recitation of the Vedic Mantras is quite impossible. The *Rk-Prātiśākhya* of Śaunaka contains in it a fair account of Chandas. But there is an independent volume on this Vedāṅga entitled as 'Pingala' of some Pingala-named scholar. It contains both—Vedic and local *Chandas*.

### *Nirukta*

This Vedāṅga deals with the origin of the Vedic vocabulary. The only Nirukta created by great sage Yāska is now available. Nirukta is nothing but a prosperous commentary of Nighaṇṭu containing a large list of Vedic vocabulary. According to Yāska, all the words have been originated from the roots. As the time of Yāska has been pushed back to Pāṇinī, the age of Nirukta must have been around 700 B.C.

### *Jyotiṣa*

The Vedas are particularly pertained to the performance of the sacrifices having too much regard of time in their actual



observance. An astrologer is well acquainted with the proper timings of sacrificial ceremonies. The science of astronomy is invented by 'Lagadha'. This Vedāṅga is available in two editions—one relating to the Yajurveda and the other to the Ṛgveda. The Yajur astronomy contains 43 verses whereas the Ārca merely 36.

### *Vyākaraṇa*

The main object of this Vedāṅga is to facilitate the understanding and safeguard the true spirit of the Vedic literature. The oldest Prātiśākhya-volumes provide a great deal of material on grammatical suggestions. There are several names of the most eminent scholars of ancient India contributing a lot to the soul of this Vedāṅga, of whom Gārgya, Iṣphoṭāyana, Śākaṭāyana, Bhāradvāja etc. are of the pioneer importance. These Vedāṅgas are variously attached to different Vedas, such as the Śaunaka Prātiśākhya is related to the Ṛgveda, while the Kātyāyana Prātiśākhya to the White Yajurveda.

### *The Anukramaṇīs*

The Anukramaṇīs of Vedāṅga-literature are meant for the protection and true knowledge of Vedic Mīmāṃsā. The Ārṣānukramaṇī contains the names of the Draṣṭā Ṛṣis of the Ṛgvedic Mantras.

Chandānukramaṇī deals with the Ṛgvedic poems.

Devatānukramaṇī has a detailed description of the Ṛgvedic gods.

The Vṛhaddevatā of Śaunaka is also based on the lines of the Ṛgvedic gods, along with the very many tales and fables relating to them.

The Sarvānukramaṇī of Kātyāyana commented by Śadguru-śiṣya is also a unique volume on this topic.

### *The Purāṇas or the Legends :*

The word 'Purāṇa' occurs in Sanskrit literature as 'legend' or 'old'. According to the Mahāpurāṇas—Matsya, Viṣṇu, Brahmāṇḍa etc., the Purāṇas deal with the *Sarga* or creation, *Pratisarga* or the expansion of the creation, dissolution and new creation. The original races of the Manvantara or the creation, the statement about various Manus with their respective dates,

along with the important events therein, and *Vanśānucarita* the description of the Solar and the Lunar kings etc., is, in short, the subject matter of the Purāṇas.<sup>1</sup> The Purāṇas contain in their fold an immeasurable treasure of knowledge. For instance, it would not be an exaggeration, if we assign the title of 'the Encyclopaedia of Indian Knowledge' to the Agnipurāṇa. Undoubtedly the Purāṇas are the real specimens of the ancient Indian knowledge. To a man of ordinary approach, the Purāṇas are nothing but a collection of old fables, as they contain a large number of impossible events. But it should be noted that the Indian Śāstras are described in three ways, which can be asserted in rhetorical language, as the true statement, the allegorical statement and the exaggeratory statement. The true statement is necessary in the scientific sphere. The Vedas are the specimens of the style of the allegorical statement, where the sun-rays due to their seven colours are transformed allegorically into horses. But the Purāṇas generally adopt the exaggeratory style for their statements.

As regards the religion of Purāṇas, they maintain the Vedic spirit in their description. We find the true picture of ancient Indian society in these volumes. The Purāṇas are also of the great geographical importance, having contained in their fold a detailed description of all the sacred places of ancient India.

### THE MAHĀPURĀṆAS

The Mahāpurāṇas mean the great Purāṇas. There is no difference of opinion about the number of the Purāṇas. These are ascertained to be 18 by all the authorities. Their names are being given below :

The Makārādi Purāṇas, two—1. Matsya and 2. Mārkaṇḍeya ; Bhakārādi Purāṇas, two—3. Bhaviṣya and 4. Bhāgavata ; Brayukta Purāṇas, three—5. Brahmāṇḍa, 6. Brahmavaivarta and 7. Brahma; Vakarādi Purāṇas, four—8. Vāmana, 9. Varāha, 10. Viṣṇu and 11. Vāyu or Śiva, 12. Agni, 13. Nārada, 14. Padma, 15. Linga, 16. Garuḍa, 17. Kūrma and 18. Skanda. These Purāṇas deal mainly with the

1. *Sargaśca pratisargaśca vanśo manvāntarāṇi ca  
Vanśānucaritam caiva purāṇam pañcalakṣaṇam.*

worship of various gods along with their respective importance. The Padma Purāṇa divides these Purāṇas into three qualities—Śatvika, Rajas and Tamas. The Purāṇas relating to Viṣṇu are considered as Sātvika, whereas those relating to Brahmā and Śiva are known as Rajas and Tamas respectively. According to the Garuḍa-Purāṇa there is also the same number of Upa-purāṇas or the lower Purāṇas, whose names are being given hereunder—1. Sanatkumāra, 2. Narasimha, 3. Skanda, 4. Śiva Dharma, 5. Āścarya, 6. Nāradiya, 7. Kapila, 8. Vāmana, 9. Ausānasa, 10. Brahmāṇḍa, 11. Varuṇa, 12. Kālikā, 13. Māheśwara, 14. Sāmba, 15. Saura, 16. Pārāśara, 17. Mārīca and 18. Bhārgava. The opinions of the eminent scholars differ as to the names of these Upa-Purāṇas, such as the Devī-Bhāgavata holds Śiva, Mānava, Āditya, Bhāgavata and Vāsiṣṭha instead of the above mentioned names. viz. Skanda, Vāmana, Brahmāṇḍa, Mārīca and Bhārgava respectively. There is also enough controversy among the literary pillars as to whether a particular Purāṇa is Mahā-purāṇa or Upa-purāṇa? As we are not much concerned with this field of finding, we proceed further on to suggest the time of Purāṇas in brief.

### *The time of Purāṇas*

The Purāṇas are not the creation of any particular century. The new chapters have been added to them from time to time. Having started their functioning from the most ancient times they have come into their present form till the time of the Gupta dynasty.

As regards the expansion of the period of Purāṇas, the following outlines stand as the testimonials thereof :—

1. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, Śankarācārya and Bāṇa Bhaṭṭa have quoted the phrases of Purāṇas in their works.

2. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa<sup>1</sup> contains an authentic mention of the Maurya family, the Matsya-Purāṇa deals with the Deccan Kings of near about 225 A.D. and the early age of the Gupta dynasty is much shadowed in the Vāyu Purāṇa.

3. The speaker of the Mahābhārata, Ugrasravāsuta, a son of Lomahaṇṣa is said to be well introduced with the Purāṇas.

1. Wilson, H.H. : Viṣṇu Purāṇa (Text with Eng. Trans.) Nag Publishers, Delhi.

A large number of verses is common in the Mahābhārata and Purāṇas. The legend of Ṛṣya Śṛṅga mentioned in the Padma-Purāṇa appears to have been older than that of the Mahābhārata.<sup>1</sup>

4. The Arthaśāstra of Kautilya is well introduced with the Purāṇas.

5. The Sūtras are also familiar with the Purāṇas. The oldest Dharma-Sūtras of Gautama and Āpastamba maintain the existence of Purāṇas.

6. It is quite evident that there was the existence of Purāṇas in the age of Upaniṣads, as Chāndogyaopaniṣad mentions so.

7. A more important mention of Purāṇas is that of a Mantra of the Atharvaveda, which maintains the existence of Purāṇas before itself.

Thus we may conclude from the above that the Purāṇas are not the product of any particular period, but they are that of the most ancient times down to the age of Gupta dynasty.

#### UPA-JĪVYA-MAHĀKĀVYA OR THE INSPIRING EPIC-LITERATURE

The Kāvyas from which the later poets draw inspirations for their own works are named as 'Upajīvyā Kāvyas'. These are three in number—1. The Rāmāyaṇa, 2. The Mahābhārata and 3. The Śrīmadbhāgavata. Their's is the vast influence on the Sanskrit literature of the later times. The Rāmāyaṇa is the most valuable epic, as a main source of subject matter for the later poetry and drama, whereas the Mahābhārata contributes a lot to every branch of literature. It would not be an exaggeration, as Vyāsa, the inscriber of the Mahābhārata, asserts to his satisfactions as, "whatsoever is there in the Mahābhārata is available elsewhere too and whatever is not available therein is available nowhere."<sup>2</sup> It is indeed, an encyclopaedia of ancient Hindu society. According to Rājasekhara's version the Rāmāyaṇa falls under the category of *Parikriyā*, meaning one heroed history, while the Mahābhārata under that of *Purākālpa*, meaning many heroed history. According to the subject-matter of these three inspiring volumes—the Rāmāyaṇa is an epic, the Mahābhārata

1. Saṁskṛta Sāhitya Kā Itihāsa: Baldeva Upādhyāya, p. 54.

2. *Yadihāsti tadanyatra yannehāsti na tat kvaeit*.

a historical encyclopaedia of ancient India, whereas Śrīmad-bhāgavata a Purāṇa. The true spirit of Hindu religion has been depicted in the Bhāgavata.

### LORD ŚRĪKṚṢṆA

"Whenever, there is decline of righteousness and unrighteousness is in the ascendant, then I body Myself forth, for the safeguard of the virtuous, for the destruction of the evil-doers and for establishing righteousness on a firm footing."<sup>1</sup> According to this statement of the Almighty, Kṛṣṇa was born as an incarnation of God. His career runs as follows :-

#### *The Tyranny of Kansa :*

More than five thousand years ago, the eldest son, Kansa of the King Ugrasena of Mathura, was very haughty and tyrant. He had friendly terms with all the cruel and oppressive rulers of the realm. There was a large number of devils among his advisers.<sup>2</sup> His uncle Devaka's younger daughter Devakī was married to Vasudeva. His cousin Devakī was so dear to him that he himself drove her chariot, when she was carried by Vasudeva on the occasion of her wedding. In the course of his driving, he heard the divine voice—"O Ye fool! the eighth issue of this bride, whom thou art carrying would destroy thee."<sup>3</sup> On hearing this voice, he at once lost his temper and drew his sword to slay her. But Vasudeva stopped him with the compromise that he would send all her issues to him just after their delivery. In due course of time, Devakī gave birth to a male child, whom, according to his promise, Vasudeva handed over to Kansa. He returned the baby to the parents. But Nārada wished that God be incarnated at an early date, he asked Kansa to count the eight lines drawn from the centre of a circle. Kansa, by his counting, realised that every line could have become the eighth one and doubted that every son of Devakī could be called the eighth one. So he forthwith went to Devakī's house, snatched her child and killed it by thrashing

1. Bhagavadgītā—4 : 7, 8.

2. Shri Krishna Charit—by Sudarshan Singh 1950, p. 15.

3. Ibid.

it on the stone. He also imprisoned Vasudeva, Devakī and his pious father Ugrasena and became the despotic ruler himself. He used to kill Devakī's sons by thrashing them on the stone. Thus he had killed her six sons just after their delivery.

### INCARNATION OF BHAGAVĀN ŚRĪKṚṢṆA AND HIS MIGRATION TO GOKUL

All the wives of Vasudeva had departed to different places on account of Kansa's tyranny. Śrī Nanda of Gokul was an intimate friend of Vasudeva. Another wife of Vasudeva Rohiṇī passed the period of her pregnancy at Gokul. When Devakī was about to beget her seventh offspring, the divine voice came—"there is the existence of Sankarṣaṇa in the womb of Devakī, transfer him into the womb of Rohiṇī. Thereafter I shall be born to Devakī and O Ye Māyā! be born as a daughter to Yaśodā, the wife of Nanda Bābā. The Lord's Yoga-Māyā transferred the said pregnancy of Devakī into the womb of Rohiṇī where mingling with her own Rohiṇī gave birth to Balarāma. Expecting the birth of Devakī's eighth issue Kansa managed to watch the jail carefully. In course of time Bhagavān incarnated in the midnight on the eighth of the black half of Bhādrapada.<sup>1</sup> Blue lotus-like wash is hue, having four arms holding with them each the conch, the wheel, the Gadā (a divine weapon) and the lotus. The Divine splendour was bursting out of His body. And He was incarnated wearing a shining yellow-garment and was adorned with jewelled crown, big ear-ring, bracelet, armlet etc. But on the request of Devakī Kṛṣṇa turned into a human baby. On the divine commandment the fetters of the hands and feet of Devakī and Vasudeva had loosened, gates of the jail opened and the watchmen slept.<sup>2</sup>

Having laid the child Bhagavān in a winnowing fan, Vasudeva brought Him to Gokul and replaced Him with the newly born girl baby of Yaśodā and then went back to the jail. Listening to the weeping of the baby the night-watchmen informed Kansa about the birth of the eighth issue of Devakī. Kansa forthwith went with his naked sword to Devakī and

1. On some date in the month of August-September.

2. Shri Krishna Charit—pp. 44-50.

snatched the baby from her lap for killing by thrashing it on the stone. But that baby was in fact Yoga-Māyā which immediately turned into an eight-armed goddess addressing Kansa—O Ye Cruel One ! Thy destroyer has already been born. Realizing the great fault on his part Kansa released his sister Devakī and her husband from jail and begged their pardon. But his ministers and advisers were also very cruel and tyrant, who advised Kansa to kill all the children born within 15 days. Kansa acted upon their advice by appointing demons like Śakaṭāsura, Vyomāsura, Pūtanā etc. for this purpose.

### CHILD KṚṢṆA KILLED THE DEMONS

A Rākṣasī or she-demon named Pūtanā came to Gokul in the form of a beautiful goddess for killing the babies, by suckling them from her poisonous nipples. She took the baby Kṛṣṇa in her lap and began to suckle Him with the object of His killing. Bhagavān understood her cunningness and began to suck her *Prāṇa* (life) also along with her milk until she died. She attained the Supreme Bliss of paradise because of her suckling Bhagavān.<sup>1</sup>

Kansa's another demon Śakaṭāsura came to Gokul with a view to kill Kṛṣṇa and hid himself in a cart whereunder baby Kṛṣṇa was sleeping. Knowing the ill-will of the demon, the baby Kṛṣṇa broke the cart into pieces by his soft foot and Śakaṭāsura hidden therein died instantly.

Thus another demon called Tṛṇāvarta came to Gokul for the same purpose. Understanding the object of his arrival, baby Bhagavān turned Himself much heavier whereby mother Yaśodā placed Him on the ground from her lap. Tṛṇāvarta caused the dusty darkness through some magic powers and in this dark atomsphere he kidnapped the baby Kṛṣṇa. When he reached the higher sky, Bhagavān throttled him and made heavier, whereby he fell on the ground and died.

### CHILDISH PLAY OF ŚRĪKṚṢṆA

Vasudeva's family priest and a great sage Garga was a big astronomer, who performed the rite of *Nāma-karaṇa-Sanskāra* (the sacrament of naming) of Śrīkṛṣṇa and Balarāma.

1. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa—Part I : Gita Press Gorakhpur, 1958, pp. 20-22.

As a boy He was very naughty and playfull. He played with Balarāma and other lads in the most jolly mood. The Gopīs<sup>1</sup> of Braja-area had the sacrificing heart for Him. His childish activities were loved by them. Being annoyed on His naughtiness Yaśodā once tried her best to tie Him with a rope, but no number of ropes could tie Him due to its shortage. Seeing the total failure of His mother Yaśodā, He once got Himself tied and crept out of the house to two Arjuna trees growing outside with the bondage of the rope. He passed on through the middle of the trees, but the rope struck up the trees. While Śrīkṛṣṇa pulled the rope, both the Arjuna trees fell down on the ground, bearing Nalakūbara and Maṇigrīva—the two sons of Kubera, who had turned into trees as punishment for disregarding Nārada long long ago. Both of them prayed the child-Bhagavān and went away to their father Kubera by His order.

### SURPRISING OF BRAHMĀ

Visualising the tyranny and misdeeds of Kansa day by day all the cattlegrazers became very afraid and hence all the dwellers of Gokul with child Kṛṣṇa migrated bag and baggage to Vrindavan near Govardhan-hill and settled there. At Vrindavan, on attaining the age of three or four years Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa engaged Himself in grazing cows. One day a demon named Vatsāsura mingled in the cows in the form of a calf for killing Śrīkṛṣṇa. Having realized the fact, Bhagavān held the hind legs and tail of the demon and killed him by thrashing it on the root of a tree.

The child Śrīkṛṣṇa killed Bakāsura another demon sent by Kansa for killing Him. And then He killed Aghāsura in the form of a big boa whose mouth was as wide as that of a cave, wherein all the cattle-grazers along with their cattle entered by mistake. Śrīkṛṣṇa also entered the belly of the boa for the safety of His friends and killed him by enlarging His body therein. With a view to testify the greatness of Bhagavān, Brahmā once stole all the calves and the boys and made them slept in a cave through his magic powers. To defeat Brahmā Bhagavān transformed Himself into all the

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1. The youthful milkmaids of Braja area.



calves and boys. A year afterwards, when Brahmā saw Kṛṣṇa grazing the calves with the boys as before, he was highly surprised, returned the stolen calves and boys and fell prostrate on His feet.

### DEFEAT OF KĀLIYA

An adder named Kāliya having hundred and one hoods had lived with its family in the very deep waters of Jamunā. It was so poisonous that the waters wherein it lived was always in the boiling state. Once the cow-grazing lads drank that poisonous water by mistake and died, but Śrīkṛṣṇa brought them back to life merely by casting a glance with His merciful eyes. Thus realizing the public nuisance and danger caused by the adder Bhagavān forced it to migrate to the sea by treading on its hoods in the dancing postures.

### KILLING OF THE DEMONS

Bhagavān killed the demon Dhenukāsura by holding his hind legs and thrashing him on a palm-tree after moving him round. After the killing of Dhenukāsura all the demons of his family came forward to take revenge but the two brothers—Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma killed them all in the same way. Once Balarāma alone had killed the demon Pralambāsura sent by Kansa. On the same day Bhagavān drank the forest fire. Another demon named Vyomāsura was also killed by Him and all the boys were released from the cave, wherein they were confined by him.<sup>1</sup>

### LIFTING UP THE MOUNTAIN GOVARDHANA

The cow-grazers of Braj area were once preparing for performing a sacrifice to Indra, the god of rain, but on the suggestion of Śrīkṛṣṇa, they offered oblations to the mountain Govardhana, Brāhmaṇas and cows. Indra took this act as his personal insult and hence he turned the atmosphere of Braj area into a doomsday by causing heavy rains and hail-storms, whereby all the Braj-dwellers suffered a lot and hence they prayed to Bhagavān for their deliverance from their distress. On their prayer, Bhagavān lifted the mountain Govardhana up by

1. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa—Part I : Gita Press 1958, pp. 37-38.

His left hand for providing shade to them. Thus the clouds continued to rain for a week and so Bhagavān continued to hold the mountain uplifted and the moving wheel of Bhagavān was continuously drying the water. On the clearance of the atmosphere, He replaced the mountain on the ground as before. Knowing the greatness of Śrīkṛṣṇa, Indra came to Him with the Kāmadhenu and begged His pardon for his offences. Kṛṣṇa was coronated with the milk of Kāmadhenu and the water of the Sky-Ganges. He was also then declared to be the lord of the cows. This is why one of His names is Govinda also.

### NANDA BĀBĀ'S PROTECTION

Once one of the servants of the god Varuṇa seized Nanda Bābā and took him to Varuṇa. On the call of the cow-grazers Bhagavān went directly to Varuṇa and got Nanda Bābā released. Another time Nanda was over-powered by a boa. Then Bhagavān saved him from its snare by beating it with His feet. On account of its being touched with the feet of Bhagavān the boa had turned into a Gandharva or a celestial being.

### THE KILLING OF THE THREE DEMONS

Bhagavān killed the demon Śankhacūḍa for the protection of the Gopīs and possessed his gem, which was presented to Balarāma. Another demon Ariṣṭāśura was also killed by Śrīkṛṣṇa. Therefore, Kansa sent the boldest of his demons named Keśī in the form of a big horse for killing Śrīkṛṣṇa, but it was also killed by Bhagavān.<sup>1</sup>

### VISIT OF MATHURA

Once upon a time Śrīkṛṣṇa went to Mathura for visiting a festival of Kansa and killed Kansa's personal washerman for his misbehaviour but blessed the gardener Sudāmā and a tailor for immortality on account of their Bhakti. He also removed the hunch-backedness of Kansa's female servant for her service. Moreover, Bhagavān broke into pieces the bow of Śiva possessed by Kansa and defeated all those who stood against its brokage.

1. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Part I : Gita Press, Gorakhpur, 1958 pp. 51-55.

### THE KILLING OF KANSA

Having killed Kansa's elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa Bhagavān entered Kansa's gymnasium along with Balarāma and other cow-grazers. Śrīkṛṣṇa wrestled against Cāṇūra and Balarāma against Muṣṭika and defeated them both. Then Balarāma killed the wrestler Kūṭa and Śrīkṛṣṇa killed Śāla and Toṣala. Thereafter Bhagavān killed Kansa by thrashing him on the gymnasium-ground and Balarāma killed Kansa's eight brothers.<sup>1</sup>

Thus having killed Kansa along with all his demons Kṛṣṇa released His parents and Ugrasena from the jail and saved the nation from his cruel bondage by reappointing Ugrasena as the ruler of Mathura.<sup>1</sup>

### ŚRĪKṚṢṆA IN THE GURU'S ĀŚRAMA

Śrīkṛṣṇa and His brother Balarāma were educated at Avantikāpurī under the discipleship of the great sage Sandipani. One of the class-mates of Śrīkṛṣṇa was a Brāhmaṇa boy named Sudāmā. All the pupils were totally devoted to the Guru. During the period of sixty-four days Śrīkṛṣṇa and Balarāma learnt all the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Upavedas, Vedāṅgas, Śāstras etc., all sciences and all the sixty-four arts. They brought back the dead son of the Guru from the domain of Yama and gave him to the Guru as the *Dakṣiṇā* or reward for his teaching.<sup>2</sup>

### JARĀSANDHA'S DEFEAT

Kansa's father-in-law Jarāsandha attacked on Mathura for taking revenge from Śrīkṛṣṇa for killing Kansa. Śrīkṛṣṇa and Balarāma killed the total army of Jarāsandha and captured him, but the compassionate Bhagavān set him free later. He then, again attacked Mathura but was defeated by the Divine Brothers. Thus he continued his attacks for seventeen times and was constantly defeated.

### DEFEAT OF KĀLAYAVANA

Having defeated the army of Kālayavana Bhagavān came to

1. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa—Part I : Gita Pres, Garakpur, 1958, pp. 60-64.

2. Ibid : pp. 5-9.

Dvārakā along with Balarāma without fighting against Jarā-sandha on the next time. This keeping away from fight gave Bhagavān a new name, '*Raṇacora*' or a flier from fight.<sup>1</sup>

### ŚRĪKṚṢṆA'S MARRIAGE

The king of Vidarbha, Bhīṣmaka was desirous to give his daughter Rukmiṇī to Kṛṣṇa in marriage, but his eldest son Rukma was desirous to marry her with Śiśupāla. On account of the insistence of Rukma King Bhīṣmaka sent the proposal for giving his daughter to Śiśupāla in marriage. But Rukmiṇī was a devoted lover of Kṛṣṇa, therefore she declared her love by writing a letter to Kṛṣṇa. Having received the letter of Rukmiṇī, Śrīkṛṣṇa forthwith went to Vidarbha with an army under the commandership of Balarāma. The Yādava soldiers fought against Śiśupāla and his helpers—Jarāsandha, Śalya etc. and having defeated them Bhagavān brought Rukmiṇī to Dvārakā and married her. Besides Rukmiṇī He also married Satyabhāmā, Jāmbavatī, Satyā, Bhadrā, Mitravindā, Kālindī and Lakṣmaṇā. Moreover, He married sixteen thousand and hundred girls of different kings after freeing them from the confinement of the mighty demon Bhaumāsura.

### THE HEROIC DEEDS OF ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA AND BALARĀMA

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma defeated thousand armed demon Bāṇāsura for taking his daughter for Aniruddha, Kṛṣṇa's grandson in marriage. Bhagavān defeated and killed Pauṇḍraka the tyrant ruler of Kāshī along with all his helpers, whereas Balarāma alone defeated Duryodhana for taking his daughter Lakṣmaṇā's hand in marriage to Sāmba, a son of Kṛṣṇa. Bhagavān himself defeated and slew Śiśupāla, Dantavakra and Vidūrattha in the royal sacrifice of Yudhiṣṭhira.

### COMPASSION TO DRAUPADĪ

Duryodhana won Draupadī by defeating Yudhiṣṭhira in gambling. He called Draupadī in his court and ill-treated her by his brother Duḥśāsana to the extent of trying her to

1. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa—Part II—Gita Press, 1958, pp. 12-14.

make her undressed by unfolding her Sārī little by little. She prayed the Bhagavān Śrīkṛṣṇa for her help. On the prayer of Draupadī, her Sārī began to increase by the divine grace, until Duhśāsana stopped its unfolding. Duryodhan's father King Dhṛtarāṣṭra returned the kingdom won in gambling to the Pāṇḍavas. Another time Yudhiṣṭhira was again defeated in gambling and was forced to spend twelve years in the forest and one year in the state of disappearance along with Draupadī and his brothers.

### KINDNESS ON OTHER DEVOTEES

Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa turned King Nṛga from the form of a chameleon into a god. He also bestowed Divine Fortune and prosperity upon Sudāmā, a poor Brāhmaṇa class-mate of His schooling days. He showed mercy to Bahulāśva, the king of Mithilā and a poor Brāhmaṇa Śrutadeva by attending to their feast at a time with his two forms.

### ASSISTANCE TO PĀṆDAVAS

The Pāṇḍavas had completed the stipulated period of thirteen years e.g. 12 years in dwelling in the forest and one year in hiding themselves, but Duryodhana was not ready to return their kingdom without fighting. Thus the war was settled to be fought between Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas in the battlefield of Kurukṣetra. Śrīkṛṣṇa took part in the battle as the charioteer of Arjuna. Having seen his teachers, uncle, grand-fathers and other relatives drawn up for battle, Arjuna was overwhelmed with faint-heartedness and denied to fight against them. Then Bhagavān preached him the discourse of Gītā emphasising on his supreme duty to fight as a warrior-prince consequently, Arjuna fought and became successful in the battle by the divine grace.

### KṚṢṆA'S DEPARTURE TO HEAVEN

Having brought back His six brothers who were killed by Kansa from the reign of King Bali, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa had preached His last discourse to Uddhava and Maitreya Muni under a

Pīpal tree and disappeared. A large number of His devotees died on hearing this sad news of His disappearance. On the seventh day of His vanishment, the ocean was overwhelmed and sank the city of Dvārakā. The greatgrandson of Śrīkṛṣṇa Vajranābha became the ruler of Mathura.<sup>1</sup>

Having cast a glance upon the Pre-Gitaic age in this chapter, it is equitably worthwhile to deal also with the Pre-Quranic age in the foregoing chapter for making a parallel study of both the scriptures.

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1. Bhagavān Śrīkṛṣṇa Part II pp. 57-58.

## Pre-Quranic Age

With a view to facilitating the understanding of the study in hand, it seems advisable to bring forth a brief sketch of the historical, social, cultural and religious background of the pre-Islamic age. The pre-Islamic period runs through the Jāhiliyyah days, usually rendered the 'time of ignorance' or 'barbarism'. But the 'ignorance' and the 'barbarism' can hardly be applied to such a cultured and lettered society as developed by the South Arabians.

Unlike the South Arabians a large number of the population of North Arabia including Al-Ḥijāz and Najd, was nomadic.

*The Bedouin Life* : The Bedouins were mainly engaged in fighting called 'Ayyām-ul-'Arab'(the Battle-Days of the Arabs); in which there was a great deal of raiding and plundering but little blood-shed. There were the inter-tribal hostilities usually arising from the disputes over cattle, pasture-lands and the water-sources.

The fighting mood being their chronic state of mind the Bedouins were always ready for a fight but not essentially eager to be killed. The transgressing tribe with the fewer accidents would have paid to its opponent blood-money for the surplus of the victim. The war of Baṣūs is an example of these Bedouin—wars arising from the disputes over birds's

eggs, cattle, pastures and water-springs. This war was waged between the two related tribes of Al-Madīnah-Kulayb bin Rabī'ah of the tribe Banū Taghlib and Jassās with Sa'd.<sup>1</sup> Almost the same case would have happened with the Day of Bu'āth, the battle fought between the Aws and the Khazraj, the transgression (the Days of Fijār) took place in the holy months, during which the fighting was forbidden between Quraysh, the prophet's family and Kinānah their allies on one side and the Hawāzin on the other. In addition to these Bedouin wars the most famous war was that of Dāḥis and Ghabrā, fought in Central Arabia between the tribes of 'Abs and Dhubyān, the principal stocks of the Aaron-Ghaṭafān.<sup>2</sup>

*The Heroic Age* : The Heroic Age of Arabic literature covers the whole 'time of ignorance', extending from about A.D. 525 down to the migration of the prophet to Al-Madīnah. We have preserved from this age several proverbs, certain legends and particularly a fairly fertile amount of poetry—all published in the later Islamic days. Luqmān along with very many sagely personalities was the product of the pre-Islamic Age.<sup>3</sup>

The courage of the Arabians is similar to that of the ancient Greeks.<sup>4</sup> The Arab hero is defiant and scornful. When there is little to lose by fight he will ride off unashamed but he will wage war against his womenfolk.<sup>5</sup>

The Bedouin-Tribal constitution was democratic guided by its chieftains who derived their office from noble blood, heroic character, wealth, wisdom and experience.

*Loyalty* : The loyalty of the Arabs did not mean allegiance to their superiors, but sincere devotion to their equals. The family and the tribe considered their sacred duty to defend these individually and collectively under a covenant of protection. If the kinsmen seek help it would be given promptly.<sup>6</sup> If

1. A Literary History of the Arabs—R.A. Nicholson, pp. 55-60.

2. Ibid pp. 61-62.

3. The Holy Qur'ān—Luqmān : 12, 13.

4. Social life of Greece—Mahaffy, p. 21.

5. The Mu'a'llaqāt—'Amr Bin Kulthūm.

6. Poetry of Durayd bin Simma.



they do wrong there is hostility arising for taking revenge. The ancient poetry affords proof that they regarded with honour any violation of the solemn covenant whether plighted between patron and client or host and guest. Al-Samawa'l bin 'Ādiyah, an Arab of Jewish descent appears to be an example of loyalty through the Arabic proverb—'Awfa mina—Al-Samawa'li (more loyal than Al-Samawa'l). Ḥātim 'Tāi is also an example for the loyalty of the Arabs of no lower degree than the former.

*Status of Women* : With a view to casting a glimpse on the position and influence of women in pre-Islamic society, it will suffice to state that, on the whole, their position was high and they were quite influential. They were free in choosing their husbands and could be released from the marriage tie, if ill-treated or displeased. They were regarded as an inspiration for the poets to compose poems and that for warriors to fight. The nobility of women is not only reflected in the heroism and devotion of men, but it stands recorded in the songs, legends and history.<sup>1</sup> However the women were not given the same rights as those of men. The women suffered a lot through the custom of polygamy extending to a large number of wives.

*Arabian Heroines* : Fāṭimah, the daughter of Khurshūb and the wife of Zayūd was one of the three noble matrons who bore the title of Al-Munjibāt (the mother of heroes). She had seven sons, three of them being Rabī' 'Umar and Anas who were called the perfect (Al-Kāmil). The famous Arab heroines which have become proverbial for their loyalty are Fukayhā and Umm-ul-Jamīl.<sup>2</sup>

*Social Customs* : The custom of infanticide which prevailed all over the country in the Jāhiliyyah days affords its testimony in the Holy Qur'ān.<sup>3</sup> The female infants were buried alive by virtue of their parents' being dishonoured in giving them to other in marriage. Realizing their ultimate separation the fathers feared their feeding uselessly, or haply they

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1. The Seven Golden Odes of Pagan Arabia—Lady Anne and Wilfrid Blunt—Introduction—pp. 14-15.
  2. A Literary History of the Arabs—R.A. Nicholson, pp. 88-90.
  3. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Takwīn—8, 9.

should cause disgrace in consequence of their being captives in the hands of the enemies. The Qur'ān put this barbarity to an end.

*Dealing with the Enemies* : A heathen Arab is a good friend to his friends, he has in the same degree an intense and deadly of hatred towards his enemies. No honourable man could forgive an injury or fail to avenge it.

*Blood-Revenge* : The blood for blood in retaliation is confirmed in the Qur'ān.<sup>1</sup> The spirit of retaliation was a mark of honour among the respectable families and tribes. It was a tormenting thirst which nothing would quench except blood. It was a disease of honour which might be described as an abnormality of passion and rage through the inherent furious temperament of the Arabs for their foes. The true Arab passion is expressed in the verses like this—

With the sword will I wash my shame away.

Let God's doom bring on me what it may.

The murder of Kulayb and the legend of Qays bin Al-Khaṭīb are the solid examples of the vengeance of the Pagan Arabs.<sup>2</sup>

*Mysticism* : It was believed that until the revenge had been taken for the dead, his spirit appeared above his grave in the shape of an owl, crying, 'Inṣūnī' (Give me a drink).

### THE PRE-ISLAMIC LEGENDS

*The Legend of 'Ād* : The region of 'Ādites was in Hadramant, the province adjoining Yemen. Their descent is doubtful, but Hommel maintains that they were the representatives of an imposing non-semitic culture. They were a folk of gigantic strength and stature, worshipping idols and committing all sorts of wrong. The Imitative Paradise was built on the earth by Shaddād, one of the 'Ādite kings. God sent Hūd as His messenger for guiding them, but they answered, 'O Hūd thou hast no proof for thy office and we will not abandon our idols for thy saying nor will we believe in thee.' Then God caused a fearful drought on the land of 'Ād.<sup>3</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah—178, 179.

2. A Literary History of the Arabs : R. A. Nicholson, pp. 93-94.

3. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-A'raf : 65-74 and Hūd : 50-60 etc.

In course of time, a new people arose who were called, 'the Second 'Ād. They settled in Yemen in the region of Ṣabā. The building of the great Dyke of Ma'rib is generally ascribed to their king, Luqmān bin 'Ād about whom many fables are attributed.

*Legend of Thamūd* : The tribe of Thamūd flourished in North Arabia between Al-Ḥijāz and Syria. The kindred race of Thamūd sinned in the same way as 'Ād and suffered a like. Ṣāliḥ, an apostle of God, bade them do the she-camel of Allāh no hurt but one of the miscreants, Qudar hamstrung and killed her. Whereupon, God caused a great earth-quake which overtook them with a noise of thunder and in the morning they lay dead in their houses.<sup>1</sup>

*Amaliques* : The list of primitive races includes in its fold the Amalikites (Amaliques)--The Amalikites settled in the Tihāmāh (Netherland) of Mecca, as well as in other parts of the Peninsula.

*Tasm and Jadīs* : There were also two sister tribes of Tasm and Jadīs of which nothing is recorded except the fact of their destruction due to their peoples' misdeeds.

### THE SABAEAN EMPIRE

*Yaqtanids* : The history of the Yaqtanids (Southern Arabs) is, in fact, the history of two peoples—the Sabaeans and the Himayarites, who were the successive heads of a South Arabian empire extending from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf.

*The Sabaeans* : Ṣabā (Ṣebā) is often mistaken to denote the whole Arabia. Ṣabā was a flourishing commercial state many centuries before the birth of Christ. Sea-traffic between the parts of East Arabia and India was very early established by the Sabaeans.

*The Himayarites* : On the downfall of the Sabaeans there came Himayarites to rule. Their country lay between Ṣabā and the sea. Under their kings known as Tubba's,<sup>2</sup> they soon became the dominant power in South Arabia. The Himayarites were not flourished like the Sabaeans.

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-A'rāf : 73-84,

2. The Holy Qur'ān—Ad-Dukhān : 37.

The sources of information regarding Ṣabā and Himayār are 1. The Himayarite inscriptions and 2. the traditions of legendary kinds which are preserved in Islamic literature.

*Dhul Qarnayn* : Dhul Qarnayn<sup>1</sup> of the Quranic legend supposed by most commentators to be identical with Alexandar the Great was one of the Tubba's of Himayar.

*Bilqīs, the Daughter of Sharabbīl* : Among the Tubba's we find the queen of Ṣeba whose adventure is related with Solomon<sup>2</sup>. The national hero of South Arabian legend is the Tubba' Asad Kāmil, known as Abū Kārib. In the Sabaean race, we see the distinguishing personalities such as Ghumdān, Zarqa-ul-Yamam (the blue-eyed woman of Yemen), Dhū Ruayn and Dhū Nuwās.

After the death of Dhū Nuwās the Abyssinian General Aryāt soon became dominant in Yemen. Abrāhah, the Viceroy of Yemen built the church at Ṣan'ā. The sons of Abrāhah, Yaqsūm and Masruque attacked the Arabs. Seeing his failure a noble Himayarite named Ṣaif bin Dhī Yazān sought foreign intervention. Therefore the Persian conquerors conquered the regions of Sabā and Himayār and settled in Yemen.

## THE PAGAN ARABS

### *Sources of Information regarding the Period of Barbarism :*

The sources of information regarding the age of ignorance are classified as under :

1. *The Poems* : These though not written down at the time were preserved by oral tradition. These poems were written down two or three hundred years afterwards. The record of pre-Islamic history is identified in the saying, 'Poetry is the public Register of the Arabs (Al-Širu Diwān-ul-'Arab).

2. *Proverbs*—These are of less importance as they seldom explain themselves. However, a large number of proverbs refer to many historical events.

3. *Traditions and legends* : Due to non-establishment of the art of writing, it was impossible that the prose in the literary

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Kahf—84-99.

2. The Holy Qur'ān—An-Naml ; 22-44.

form could be existed. The germs of Arabic prose, however, may be traced back to the 'time of barbarism'. In addition to the proverb (Mathal) and the oration (Khuṭbah), we find elements of history and romance in the prose-narratives. A vast number of such legendary stories are preserved in various literary, historical, cultural and geographical works under the Abbasid Caliphate especially in the 'Kitāb-ul-Aghānī' (The book of the songs).—This Kitāb-ul-Aghānī is the Register of the Arabs.

### THE ARAB KINGDOMS

About the middle of the third century of the Christian era Arabia was enclosed on the North and North-East by the rival empires of Rome and Persia, which were in those days at war. The Bedouins, however, fought as free allies under their own chieftains. In this way two Arabian dynasties came into existence—the Ghassanids in Syria and the Lakhmites at Ḥirā.

The Arab Dynasties—Ḥirā and Ghassān : The first king of Arabs in Irāq (Babylonia) is said to have been Malik, the Azdite who was killed accidentally with an arrow by his son Sulaimān. The kingdom of Malik was consolidated and organised by his son Jadhīmā. He ruled till Ardashir Babākān (A.D. 226) the founder of the Sasanian dynasty in Persia, who afterwards continued to dominate the Arabs of Irāq during the whole Pre-Islamic Age.

In the regions of Ḥirā and Ghassān Pre-Islamic culture attained its highest development, as referred to in the Qur'ān.

*The Establishment of Ḥirā :* About the beginning of the third century A.D., a number of Bedouin tribes of Yemenite origin took advantage of the disorder in the Arsacid Empire to invade Irāq. They occupied Ḥirā, a few miles away to the South of Kūfah. The first Sasanian kingdom of Persia consisted of the three classes of people :

1. The Tanūkh, who dwelt in the west of the Euphrates between Ḥirā and Anbār in the tents of camel's hair.
2. The 'Ibād, who lived in houses in Ḥirā.
3. The Ahlāf (clients), who were neutral from the above-noted classes, but related themselves to the people of Ḥirā.

*The Lakhmite Dynasty :* Hishām bin Muḥammad-al-Kalbī gives a list of twenty Lakhmite kings embracing the period of

523 years. The first Lakhmite ruler was 'Amr bin 'Adī bin Naṣr bin Rabī'ah bin Lakhm, the adopted son of Jadhīmah. Missing his successor we come to Nu'mān I. Nu'mān was succeeded by his son Mundhir. Passing over several unknown reigns we arrive at the sixth century, when Mundhir, the third mounted the throne. About 480 A.D. the powerful tribe of Kindah, whose nobles have had much the same position under the Tubba's of Yemen as the Lakhmites under the Persian monarchies. The rare figure in this conquest was Hujr known as Akīl-ul-Munār, an ancestor of the poet 'Imru-ul-Qays. He was succeeded by his grandson Hārith bin 'Amr, a rival to the kingdom of Ghassān and Ḥirā.

*Doctrine of Mazdak* : Meanwhile the communistic doctrine of Mazdak became popular in Persia and was embraced by King Kāwith—'Amr, the Kindite who invaded Irāq and caused Mundhir to flee. The Lakhmites and the Kindites had hereditary hatred.<sup>1</sup> Mundhir captured a son of Hārith and sacrificed him to the Arabic goddess Al-'Uzza. The Lakhmites were a pagan and barbarous race. Now, we arrive at the reign of 'Amr bin Hind, in whose reign Ḥirā dominated as a literary centre. Afterwards Qabūs and Mundhir IV (son of Hind) reigned for a short period. Then came Nu'mān III, a tyrannical prince. Then came into existence the Janfite Dynasty founded by Janfā. The nobles of this dynasty are Hārith the lame, Jabālā bin Al-Ayhām, Mundhir bin Hārith, Ḥassān bin Thābit and Nābighah.

*Arabian Poetry* : The Bedouins were nature-born lovers of poetry. Thus we see that the Arabic language, like many other languages came into existence with an out-burst of poetry. The Qur'ān itself, being a solid specimen of the rhymed prose which was brought forth by soothsayers and oracles may be adopted the first stage in the development of poetical form.

*The Qaṣidah or Ode* : The fountain-songs, war-songs and hymns to idols composed by Arab poets cast glimpses on the respective conditions of the earliest times. The first Arabian ode is said to be composed by Muhalhil bin Rabī'ah, the Taghlibite on the death of his brother Ku'ayb. The Bedouin's

1. The poems of Imru-al-Qays.

verses embrace mainly the animal life. Thus the pre-Islamic poetry may be defined as a narrative criticism of the ancient Arabian life and thought. Abū Tammām Ḥamāsah pours light on the Bedouin's bravery in battle, patience in misfortune, persistence in revenge, protection of the weak and the challenge to fight against the strong.

*The Mu'allaqāt or the Suspended Poems* : These Mu'allaqāt or the seven long poems are also called the 'suspended poems' on their being hung up in the Holy house of Ka'bah, by virtue of their merit conferred by the judges at the fair of Ukāz, near Mecca, when poets gathered in rivalry and recited their choicest verses, and the triumphant compositions were transcribed in letters of gold on the fine Egyptian linen and then affixed them to the door of the Ka'bah.

*The Ideal Arab Poets :*

*Šanfūrā*: Šanfūrā with his comrade Ṭabbata Šarra was an excellent poet as well as a renowned hero.

Here we cite the names of the leading poets of the land of that time, whose poetry afford proof of the historical, social, cultural and religious aspects of the heathen Arabs in the Pre-Quranic days. The Mu'allaqāt of Imru-ʿal-Qays holds the highest position in the literary field of Pre-Islamic age. He was a descendant of the ancient kings of Yemen.

Tarafah bin Al-'Abd was a member of the tribe of Bakr.

'Amr bin Kulthūm, the Taghlibite was a son of Laylā, a daughter of the famous poet and warrior Muhalhil.

Hārith bin Ḥillizah's poems have got some historical importance.

'Antara bin Shaddād distinguished himself in the war of Dāḥis.

Zuhayr bin Abī Sulmā, the Muzamite was a contemporary poet to Tarafah.

Lahīb was purely a Bedouin poet who casts a glance on the desert life and scenery in his poetry.

Nābigah or Ziyād bin Mu'āwiyah lived at the courts of Ḡhassān and Ḥirā.

Ma'mūn bin Qays known as Al-A'shā was a professional poet wandering all over the land with a harp in hand.

'Alqamah bin 'Abūd's most famous poem is on addressing to the Ghassanid Hārith after the battle of Ḥalīm.

*Pagan Arab Poetess* : Kḥansā' or Tumādir flourished just before the spread of Islām. She was an elegiac poetess. *The Poets born in the age of the Paganism and even survived in the Islamic period.*

The poet of great importance of this period was Ḥasan bin Thābit who did useful work on the prophet of Islām.

Ka'b bin Zuhayr, author of the famous panegyric on the prophet.

Mutammim bin Nuwayrah, author of an elegy on his brother.

Abū Mihjan, the singer of wine, who was punished by the Caliph 'Umar.

Al-Hutāyā was comparisonless in the field of satire.

*The collection of the ancient poetry* : The literary figures of Baṣrah and Kūfah rescued the ancient Arabian poetry from being perished. They collected and arranged their material according to various motives. This collection was called *Dīwān*.

*Pre-Islamic Religion of Arabia* : The heathen Bedouins of Pre-Islamic Age were lukewarms towards the spiritual impulses, their religious practice followed the inactivity of their own tribe and were commanded by their conservative respect for tradition. Along with the poetic references, we find sources of information about Pre-Islamic idolatry in the remains of heathenism in Islām.<sup>1</sup> The Pagan Arabs were neither advanced in theology nor in mythology. Their religion represents the earliest and the most primitive form of Semite belief. The South Arabians, however, represented a higher stage of development with their astral features, richly temples elaborate rituals and sacrifices. The emphasis on nature-worship in the cultured societies implies some natural gain through the association of natural objects, such as the rivers, the mountains, the wells, the springs, the caves, the stones, the cattle, the fire, the water and so on.

The religion of Bedouins, like other forms of primitive beliefs is fundamentally animistic. The sphere of oasis and desert gave rise to their earliest set conception of deity. The

1. Al-Kabbīs-ul-Aṣṇām—pp. 819-20.



arable land gave rise to their beneficent deity, while the barren land became the maleficent and the demon to be afraid of the well with its life-giving water very early became an object of worship. The zamzam's well which supplied water to Hagar (Ḥājah) and Ismael (Ismā'īl), and Yāqūt and Al-Qazvīnī, was pre-Islamic. Similarly all the above noted objects were worshipped through the media of some beneficence and maleficence for the begging and fearing respectively.

*Solar Worship* : The moon was the chief among all the solar deities of Bedouins, in whose light they grazed their cattle. Therefore Moon-worship implied a pastoral worship, whereas Sun-worship represented an agricultural folk.

*Mysticism* : A sacred palm-tree is said to be in existence in Najrān.<sup>1</sup> The gifts in forms of weapons, garments and rags were offered to the tree. Dhāt-Anwāt<sup>2</sup> to which the Meccans gathered annually was identical with the tree of Al-'Uzzā at Nakhlāb,<sup>3</sup> 'Al-Lāt' in 'Tāif was represented by a square stone and Dhul-Sharā in Petra by a quadrangular black stone. Most of these deities occupied a destined land.

*The Jinns* : Pre-Islamic Arabs peopled the desert with the living things of beastly nature called Jinns. These Jinns differ from the gods : the gods are on the whole friendly, whereas the Jinns hostile. The latter are supposed to be personifications of the fantastic notions of the terrors of the desert. Unlike those Jinns, the gods belong to the sphere familiar with the man. The Jinns were on the unknown and the barren parts of the wilderness. A lunatic was nothing but possessed by a Jinn. The number of Jinns was increased with the mission of Islām, whereas the Pagan deities were degraded into such beings.<sup>4</sup>

*Three Daughters of Allāh* : The urban population of Al-Ḥijāz and about seventeen percent of the Bedouin population reached early the astral stage of heathenism. Al-'Uzzā, Al-Lāt and Al-Manāt were regarded as the three daughters of Allāh and were venerated all over Arabia. They had their sanctuaries in the region which later became the spine of Islām. Al-Lāt had her

1. Sirah : p. 22.

2. Ibid : p. 922.

3. Kabbī : pp. 24-7.

4. The Holy Qur'an - Aṣ-Ṣaffāt—158 and Al-Jinn—1.

shrine near A't-'Tāif. The Meccans and others gathered there for pilgrimage and sacrifice. Within the enclosure of this goddess, no tree could be felled, no game hunted and no human blood shed. The cities of refuge in Isrā'īl were of the similar origin. This goddess is mentioned under the name Alīlāt among the Nabataean deities.<sup>1</sup>

Al-'Uzzā was the most mighty venus. The morning star was centred at Nakhlah. Heis was the most venerated idol among the Quraysh<sup>2</sup> tribe. Her sanctuary consisted of the three trees. Human sacrifice was offered to characterise her cult. She was also known as the 'Uzzayan to whom a south Arabian offered a golden image on behalf of his sick daughter, Amat-Uzzayan.<sup>3</sup> Abdul 'Uzzā e.g. the worshipper of 'Uzzā was the favourite name at the rise of Islām.

Manāt was the goddess of fate. Her chief sanctuary consisted of a black stone in Qudayd on the road between Mecca and Yathrib (later Al-Madinah). She was the deity of Aws and Khazraj and her name was associated with Dhul-Sharā, as appears in the Nabataeans' inscriptions of Al-Ḥijr.<sup>4</sup>

Since the family organization was originally matriarchal, the Bedouin's goddess excels the god as an object of worship.

*The Concept of Allāh* : The Pagan Arabs believed vaguely in a supreme God, called Allāh, who was variously known as 'Al-Ilāh', 'Hallāh' etc., though not the only deity of Mecca, and may have been a withdrawal or a gradual growth of some Ka'bah God. The name Allāh has been recognized from the pre-historic age. It appears as Hallāh in the Ṣafā inscriptions five hundred years before Islām. It has also been used in a Pre-Islamic Christian Arabic inscription.<sup>5</sup> The existence of the name Allāh may be justified by the name of the prophet's father 'Abdullāh' (the worshipper of Allāh). The heathen Arabs held Allāh as the Creator, the Helper and the Supreme Provider as well.

Moreover, there were other pagan deities, such as Wadd,

1. Herodotus, Book III, Ch. VIII.

2. Al-Kalbi. pp. 18-19.

3. Nielsen, Handbuch, Vol. I.P. 236.

4. Cooke, pp. 217, 219.

5. Ibid.

Suwā', Yaghūth and Nasr<sup>1</sup> (the vulture). There was also 'Awf (the great bird) along with numerous other gods in the form of birds, animals and beasts.

*The Holy Truce* : The holy truce according to Muslim calendar included in its fold the four months, namely the first two months of each year and the last two months thereof (viz., Ziqād, Zil-Hijja, Muḥarram and Rajab). The first three of these were assigned for religious observances and the fourth for trade. The fighting was forbidden in the holy months through some ancient belief of Bedouins. This belief is confirmed by the revelations of Allāh in the Holy Qur'ān.<sup>2</sup>

*The Sacrifice* : The heathen Arabs offered sacrifices of camels and sheep at Mecca on various stones and spots elsewhere. This was the practice of the wandering Arabs to go on the pilgrimage to some shrine or sacred place. This practice is confirmed by the divine message enjoined in the Qur'ān.<sup>3</sup>

On the whole, the Pagan Arab's view of life was thoroughly hedonistic. The polygamy, divorcing wives on one's sweet will, marrying within the prohibited degrees, infanticide, usury, slavery, loving, wining, gambling, hunting, the pleasures of song and romance, fighting and elegant expression of wit and wisdom etc.—these things were regarded by Arabs to be meritorious.

### THE EARLY HISTORY OF MECCA

*Al-Ḥijāz* : The rough plateau between Najd and the coast of Red Sea forms Al-Ḥijāz, through which, in ancient times, the Sabaeen caravans passed on to the Mediterranean ports. Long before the commencement of the Christian era two trading settlements 1. Macoraba (Mecca) and 2. Yathrippa (Yathrib or Madinah) had sprung up in this region. We know nothing of their early inhabitants except what is related by Muslim writers reaching back to the days of Adam and Abraham. The Holy city of Islām had appeared in the same light thousands of years before the prophet's time.

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Nūḥ : 23.

2. The Holy Qur'ān—At-Taubah : 5, 36, 37.

3. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah : 67, Hajj : 33, Al-Kauthar : 2.

*The Foundation of Ka'bah* : The primitive home of the Arabian race which claims its descent from Ismā'īl, the son of Ibrāhīm by Hājrah (Hagar)-erected an irregular, cube-shaped building of Ka'bah. The legends attribute its foundation to Adam who built it by Divine command. At the Flood it was taken up into heaven and was rebuilt by the Divine command on its former site by Abraham and Ismael. While they were engaged in raising the building Gabriel (Jibrīl) bestowed upon them the celebrated Black Stone which was affixed in the South-East corner of the building, which is instructed in the ceremonies of the pilgrimage till to-day. Having erected the building Abraham stood on a rock which is now known as the Maqām-ul-Ibrāhīm and proclaimed : 'O my people ! the pilgrimage to the Holy House of Ka'bah is prescribed unto you,' whereupon, from every part of the world came the answer : "Labbaika Yahumma Labbaika" e.g. "We Obey O God ! we Obey."

The Ismaelites multiplied exceedingly and a vast number of them migrated to other lands. The ruling of the sacred territory was succeeded by the tribe of Jurhum. The invaders settled in Al-Hijāz, having almost exterminated the Jurhumites. One sect thereof-Banū Khuz'ah led by their chief Luḥayy, settled in the neighbourhood of Mecca.

*The Qurayshites* : The principal descendants who remained in Al-Hijāz were the Hudhāyī, the Kinānah and the Quraysh. Among them the last named tribe gained popularity in Mecca and became acknowledged guardians of Ka'bah. Kabbin Murrah, a Qurayshite had two sons--Zuhrā and Zayd. The later was carried by his mother from Mecca to her new husband's house on the death of the old. Zayd grew up there. When he discovered his true nationality on attaining his puberty, he came back to Mecca, which was wholly in the hands of Khuzaites under their chieftain Hulayl bin Ḥubshiyah. But Qurayshites, being the pure-blooded descendants of Ismā'īl had the preferential claim to be superintendents of Ka'bah. Therefore Zayd known as Quṣayy arose against Ghulshān, a Khuzaites to fight and won a decisive victory. He became now the master of Ka'bah. He organized Mecca and his race. The historical rivalry of the Umayyads and 'Abbāsids appears in the persons of their founders—Umayyah and Hāshim. Thereafter the

influence of the Qurayshites was steadily maintained and extended.

Abrāhah, the Abyssinian viceroy of Yemen, defeating Dhū Nafar, a Himyarite chieftain sent a message to 'Abd-ul-Muṭṭalib, the prophet's grandfather that I have not come to wage war on you but only to destroy the temple. After a long dispute, 'Abd-ul-Muṭṭalib accompanied by several Qurayshites became ready for fight, and prayed for help against Abrāhah and his huge army. The Qurayshites conquered Abyssinians by Divine aid.<sup>1</sup> And thus the Holy House of Ka'bah was protected. On the Abyssinians' repulsion from Mecca, the Arabs regarded the Qurayshites to be the God's people.

In fact, the patriotic feelings aroused in the Arabs of Al-Ḥijāz by the Abyssinian invasion. Consequently the Lakhmite dynasty at Ḥirā came to an end. Nu'mān III the last Lakhmite ruler, had deposited his arms and property with Hānī' a chieftain of the Banū Bakr. Khusra stood as a claimant for them, but on his refusal a desperate conflict caused at Dhū Qār a place near Kūfah, in which the Persians were totally defeated, this victory was regarded by the Arabs the commencement of the new set up of things.

### MUḤAMMAD, THE APOSTLE OF ALLĀH

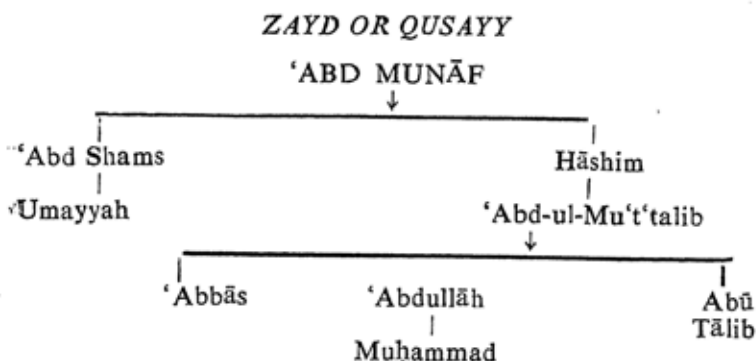
The Arabian desert, thus enshrouded with an impenetrable veil of all sorts of social, moral, historical and religious deficiencies and backwardness was suddenly torn out with the appearance of Muḥammad. Here it seems advisable to give a brief account of the prophet's life on the authority of the Qur'ān, the Ḥadīth (Prophet's traditions), biographies, general collections and the commentaries on the Qur'ān.

*Birth of Muḥammad*: According to traditional chronology Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh and Āminā, a Qurayshite was born as foretold by Jesus, son of Mary at Mecca on the 12th of Rabī'ul-Awwal in the year of the elephant (A.D. 570), so called due to Arabs' being deeply impressed by the extraordinary spectacle of these huge animals, seeing for the first time in the

1. A Literary History of the Arabs—R.A. Nicholson pp. 67. 68.

2. The Holy Qur'ān—Aṣ-Saff : 6.

Abyssinian force.<sup>1</sup> The following tree maintains our prophet's descent with an elaborate accuracy :



*Halimah* : Shortly after his birth he was handed over to a Bedouin nurse—Halimah, a woman of the Banū Sa’d tribe, so that he may breath pure air for his physical and mental growth, until he was five years old.

*Muḥammad and the Two Angels* : Halimah related that Muḥammad and his foster brother were among the cattle, when all of a sudden my son came running and cried : ‘My brother Muḥammad...two men dressed in white garments caught him and laid him on his side and cleft his belly and they were stirring their hands in it’. Then my husband and I went out to him. We found him standing with his face turned pale and we asked, ‘what ails thee child?’ He replied, ‘two men clad in white came to me and laid me on my side and tore my belly and groped for something. I know nothing else.’ My husband doubted lest this lad has been possessed by an evil-spirit. Therefore on my husband’s persuading, I restored him to his mother. His mother Āminah said, ‘O Halimah ! Thou wert so fond of him and anxious that he should stay with thee. Then, what has brought thou ?’ I said, ‘God has made him grow up and I have done my duty. I feared that some ill-luck would befall him.’ But Āminah guessed that there is something

1. The Holy Qur’ān—Al-Fīl : 1.

in the bottom and asked me to tell the truth. Then I told her about the happening. Nay, by God, added Āminah the devil cannot reach him—my son has a high destination.<sup>1</sup> This fact seems to be hinted at in the Divine Message.<sup>2</sup>

Others hold that the angels drew forth Muḥammad's heart, sanctified it and removed the black clot therefrom.

'Abdullāh, the father of Muḥammad had died before the birth of his son and on entering his sixth year, Muḥammad lost his mother also. The charge of the orphan was undertaken first by his grandfather 'Abd-ul-Mu't'talib and after his death by his uncle Abū 'Tālib, who honestly fulfilled the duties of a guardian to the last hour of his life. The small amount of Muḥammad's patrimony was soon spent and he was forced to herding sheep—a degraded employment, usually assigned to the women and the slaves. On attaining his twelfth year he accompanied his uncle on a business expedition to Syria. In the course of his journey he is said to have been interviewed by a Christian monk called Bahīrā who discovered the signs of prophethood between the boy's shoulders and foretold thereabout.

*His Marriage* : Several years afterwards he made his journey again to Syria in the service of a wealthy widow named Khadījah. So faithfully did he transact the widow's business and so excellent was the report of his conduct which she received from her old servant who had accompanied him that she soon married her young agent and the marriage proved a very happy one, though she was forty years of age whereas Muḥammad was only twenty-five at that time. Throughout the twenty-six years of their life together, he remained devoted to her and after her death, when he married other wives along with 'Āishah he always mentioned her with the honest love and reverence. His marriage with Khadījah gave him rank among the notables of Mecca and his behaviour earned for him the title 'Al-Amīn', the Trustworthy.

Muḥammad as a youth is said to have shared idolatry of his countrymen, even some westerners hold that he in his

1. Ibn Hishām, p. 105 Sqq.

2. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Inḥsārāh : 1.

youth offered some sacrifice to Al-'Uzzā, the most mighty Venus of Jahiliyyah Days.. But I do not agree with this opinion of Hitti and others, who appear to be under a misconception on the Quranic verse—'Did He (God) not find thee (Muḥammad) wandering and direct thee.'<sup>2</sup> This is simply a hint towards his wandering folk in which he was born, amounting to the fact that if he would not be led aright he would also become the same—wandering. His heart was cleansed by Allāh before his reaching the age of five as referred to above. Then how could he be a misled? This is also the plea of the orthodox theologians of Islām.

*The Hunafā*: A number of religious thinkers who felt disgusted at the Pre-Islamic idolatry and followed the religion of Abraham, the upright, were known as Hunafā (Ḥanīfs), and of whom the renowned were Waraqā bin Naufāl, Zayd bin 'Amr bin Nufayl—both Qurayshites and Umayyah bin Abī-Salt, a Thaḳifite. These were the seekers of truth by the light of their own inner consciousness. Our prophet formerly became one of these. It is said that Umayyah hoped to be recognised as an apostle of God and therefore when Muḥammad appeared he envied and bitterly opposed him.<sup>1</sup>

*Muḥammad's Vision*: It was the practice of Muḥammad to retire with his family annually in the month of Ramadān to a cave named Ḥirā near Mecca for meditation. Reaching his fortieth year, it is said, Muḥammad began to dream dreams and see visions. One night in the month of Ramadān, when he was engaged in religious austerities in the state of a trance he heard a divine voice, expressing; 'Read' (Iqra'). He answered: 'I am no reader'. The voice came/again: 'Read' (Iqra'). He said: 'I cannot read'. A third time the voice commanded him with a stress, 'Read.' He said: 'How can I read, while...? The voice poured forth<sup>2</sup>:

#### *The First Revelation*:

'Read in the name of thy Lord,  
Who creates men from a clot.  
Read and it is thy Lord the Most Bountiful,

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Ad-Duhā : 7

2. Ibid.,—Al-'Alaq t 1-5.



Who teaches by the Pen.  
Teaches man that which he did not know.<sup>1</sup>

Then the voice awoke him, inspring : 'O Muḥammad! Thou art Allāh's messenger and I am Gabriel (Jibrīl).' He raised his eyes and saw the Holy spirit in the likeness of a man, standing in the sky above the horizon. And again, the dreadful voice said: 'O Muḥammad! Thou art Allāh's messenger and I am Gabriel.' He stood quite still turning his face away from the splendour of the vision but whithersoever, he turned his face the angel confronted him. On his being vanished, he returned in great distress of mind to his wife Khadījah. She did her best to reassure him. Arriving at Mecca, she took him to her cousin Waraqā bin Naufāl who was well acquainted with the Christian and Jewish scriptures and declared that the True Spirit which came to Moses had come to Muḥammad and that he was chosen as the prophet, bestowing upon him the proudest title of 'The Slave of Allāh.'<sup>2</sup>

*His Role in the Society* : It is surprising to note that the leader and the preacher of countless souls of the world had no schooling at all.

He possessed these gifted and sterling qualities by nature :—

He could not suffer the pain of others.

He was keenly anxious for the welfare of mankind.

He was seeker of the Reality.

He was compassionate and merciful.<sup>3</sup>

By virtue of his meritorious deeds and constant devotion to Almighty, he, as stated above, attained prophethood and brought the created close to the Creator.

*The First Muslims* : After being bestowed upon him the apostleship of God, he naturally turned to his own family and friends for summoning them to embrace Islām, while an ancient tradition suggests that the prophet summoned the

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-'Alaq : 1—5.

2. Ibid.,—Al-Baqarah : 23, 90, 207 and so on.

3. The Man of Allāh—Al-Hāj Qasim Ali Jairazbhoy, Preface p. IV.

public to be converted.<sup>1</sup> Khadijah was the first convert, then there were his cousin 'Alī, his adopted son Zayd bin Hārith and Abū Bakr bin Quhāfā.

*Persecution of the Qurayshites* : The preaching on the unity of God, as against countless idols, the resurrection of the dead, the rights of women and the demerits of the wining, gambling, infanticide, usury, adultery etc., was in fact the negation of all the outlooks of the Pre-Islamic Arabs. Therefore, a bitter antagonism arose to face the new faith. The prophet along with his followers was put to all sorts of tortures. But the authority of Abū 'Tālib secured the personal safety of his nephew, Muḥammad. The Meccans laughed at him and called him a mad man or a wizard,<sup>2</sup> yet Muḥammad continued his preaching. In the fifth year of the Islamic mission he and the new converts were forced to emigrate to Abyssinia under Christianity. At this time the ideology of the Christianity was almost the same as that of Islām.<sup>3</sup> Nearly a hundred men and women left the prophet with a small party and went into exile.

#### *Short-lived Compromise with the Qurayshites :*

In the hour of distress Muḥammad had a temporary reconciliation with his countrymen. But one day, being seated in a friendly manner amidst the Meccans, he began to recite the 53rd Sūrah of the Holy Qur'ān. As he came to the verses (19-20).

'Do you see Al-Lāt. Al-'Uzzā and Al-Manāt the third and the final.

But the Satan (Shay'tān) bade him to add :

'These are the most exalted cranes (or swans) and verily their intercession is to be hoped for'.

The Meccans were delighted with the authority of their deities by this acknowledgement. Then he ended the Sūrah with the closing words—

'So bow down before Allāh and serve Him'.

1. Hadīth-ul-Zuhri (A.D.742).

2. The man of Allah—al-Haj Qassim Ali pp. 12-14.

3. Literary History of the Arabs—R.A. Nicholson fn. p. 155.

The whole gathering of the Meccans prostrated on the ground.<sup>1</sup> But the prophet was highly depressed for the sin committed by him in his wrong-reconstitution for the confirmation of the idols. He repented and abrogated the idolatrous rendering and revealed in their place the following ones--

'Shall yours be the male and His the Female ?

This was surely an unjust division.

They are naught but names, which ye and  
your fathers have named.<sup>2</sup>

*Misfortunes of the Prophet* : By Muḥammad's constant preaching and practice of the Divine Faith, dread and uneasiness seized the Qurayshites. They retaliated by cutting off all relations with the Hashimites. This boycott secluded the prophet and his followers from the social atmosphere of the town. Shortly afterwards, the prophet lost his beloved wife Khadijah and his uncle Abū 'Tālib, his true defender.

*Flight to Madinah* : In the year 622 A.D. the Muslims of Mecca left their homes. A few months afterwards in September 622 A.D. the prophet himself entered Madinah, where he was received by the Madinites with the highest honour. Madinah, then largely populated by Jews was, however, closer to the new faith than the Meccan's heathendom.<sup>3</sup> At Madinah Muḥammad passed his days with pure religious enthusiasm and integrity. This flight was undoubtedly essential for the establishment of Islām.

*Muḥammad's Ascension And The Night Journey To The Celestial Spheres* : Shortly before the flight the prophet dreamed that he was departed from the Ka'bah to the Temple of Jerusalem, and thence to the seventh heaven, as the former part of the vision is indicated in the Divine speech.<sup>4</sup> The Ascension or Mi'rāj of the Prophet has universally been regarded as an earnest event.

1. Life of Mohammad : Muir. Vol. II p. 151.

2. The Holy Qur'ān—An—Najm : 21-25.

3. A Literary History of the Arabs—R.A. Nicholson, p. 158.

4. The Holy Qur'ān—Baqi Isrā'īl. 1.

*Establishment of the Muslim State* : Circumstances changed Muḥammad from the Divine messenger to a legislator and a ruler. He was ever stimulated in the spiritual struggle, which preceded his call for the welfare of humanity.<sup>1</sup> There were in Madinah four parties, comprising of those who either warmly supported or actively opposed the prophet, or who were neutrals viz., the Mahājirīn (refugees), the Anṣārs (helpers) the Munāfiqīn (hypocrites) and the Yahūd (Jews). Muḥammad passed a charter between the refugees and the helpers embodying therein a covenant with Yahūd, ratifying them in the exercise of their religion and in the occupation of their properties, imposing upon them certain obligations and giving them certain rights.<sup>2</sup> But it is said to be destroyed by the prophet on the ground of its non-fulfilment of the necessary conditions.<sup>3</sup>

*The Battle of Badr (624 A.D.)* : The believers are ordained to fight against the disbelievers, if they are tortured.<sup>4</sup> According to the Divine Command some three hundred true believers rose to face the great army of Meccan disbelievers and won a triumphant victory at Badr in the year 624 A.D. This victory made all eyes turn on Muḥammad. He became now a power in the land.

*The Battle of Uhud (625 A.D.)* : He was now in Madinah more and more influential. In the following year a Muslim army was defeated by the Qurayshites under Abū Ṣufyān. The conquerors were satisfied with having taken revenge but the prophet did not, and marched with high hopes to crush his adversaries. But in January 630 A.D. Meccans themselves, fearing the further destruction, opened their gates to the prophet and surrendered themselves to God.

*Submission of Meccans (630 A.D.)* : The Meccans acknowledgement to the Omnipotence of Allāh made the Holy prophet of Islām without a rival in the realm.

1. Mohammad's die Berufung—M.J. De. Goeje (in Noldeke Festschrift Giessen. 1916 Vol.1. P. 5.

2. Ibn Hisham's Biography of Mohammad pp. 341-344.

3. A Literary History of the Arabs : R.A. Nicholson, p. 179.

4. The Holy Qur'an—Al-Hajj : 40, 41, Al-Baqarah—187.

*The Death of the Prophet (632 A.D.)* : Muḥammad the last prophet, died after a brief illness, on the 8th June, 632. A.D. and buried in Qubbat-ul-Khadrah at Madinah. The green tomb has been built over the grave of the Holy Prophet.<sup>1</sup>

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1. The Man of Allah—Al-Haj Oassim Ali, Preface p. X..

## A General View on the Gita

*Authenticity of the Gītā* : As the Mahābhārata is the mother volume of the Bhagavadgītā, which is but the portion between 24th and 43rd chapters of Bhīṣma Parva thereof, to which, we are directly concerned, we should, for determining the origin, date and authenticity of the Gītā, cast a careful glance upon the Mahābhārata. The subject matter of the most sacred volumes such as Bhagavadgītā, Viṣṇusahasranāma, Aṇugītā, Bhīṣmastavarāja and Gajendramokṣa are directly or indirectly related to the Mahābhārata. These five divine books are designated as the 'Pañca-Ratna' or 'the five gems'. Biduranīti or the ethics of Bidura is also a part of the Mahābhārata. By virtue of these glorious facts the Mahābhārata is called the fifth Veda.

To determine the approximate age of the Mahābhārata we are better advised to consider the matter in the following manner :

No event of the Mahābhārata has been depicted in the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki. On the contrary, the chapter Vanaparva of the Mahābhārata describes the character of Rāma in many chapters under the title 'Rāmopākhyāna' with full reference of Vālmīki and several verses of his Rāmāyaṇa. Thus, it is quite evident that the Rāmāyaṇa is undoubtedly older than the

Mahābhārata, while the creation of the Bhāgavata is of the later age than that. The Mahābhārata and the Bhāgavata are the contributions of one sagely authority—Vyāsadeva and the latter is written shortly afterwards. It has been widely accepted that the creation of the Rāmāyaṇa must have been completed before the birth of Buddha (500 B.C.)<sup>1</sup>

As regards the approximate date of the Mahābhārata, it is witnessed as under :

1. According to an inscription of 445 A.D. the existence of the Mahābhārata appears to be much earlier than 245 A.D.

2. Aśvaghoṣa of the court of Kaniṣka (100 B.C.) has quoted several verses of the Harivaṃśa Purāṇa as well as of the Mahābhārata. At that time it contained one lac verses.

3. The words 'Bhārata' and 'Mahābhārata' have been separately used in the Gṛhyasūtra.<sup>2</sup> The Gṛhyasūtra of Baudhāyana mentions the thousand names of Viṣṇu and quotes one verse from Gītā as an example. These two volumes are known to have been created in near about 400 B.C. Thus it may, authentically, be said that the approximate date of the original Mahābhārata must, necessarily, be at least 200 years earlier than the date of creation of these volumes. The Mahābhārata has, decidedly been created before Buddha's time but it got its present form later.

As regards the authenticity of the original verses of the Gītā, Sañjaya, who had been perceiving and listening to all events of the battlefield from a long distance, on account of his being vouchsafed a divine eye through the grace of Vyāsa, says in the Gītā—'I heard this supremely secret Yoga from the Lord of Yoga, Śrīkṛṣṇa, Himself, speaking before my very eyes.'<sup>3</sup> Casting a glance upon the time, place and circumstances in which the Gītā was preached, it was doubted by the eminent scholars that such a long lecture containing 700 verses was quite impossible to be delivered on a battlefield, where main bent of mind of both the armies was to wage war as soon as possible. On the basis of this very doubt, some

1. Saṃskṛta Sāhitya Kā Itihāsa : Baldeva Upadhyaya pp. 71-73.

2. Gṛhyasūtra of Āśvalāyana—3.4.4

3. Bhagavadgītā—18 : 75.

commentators reached the conclusion that the original verses preached by the Blessed Lord Himself are only 100, while others searched out to be thirty-six, twenty-eight and only seven respectively. These scholars opine that Vyāsa himself fashioned this original discourse contained in seven verses into those extending to seven hundred. This is the very basis whereon several authorities accept Gītā to be an allegorical speech.<sup>1</sup>

It is to be borne in mind that the present form of the Gītā containing 700 verses was never preached by Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa Himself, but a major part of it is the creation of the sage Vyāsa who wrote it with the essence of all the Upaniṣads Vedas and other scriptures of the past. Therefore, the Gītā is made such an incomparable volume that not a word is found in it, which is devoid of spiritual import. This is why, the sage, after describing the Gītā in the Mahābhārata said in the end :

The Gītā should be carefully studied, that is, after reading the text, its meaning and ideas should be gathered and held in the mind. It emanated from the lotus-like lips of Bhagavān Viṣṇu Himself, from whose navel sprang the lotus. What is the use of going through the other elaborate scriptures ?<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the Blessed Lord Himself described its glory at the end of the Gītā.<sup>3</sup>

### THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE GĪTĀ

The Bhagavadgītā is nothing but the discourse of Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa in the battle-field of Kurukṣetra for instigation Arjuna to fight against Kauravas, the aggressors, who were oppressing the land. Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa while trying His best to convince Arjuna who was deeply infatuated and dejected by seeing his teachers, uncles, sons, grand-uncles, maternal-uncles, father-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law and other relations drawn up for battle against himself, adopted logical, ethical and philosophical methods based on the reality of God and soul as well

1. Gītā Aur Qurān—Sundar Lal, Hindi ed. 1946, pp. 102-103.

2. Gītā Sugītā Kartavyaḥ Kimanyaiḥ Śāstra Vistaraiḥ.

Ya Svayam Padmanābhaya Mukhapadmadvinihṛtā.

3. Bhagavadgītā—18 : 67-71.



as the doctrines of *Karma* (Action), *Sāṃkhya* (Knowledge), *Bhakti* (Devotion), *Dhyāna* (contemplation), *Samādhi* (meditation), *Punarjanma* (re-incarnation of soul), *Mokṣa* (salvation) and so on.

The Bhagavadgītā preaches nothing but instigate individuals to perform their respective duties fell to their lot under the given circumstances. The real spirit of the Gītā lies in its statements, 'devoted to his own duty man attains the highest perfection in the shape of God-Realization.<sup>1</sup> Man's own duty is better, though devoid of merit than the duty of another well-executed. He, who performs his duty enjoined by his own nature does not incur sin.'<sup>2</sup> Realizing the faint-heartedness and suppression of Arjuna in such a critical situation wherein Arjuna as a warrior hero appears not to perform his own duty as allotted to him as a Kṣatriya, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa, his friend and chariot-driver starts His lecture as a Divine Lecturer for impelling Arjuna to fight against the usurpers. First of all Śrīkṛṣṇa tries His best to satisfy Arjuna by adopting philosophical method. Thus, He describes the doctrine of Sāṃkhyayoga or the science of knowledge to Arjuna, who was suppressed and overwhelmed with pity, whose eyes were tearful and who was full of sorrow and grief. Thus Bhagvān said: 'Arjuna, this infatuation of yours is not proper at this odd hour. It is foresaken by the noble persons. This faint-heartedness does not lead man to attain heaven or achieve fame in this world.'<sup>3</sup> Thus Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa teaches mankind through the agency of the Gītā that man's ultimate goal must be to achieve the highest perfection in the shape of God-Realization, preparing himself for the same, through the performance of the proper actions allotted to him in the world. He instigates Arjuna, the warrior-prince to be engulfed with the spirit of a Kṣatriya or a warrior, whose allotted duties rest in prowess, firmness, majesty, bravery ingenuity, to be steadfast in the battle, generosity and rulerships,<sup>4</sup> by saying 'Yield not to unmanliness. It is not proper for a man of the warrior-class like you.' Even after hearing this.

1. Bhagavadgītā 18 : 45.

2. Ibid ; 18 : 47.

3. Ibid ; 2 : 2.

4. Ibid ; 18 : 43.

Arjuna's faint-heartedness and infatuation was not removed and showing his total inability to fight against his elders and respectables—like Guru Droṇa and grandfather Bhīṣma who are both objects of reverence and regard, Arjuna said: 'It is better to spend the life of a beggar in this world than slaying these noble elders, because, even after killing them we shall enjoy only the blood-stained happiness in the form of wealth and sense-enjoyments.<sup>1</sup> To make the contest more bitter beloved comrades, intimate friends and elders stood on both sides, wringing his heart with personal perplexity, and making the conflict of duties as well as physical strife, whether he could slay those to whom he owes love and duty and tangle on ties of kindred? To break the family attachment was a sin; to leave the nation in cruel bondage of the aggressors was a sin, and the non-performance of his nature-born duties was a sin.<sup>2</sup> Having arisen such conflicts of duties Arjuna prays to Bhagvān to show the definite right way which is preferable to fight or not to fight. With his very being tainted by the vice of faint-heartedness and infatuation and his mind puzzled with regard to duty, he asks, 'Tell me that which is decidedly better, guide me, O Lord! I am your disciple and I have sought refuge in you.'<sup>3</sup>

### SĀMKNHYAYOGA OR THE YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE

Now, Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa tries to satisfy Arjuna philosophically by adopting the method of Sāmkhyayoga or the Yoga of knowledge that the wisemen are those who would not grieve over the dead or the living. The man should be sure that there was never a time when he was not into being, nor, in fact, hereafter anyone shall cease to be.<sup>4</sup> Just as boyhood, youth and old age are attributes to the soul through the body, in the same way, it attains another body. The contacts between the senses and their objects, which give rise to the sensibility of heat and cold, pleasure and pain etc., are transitory and unsta-

1. The Bhagavadgītā ; 2 : 5.

2. The Science of Karma-yoga Vol. I bp B.G. Tilak, p. xii.

3. The Bhagavadgītā : 2 : 6, 7.

4. Ibid : 2 ; 11, 12.

ble. Therefore, these must be ignored. The man becomes eligible for immortality to whom pleasure and pain are alike and who is not tormented by the contacts of the sense-organs and their objects. The unreal has no existence and the real never ceases to be : the reality of both has, thus, been perceived by the seers of Truth in the shape of God-Realization<sup>1</sup>

The imperishable is that by which all this is pervaded ; for none can bring about the destruction of this indestructible substance e.g. soul. All the bodies pertaining to the imperishable, indefinable and eternal soul are perishable. The soul is that which neither kills nor is killed. It is neither born nor dies; nor does it exist on coming into being. For it is unborn, eternal, everlasting, ancient immeasurable, indestructible, permanent and without movements, even though the body is slain the soul is not.<sup>2</sup> Further it is all-pervading, unmanifest, unthinkable, supervisor, consentor, supporter, enjoyer, the great Lord, the ultimate good, the ultimate person, and the stable. This soul cannot be cut, burnt, made wet and made dried. It is without modification, beginning and qualities, as well as the knower<sup>4</sup> and the owner<sup>5</sup> of the field. It dwells in the centre.

The soul, in fact, is a fragment of God, being present in the hearts of all.<sup>6</sup>

Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa, thus, satisfying Arjuna with the examples of the imperishability of the soul, again emphasises—even regarding this soul as constantly taking birth and dying, you should not grieve because the death of him who is born is sure; and the rebirth of him who is dead is certain, as all beings were unmanifest before their birth and will become unmanifest again after their death. They are manifest only in the middle stage, What occasion, then, for lamentation?<sup>7</sup>

1. The Bhagavadgītā : 2 : 13-16.

2. Ibid : 2 : 17-20.

3. Ibid : 2 : 24.

4. Ibid : 13 : 2.

5. Ibid : 13 : 33.

6. Ibid : 15 : 7.

7. Ibid : : 26-28.

## KARMAYOGA OR THE YOGA OF ACTION

Man attains the highest perfection in the shape of God-Realization by devoting himself to his own duty born of his own nature. In the light of this Divine Statement Bhagavān tries His best to make Arjuna ready for fight by preaching him through the Yoga of Action, as mentioned hereunder :

Man's right is to work only, but never to the fruit thereof. The fruit of action must not be your object, nor you must be inclined to inaction. Everyone should perform his duties, dwelling in the yoga of action, being aloof from attachment and indifferent to success and failure. The yoga of action rests in equanimity.<sup>1</sup> Endowed with equanimity, one sheds in this life good and evil. Therefore, one should exert oneself for this yoga of equanimity. The skill in action lies in the practice thereof.<sup>2</sup> When one's mind crosses the mire of delusion, he grows indifferent to what had been heard and what is yet to be heard about this world and the next. And when one's mind even confused by hearing conflicting statements, remains steadfast in meditation on God, he attains the Blissful Supreme State. The two courses of *Sādhana*s or spiritual discipline have been set forth. In the case of the Sāṃkhyayogin, the spiritual discipline proceeds along with the path of knowledge, whereas in the case of the Karmayogin, it proceeds with the path of action. Man is unable to attain freedom from action without entering upon action, nor does he reach perfection merely by renunciation of action.<sup>3</sup> None can remain inactive even for a moment, every one is helplessly driven to action by his nature-born qualities. Man should have control over the organs of sense and action by the mind and should remain unattached. Desisting from action man cannot even maintain his own body. Man should perform his duty free from attachment and only for the sake of sacrifice. Man must believe in the Divine Statement—"all beings are evolved from food, food is produced by rain, rain is caused by sacrifice and the sacrifice is rooted in action, the action has its root in the Vedas and the Vedas

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1. The Bhagavadgītā : 2 : 47, 48.

2. Ibid : 2 : 50.

3. Ibid : 3 : 3-4.

spring from Almighty.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, Indestructible is always present in the sacrifice, therefore, man must perform sacrifice, except he who takes delight in the Self alone and in gratified with the Self.

Quoting His own example—“there is nothing in the three worlds to be done by Me, nor is there anything worth attaining unattained by Me, still I continue to act,” the Blessed Lord emphasises that man in all circumstances must continue to work.<sup>2</sup> Though all actions are being done by the modes of Prakṛti or the primordial matter, yet whose mind is deluded by egoism considers himself to be the doer. Therefore, Arjuna ! thinking himself to be the non-doer dedicating all actions to Me, with your mind fixed on Me, the self of all, freed from hope and the feeling of meum and cured of mental fever, be ready for fight.<sup>3</sup>

The Gītā preaches that both the yoga of knowledge and the yoga of action are ways to Supreme bliss. However, the yoga of action is superior to the yoga of knowledge.<sup>4</sup> The Karma-yogin or the doer who neither hates nor desires, should be considered a Sanyāsin or a renouncer. Whosoever is equal to the pairs of opposites is freed from the bondage of taking birth and dying. Sāṃkhyayoga or the renunciation of doership in relation to all activities of the mind, senses and the body is, however, difficult without Karmayoga.<sup>5</sup> The Sāṃkhyayogin, who knows the reality of the things, even though acting with his sense-organs, must believe that he does nothing, alleging that it is the senses that are acting on sense-objects, whereas the Karmayogin must work dedicating the fruit of actions to God, without selfish motive and thus, he who does his duty without hoping for the fruit of his actions is a Sanyāsin or a Sāṃkhyayogin and a Yogin or Karmayogin both. He cannot claim to be a renouncer, who has merely renounced the sacred fire, even so, he is not a Karmayogin, who has merely given up all actions. Therefore, none becomes a Yogin, who has not

1. The Bhagavadgītā 3 : 14.

2. Ibid : 3 22.

3. Ibid 3 30.

4. Ibid 5 2.

5. Ibid 5 6.

given up thoughts of the world.<sup>1</sup>

## THE BHAKTIYOGA OR THE YOGA OF DEVOTION

He, who is free from malice towards all beings, having no attachment, working for the sake of God and depending on Him is said to be devoted to Him.<sup>2</sup> The best Yogins are those who endowed with supreme faith and even united through meditation with indestructible, worship Him through single-minded devotion. Those who having controlled their senses, being even-minded towards all creatures and devoted to doing good to all, steadfastly adore as their very self the unthinkable, all-pervading, imperishable, ineffable, eternal, immobile, unmanifest and immutable Brahman, they too attain immortality.<sup>3</sup> Those who being solely devoted to God and surrendering all actions to God, worship God, constantly meditating on Him with the mind centred on Him are the true devotees to God. Therefore man must fix his mind on God and must establish his reason in Him alone.

Any of the trinity—the Sāṃkhyayoga, the Karmayoga and the Bhaktiyoga—leads man to the highest goal. If one is unable to fix his mind on God, through meditation, he must seek to attain God through the Yoga of practice or the Karmayoga. If he is unable to achieve the goal by practice, he must be steadfast on performing actions for God. If he is still unable to do so, then he must subdue his mind, senses etc., and must relinquish the fruit of all actions. The person who is aloof from malice towards all creatures, who is friendly as well as compassionate, who is free from the feeling of meum and is far from egoism, to whom pleasure and pain are alike and who is forgiving by nature, who is ever content and steadily united with God, who has subdued his senses, body and mind acquiring stability of mind and also surrendered his mind and intellect to God—such type of devotee is dear to God.<sup>5</sup>

1. The Bhagavadgītā 6 : 1, 2.

2. Ibid., 11 : 55.

3. Ibid., 12 : 3, 4.

4. Ibid., 12 : 3, 5.

5. Ibid., 12 : 13-20.

## THE PROHIBITIONS OR RENUNCIATIONS AS LAID DOWN IN THE GĪTĀ

The Gītā's prohibitions based on the expressed or implied grounds may be classified as hereinafter mentioned :—

### 1. *The Prohibited Acts:*

In any way, whatsoever, through mind, speech and body, the acts prohibited by the scriptures such as theft, adultery, deception, fraud, falsehood, oppression, violence, wrong-doing, taking of interdicted food etc. must be renounced.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. *Worldly Desires Prohibited:*

Sacrifices, charities, austerities, worship and other desire-born actions with a selfish motive for gaining objects of enjoyment, such as wife, progeny and wealth etc. or with the object of terminating various forms of sufferings, must totally be renounced.

### 3. *Worldly Achievements Prohibited:*

Dignity, fame, social prestige, wife, progeny-wealth and all other objects automatically gained by the force of *Prārabdha* or destiny must be renounced holding them as an obstacle in the way of God-Realization.

### 4. *Habit of Extracting Service from others with a Selfish motive Prohibited:*

Demanding service from another for personal happiness, asking for money, and acceptance of things and services given without one's asking for the same; or entertaining any desire in the mind for getting by any means one's self-interest served by another; all these and similar ideas of getting service from another for the satisfaction of self-interest must be prohibited.<sup>2</sup>

### 5. *Prohibition of Indolence and Desire for Fruit:*

In the performance of all duties, such as, cultivation of devotion to God, worship, service of the parents and other

1. Bhagavadgītā as interpreted by Jai D. Goyanka p. 372.

2. Ibid., pp. 372-74.

elders, performance of sacrifices, charities and austerities, maintenance of the household through the earning of livelihood by means of works assigned according to the Varṇāśrama-Dharma and taking of food and drink etc. for maintaining sound health, indolence in any form of desire for attaining worldly pleasures should be prohibited.

#### 6. *The Sense of Meum and Attachment Prohibited:*

The feeling of Meum and attachment in connection with all worldly objects like wealth, house, clothes, etc., all relations like wife, children, friends, etc., and all sorts of enjoyments of this world and the next like fame, prestige, honour, dignity etc., must totally be abandoned. Having abandoned the sense of meum and attachment, man's distaste for wasting even a moment of his valuable time in the company of men attached to the world and indulging in laughter, luxury, carelessness, enjoyment, backbiting and idle talks becomes automatically developed.

#### 7. *Subtle Desires and Egotism Prohibited:*

All worldly objects being creations of Māyā are totally perishable and only one Indestructible God equally pervades everywhere. Holding this notion as true, all subtle desires with regard to worldly objects, including the body and the actions thereof must totally be prohibited. In other words, due to total lack of identification with the body, there should be no sense of doership with regard to all actions done through mind, speech and body.

Thus, we see that even a house-holder can realize God through the practice of renunciation. Renunciation is the principal means of attaining God. The man performing his actions in the form of his duties born of his own nature must renounce the fruit of his actions by surrendering them to God. Throughout His speech of Gītā Bhagavān suggests, occasionally to Arjuna belonging to the warrior class to take part in the war, which is the duty of a warrior prince. Thus the sole theme of the Gītā appears to be insisting men to perform their duties in accordance with their nature-born abilities in the society.



### THE CONCEPT OF GOD

The Gitaic conception of God is evident when Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks himself as God by virtue of His being absorbed into the Brāhmī State. Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa through the agency of His discourse assigns a duty to mankind to know God as the undestructible seed with the attributes and qualities as mentioned hereunder :

God is ever Imperishable, who has extended all.<sup>1</sup> He is Brahman, the Equable, the Balanced and the Even.<sup>2</sup> He is the Creator and non-Creator both.<sup>3</sup> He is neither Desirous for the fruit of His work nor the work affects Him.<sup>4</sup> He is All-Pervading. He is Origin as well as Dissolution of Universe.<sup>5</sup> He is Unmanifest and Unborn as well as the Knower of past, present and future, but no one knows Him.<sup>6</sup> He is the President of sacrifices. Seer of old, Supporter of all, as well as the Smaller than an atom.<sup>7</sup> His form is beyond imaginations, yet His splendour is of the colour of the sun, being beyond the reach of the darkness.<sup>8</sup> He is the Supreme Divine Puruṣa and *Om* as one letter Brahman.<sup>9</sup> He is the Father, the Mother and the Grandfather of the Universe, as well as the Foundation and Treasure-House thereof.<sup>10</sup> He is the Vedic gods—god of air, fire, death and night as well as the moon god.<sup>11</sup> God may further be conceived an immortality, death, being and non-being, as well as without beginning.<sup>12</sup> And He is the subtle, the occupier of all the qualities such as being unattached, maintaining all, enjoying all qualities and, so on.<sup>13</sup>

The Gitaic conception of God as cited above is absolutely the same as available in the older Upaniṣads.

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1. The Bhagavadgītā : 2 : 17.
  2. Ibid., 5 : 19.
  3. Ibid., 4 : 13.
  4. Ibid., 4 : 14.
  5. Ibid., 7 : 6.
  6. Ibid., 7 : 24—26 ; Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad : 4.4.20.
  7. Ibid., 8 : 4. 9. Iśāvāsyopaniṣad : 8.
  8. Ibid., 8 : 9, Muṇḍakopaniṣad—3.1.6; Māṇḍūkya : 7.
  9. Ibid., 8 : 13.
  10. Ibid : 8 : 17, 18.
  11. Ibid., 11 : 39.
  12. Ibid., 9 : 19, 10 : 3.
  13. Ibid., 13 : 15,

*Previous Scriptures*

The whole theme of the Gītā is the essence of all the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa while preaching to Arjuna admits the authority of the Vedas in connection with the three Guṇas.<sup>1</sup> The Gītā expressly legalises the actions sanctioned by the three Vedas.<sup>2</sup> The express admittance of the authority of the Upaniṣads is also found in the Gītā as it contains quite a number of the Upaniṣadic verses in their original form. Further the finishing touch of every chapter of the Gītā, claiming itself to be an 'Upaniṣad' undoubtedly respects the injunctions sanctioned by the Upaniṣads. The subject matter of the Gītā gives clues to the admittance of the authority of other scriptures prevailing in the past.

## RE-INCARNATION OF SOUL

The concept of soul has already been discussed under the head 'Sāṃkhyayoga' or the Yoga of knowledge, we therefore, now have to deal with that of re-incarnation of soul. The Gītā teaches that man is born again and again and keeps on doing so for thousands of lives until he is sufficiently spiritually evolved to reach the stage of immortality e.g. freedom from necessity of taking birth again and again in various forms. Even Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa went through this tedious process of life and death for a large number of lives before He attained Godhood.<sup>3</sup>

The men of meritorious deeds are entitled to take birth in the house of pious and wealthy men or they may be reborn in the family of enlightened Yogins.<sup>4</sup> The Yogin, however, who diligently takes up the practice attaining perfection in this very life through the help of latencies of many births and being thoroughly purged of sin forthwith reaches the Supreme State. All the worlds from Brahmaloḥa or the Abode of Brahman downwards are subject to appearance and

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1. The Bhagavadgītā : 2 45.

2. Ibid., 6 : 20, 4 : 1-3.

3. Ibid., 4 : 5, 6-45.

4. Ibid., 6 : 40-42.

disappearance, but on attaining God there is no rebirth. But those who have no faith in this Dharma of Gītā fail to reach Brahman and thereby they resolve in the path of the world of death.<sup>1</sup>

### THE CONCEPT OF SALVATION

The Gitaic conception of salvation rests in the words—“devoted to his own duty man attains the highest perfection in the shape of God-Realization.”<sup>2</sup> For the attainment of salvation Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa set forth the three paths—The Sāṃkhya-yoga, the Karmayoga and the Bhaktiyoga. By adopting any of these three paths, one can attain salvation. As the Divine Lord says—“The yoga of knowledge and the Yoga of action both lead to supreme bliss. However the Yoga of action is superior to the Yoga of knowledge. The Karmayogin, who neither hates nor desires should be ever considered a Sanyāsin or renouncer. He, who has transcended the pairs of opposites, such as pleasure and pain, good and bad etc., is freed from the cycle of taking birth and dying.”<sup>3</sup>

The salvation through the path of devotion is described as, “those who controlling all their senses are even-minded towards all and devoted to doing good to all beings, constantly adore as their very self, the unthinkable, all-pervading, imperishable, ineffable, eternal, immobile, unmanifest and immutable Brahman, they too attain bliss in the shape of salvation.” Furthermore, those who solely devoted to the Supreme Lord and surrendering all actions to Him worship the Manifest Divine, constantly meditating on Him with single-minded devotion are released from the ocean of birth and death.<sup>4</sup>

### THE CONCEPT OF SELF-CONTROL

The Gītā describes the ways of self-control in the manner given below : On a clean spot having firmly placed his seat on Kuśa-grass, a deer-skin and a cloth spread thereon one below another and sitting on that seat, concentrating the mind and controlling the functions of the mind and senses, a

1. The Bhagavadgītā: 9 : 3.

2. Ibid., 18-45.

3. Ibid., 5.2-3.

4. Ibid., 12 : 3, 4, 6, 7.

person should practice Yoga for self-purification. Keeping the trunk, head and neck straight and steady, remaining firm and looking at the tip of his nose, without looking in other directions, pledged to the vow of continence and fearless, keeping himself perfectly calm and with the mind thoroughly brought under control and fixed on God, a person should sit absorbed in Him. Thus constantly applying his mind to the Divine Lord a person attains the supreme bliss in the shape of God-Realization.<sup>1</sup>

### DIVINE AND DEMONIAL PROPERTIES

#### *Divine Properties :*

The marks of one who is naturally endowed with divine virtues are fearlessness, absolute purity of heart, constant absorption of mind in meditation for self-realization and the Sāttvika form of charity, control of the senses, worship of God, celestials and superiors and the performance of pouring oblations into the sacred fire and other auspicious acts, study of the Vedas and other scriptures chanting of Divine Names and Glories, enduring hardships for the sake of one's own Dharma and straightness of mind, body and senses.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore the marks of Him who is endowed with the divine properties are non-violence in thought, speech and action, truthfulness and geniality of word, absence of anger even on provocations, renunciation of the idea of doership, tranquility of mind, refraining from malicious talks, kindness to all beings, lack of attachment to the objects of the senses even during their contact with the senses, mildness, sense of shame in doing things not sanctioned by the sacred books, abstaining from idle pursuits, sublimity, forgiveness, external purity absence of malice and the absence of self-importance.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Demoniacal Properties :*

On the contrary the marks of one who is born with demoniacal properties are hypocrisy arrogance, pride, anger, harshness and ignorance.<sup>4</sup>

1. The Bhagavadgītā : 6: 10-18.

2. Ibid 16 : 1.

3. Ibid., : 16 : 2, 3.

4. Ibid., 16 : 4.

Of these two, the divine properties are regarded as conducive to liberation and the demoniacal ones as conducive to bondage. In this world there are two types of beings—divine and demoniacal. The divine being is endowed with the divine virtues as mentioned above, whereas the demoniacal one is endowed with the demoniacal properties. The people belonging to the demoniac group do not know what is right and what is wrong. They are lukewarm to their commissions and omissions. Hence they possess neither purity nor good conduct nor truthfulness.<sup>1</sup>

### THREE GUṆAS OR MODES OF PRAKṚTI

Originally, the Vedas deal with the three Guṇas and their evolutes in the form of worldly enjoyments.<sup>2</sup> God's Prakṛti or nature in His primordial undeveloped state is the womb of all creatures. God places the seed of consciousness. The birth of all beings follows from this combination of Matter and Spirit. This primordial Matter is the Mother and God Himself is the Father of all the bodies which take birth from different wombs. The nature-born qualities of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* firmly tie the imperishable soul absorbed in the body.<sup>3</sup> Of these, the Sāttvika quality, being immaculate is illuminating and flawless. It binds through self-identification with happiness and wisdom. The quality of *Rajas* which is of the nature of the passion is born of cupidity and attachment. It binds the soul through attachment to the feeling of doership and the fruit of doings. And the quality of *Tamas* is the deluder of all embodied beings as it is born of ignorance. It disqualifies the soul through error, sloth and sleep.<sup>4</sup>

The quality of *Sattva* urges one to happiness and the quality of *Rajas* to action while *Tamas* clouding wisdom urges one to utter ruin. *Sattva* dominates *Rajas* and *Tamas* while *Tamas* dominates *Sattva* and *Rajas*.<sup>5</sup>

When a person dies during the predominance of the Sāt-

1. The Bhagavadgītā : 16 : 5-7.

2. Ibid., 2 : 45.

3. Ibid., 14 : 3-5.

4. Ibid., 14 : 6-8.

5. Ibid., 14 : 9, 14.

tvika quality, he reaches Supreme State in the heaven. Dying when *Rajas* in the ascendant, he takes birth in the family of those attached to action, while expiring during the predominance of *Tamas*, he takes birth in the wombs of stupid creatures.<sup>1</sup> Wisdom arises from *Sattva*, greed from *Rajas* and error, stupor and ignorance from *Tamas*.<sup>2</sup>

### THE THREE KINDS OF FOOD

According to the Gītā food is of three kinds—*Sāttvika*, *Rājasa* and *Tāmasa*. The food which promotes longevity, intelligence, strength, health, happiness and delight and which is sweet, bland nourishing and agreeable is liked by the *Sāttvika* type of men. The food which is bitter, acid salted, very hot, pungent, dry, burning and giving rise to pain, grief and illness is liked by the *Rājasa* type of men. And the food which is half-cooked, insipid, putrid, stale, impure and polluted is liked by the *Tāmasa* type of men.<sup>3</sup>

It is not only food which is divided into three categories according to the three Guṇas of nature but there is no existence of anything on earth, in the heavens or among the celestials or anywhere else in the creation which is free from these qualities born of Prakṛti.<sup>4</sup>

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1. The Bhagavadgītā : 14 : 14, 15.

2. Ibid., 14 : 17.

3. Ibid., 17 : 7-10.

4. Ibid., 18 : 40.

## A General View on the Qur'an

*Authenticity of the Qur'an* : The words revealed to Muḥammad occasionally in the course of 23 years, according to the time, place and circumstances, were named as '*Qur'ān*' by the Divine Command.<sup>1</sup> The word '*Qur'ān*' springs from the Arabic root, '*Qara'a*' meaning 'to pronounce publicly' or 'to recite'. The roots '*to cry*' and '*Krand*' of English and Sanskrit languages respectively seem to be of the same origin. Thus the Qur'ān means the volume to be recited, proclaimed and to be read as well. The Jews before Islām called their scriptures as '*Qarāh*' meaning the same as Qur'ān.<sup>2</sup> The Qur'ān itself holds the word Qur'ān for the pre-revelations.<sup>3</sup> The root '*Qara*' occurs in the first revelation of the Qur'ān in the same sense.<sup>4</sup> As the sacred book of more than hundreds of crores of the present population of the world, the Qur'ān possesses a position of a revealed book like Torah, Gospel and Psalms. It was revealed on the night of power (Laylat-ul-Qadr) to the prophet of Islām at the age of forty,

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah : 185.

2. Gītā Aur Qur'ān—Pt. Sundarlal, 1946, (Hindi Edition) p. 172.

3. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Hijr : 81, 91.

4. Ibid., Al-'Alaq : 1, 3.

through the agency of Gabriel, the mightiest of the archangels called the holy or the true spirit,<sup>1</sup> as the revealer of the God's message. To the pious Muslims, it is the very words of Allāh (Kalām-ullāh), the true code of life and the source of all his hopes for the world to come. It is the guidance for mankind and the criterion of right and wrong.<sup>2</sup> It is the final scripture in which there can be no change or alteration, absolutely free from error and comprising all secrets both of the world and the hereafter. The safety of Qur'ān is promised by Allāh Himself. Its reading, teaching and listening is ordained by Him.

It is the book ! there is no doubt therein a guidance to the pious, who believe in the unseen (*Ghayb*) and are steadfast in prayer and give alms of what Allāh has bestowed upon them, who believe in the words of Allāh revealed to Muḥammad and that which was revealed before him in the form of Torah, Gospel, Psalms and others and who are sure of the Hereafter. These are on the plain road led by their Lord and are successful.<sup>3</sup>

It is the perception from the Lord of the worlds and a mercy to a folk who believe.<sup>4</sup> This volume could not have been devised by any save God, there is no doubt in its being the very words of Allāh.<sup>5</sup> No one can bring a verse like it. If mankind and Jinns are united together and try to bring the like of this Qur'ān, they cannot do so.<sup>6</sup> The bare name Qur'ān appears in the scripture eleven times, with the article thirty-six times and with the pronoun fifteen times. It applies, sometimes, to some particular Sūrah, but sometimes to the whole collection thereof.

It is universally accepted to be written with the utmost elegance and purity of style, for the standard of the Arabic language scarcely comes within the fence of grammatical criticism. Its style and diction is full of surpassing beauty and

1. The Holy Qur'ān: Al-Baqarah 87, 97, 253, Al-Maidah 110.

2. Ibid., Al-Baqarah 185.

3. Ibid.,—2-5.

4. Ibid.,—Al-A'raf 203.

5. Ibid.,—Yūnus 38.

6. Ibid.,—Bani Isrā'īl 88.



eloquence and it is composed in the form of poetic prose.<sup>1</sup> Its style is generally charming with a flow like that of a river.<sup>2</sup> One verse thereof contains more matter in its fold. The similes of Asiatic style are given for increasing the beauty of the tongue. Particularly where the glories and powers of the Creator are described, the language of high standard is used.<sup>3</sup> The various styles of reciting the Qur'ān among Muslims are like those of reciting Vedas among Hindus.<sup>4</sup> The prophet of Islām was ordered by the Lord of the worlds to tell his people to believe in the Divine Message of the Qur'ān.<sup>5</sup> There is none to change the words of the Qur'ān save Allāh who can abrogate or cause any number of the verses thereof to be forgotten from the minds of men and bring in its place a better or the like thereof.<sup>6</sup> Thus sixteen verses of the Qur'ān are said to be abrogated in the very life time of the prophet. And some more verses which were irrelevant to the time were considered to be abrogated later.<sup>7</sup>

A foreigner's opinion about the Qur'ān runs as 'The Koran abounds in excellent moral suggestions and precepts; its composition is so fragmentary that we cannot turn to a single page without finding maxims of which all men must approve of this fragmentary constructions. It yields maxims, mottoes and rules, complete in themselves suitable for common men in any of the incidents of life.'<sup>8</sup> And another opines about the sacred book of Islām as 'It is a literal revelation of God dictated to Muḥammad by Gabriel, perfect in every letter. It is an ever-present miracle, witnessing to itself and to Muḥammad, the prophet of God. Its miraculous quality resides partly in its style so perfect and lofty that neither men nor Jinns

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1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Qāri'ah 1—11.

2. The Holy Qur'ān—Ash—Shams, Ad-Dhuhā, Az-Zilzāl, Al-Mursilāt. 1-6 Al-Adiyāt, and so on.

3. Sale's Preliminary Discourse, p. 44.

4. Gītā Aur Qur'ān—Pt. Sundarlal ed 1946 p.176.

5. The Holy Qur'ān—Al Maidah 109, 110.

6. Ibid—Al-Baqarah 106, An-Nahl—101.

7. The Wisdom of the Qur'ān—Mahmud Mukhtar Pasha, Introduction p. 45.

8. A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe, London, Vol. I pp. 343-44.

could produce a single chapter to compare with its briefest chapter and partly in its contents of teachings. Prophecies about the future and amazingly accurate information such as the illiterate Muḥammad could never have gathered of his own accord.<sup>1</sup>

*The Preservation of the Qur'ān:* The Sūrahs after their revelation remained as if inscribed upon the heart of Muḥammad. The prophet was himself a memorizer (Ḥāfiẓh) of the complete Holy Volume, and at the time of inspiration, or shortly after, each passage was recited by him before the companions who happened to be present, and was committed to writing by the prophet's scribe or some one amongst them upon palm-leaves, leather, stones or other things easily available.<sup>2</sup> These contents, thus recorded were not systematically arranged during the prophet's life-time.<sup>3</sup> But they were preserved; anyhow, fragmentary copies and mainly by oral recitation. On diminishing a great number of memorizers (Ḥuffāẓh) in the sanguinary battles after the battle of Yamāmā (A.D. 633), Abū Bakr, who was the Caliph of the time with the consultation of 'Umar bin Al-Kha't'āb through the trusteeship of Zayd bin Thābit had collected those copies which were taken away, more or less incomplete, by the followers of the prophet for their private recital and re-arranged them with the addition.

of the portions, which had not been previously written.

The manuscripts, thus compiled, were deposited with Abū Bakr, then with 'Umar and on his death they were transferred to his daughter Ḥafsā. Thereafter in the caliphate of Uthmān Hudhayfā bin Al-Yaman observed much difference in the text of Qur'ān as read in Syria and Iraq. Fearing lest the Holy Book should become the subject of dispute like the scriptures of Jews and Christians, he advised the Caliph for its solution. Uthmān, in the year 651 A.D. ordered Zayd bin Thābit for its revision with the help of three Qurayshites, saying to the latter: 'If you differ from Zayd regarding any word of the Qur'ān write it in the

1. Towards Understanding Islam—Harry Gaylard, Dorman. New York, p. 3.

2. A Literary History of the Arabs—R.A. Nicholson, p. 141.

3. Muir's Life of Mohomet, Introduction, p. 2 seq.

dialect of Quraysh for it was revealed therein.<sup>1</sup> This compilation has, ever since, remained as a final edition, which has been universally accepted. The copies of this edition were multiplied and were dispersed throughout the empire and the existing old copies were, by the order of Uthmān, committed to the flames.<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to note that out of the seven chief editions of the Qur'ān only two were published and used at Madinah, the third at Mecca, the fourth at Kāfah, the fifth at Baṣrah, the sixth in Syria while the seventh became the most popular edition all over the Muslim world. The first edition appeared in Arabic at Venice in 1530 A.D. under the direction of Payninus of Bescia. All these copies were committed to the flames by the order of the Pope of Rome, and the next complete Arabic edition was published at Hamburg in 1649 A.D. under the patronage of Hinkelmann. This is the most popular version containing 323621 letters or 77934 words.<sup>3</sup> The subject matter and the number of words, being the same in all the seven editions, the number of verses differs due to the acceptance of one verse for two and vice versa. Thus, of these editions, one contains 6000 verses, another 6214, one 6219, one 6236, one 6226 and the next 6225 verses.<sup>4</sup>

The Qur'ān due to the historical background in which it remained in the state of confusion till the caliphate of Abū Bakr before its final publication during the caliphate of Uthmān in 652 A.D. it is difficult to assert that it has been published in the original text of the words actually spoken by the prophet from time to time under the circumstances. This edition, however containing 114 Sūrahs bearing the seal of eminent scholars has universally been accepted.

## THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE QUR'ĀN

The Holy Volume of Islām, 'Al-Qur'ān' or 'the Reciting'

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1. The Fihrist Ed., G. Fluegel, p. 24.
  2. Muir, op. cit., Introduction, p. 14.
  3. The Teaching of the Qur'ān—H.U.W. Stanton, Introduction, p. 12.
  4. Gītā Aur Qurān—op.cit. pp. 174-75.

contains a series of revelations revealed to Muḥammad, the prophet of Islām at intervals. Moreover, this Qur'ān was extracted from an original code, the Umm-ul-Kitab or 'the Mother of the Book', which is preserved in Heaven.<sup>1</sup> The intermediary that brought the revelations to earth was a faithful spirit, later identified as the angel Gabriel.<sup>2</sup> This revelation is a guide for him who should do right and a decision on all matters, because God has willed it so.<sup>3</sup> The Sūrahs or the chapters of the Holy Qur'ān may, in their broad outline, be divided into two classes :

1. *The Makkī or the Meccan Sūrahs* : The Makkī or the Meccan Sūrahs are those which were revealed to the prophet of Islām at Mecca.

2. *The Madanī or the Madinite Sūrahs* : The Sūrahs which were revealed to Muḥammad during the period of his stay at Madīnah are called the Madanī or the Madinite Sūrahs.

The ethical teachings of the Qur'ān till the time of the Prophet's migration to Madīnah may be summarized in three codes. The first of these codes includes four positive commandments and seven prohibitions. The four commandments are:—

1. To know one God only.
2. To be kind to parents.
3. To give to the poor.
4. To be moderate in spending.

The prohibited things are :—

1. Infanticide
2. Adultery
3. Killing unjustly
4. Robbing orphans
5. Cheating in trade
6. Believing false reports,
7. Showing pride.<sup>4</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Az-Zukhruf : 3, Ar-Ra'd 39, An-Nabā 29.

2. Ibid.,—Al-Baqarah 97, 253.

3. The Sociology of Islam—R. Levy, Vol. I p. 214.

4. Studies in Muslim Ethics : D. M. Donaldson, p. 25 and The Holy Qur'ān—Bani-Isrāil : 23—40.

The second code is in the form of discrimination between the high and the low-ranked.

The third code is styled as of an old Persian, as modelled in the Sūrah Luqmān of the Qur'ān. Its admonitions are : —

1. To observe duties to parents
2. To remember that Allāh brings everything to light
3. To seek refuge in prayer to be steadfast, reasonable and patient
4. To live so as to avoid pride and ignorance.<sup>1</sup>

Other moral obligations of the Qur'ān may roughly be reiterated as: 'man should assist his fellow-being and the needy and should be free from the snare of attachment to delusive wealth and be chaste in his life and be aloof from the evil-practice of infanticide.'<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'ān is the scripture which leads men to the straight path. It contains clear statements of the guidance and the criterion of good and evil.<sup>3</sup> According to orthodox Muslim theologians, the Qur'ān is the only source of universal guidance and good, but there is no doubt that the Qur'ān contributes a large number of articles for providing an exhaustive code of human ethics here and for success Here-after.

### THE CONCEPT OF GOD

The Quranic name of God is Allāh, the Responsive, the Aware, the Almighty, the Defender, the Subtile, the Omnipresent, the Omnipotent, the Lord of Mercy, the Lord of Tyranny, the Owner of Glory and so on. God is the only praiseworthy, the Lord of the worlds, the Beneficent, the Merciful, the only object of worship, the Helper and the Leader of the right path, followed before by the virtuous.<sup>4</sup> Allāh is the One, the Matchless, He begets none, nor He was begotten.<sup>5</sup> 'He must be conceived as superior to the antagonistic tendency of reproduction.

1. Studies in Muslims Ethics—D. M. Donaldson, p. 25.

2. The Holy Qur'ān Al-An'ām 152, Banī Isrā'īl 33.

3. Ibid—Al-Baqarah 185.

4. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Fātiḥah 1—6.

5. Ibid.—At-Tanḥīd 1—4.

This characteristic of the perfect ego is one of the most essential elements in the Quranic conception of God.<sup>1</sup> The other constituents of God, from a purely intellectual point of view, being of greater importance are creativeness, omnipotence, knowledge and eternity. The knowledge of God includes the knowledge of the creator and the creation comprising the universe, the soul and the circumstances of Heaven and Hell attending after death. The realization of the knowledge of God and His works brings about human perfection. But this state can be reached only when the barriers of the heart precluding such realization are removed.<sup>2</sup>

The general principles, which are proclaimed in the scripture of Islām to govern the conduct of the prophet himself and of those who believe, are based on the fundamental assumption that God created both men and women from a single soul,<sup>3</sup> and He sees, hears and knows everything that they do.<sup>4</sup> Allāh is able to do all things.<sup>5</sup> He enjoins upon believers to do justice and good and give to their kindred their due, and to fulfil His covenant and to make Allāh their surety.<sup>6</sup> He knows the nature of man's breast<sup>7</sup> and unto Him all things are brought back.<sup>8</sup> He is the First and the Last, the Outer and the Inner and He has created the Heavens and the Earth in six days and then He mounted the Throne.<sup>9</sup> 'Allāh is the source of all things, to whom all creatures return, the Powerful who fixes all, the King of the kingdom, Who rules all; the Forceful, the Guardian, the Great, the All-compelling, the Haughty, He is the Creator, Maker and Fashioner. He sustains as the Life-giver and Provider. He is the Dominator or Victorious, Who subdues all things to His will'.<sup>10</sup> Allāh is the Seer of all but is seen by none.

1. Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islām—Sir Md. Iqbal, p. 88.

2. The Ethical Philosophy of Al-Ghazzali-Vol. I Part III : M. Umar-ud-din, p. 20.

3. The Holy Qur'ān : An-Nisā 1.

4. Ibid., Al Baqarah 233, 237 and An-Nūr 28.

5. Ibid., Al Baqarah 20.

6. Ibid., Al-Nahl 90, 91.

7. Ibid., Al-Anfāl 45.

8. Ibid., : 44.

9. Ibid—Al Hadid : 3, 4.

10. The Teaching of the Qur'ān—H.U.W. Stanton, p. 34.

He is the Truth or Reality and is the Judge and the Owner of the Day of Judgment. He loves those who follow His messenger Muḥammad. Allāh is Nigh and answers to the prayer of His suppliant.<sup>1</sup>

### THE CONCEPT OF SOUL

The Qur'ān does not invite a keen attention concerning the soul or the spirit. The prophet of Islām describes soul very briefly by merely saying that the soul is by 'the command of Allāh and ye people are not able to understand its secrets because ye have been vouchsafed a little knowledge.'<sup>2</sup> Further, it is interpreted as: 'No soul can ever die except by the permission of God.'<sup>3</sup> The soul is originally one, and all men and women are created from that single soul,<sup>4</sup> that is, indeed, God Himself. It acts in accordance with the commandment of Allāh.<sup>5</sup> The different modes of soul, though not discussed in detail, yet there may be available a short account concerning it, such as 'God receives men's souls at the time of their death' and, that soul which does not die exists in its sleep. 'He retains the souls of those whose death is ordained and dismisses the rest which are only in the state of sleep till an appointed time of death.'<sup>6</sup> Men's souls are judged on the Day of Judgment according to their deeds and they will either enjoy the joys of paradise or suffer the curse of hell for their deeds forever.<sup>7</sup>

### THE CONCEPT OF REVELATION

The concept of revelation, in accordance with the Qur'ān, immediately includes in its fold the doctrine of the angels, which claims Jibrīl (Gabriel), the mightiest of all the archangels as well as the revealer of the Divine Message, variously called, 'The Holy Spirit', 'The True Spirit' etc. in this capacity. Allāh supports the worlds by appointing three thousand angels and

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah : 186.

2. Ibid—Bani, Isrā'īl : 85.

3. Ibid—Al-i-Imrān : 145.

4. Ibid—Al-A'raf : 189, An-Nisā : 1.

5. Ibid—Hūd : 105, and Yūnus : 101.

6. Ibid—Az-Zumar : 42 (Translation of M. Farman Ali 1937)

7. Ibid—Al-Baqarah : 48 and Bani Isrā'īl : 7.

helps believers against the tyranny of disbelievers with five thousand angels.<sup>1</sup> 'No one, however, can claim to know the exact figure of the angels except God. Out of the numerous angels, four are very prominent. The first of them is Jibrīl (Gabriel), the revealer of the Divine Messages; the second is Isrāfīl, who will breath Šūr on the Day of Resurrection; the third Mikāīl (Michael), the manager of rain and livelihood, and the fourth is Izrāīl, the angel of death.'<sup>2</sup> The angels bear up the throne of God and worship Him constantly. Iblīs was also an angel but was cast down from Paradise by the Divine Command on his not prostrating to Adam.<sup>3</sup> They are personal assistants to Allāh to guard and help believers particularly in fighting for the Faith. They record the deeds of men, receive their souls, and intercede for the believers on the Judgment Day.<sup>4</sup> The two angels who record the good and the evil deeds of men are called 'Kirāman—Kātibain' or 'the recorders'. The two angels who question in the grave are called 'Munkir and Nakīr'.<sup>5</sup>

*The Jinns* : The Angels and the Jinns are not clearly distinguished from one another. For instance in the Sūrah Al-Baqarah 34, Iblīs appears as one of the angels, but in the Sūrah Al-Kahf 51, he stands as one of the Jinns. Generally speaking, the Jinns are regarded as a class of beings midway between men and angels or men devils who, like human beings, are bound to worship Allāh.<sup>6</sup> Jinns and devils are regarded as subject to the great magician prophet Sulaimān (Solomon).<sup>7</sup>

### THE SCRIPTURES

The scripture occurs from the Quranic word 'Kitāb', which also includes other scriptures revealed before.<sup>8</sup> Umm-ul-Kitāb

1. Āl-I-'Imrān : 124, 125.
2. Ta'lim-ul-Islām—Part II Mufti Kifāyatullah, p. 5.
3. The Holy Qur'ān—Al Baqarah : 34.
4. The Teaching of the Qur'ān—H.U.W. Stanton, p. 38.
5. Ta'lim-ul-Islām Part III, Mufti Kifāyatullah, p. 7.
6. The Teaching of the Qur'ān : H.U.W. Stanton, p. 39.
7. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah : 102.
8. Ibid., 89.



or the Mother of the Books is the *perfect volume* containing all scriptures in its fold kept with Allāh, from which every successive revelation is extracted and sent down.<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'ān confirms the previous scriptures revealed occasionally between Adam to Muḥammad. Taurāt (Torah) Injīl (Gospel) and Zubūr (Psalms) are clearly mentioned in the Qur'ān as previous scriptures, but the names of the scriptures revealed to the previous prophets like Adam, Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Nūh (Noah) Ismā'il, Sulaimān (Soloman), Ya'qūb (Jacob), Ishāq (Isaac), Dāūd (David), John, (Job), Yūnus (Jonah), Yūsuf (Joseph), Lū't (Lot), Idrīs, Hārūn (Aaron), Zakariyah, Hūd, Šālih, Shu'ayb (Shoeb), etc., are not mentioned in the Qur'ān. But the believers are ordained to believe in them.<sup>2</sup>

### REVELATION AND INSPIRATION

The scripture means the revelation or the unveiling of Divine preachings and mysteries. This is asserted, most elaborately, regarding the Qur'ān itself, but the same stands also for other scriptures. Inspiration or Wahī means the Divine speech to man, conveying occasionally the objective message as well as the subjective method of its imparting.<sup>3</sup>

### THE CONCEPT OF JUDGMENT

At the time of death, the souls are surrendered to God by the angel of death, 'Izrāil. God keeps all souls in His custody till the Day of Resurrection. After the Day of Calamity, wherein mankind will be as thinly-scattered moths and the mountain will be as carded wool, there comes the Day of Resurrection, which is, in fact, the Judgment Day. Those persons whose scales are heavy with good works will live a pleasant life, whereas those whose scales are light will suffer the raging fires of Hell.<sup>4</sup> Men will suffer a lot on that day, except those who believe and do good works.<sup>5</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-A'rāf : 37.

2. The Teaching of the Qur'ān—H.U.W. Stanton, p. 40.

3. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah : 4, 41, Al-Imrān : 3.

4. Ibid—Al-Qārī'ah : 3-11.

5. Ibid—Al-Aqr : 2, 3.

### THE PARADISE

'The abode of the virtuous is designated as Jannat or paradise. It is the Garden of Refuge, Delight and Eternity as well as the Garden of Eden or Pleasure'. The blessed are welcomed with greetings of peace and dwell in the gardens by cool flowing streams before the Mighty King.<sup>1</sup> They enjoy exquisite food, drink, virgin dark-eyed damsels (Hūrs) and other luxuries of the Heaven.<sup>2</sup>

### THE HELL

The Quranic name for Hell is Nār or Jahannam. It has seven gates watched by nineteen angels. It blazes with intolerable flames. Instead of repose and ease the cursed are tortured with burning chains and beaten with iron clubs. They are forced to partake of dirty food and boiling water. The Quranic Hell is the place where there is no peace, no kind greetings, but wranglings with the seducers.

### THE DIVINE DECREES

'The fate of men and cities is written in their book on a clear register containing all secret things. The doctrine of predestination rests in 'whatever befalls on men of good it is from Allāh and whatever befalls of bad it is from man.'<sup>3</sup> Predestination fixes the weal or woe of beings in the life to come. Similarly, it had determined in the past the creation of all beings and their actions, beliefs, unbeliefs and other events of their life.<sup>4</sup>

### THE CONCEPT OF SALVATION

Man should follow the will of Allāh as contained in the Qur'ān. All men are descended from one pair and originally of one religion or Ummah.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, all should live together with a compromise as believing brothers, performing

1. The Teaching of the Qur'ān H.U.W. Stanton, p. 53.

2. The Holy Qur'ān : As-Sajadah : 19.

3. Teaching of the Qur'ān : Stanton, H.U.S. p. 55.

4. Ibid : p. 55.

5. The Holy Qur'ān:Al-Baqarah : 213.

their five prominent duties : confession of faith, (Kalimah), prayer (Ṣalāt), almsgiving (Zakāt), fasting (Saum) and the pilgrimage (Ḥajj).

1. Confession of faith or the *Kalimah* rests in confessing by heart that Allāh is the only worshipable Deity and Muḥammad is His Apostle.<sup>1</sup>

2. Prayer or the *Ṣalāt* being the first means of release is incumbent on all Muslims. Unto Allāh belongs the East and the West, therefore, whithersoever man turns his face in prayer, Allāh is there.<sup>2</sup>

But it is better to turn in prayer towards the Qiblah, the sacred mosque, or the inviolable place of worship at Mecca.<sup>3</sup> Prayer should be offered to One God after having done ablution on five stated hours : before sunrise, at afternoon, before sunset, after sunset and at night.<sup>4</sup>

3. Almsgiving or the *Zakāt*, the poor-due is prescribed for the believers. One cannot attain righteousness until one gives away in alms what God has bestowed.<sup>5</sup> The poor-due must be paid to one's own kinsfolk, orphans, needy, wayfarers and the beggars.<sup>6</sup> The Qur'ān holds it as a loan to Allāh, who will repay it doubly with a Divine Usury.<sup>7</sup>

4. Fasting or the *Saum*—The general conception of fasting is work of piety and a penance for offences. Man is ordained to fast the whole month of Ramadān excepting those sick or abroad. But they should fast the same number of days afterwards.<sup>8</sup> The fasters can eat and drink and hold intercourse with their wives until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct from the black thread of the night. Thereafter they should strictly observe the fast till night-fall and touch nothing but sit in devotion in the mosques.<sup>9</sup>

1. Ta'lim-ul-Islām—M. Kifāyatullāh pp. 1-2.

2. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah : 115.

3. Ibid.,— 144.

4. The Teaching of the Qur'ān—H.U.W. Stanton, p. 59

5. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah : 3.

6. Ibid : 177, 215.

7. Ibid., 245.

8. Ibid., 185.

9. Ibid, 187.

5. Pilgrimage or the *Ḥajj*: The performance of pilgrimage for visiting the Inviolable Place of Worship at Mecca is ordained for the believers, by the Divine Ruler. In case they can't they must send such gifts as can be received easily and they should not shave their heads until the gifts have reached their destination. In the case of sickness or ailment of the head, they must pay a ransom in the form of fasting, alms-giving or offering. If one is in safety, then whosoever contents himself with the visit for the pilgrimage will offer such gifts. And whosoever cannot find such gifts, should observe a fast of three days while on the pilgrimage (and of seven days on his return). The pilgrimage is to be undertaken at the time of the new moon of Zul-Hijjah. The pilgrims are to pay their vows<sup>1</sup> and make the circuit of the Ka'bah<sup>1</sup> and should proceed to Šafā and Marwā (the two holy hills) and to Mount Arafāt. The sacrifice by slaughtering the camels or other (lawful) animals after invoking the name of Allāh over them is to be performed on the tenth day. Pilgrims who are unable to arrive in time may send an animal to be sacrificed on their behalf. The flesh of the sacrificed animal should be eaten by themselves and be distributed among the poor. The flesh of the sacrifices is not acceptable to God but He accepts the piety of the sacrificers.<sup>2</sup> After the sacrifice the pilgrims (Ḥājis) should remain there to worship Allāh at least for two days.<sup>3</sup> Game is made unlawful on the pilgrimage.<sup>4</sup>

### TAQWĀ OR PIETY

Besides these five fundamental conditions for salvation, the mode of salvation is conceived in two ways. Subjectively, as affecting the personal attitude of the believer, through the practice of piety and objectively, the object regulating the pilgrim's life is surrender to God. The Taqwā means fear of Allāh or abstinence from idolatry or evil of any kind. The essence of Taqwā rests in the

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Hajj : 29.

2. Ibid., 37.

3. The Teaching of the Qur'ān—H.U.W. Stanton, p. 61.

4. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Mā'idah : 1.

Quranic uttering, 'Verily we are Allāh's and unto Him we are returning'.<sup>1</sup> Believing in Truth, being sincere in worship, choosing the Hereafter rather than this world are some moderate examples of piety. A pious man should be patient, meek, truthful, charitable, humble, penitent, harmless, forgiving, just and considerate. Truly pious is one whose heart thrills with fear at the mere mention of Allāh's name.

### AL-ISLĀM

The Quranic religion has been designated by the Divine Command as Al-Islām.<sup>2</sup> It signifies submission, resignation and acceptance. Islām confirms the religions of Abraham (Ibrāhīm), Issac (Ishāq), Jacob, (Ya'qūb), Moses (Mūsā), Jesus (ʿĪsā) and other prophets.<sup>3</sup> Believers or the followers of Islām have been called Muslims by Allāh ever since the prophet-hood of Abraham. 'Faithful Jews and Christians were Muslims before the Qur'ān was given.'<sup>4</sup>

### THE CODE OF LIFE

The conditions of salvation as laid down by the Qur'ān in their broad outline are of two types—the strictly religious and the ordinarily religious. The strictly religious conditions of salvation have already been summed up above. And the ordinarily religious conditions extend to all affairs of human life as, social, political, civil, military, criminal and domestic.

### THE DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL RULES

*Marriage* : So far as the domestic and social rules are concerned, the legislation regarding marriage and divorce is of prominent importance. The Quranic word for marriage is 'Nikāh'. Its main purpose is the begetting of children for the multiplication of the race. The Divine Commands concerning marriage are as follows : "Wed not idolatresses

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah : 156.

2. Ibid.,—Al-Māidah : 3.

3. Ibid.,—Al-T-Imrān : 84.

4. The Teaching of the Qur'ān—H. U. W. Stanton, p. 162.

until they believe. A believing bond-woman is better than an idolatress, though she may be dear to you. Similarly, give not your daughters in marriage to idolaters until they believe. A believing slave is better than an idolater though he may be dear to you.<sup>1</sup> An adulterer can marry an adulteress, and vice versa.<sup>2</sup> Wed not those women whom your fathers married. Don't follow examples of incest in the past. An exhaustive list of prohibitions is : your mothers, daughters, sisters, father's sisters, mother's sisters, brother's daughters, sister's daughters, foster mothers, foster sisters, mothers-in-law, step-daughters who are under your protection, the wives of your sons, who spring from your own loins, two sisters at a time, except what has already happened of that nature in the past. All married women except captives in the war are unlawful to marry.<sup>3</sup> One can have only four wives at a time with no impartiality to any of them. The marital intercourse should be preceded by an act of piety. The marriage of an orphan girl is to be carefully arranged. The widows must not remarry except on the expiry of the period of 'Iddat e.g. four months and ten days after the death of their husbands.<sup>4</sup>

*Dower (Mihar) :—*Man is commanded by Allāh to give to the woman, whom he marries, free gift of her marriage portions, but if she of her own accord remits him then he is welcomed to add the amount of dower to his wealth.<sup>5</sup>

*Divorce ('Talāq) :* The divorcing of the wives is unlawful unless they commit an open immorality. There must be an interval of four months between the declaration accompanied by separation and the actual dissolution of the marriage-tie. A divorced wife must not be remarried by the same husband more than three times until remarriage with another man followed by a divorce from him, has intervened. The divorced woman is entitled to her dowry. The woman who

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1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah : 221.

2. Ibid., An-Nūr : 3.

3. Ibid : An-Nisā : 22—24.

4. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 234.

5. Ibid., An-Nisā : 4.

is despair of menstruation should be separated after the expiry of three monthly courses. He who forswears his wife must wait for four months, then if he changes his mind, there is no sin for him.<sup>1</sup>

### SUCKLING

The divorced women are bound to suckle their children for two whole years. Similarly the father of the child is also bound to provide feeding and clothing for the nursing mother. No one should be charged beyond one's capacity.<sup>2</sup>

### POLITICAL LAWS

*Warfare* : (Jihād) : The Quranic function of the political laws deals mainly with warfare or the holy war. The characteristic term used in the Qur'ān is 'Jihādān Fī Sabillillāh, i.e. strife in the way of Allāh.<sup>3</sup> The warfare is ordained for men, except during the sacred months. Fight in the way of Allāh against those who fight against you, but commit not injustice by attacking them first.<sup>4</sup>

*Slavery* : The captives of war or the slaves are the absolute property of their master. The female slaves may be kept as concubines at discretion but the master should not hire them out as prostitutes.

### CIVIL REGULATIONS

The squandering is prohibited, but no penalty is laid down for it. The inheritance of the property plays an important role in connection with these rules.<sup>5</sup> Equitable testamentary provision must be made for parents and kinsmen. There are provisions to inherit husbands, wives and distant kindreds. One can attest a will by oath on his own discretion. Care for the interests of the orphans is enjoined over and over again. Though the prophet was himself a trader, yet a little mention

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah : 226.

2. Ibid., 233, see also the Studies in Muslim Ethics : D.M. Donaldson, p. 15.

3. Ibid.,—Al-Mumtahnah : 1, Al-Baqarah : 244, 167.

4. Ibid.,—Al-Baqarah : 194, 246. Āl-I-'Imrān.

5. Ibid., Al-Baqarah—7, 11, 12, 177 etc.

is made thereof.<sup>1</sup> Trading is allowed but usury is prohibited on the fear of hell-fire.<sup>2</sup>

### CRIMINAL LAWS

The penalties in this world as well as in the next are enacted for the commission of certain crimes. The Divine Commandment to punish a thief is, 'cut off the hands of the thief, whether he be male or female.'<sup>3</sup> The unchaste woman may be immured alive or confined for life. One hundred stripes are to be inflicted on each of the fornicators. In case of murder the retaliation is prescribed by the relatives of the person killed or blood-money may be accepted by them. In addition to this punishment the murder is held liable in the next world.<sup>4</sup> The customary laws and practices of the Arabs, are, no doubt, shadowed in these and other fragmentary legislations.

### THE CEREMONIAL LEGISLATION

The ceremonial rules rest in ablution (Wudū) by washing before prayers, lawful and unlawful food etc.

#### ABLUTION (WUDŪ)

The Command regarding Ablution is 'Draw not near unto prayer when you are in the state of drunkenness or are polluted except when you are journeying till you have bathed. In case of inability and lack of water go to high clean soil and rub your face and hands therewith.'<sup>5</sup> This sort of ablution is called "Tayammum."

#### LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL FOOD

The Quranic words for these are Ḥalāl and Ḥarām respectively. Before the revelation of Torah (Taurāt) all things were held lawful save that Jacob forbade.<sup>7</sup> A Muslim may eat only

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah : 198.

2. Ibid., 275.

3. Ibid.,—Al-Māidah : 38.

4. Ibid.,—Al-Baqarah : 178.

5. The Teaching of the Qur'ān-by H.U.W. Stanton, p. 66.

6. The Holy Qur'ān—An-Nisā : 43, Al Māidah : 6.

7. The Teaching of the Qur'ān : by H.U.W. Stanton, p. 70.



that over which the killer has invoked the name of Allāh.<sup>1</sup> The forbidden food fixed by Allāh are carrion, blood, swine-flesh and that which has been dedicated unto any other than Allāh. The strangled, the dead through beating, the dead through falling from a height, killed by goring of horns, devoured of wild beasts, the dead which has been immolated to idols and that you swear by the divining arrow.<sup>2</sup> But if a Muslim eats unlawful food under compulsion or out of fear, he is to be pardoned.<sup>3</sup>

### OTHER FORBIDDEN THINGS

The wining, gambling, usury, magic,<sup>4</sup> infanticide and the ill-treatment of the orphans are strictly prohibited in the Qur'ān by the Divine Command.

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1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al Māidah : 4.

2. Ibid., 3.

3. Ibid., 3, 4.

4. Ibid., 10.

## Concept of Duty

### *Duty Defined and Explained*

As rights and duties are strictly correlative to each other, therefore, they cannot be defined and explained separately. Rights are moral claims of individuals recognized by society and duties are moral debts or obligations of individuals recognised by society.<sup>1</sup> According to Bosanquet 'rights are claims recognized by society acting as ultimate authority to the maintenance of conditions favourable to the best life.' Henry Sidgwick summarises the concept of duty as 'It has been thought possible to prove on empirical grounds that one's greatest happiness is always attained by the performance of duty. But no such complete coincidence seems to result from a consideration either of the legal sanctions of duty or of the social sanctions or of the internal sanctions, even if we consider not merely isolated acts of duty, but a virtuous life as a whole'.<sup>2</sup> Every right brings an obligation with it; and that not only in the obvious sense that when one man has a right other men are under an obligation to respect it, but also in the more

1. A Manual of Ethics—Sinha, J. N : ed. 1957, p. 202.

2. The Method of Ethics—Sidgwick, H. Macmillan, 1930, p. XXVII.

subtle sense that when a person has a right, he is, thereby, laid under an obligation to enjoy it well for the common good. Rights reside in several individuals, they have rights to certain things, which are necessary for self-realization. Duties are moral obligations on the part of other individuals to respect those rights. Rights and duties are ultimately based on the same moral laws and relations. The society grants certain rights to some individuals for their own good and the good of society at large. A man has no right to anything by himself, but the society concedes certain rights to him, which are conducive to the social good. No one can claim anything for himself alone apart from society. Moral rights of men are protected by social conscience or public opinion, they are not necessarily enforced by the law of the state like rights. They are indispensable for the realization of the highest personal good and the general good. Thus moral obligation is different from legal obligation. The former cannot be enforced by the state while the latter can. Moral obligation depends upon the approval of public opinion. One can have a right to the means that are necessary for one's self-realization and for the highest good of the society of which he is the member. Therefore, man must employ his rights in the best way for maintenance of the social order. A man's rights, in fact, are nothing more than those things which, for the sake of the general good, it is convenient that he should be allowed to possess. And since it is for the sake of the general good that he possesses them, he is bound to use them for that end.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it can, easily, be concluded that an individual has, by himself, no right to anything whatsoever. He is a unit of a social whole and he has a right only to that which is for the good of the other members of the society. And the society is the ultimate authority which yields moral rights to individuals, imposes duties or moral obligations on others to respect those rights and enforce the observance of their duties. Thus rights and duties always have a reference of the society. The rights are never unconditional, as they are conceded to certain individuals only when they acquire firmness for receiving them.

1. Manual of Ethics—Mackenzie, J.S.: Tutorial Univ. Press, London; 1929, p. 290.

## THE RIGHT OF MAN

Here we cite the most fundamental rights of man, which must, by all means, be respected as an obligation, by all members of the society.

*The right of life and labour*

Man's first right is the right to live. Self-realization is the highest good, which requires the continuance of life for its realization. The right of life, like all rights, brings an obligation with it - that is, the obligation of treating life both one's own and that of others as a sacred thing. He who violates this obligation - e.g. by murder - forfeits the right of life and may legitimately be deprived of it.<sup>1</sup> But even this fundamental right was very lightly treated in the primitive forms of societies. For instance infanticide was common in Arabia before the advent of Islām, widows were burnt in India and the captives of war were put to death in many countries. If the sacredness of life were fully appreciated, there can be little doubt that even battles would soon be abolished among civilized nations. At present, however, it remains a more or less true maxim. 'Sivis Pacem Para Bellum.' Again it must be observed that the right of life cannot be said to be really secured to all that the citizens of a community unless the means for earning a livelihood are secured. The right to live, thus involves, the right to work for obtaining a livelihood.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, a government which is incapable of granting its countrymen the right to work is, in fact, depriving them of their right to live, and hence such states should not be allowed to function.

*Right of Education*

The right of education plays a secondary role in the rights of humanity. Every individual has a right to obtain the highest education, he is capable of receiving. He is under moral obligation to gain the best education according to his capacity. In a civilized society every one ought to be given the ~~maximum~~

1. A Manual of Ethics—by Mackenzie, J.S. p. 291.

2. A Manual of Ethics : Sinha, J.N. 1957, Calcutta, pp. 203, 204.]

opportunity to unfold his potentialities to the best advantage and contribute his share for the service of the society. Education develops the intellect, sharpens the understanding and widens the intellectual horizon. The best education must, by all means, be received for self-expression and self-development for the advancement of the society at large.

A state which is not providing good education to its citizens is depriving them of their fundamental right of education.

### *Right of Freedom*

The next right is based on freedom. Self-realization being the highest good is realized by a person's will. Therefore, men must be free to exercise his will in order to realize his supreme end. He should not be coerced by anybody. He should not be a slave to anybody. The freedom should be in restricted measures. The absolute and unrestricted freedom amounts to corruption, anarchy and chaos. The right which is desirable to secure is the right of having the free development of one's life as little interfered with as is possible, consistently with the maintenance of the social order.<sup>1</sup> Milton rightly said of liberty, 'who love that must first be wise and good'.<sup>2</sup> He further says, 'none can love freedom heartily but good men; the rest love not freedom, but licence; which never hath more scope or more indulgence than under tyrants'.<sup>3</sup> The right of freedom brings with it an obligation of using one's freedom for the social good, imposing an obligation on others to respect it.

### *Right of Property*

The right of property necessarily involves the right of freedom. Self-realization is the highest good. It can be realized by a person, if he is at liberty to live, work and freely exercise his will. The free will can only be, effectively, exercised by an individual, if he is allowed to use his private property earned by him freely. Personality and property are

1. Philosophy of History—Hegel Introduction.

2. Tenure of Kings and Magistrates—Milton, 1.

3. Ibid.

linked together. The sense of 'me' cannot be developed without the sense of 'mine'. The state is the custodian not only of the 'personal', but also of the 'real' rights of the individual. For these real rights or rights of property are essentially, as Hegel shows personal rights, rights of the person. Property is the expression of personality. My will sets its stand upon the thing (property), and make it mine—makes it, as if we are, part of me. Rights of property are essentially, like all rights, personal—the creation and expression of personality.<sup>1</sup> Thus we see that the sense of ownership is too deeply rooted in the human nature. As no one can develop his personality without some property. Therefore the right of property should be yielded to a person on the basis of equity and justice so as to develop his own personality along with the advancement of the society. A German writer, G. Simmel expresses his views on this point that, strictly speaking, 'I possess nothing but what I am'.<sup>2</sup> But so far as I conclude this principle cannot be applicable in the practical politics. From a purely ethical point of view, it may be observed that a man has no right to any kind of property except that which he has made an essential part of his own being.

Plato opines about the right of property that in an ideal republic there should be a community of goods and no right to private property. Aristotle holds that in an ideal commonwealth everyone should freely enjoy his property for the general good. The opinion of Aristotle in connection with the property is quite agreeable and practical, as one's self-dignity is always rooted in some property. While the right of private property is snatched from the individual members of the society as Plato holds, then the keen strife for earning money for the attainment of self-realization will come to an end, causing a total handicap to the production of the talented persons of high calibre. Therefore, the right of private property should be held secured for the safeguard of the society, with the exception of imposing certain restrictions on the evils of the capitalistic structure of society by way of ceiling etc.

1. Ethical Principles—Seth, p. 305.

2. Einleitung in Die Moralwissenschaft—G. Simmel, p. 172.

*Right of Contract*

One of the most fundamental rights of men is the right to the fulfilment of contracts. If an individual engages himself to render certain services to another, the second has the right to enjoy these services. 'The rights of property give rise to the rights of contract. I have control over my property : it is mine, it is part of myself. My freedom has entered into, and characterises it. The disposition of it is in my hands ; I have the right of use and exchange, as well as of possession.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it may, rightly, be concluded that the rights of contract necessarily arise out of rights of property. This right was scarcely recognized in the primitive societies. The fairness in fulfilling the contracts should be guaranteed. An individual is not at liberty, however, to contract himself into slavery, or prostitution, or other immoral acts. On the contrary in modern times, contract has become so common a method of entering into relationship that some writers have been compelled to think that all relationships are founded, on such engagements. The state, for example, was said to rest on a 'social contract'. Hobbes and Rousseau were the chief supporters of this view. But an eloquent attack was made on this view by Burke in his 'Reflections on the Revolution in France.'<sup>2</sup>

All the above mentioned rights can only be exercised in equity and justice for the personal good as well as for the maintenance of the social order. These rights also impose obligations, in the like manner, on others for their respect.

*Classification of Duties*

The human duties, may, in their broad outline be classified into three categories ; (1) Duties to self ; (2) Duties to others ; (3) Duties to God.

**DUTIES TO SELF**

The first category includes (a) physical duty, (b) Economic

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1. Ethical Principles—Seth : 306.

2. Elements of Ethics—Muirhead, pp. 183, 184.

•duty, (c) Intellectual duty; (d) Aesthetic duty and (e) Moral duty.

*Duties to Body*

Self-preservation, care for health and recreation constitute one's duty to the body.

No one is at liberty to commit suicide, as his life is the joint property of his own and others. Therefore, we should preserve and further our life, and enjoy sound health which is necessary for moral strength. The duty to maintenance of sound health involves the duty of taking *Sāttvika* quality of food.<sup>1</sup> We should cultivate bodily values, because they are the basis of higher values. We should earn a decent living. We should acquire wealth and make frugal use of it, so that we may enjoy higher values.<sup>2</sup>

*Duties to Property*

The next commandment is, 'Thou shalt not steal'. It forbids any appropriation of the instruments of another's well-being, whether they be material things that belong to him, or such goods as term reputation and the like.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, economic values should be cultivated as instrumental to higher intrinsic values. But it should be born in mind that one should not treat money as an end in itself.

*Duties to Education*

One must be under an obligation to cultivate one's intellect and acquire knowledge. We are not at liberty to leave our intellect undeveloped, for the intellectual development is indispensable for the development of personality.

*Duties to Aesthetics*

Everyone should cultivate his aesthetic taste by appreciating and creating beauty. Without the sense of appreciating beauty, in deed, there is no charm in the strivings of the world. Beauty should not be restricted to the visible objects but its extension should be realized even in the abstract things.

1. Bhagavadgītā—17 : 8.

2. A Manual of Ethics—Sinha, J.N. 1957, p. 212.

3. A Manual of Ethics—Mackenzie, London, 1929, p. 307.



Therefore, it is quite obvious that man should not only realize and appreciate the outward beauty of the gem-like stars and flowers etc., but he should also look into the inner beauty and the essence of them. By entering into the subtlety of his own self and the souls of other objects many a valuable researches can be made.

### *Duties to Morality*

Self-control and self-regard constitute our moral duty. Therefore, we should have control over our instincts, appetites, desires and passions. We should regulate sensibility by reason and should respect our personality. We should aim at truth and beauty as elements of good. Therefore, everyone should treat intellectual, aesthetic and moral values as intrinsic, absolute and eternal. These are, in short, the duties to the self, called individual duties.<sup>1</sup>

## DUTIES TO OTHERS

The second division includes (a) duties to the family, (b) duties to other individuals in the society; (c) duties to the country, (d) duties to humanity at large; (e) duties to animals and (f) duties to plants.

### *Duties to the Family*

The family is the unit of the society. It is the primary social institution. We cannot think of the state of society in which man was not a member of the family. Husband, wife and children constitute a natural social unit. The earliest forms of group life were based on the relation of kinship. The family is based upon the natural affections of love and tender emotions, therefore, we should love and respect our parents and should love our children. We should take care of our children's health, education and character, and should help them choose their proper avocations. Husband and wife should love and respect each other. They should treat each other as friends and equals.

### *Duties to the Society at Large*

Our duties to others in the society include mainly

1. A Manual of Ethics—Sinha, J.N. 1957, p. 212.

(i) Veracity ; (ii) Equity and (iii) Benevolence. Veracity rests in truthfulness, imposing an obligation on others to speak the truth. We should say what we mean. We should do what we say. We should keep our promises. We should speak out our conviction. We should shun all hypocrisy and pretence. Equity rests in justice and fair dealing. We should do unto others as we would be done by. We should respect the personality of others. We should treat all beings as ends—not as means to self enjoyment and self-aggrandizement. We should not interfere with the liberty and property of others. We should not find faults with the character of others. We should not take away the life of others or interfere with the honour, reputation and earning of others. We should cultivate goodwill towards all and should not cause any harm to anybody else by thought, word and deed. All these duties are included in equity. We should have compassion and benevolence to the distressed. We should do our best to relieve their distress benevolently. These are, in short, our duties to others in the society.

As regards the duties towards country, everyone should be engulfed with the patriotic feelings. He should love his country exert his utmost to improve its condition, and feel proud in its achievements.<sup>1</sup>

So far as the duties to humanity in general are concerned, we should love all human beings and treat them as our fellows. This can be done by casting off narrow patriotism, jingoism, imperialism, colour prejudice and social superiority. Everyone should have respect for social order and faith in human progress. We should cultivate broadmindedness through humanitarianism.

Man's duty extends to the safeguard of the animals. Therefore, he should take care of domestic animals by giving them proper food and shelter and nursing them when they are sick. No one should ruthlessly kill any animal for any enjoyment, but he should grow tenderness for them. These are, briefly, the duties to animals. We should take care of the plants also by giving them water and proper nourishment.

This is the moral injunction to everybody not to be rude to Nature. The Gītā and the Qur'ān along with many other scriptures appear to be source of these duties,

### DUTIES TO GOD

The duties to God include daily prayers to God, meditation on Him and having communion with Him. Therefore, everyone should daily worship Him, rever Him and seek His protection and care. Man should surrender his purpose to Him, dedicate his actions to Him and love Him with single minded devotion.<sup>1</sup> The duty to God is one supreme duty, which is the source of all other duties. Particular duties are aspects of this absolute and ultimate duty. It is so broad in its nature that it should be supplemented by other particular rules of conduct. When these rules seem to conflict with each other we should appeal to the supreme commandment: 'Realise the rational self and the rational universe.'<sup>2</sup>

#### *Conflict of Duties*

Sometimes particular duties seem to come into conflict with one another. For example, respect for life may conflict with respect for truth. If a doctor tells the truth to his patient suffering from consumption about his disease he may hasten his death. Again, the respect for the maintenance of family traditions may come into conflict with the performance of one's duty proper to his status in the society. For instance, Arjuna was on the path of conflict of duties, as to whether he should save his own family members, respectables, elders and teachers by stopping war against them, or he should wage war against aggressing kinsmen as a warrior hero whose duty is to fight for the deliverance of his nation from the cruel bondage and to restore order and peace.<sup>3</sup>

As though to solve the difficulties in such cases of conflict of duties, we are advised by some writers to take the aid of 'Casuistry'. It tells us under what particular circumstances we

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1. Bhagavadgītā—9 : 27, 29 etc.

2. A Manual of Ethics—Sinha J.N. 1957, p. 211.

3. Bhagavadgītā—1 : 33 and 18 : 43.

are justified in violating particular moral laws. Casuistry tries to formulate rules for breaking moral injunctions under certain circumstances. It is a branch of ethics which deals with the cases of conscience.<sup>1</sup> The expression of the moral laws in the form of peculiar rules belongs to an early stage in moral development. It naturally comes immediately after that stage in which morality is identified with the laws of the state.<sup>2</sup>

Under particular circumstances, we have one definite duty, recognizing no conflict of duties. It is on account of one's failure to grasp the real situation that he speaks of conflicts of duties. For example, it is one's clear duty to appropriate the knife of a person about to commit murder or suicide. Green says, 'There is no such thing really as a conflict of duties. A man's duty under any particular set of circumstances is always one, though the conditions of the case may be so complicated and obscure as to make it difficult to decide what the duty really is.'<sup>3</sup> It may better be concluded that there is no conflict of duties properly so called, as in a concrete situation, a person has only one definite duty. He can know it with a clear moral insight, if he does not yield to passion and prejudice of the moment. Therefore, the so-called conflict of duties is due to lack of clear moral insight, warping of moral judgment by passions and narrow self-interest, confusion of issues, want of discrimination of the essential from the non-essential factors in the moral situation. Some hold that we should take the help of casuistry to solve the difficulty in the case of a conflict of duties. But according to Mackenzie, 'It is bad enough that we should require particular rules of conduct at all, but rules for the breaking of rules would be quite intolerable'.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, a good defence of casuistry has been made by Rashdall.<sup>5</sup>

The opinion of Mackenzie on this point is quite agreeable and convincing. It is also true that the rules can never be

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1. A Manual of Ethics—Mackenzie J.S. 1929, p. 310.

2. Elements of Ethics—Muirhead, pp. 71-76.

3. Prolegomena to Ethics—Green, 1924, p. 391.

4. A Manual of Ethics—Mackenzie, J.S, 1929, p. 310.

5. Theory of Good and Evil—Rashdall, Book III, Ch. V.

formulated instead of pre-existing rules in connection with a conflict of duties. Only a particular situation may allow one to change one's moral insight. Therefore, without examining the actual situation formulation of rules for violating the rules is quite difficult. Averse action under certain circumstances depends upon the agent's common sense, moral judgment and conscience. The agent's disposition, motive, intention and attitude, in an act, or the goal that is achieved by the act, or the unique occasion on which the act is done dominate the situation to act upon. Therefore, man, must, whenever there appears to be a conflict of duties, fall back upon the supreme moral rule that he should realize his rational self and the values which are implied in this realization. The Gītā and the Qur'ān both preach mankind to utilize their intellect and common sense according to time, place and circumstances.

### *Duties of Perfect and Imperfect Obligation*

The impossibility of drawing out any absolute code of duties has led some writers to draw a distinction between that part of our obligations which can be definitely codified and that part which must be left comparatively vague. This discrimination has, variously, been formulated. Kant distinguished between duties of perfect obligation and those of imperfect obligation. The duties of perfect obligation are definite and precise and can be exacted from individuals, whereas the duties of imperfect obligation are rather indefinite and cannot be exacted from individuals. The former are mostly negative, while the latter are mostly positive, but cannot be formulated definitely and absolutely. For example, our duties not to kill, or to steal, or to lie etc., are duties of perfect obligation. But our duties to help the helpless, or to respect the respectables, or to feed the hungry etc., which involve some sort of benevolence are relative to time, place and circumstances and greatly depend upon our discretion. These are, by virtue of their not being exacted from individuals, called the duties of imperfect obligation.<sup>1</sup>

1. A Manual of Ethics—Mackenzie. 1.S: 1929, pp. 321-322. and see also *Metaphysics of Morals*, Section II, (Abbott's Translation, p. 39, and Caird's *Critical Philosophy of Kant* Vol. II, pp. 282, 283.

Again, Mill classifies the duties of perfect obligation under the head of justice and states that 'there are other things, on the contrary, which we wish that people should do, which we like to admire them for doing, but admits that they are not bound to do; it is not a case of moral obligation'.<sup>1</sup>

There is, no doubt, a three-fold-distinction between duties of different kinds. In the first place those duties which can be definitely formulated, and codified in the law of a state, with penalties attached to their infringement. This was the meaning of the duties of imperfect obligation, but Kant altered the use of the phrase. Several points in connection with the relation between ethics and jurisprudence are well brought out by Adam Smith.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, there are those duties that cannot be put into the form of national laws, or that it would be very inconvenient to put into such a form, but which, nevertheless, every good citizen may be expected to perform them. Thirdly, there are duties which we may demand of some, but not of others; or which different individuals can only be expected to fulfil in varying degrees. The fulfilment of these, in an eminent degree might be said to contribute virtue, as distinguished from duty, in the sense explained above.

But this is on the whole an inconvenient usage. The distinction between these various classes of duties is not a rigid one. The duties which can be made obligatory by legal injunctions vary from time to time, according to the constitution of the state concerned as well as the degree of the civilization of its people. The same applies to those obligations that every good citizen may, fairly, be expected to observe. Consequently, while at any given time and place it might be possible to draw out a list of the duties of perfect obligation, and to express them in an embodiment of commandments.

And what Hegel opines on this point is, 'the universal law cannot be forever the ten commandments. Yet it would be absurd to refuse to set up the law 'Thou shalt not kill' on the ground that a statute-book cannot be made complete.

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1. Utilitarianism : Mill Ch. V.

2. Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part VI, Section IV—: Adam Smith.

Every statute-book can, of course, be better. It is patent to the most idle reflection that the most excellent, noble and beautiful can be conceived of as still more excellent, noble and beautiful. A large old tree grows more and more branches without becoming a new tree in the process; it would be folly, however, not to plant a new tree for the reason that it was destined, in time, to have new branches'.<sup>1</sup>

*Station in Society and its duties*

Every individual is born with particular aptitude in a particular social environment. His duties are unbendingly determined by his particular station in life, and he should perform these duties faithfully to realize his highest personal good along with the maintenance of the social order. This conception of duties in connection with one's relation in life is, more or less, the same as laid down by the Gītā.<sup>2</sup> Carlyle said in this connection, 'Do the duty that lies nearest thee'. 'Know what thou canst work at and work at it like a Hercules.' Thus the discrimination of a man's duties depends greatly upon one's individual insight. Everyone ought to follow the bent of his own genius and determine his duties accordingly in conformity with his status in life. Therefore, one's duties can be determined by one's station in society or his status in the actual social relations; and even his steadfast devotion to an ideal ought to be regulated by the imperious claims of moral station. An individual's duties are determined by his station in society. Therefore, the duties of preceptor, disciple, ruler, subject, merchant, workman, judge, lawyer, father, mother, child etc. are different from the duties of those persons, who belong to the opposite category.<sup>4</sup> What Dewey opines in this regard is, 'The good artisan has his heart in his work. His self-respect makes it necessary for him to respect his technical or artistic capacity; and to do the best by

1. Philosophy of Right—Hegel, p. 216.

2. Bhagavadgītā—18 : 41-46.

3. Sartor Resartus, Book II, Chapter IX, and see also Bradley's Charter on 'My Station and Its Duties' (Ethical Studies, Essay V).

4. Elements of Ethics—Muirhead p. 49 and also see. Gītā-Rahasya—Tilak, B.G. Commentary on Bhagavadgītā : 18 : 41-46.

it that he can without crimping or lowering'.<sup>1</sup> Further Dewey says, 'It is a common remark that moral codes change from 'Do not' to 'Do' and from this to 'Be'.<sup>2</sup> A Mosaic code may attempt to regulate the specific acts of life. Christianity holds, 'Be ye perfect'. The effort to exhaust the various special right actions is futile. They are not the same for any two men, and they change constantly with the same men. The very words denote virtues come less and less to mean specific acts and more the spirit in which conduct occurs.<sup>3</sup>

Hence it may be concluded from the above discussion that the important point on the whole is not to know what the prescribed rules of the actions are, but rather the type of character that is to be developed in us. A well-developed character, placed in a given situation, will soon unfold rules for itself.

### *Rules of Conduct*

As ethics is the science of conduct, therefore, the rules of conduct cannot be well thought out without knowing the true nature of ethics. Thus, we may define ethics as the study of what is right or good in conduct. It is the common theory of conduct and considers the actions of human beings with reference to their rightness or wrongness, their tendency to good or to evil. The word 'ethics' is derived from the Greek adjective '*ethica*' which comes from the substantive '*ethos*'. Ethics means customs, usages or habits. Ethics is also called 'moral philosophy'. The word 'moral' is derived from the Latin Substantive '*mores*' which also means customs or habits. Customs are not merely habitual ways of acting. The Ethics literally means the science of customs or habits of men.<sup>4</sup>

It is, no doubt, true enough that an ethical philosopher, if he is good for anything, will explain the spirit in which one ought to apply oneself to the particular situation before him tomorrow morning. Most of the English schools of Ethics.

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1. Outlines of Ethics—Dewey, p. 112.

2. Ibid : p. 231.

3. Elements of Ethics—Muirhead, p. 75 notes.

4. A Manual of Ethics—Sinha, J.N. 1957, pp. 1, 2.



have concerned themselves closely with jurisprudence and have thus given encouragement to the notion that a set of moral laws might be devised similar to the laws of a nation. Happy life cannot be reduced to rules. A moral genius must, always, like Miraben, 'Swallow his formulas' and start afresh.

While emphasizing this point, I have certainly no wish to rush to the opposite extreme. There has been so stiff a tendency in ancient times to lay down an absolute 'ought' in Ethics, with a bending scheme of obligations hanging from it, that now, by a natural reaction, we find a number of our ethical writers to say that there is any such thing as duty, apologizing for the use of the word 'ought' and calmly yielding that Ethics is of no practical value, this extreme seems to me to be quite hurtful as the other. It is the function of the ethical philosopher to discover and define the supreme end of life. This very thing has been done by all the great ethical authorities from Plato and Aristotle down to Kant, Hegel and Green.

Aristotle asserts, 'from a practical point of view, it much concerns us to know this good; for then, like archers, shooting at a definite mark, we shall be more likely to attain what we want'.<sup>1</sup> In this case ethics is largely of practical value. For instance, military spirit is deeply rooted in human nature. Men are eager to catch the word of command and are disappointed when they are only told, as by Jesus to 'Love one another', or, as by Hegel, to 'Be persons' or as in the vision of Dante, to 'follow their star'.<sup>2</sup> It may, rightly, be concluded that all actions that is of much consequence has reference to concrete situations, which could not possibly be exhausted by any abstract methods of analysis. It is, no doubt, the special business of every human being to find out for himself what he is to do, and to do it. Ethics only instructs men where to look for it, and helps them to see why it is worthwhile to find it and to do it. It leaves its principles, like all sciences to be applied by the instructed common sense.<sup>3</sup>

1. Ethics Vol. I —Aristotle, Ch. II, p. 2.

2. A manual of Ethics—Mackenzie, J.S. 1929, p. 327.

3. System of Logic—Book IV Mill. Chs. IV and V, and also

(a) Prolegomena to Ethics—Book IV—Green.

(b) Philosophy of Right—Hegel, Introduction.

(c) Civilization of Christendom—Bossenquent, p. 160.

(d) The Article of Prof. Muirhead on 'Abstract and Practical Ethics in American Journal of sociology.

Ethics is the science of habitual conduct of men, habits are the expression of settled dispositions of the will or character, character is the permanent habits of willing, the inner bent of mind which is expressed in habitual conduct.

As regards the character of an individual, it is the inner counterpart of conduct, which is its outer expression. Thus, ethics is the science of conduct and character. It evaluates the habits, voluntary actions, and characters of persons and investigates their rightness and wrongness, virtuousness and viciousness. Therefore, ethics is the science of rightness and wrongness of conduct and the highest good. It is the science of morality.<sup>1</sup> This is the main theme of the preachings of the Gītā and the Qur'ān both.

*The terms 'Right' and 'Good' briefly explained*

The term 'Right' is derived from the Latin '*rectus*', meaning straight or according to rule. When an action is said to be right, it means that it complies with a law or rule. An action is right, which conforms to the moral law. Every law presupposes and which is realized by it. The end which is subserved by a rule is called the 'good'. Thus right is subordinate to 'good'. An action is right, which is a means to the good.

The term 'good' is connected with the the German '*Gut*'. A thing is generally said to be good, when it realizes an end. For example, a particular medicine is said to be good for this or that complaint. Such as quinine is good for malaria. Physical exercise is good for health. Similarly one's conduct is good when it is serviceable for an end or ideal.

Ethics is not concerned with relative or subordinate goods but with the absolute or supreme good. It seeks to determine the highest good or *Summum Bonum* of human life.<sup>2</sup>

Ethics deals with judgement consciously passed by man upon himself and others. It is the normative science of the highest good. It is not a practical science which lays down rules for the realization of an end. Thus, it is said to be a part of philosophy, but it should not be identified with Metaphysics

1. A manual of Ethics—Sinha, J.N., 195, p. 2.

2. Ibid—Mackenzie, J.S. 1929, p. 2.

for some reasons.<sup>1</sup> The aim of ethics is to define and explain the true nature of the highest good of man as a member of society. It is the root of all moral distinctions. It deduces concrete duties and virtues from the notion of the supreme good which, may guide everybody in the regulation of his conduct. Though, it is not a practical science to teach us, how can we lead a moral life. But the study of duties and virtues inferred by it from the supreme good has an indirect bearing upon our practical life for regulating our conduct. Thus Ethics is the theory of morality, which is the cardinal duty of a man to attain it.

As virtue is the excellence of character due to habitual performance of duties, leading to a virtuous disposition, therefore, I concern myself, in brief, with the virtues for realizing the true nature of duties as follows :—

## VIRTUES

### *Duties and Virtues*

Duties are turned into virtues by their habitual performance. Virtues refer to acquired disposition of mind. The virtuous man is he who has steadfast habit of performing duties. Duty denotes a particular action that we ought to perform and virtue denotes to a good character. If a man does his duty; he possesses a virtue or is virtuous. Virtue is the excellence of character. Duty refers to outer conduct. Virtue is expressed in the habitual observance of the duties fallen to one's lot in life. Duties habitually performed lead man to the formation of virtue. Virtue refers to the inner character, whereas duty refers to an overt action.<sup>2</sup> Thus it may easily be concluded that virtue is the excellence of inner character and duty is its expression in an overt action.

What Sidgwick opines about duty and virtue is, 'Duties are right acts for the adequate performance of which a moral motive is at least occasionally necessary. Virtuous conduct includes the performance of duties as well as praiseworthy acts, that are thought to go beyond strict duty and that may

1. Manual of Ethics—Sinha, J.N. 1957, pp. 7, 81.

2. A Manual of Ethics—Mackenzie, J.S. 1929, p. 328.

even be beyond the power of some to perform. Virtues, as commonly recognized, are manifested primarily in volitions to produce particular right effects, which must, at least, be thought by the agent to be not wrong, but for the completeness of some virtues, the presence of certain emotions seems necessary.

It may be said that moral excellence, like Beauty eludes definition; but if ethical science is to be constituted, we must obtain definite Moral Axioms.<sup>1</sup>

It is true that a virtuous man should be a keen performer of his duties allotted to him in the society along with some praiseworthy obligations for which he is not bound to perform. A virtuous man is generally thought to be a rare one. He must be above the generally, possessing some sterling qualities, being well known for them. This is, in fact, an exhaustive illustration of duty and virtue.

Virtue is the habit of deliberate choice of right actions, as vice is the habit of deliberate choice of wrong actions. Virtue is the habit of controlling instincts and impulses and realizing the good of the self as a whole. Vice is the habit of conceding to instincts and impulses and realizing the good of their satisfaction to the detriment of the self as a whole. Virtue is the excellence of character, while vice is the taint thereof. Virtue is expressed in the observance of duties while vice is expressed in the commission of sins. Virtue is acquired by the habitual performance of duties, but vice is attained by the habitual commission of sins. Virtue is an acquired disposition due to the habit of controlling and regulating instincts and impulses by reason.

### *The Cardinal Virtues*

The Cardinal virtues are the fundamental virtues on which other virtues are based. Plato recognises four primary virtues—Wisdom, Courage, Temperance and Justice. Wisdom includes all remaining virtues as every virtuous activity consists in performing wisely under the compulsion of time, place and circumstances. It is, indeed, an all-embracing virtue. Courage

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1. The Method of Ethics : Sidgwick, H. Macmillan 1930. p. XXIX.

and temperance are the virtues that bear most directly on the life of the individual. Courage should be taken in the sense of resistance to the fear of pain and temerance in the sense of resistance to all allurements of pleasure. These two virtues include all forms of opposition to temperance in the personal life. Temptation appears in the form of avoidance of some pain or attainment of some pleasure. Justice comprehends all social virtues.<sup>1</sup>

Thus Plato's classification of cardinal virtues may be admitted as the basis to the requirements of the modern society. These virtues should be taken in a wider sense.

### KINDS OF VIRTUES

Virtues have been grouped under three distinct categories—(1) Self-regarding, (2) Other-regarding and (3) ideal-regarding. The virtues under the first head are conducive to the agent's own good, those of second category to the good of others whereas, those of third group are conducive to the realization of an ideal, viz., truth, good or beauty etc.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, like duties towards God are also virtues regarding God.<sup>3</sup>

One may, from what has been attempted above, easily conclude that the duties may be performed independently, while the virtues are always accompanied by the habitual performance of duties. A punctual observer of his duties is indeed, a virtuous man. Therefore, virtues can never be separated from duties. Virtues are also, like duties, classified on the similar lines, namely, to self, to others and to God based on sub-divisions like intellectual, aesthetic, moral and so on.

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1. A Manual of Ethics—Mackenzie, J.S. 1929, p. 333.

2. A Manual of Ethics—Sinha, J.N. 1957, p. 222.

3. Ibid., p. 225.

## Human Duties in the Gita and their Classifications

Human duties as laid down in the Bhagavadgītā are two-sided—divine and worldly. To make it more clear, every duty of man is both divine and worldly. The essence of the theme of the Bhagavadgītā rests in the words of Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa, “Devoted to his own duty, man attains the highest perfection in the shape of God-realization.”<sup>1</sup> This is the cardinal attitude of the Gītā, which is variously discussed and elaborated throughout this sacred volume adopting different methods based on philosophy, logic, ethics and other moral obligations. One may realize, after a minute observation that the Gītā is nothing but the commentary of the first half of the 45th verse of its eighteenth chapter, as translated above. To a general reader the Gītā appears to prescribe duties in connection with the waging war, as Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa throughout His discourse occasionally compels Arjuna to fight. In fact, the Gitaic duties are not so limited, they are equally applicable in each and every field of human life. It was not impossible for the Blessed Lord to prescribe duties expressly in connection

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1. The Bhagavadgītā—18 : 45.

with all the business and engagements of man in life, but having regard of man's inconvenience by going through the bulky code containing all duties in various phases of human activity, He summarises His preaching by choosing, for example, a battlefield to make the discourse more impressive.

Now, the Divine Phrase—"Sve Sve Karmanyabhirataḥ Samsiddhim Labhate Naraḥ" that is "Devoted to his own duty man attains the highest perfection in the shape of God-realization" may, in short, be elaborated as follows—A man must perform his duties proper to his status in life. The duties of Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas as well as those of Śūdras are divided according to the qualities born of their respective natures. Controlling the mind and senses, enduring hardship for the sake of duty, purity, both internal and external, forgiveness straightness of mind and body, belief in God, sacred books and the hereafter, the knowledge of the sacred lore and the knowledge of God based on direct experience are the duties of Brāhmaṇas born of their own natures. Daring, majesty, firmness, bravery, ingenuity, not running away from battle, generosity and rulership are the duties of Kṣatriyas born of their own natures.<sup>1</sup> The duties of Vaiśyas born of their own natures are agriculture, cow-breeding and trade, while the duties of Śūdras born of their own natures are to serve these three castes.<sup>2</sup>

There is a fundamental unity underlying God, man and the world. The world is in existence because God has willed it so. Man strives to gain union with God and when this union is attained, he will be absorbed in Him. Will an individual not do any act, while Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa, the Representative of God, Himself says that 'there is nothing in all the three worlds for Me to do, nor is there anything worth attaining unattained by Me, yet I continue to act for the benefit of the world?'<sup>3</sup> Thus, the man, who has attained unity with God, must necessarily seek unity with the benefits of the world through his acting.

1. The Bhagavadgītā : 18 : 42, 43.

2. Ibid., 18 : 44.

3. Ibid., 3 : 22, 23.

If he does not act, the unity is not perfect, because there is union between the elements—man and deity leaving out the third, the world. The surest way of salvation thus rests in the service of the world, as God Himself wills to do so.<sup>1</sup>

The ideology of Mr. B.G. Tilak cited above is quite convincing and agreeable that a man can realise God through the service of the society in this very life, according to his nature-born capabilities. We are more sure about the conception of the human duties while Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa Himself preaches that One's own duty though devoid of righteousness is preferable to the duty of another well executed. We may conclude from the above that all men should try their best to be well-versed in their respective occupations in life for the sake of serving the world. In short, all teachers, students, traders, servants, farmers, engineers, magistrates, judges, players, fighters, commanders, devotees, worshippers, singers, barbers, potters, architects and so on, must try their best to serve the society through their respective professions in accordance with the prescribed rules in the scriptures.

It is obvious from the above that the true spirit of the Gītā rests in disinterested action according to one's own status in the society. The knowledge and devotion are both subservient to the action preached in the Gītā. Many commentators opine that the main teaching of the Gītā is to achieve salvation through the path of devotion and knowledge. While the Gītā was preached to Arjuna, who was overwhelmed by infatuation, faint-heartedness, tenderness and grief beholding his teachers, uncles, sons, granduncles, maternal-uncles, grandsons, brothers-in-law, father-in-law and other relations arrayed on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra<sup>2</sup> to make him ready for fight—resulting from action, how can it be said that the ultimate lesson of the sacred volume is devotion or knowledge alone? Verily there is a blending of all these philosophical methods to be observed simultaneously with an equable frame of mind for the maintenance of the world resulting in salvation in the hereafter.

1. Gītā-Rahasya- Vol. I—B.G. Tilak, Preface p. XXVI Ed. 1936.

2. The Bhagavadgītā : 1 : 26, 27.



With a view to facilitating the understanding of the true spirit of the Gītā, it seems advisable to cast a glance upon the circumstances under which the Gītā was originally preached by the Blessed Lord. When Arjuna, the warrior-prince was overwhelmed by infatuation seeing his teachers, friends and kinsmen drawn up for battle against him at the beginning of the Mahābhārata war at the battlefield of Kurukṣetra and was inspired by the desire to give up the war and renounce the world. He was perplexed by the confrontation of the conflict of duties. To make the contest more complicated, favourite comrades, elders and friends stood on both the sides, wringing his heart with tenderness and grief and physical strife regarding the conflict of duties, as to whether he should slay those to whom he owes love and honour on account of the ties of kindred or should he let the usurpers oppress the land through abstinence from waging war against them? To break family traditions was a sin; and to leave the nation in the cruel bondage was also a sin; what should he do then? Justice must be done according to the scriptural ordinances. Who is perplexed on the happening of the conflict of duties? A Kṣatriya. What is the duty of a Kṣatriya? A Kṣatriya's duty is to engage himself in fight.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it was the duty of Arjuna as a Prince, as a warrior hero to fight for the deliverance of his subjects and to restore order and peace. But he was so infatuated that he still said, 'It is better to live on alms in this world without killing these noble elders, because even after slaying them we shall enjoy only blood-stained pleasures in the form of wealth and sense-enjoyments. And we do not know which is preferable for us—to fight or not to fight.'<sup>2</sup> Thus his very being tainted by the vice of faint-heartedness and his mind puzzled with regard to duty, Arjuna asked the Blessed Lord to tell that which is decidedly better to act upon.<sup>3</sup>

It is not only Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa who for the first time led the man puzzled on account of two mutually contradictory paths of duty, but long long ago Manu preached, 'An Ātāyīn or villain should be killed without the slightest remorse and

1. The Bhagavadgītā : 2 : 31—38, 18 : 42.

2. Ibid., 2 : 5, 6.

3. Ibid., 2 : 7.

without thinking whether he is a preceptor or a Guru or an old man or a child or a learned Brāhmaṇa, because on such occasions the slayer does not incur the sin of slaying, but the wicked is killed on account of his own wickedness.<sup>1</sup> Not only the older Śāstras, but also the modern criminal law has accepted the right of self-protection with some limitations.<sup>2</sup> On such occasions, self-defence is considered to be of higher value than non-violence. The killing of tender infants is the most objectionable and sinful, but if the child is being born by transverse presentation, it is not sinful to cut the child and deliver the mother. The slaughter of cattle for the purpose of ritualistic sacrifices is considered to be blameless even by the Vedas.<sup>3</sup> Similarly the hunting is justified in the Mahābhārata.<sup>4</sup> "The ordinary rules of morality are not always sufficient and even the most principled maxim of ethics, namely that of harmlessness does not escape the necessity of discrimination between the duty and the non-duty."<sup>5</sup> Therefore Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa tries Arjuna, who was puzzled on arrival of mutually conflicting paths of duty, to make him ready for fight—for action on the authority of Sāmkhyayoga or the Yoga of knowledge.

[Whenever I read or listen to any discourse on God's permission to kill for no offence the helpless animals like goats, sheep, cows, buffaloes and other animals for eating or even for sacrifices; my faith in the Almighty is always shaken. While God is the only creator of the whole universe including all the living creatures like men, women, cows, horses, elephants, camels, goats, pigs, birds, insects, reptiles etc. why should He allow any one to kill any of His own created beings without any wrong whatsoever on their part? If He does so, is this an example of His being the Merciful or the Just? On this very ideology, it appears that God is not All-powerful or Almighty or even Merciful. Almost in all the religions, God is described as Almighty, Compassionate, Merciful, Just and possessing the vast and indestructible treasure of all the worldly and

1. Manusmṛti—8 : 350.

2. Indian Penal Code—General Exceptions : 55, 76-106.

3. Manusmṛti—5 : 31, 32.

4. Mahābhārata—Anuśāsana Parva : 116.

5. Gītā-Rahasya—Vol. 1 : B.G. Tilak. p. 44 ed 1936.

heavenly wealth and material. Then why does He not provide a decent and honest living or even two square meals to a larger number of His own created beings? Many are born blind, deaf and disabled, many are forced to steal for subsidising their hunger and many are selling their own children for saving their lives. Is He merciful or just in tolerating such immeasurable sufferings of His own created beings, while He is Himself the All-powerful? A living being's climax of pain or torture is his/her/its being killed. If killing is done for no offence, it is a great sin. I wonder, how should the Merciful God order or permit killing even for sacrifices. The permission for slaughtering animals for sacrifices is man-made with a selfish motive and naming God for such cruel acts is still a more serious sin, if God is really merciful.

The idea of transmigration of soul resulting in the rebirth of beings is quite convincing, but it also hints at the helplessness of God. For instance, a man who had committed serious sins in his previous birth is born blind in this birth. It shows God's inability to punish the sinner in that very birth, so that he could learn a lesson thereby. Punishing for the offence which is not even remembered by the offender is no punishment. For example, a man stole my watch and knowing all this I was dealing with him quite fairly, but all of a sudden after 20 years, I, in a fit of anger, slapped the man for stealing my watch. Is there any justification for such punishment after such a long time, when the offence is altogether forgotten? Of course, a human being may be unable or helpless in punishing the offender at a proper time, but what is the helplessness for the Almighty in punishing the criminal in that very life-at a time when he could, at least, remember his crime. 'Justice delayed is justice denied', stands as proverbial, but what about the justice which is postponed for the next birth, when the offender would, no more, remember his offence? No judge can be called just, who passes judgment for punishing someone without telling him about his crime. The conventional names of God e.g., Almighty, Just, Merciful, All-knowing etc., sometimes, seem imaginery and mysterious.

Further, it is all the more distressing to note the creation of mosquitoes, viruses of many diseases, bugs, lice and many other beings, which are born directly to harm living beings and

consequently they are always at a risk of their being killed by the suffering creatures. Thus, the planning of God's creation does not seem to be praiseworthy. Was He not able to save His created beings from being tortured or even killed? If they indirectly do some good to mankind, was God not able to do that otherwise? The concept of God in the scriptures, some times, appears to be self-contradictory. For example, God is faultless not liable for any deficiency on His part or held under any obligation whatsoever. Had God not left any of His created being needy for any thing from the very beginning of the creation, there would be no room for any sin or offence in the world. The sinners are created with a faulty organism. 'There should always be a self-imposed obligation on God either not to give birth to any being at all or to provide all necessary things if they are given birth, in any form in the world. God is, of course, merciful like exceptionally. In short, the concept of God is, altogether, a mysterious notion. which is absolutely beyond the reach of human mind.

For example, the scriptures in general proclaim that the Almighty God does not create a being unless it is for the benefit of mankind. But the believers like me observe with a heavy heart in the day-to-day life that huge amounts of money are being spent on insecticides for getting rid of mosquitoes, insects and viruses etc. to save agriculture and human life! These are my personal views, which are supported neither by the Gītā nor by the Qur'ān but by my God-given intellect].

### SĀMĀKHYAYOGA OR THE YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE

Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa has started the exposition of Karma-yoga Śāstra or the science of Karmayoga by adopting the logical methods based on the Sāmkhya-philosophy. Though the followers of the Sāmkhya path ignore action after the acquisition of knowledge, yet there is no discrimination between the knowledge of the Brahman or God according to the Sāmkhya-path and the Karma-path. Hence, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa has first explained to Arjuna the path of knowledge as if to ridicule him by saying: "You grieve over those who should not be grieved for, and at the same time, speak like the learned, wise men do not sorrow over the dead and the living.<sup>1</sup>

1. Bhagavadgītā : 2 : 1.

And if the Ātman or soul is indestructible and permanent even according to the Sāṃkhya system, then the question, "how shall I kill my own kinsmen so and so?" is mere worthless talk.' Action sanctioned by the authority of Sāṃkya yoga is not merely applicable in connection with the war but it is equally applicable in the performance of duties allotted to the different classes of individuals according to their status in the society. Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa has chosen the field of battle only with a view to make His Discourse more impressive as well as to provide a specimen of His Teachings as a guide utilizable in all spheres of human life. Thus, trying mankind through His preaching addressed to Arjuna to make him ready for fight resulting from action, He states that one should not grieve whether life continues or becomes extinct.<sup>1</sup> In fact, there was never a time when I was not in existence along with you (Arjuna) and other kings, nor is it a fact that in the hereafter we shall all cease to be.<sup>2</sup> According to the commentary of Rāmānuja 'I', that is the Supreme Being and 'you and the kings' that is the other souls were in the existence in the past and will be born again in the future in the numerous births. Here God and Soul become separate and independent entities. Though this argument is not correct but intending to explain only that both are permanent, stands as correct. With a view to delivering Arjuna from the infatuation, the Blessed Lord says, 'Just as boyhood, youth and old age are attributed to the soul through this body, in the same way it attains another body. Therefore the wise man should not get deluded. The contacts between the senses and their objects, which give rise to the feeling of heat and cold, pleasure and pain etc. are transitory.<sup>3</sup> The man to whom pleasure and pain are alike and who is not tormented by these contacts is eligible for immortality. And that which is not, cannot come into being and the real never ceases to be. Therefore, know that to be imperishable by which all this is pervaded and none can bring about the destruction of this indestructible substance.

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1. Bhagavadgītā 2 : 11.

2. Ibid., 2 : 12.

3. Ibid 2 : 33, 14.

All these bodies acquired by the imperishable, indefinable and eternal soul are said to be perishable, therefore, Arjuna, be ready for fighting rooted in action.<sup>1</sup>

In order to dispel the ignorance of Arjuna caused by faint-heartedness, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa philosophically examines the questions—'What is death?' and 'what is killing.'<sup>2</sup> Man is an aggregate of the body and the soul. Out of these, the soul being a fragment of God<sup>3</sup> is permanent and immortal. Therefore killing or dying is not applied to the Ātman or soul, thus, there must be no room for any lamentation in waging war for the deliverance of the nation from the tyranny of the usurpers in order to restore order and peace. In the same way, man should discharge his duties fallen to his lot in all matters having regard of time, place and circumstances.

### THE SOUL

The Gītā instigates man to realise the true nature of soul on the authority of the Sāṃkhya system of Indian philosophy. The soul is neither the killer, nor the subject of being killed,<sup>4</sup> because the soul is indestructible and itself a non-doer, and the whole doing thereof is of the Nature deriving its motive power from God. It is neither born nor dies, nor does it exist on coming into being as it is unborn, eternal, everlasting and primeval as well as it is not perished with the body.<sup>5</sup> Again the soul is 'permanent, indestructible, immeasurable,<sup>6</sup> and it cannot be cut, burnt, made wet and made dried, being all-pervading, firm, without movement, ancient, unmanifest, unthinkable and without modification.'<sup>7</sup> It is the knower of the field.<sup>8</sup> Supervisor, consentor, supporter, enjoyer, the great-Lord, the ultimate goal and the ultimate person.<sup>9</sup> Moreover,

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1. Bhagavadgītā : 15 : 18.

2. Ibid : 2 : 11-30,

3. Ibid : 2 : 15-7.

4. Ibid : 2 : 19,

5. Ibid : 2 : 20.

6. Ibid : 2 : 18.

7. Ibid : 2 : 24, 25.

8. Ibid : 13 : 2.

9. Ibid : 13 : 23.

the soul is without beginning and qualities<sup>1</sup> and the owner of the field.<sup>2</sup>

### GOD

The Gītā recognises soul as a fragment of God.<sup>3</sup> This is why, most of the terms are equally applied to God and soul as God comprises in His Universal Form embodied in one limb, all celestials and the entire perceptible and imperceptible universe.<sup>4</sup> A wise man should realize the real attributes of God through acquisition of knowledge laid down in the scriptures.

All the theologians of the world, even-mindedly admit God to be the only Supreme object of worship. A child before worshipping God naturally questions himself who is God? What are His attributes and why should He be worshipped? etc. He thinks better to realise God first and then to worship Him if satisfied. Therefore, man's nature-born foremost duty rests in the realization of God, through the teachings of the preceptors and the ordinances of the scriptures.

Having realised the true nature of God and soul, the embodied man, who has controlled the senses relinquishing all actions, mentally dwells happily in the city of this body with its nine doors (holes) doing nothing and causing nothing to be done.<sup>5</sup> That is to say, such a Sāṃkhyayogin realises that the soul is a non-doer and the entire functioning is of Prakṛti or Nature, deriving its motive power from the Supreme Being. He remains calm or in a state of neutrality. Man is nothing to do or not to do any act.<sup>6</sup> Two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth, the hole for urinating and the anus are taken as the nine doors of the city of body. Here Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa gives a metaphysical explanation of the fact that the

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1. Bhagavadgītā : 13. 31.

2. Ibid : 13 : 33.

3. Ibid : 15 : 7.

4. Ibid : 11 : 5-8.

5. Ibid : 5 : 13.

6. Ibid : 18 : 59, 60.

man remains non-doer, though outwardly he is performing actions. The *Prabhu* or God determines neither the doership nor the doings of beings, nor even their contract with the fruit of actions, but every thing is done by force of nature. The Omnipresent Lord does not partake of the virtue or sin of anyone. As knowledge is covered by the covering of ignorance as a result of *Māyā*, all created beings are confused regarding this.<sup>1</sup> The Lord explains the question of body and soul on the authority of the *Sāṃkhya*-philosophy, looking upon *Prakṛti* or Matter and *Puruṣa* or Spirit as the two fundamental principles and determines the *Prakṛti* as the active agent and the *Puruṣa* as inactive. But according to the Vedantists the root of both *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* is *Nirguṇa Brahman* or God without qualities, who is a non-doer, and that all functioning is of *Māyā* or of Nature.<sup>2</sup> The Lord now states that the ordinary man does not understand these things on account of ignorance. Only the wise man understands the difference between the doer and the non-doer remaining unattached to action. Those, whose said ignorance has been destroyed by the knowledge, that wisdom shining like the sun reveals the Supreme. And those, whose mind and intellect are entirely absorbed in God, who are constantly established in identity with Him, and are exclusively devoted to Him, and their sins being washed away by knowledge attain Immortality.<sup>3</sup> Describing the true state of *Sāṃkhya*yoga, the Blessed Lord, further, says : 'The wise men look with the same eye on a *Brāhmaṇa* endowed with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant and a pariah and those, whose minds have, thus, become stable in a state of equanimity, conquer the mortal world ; since the Absolute is free from fault and equability, therefore, they are established in the Eternal.'<sup>4</sup> That is to say, after having realised the non-doership of God as well as the doership of Nature, the wise does not escape action, even though he has reached this state.<sup>5</sup> One should not become

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1. *Bhagavadgītā* : 5 : 14, 15.

2. *Gītā Rahasya*—Vol. I B.G. Tilak, 1936, p. 369.

3. *Bhagavadgītā* : 5 : 16, 17.

4. *Ibid* : 5 : 18, 19.

5. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, 8 : 151.



glad because he has got the desired thing, nor one should become disheartened, if something undesirable happens. He, whose mind has, thus become steady and who does not suffer with mental perplexity, such a knower of Brahman lives eternally in Him. One, whose mind remains unattached to external enjoyments, derives the unmixed joy through meditation, which is inherent in the soul, such a Yogin, having completely identified himself with Brahman enjoys inexhaustible happiness in the shape of God-realization. The enjoyments, which are born of the contacts of the sense-organs are verily sources of unhappiness though appearing as enjoyable to worldly-minded persons. They have a beginning and an end, this is why a wise man does not indulge in them. He, who is capable of bearing in this world before casting of this body, the urges of lust and anger, is a liberated man and is happy in the true sense.<sup>1</sup> That is to say one should control the senses and should fix his mind on God in order to obtain His knowledge through the path of devotion.<sup>2</sup>

He, who is happy within himself without laying any store by external happiness or unhappiness, enjoys within himself the delight of the soul and who has been illumined by this inner light, such a Karmayogin identified with Brahman attains Brahman, Who is all peace. The R̥ṣis or seers whose sins have been wiped out, whose doubts have been dispelled away by knowledge and who have become engrossed in achieving the welfare of the entire creation by means of self-control, attain Eternal Bliss in the shape of God-realization. The wise men who are free from lust and anger, who have subdued their mind and have realised God, attain the Abode of Everlasting peace.<sup>3</sup> This state of perfection of the soul from the point of view of knowledge is known as the Brahmanbhūta<sup>4</sup> or the Brāhmī state.<sup>5</sup> The Brāhmī state described in the philosophy of the Absolute Self by the words—'Aham

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1. Bhagavadgītā—5 : 20-23.

2. Ibid., 9 : 34.

3. Ibid., 5 : 24-26.

4. Ibid., 18 : 54.

5. Ibid., 2 : 72.

*Brahmāsmi* i.e., 'I am God'.<sup>1</sup> is attained sometimes by the path of devotion, sometimes by the practice of the control of the mind according to the Pātanjala Yoga and sometimes by the path of discernment of constituents laid down in the Sāṃkhya system. Out of these paths, the philosophy of the Absolute Self is purely rational philosophy, the devotion has been mentioned as the easiest means for an ordinary person for the acquisition of the knowledge of Brahman.<sup>2</sup> Whatever be the means employed this much is, undoubtedly, agreed by all that realizing the identity of the Supreme Being and the soul with the belief that there is only one soul in all creatures is the climax of divine knowledge.

The knowledge of both the Nirguṇa or qualityless and Saguṇa or qualityful aspects of divinity is a sovereign science, a sovereign secret, supremely holy, most excellent, directly enjoyable, attended with virtue, very easy to practise and imperishable.<sup>3</sup> It is asserted here that the path of devotion or the worship of the perceptible is a *Vidyā* according to the Upaniṣads, which is the king or the most superior of these mysterious *Vidyās*, and also that this religion being something which is actually visible to the eyes is easy to follow. As this Yoga comes into practice by the tradition of Ikṣvāku and other kings, it may also be said to be the path followed by such eminent persons, and thus to be a '*Rājavidyā*'.<sup>4</sup> In that respect the sovereign science or *Rājavidyā* may be treated as the path of devotion.

### THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD

The perceptible universe begins to come into being out of the imperceptible Prakṛti or God when the day of Brahmadeva or the Kalpa (the creation) starts.<sup>5</sup> God gives to everyone a birth and a death according to his own doings. Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa has explained here that He Himself is not responsible for His doings, but the man is himself liable for his

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1. Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad—I : 4, 10,
  2. Gītā-Rahasya-Vol. I : B.G. Tilak, 1936, p. 613.
  3. Bhagavadgītā : 9 : 2,
  4. Ibid : 4 : 1, 2.
  5. Ibid : 8 : 18.

acts. With God as the supervisor, Nature brings forth the entire creation, both animate and inanimate. It is due to this fact that the wheel of the universe is moving round a centre<sup>1</sup> in the shape of evolutions and dissolutions of the creations.<sup>2</sup> To make it more clear the three-fold *Māyā* or *Prakṛti* is not an independent substance, but as a result of ignorance, ascribes a qualityful appearance to one homogeneous and qualityless Brahman. According to the non-dualistic Vedantists if the qualityless Brahman was the only fundamental substance as the *Kaṇāda Nyāya* philosophy propounds the doctrine that innumerable atoms are the prime cause of the universe and the followers of the *Nyāya* philosophy consider these atoms to be real. They conclude that the various objects of the world begin to come into existence when these atoms begin to combine. This theory of the creation of the Universe through the union of the atoms is known as *Ārambha-Vāda* or the theory of commencement of a creation. But the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy of the *Gītā* does not recognise this theory and says that the prime cause of the gross world is one real three-constituted Nature and that the visible world comes into existence as a result of the unfolding of the constituents of this triple Nature.<sup>3</sup>

The knowledge is divided into three categories on account of its difference of qualities in accordance with the three *Guṇas*—The knowledge by which one realises one imperishable entity in all beings undivided among the divided is known as *Sāttvika*. The knowledge which regards the manifold existence of various kinds in all beings as separate is called *Rājasa*, and the knowledge which unreasonably and without understanding the elementary principles confines itself to only one thing looking upon it as the all-in-all is declared to be *Tāmasa*.<sup>4</sup>

These characteristics of the three-fold knowledge are very comprehensive. The narrow-mindedness that one's own wife,

1. *Bhagavadgītā* : 9 : 10.

2. *Ibid* : 9 : 7.

3. *Gītā Rahasya* Vol. I : B.G. Tilak, Ed. 1936, p. 331.

4. *Bhagavadgītā* 18 : 20-22.

children and relations are the whole creation taking them as the only object of his support and well-wishing rests in the Tāmāsa knowledge. When one rising up a little considers a neighbour, a townsman or a fellow countryman as his own—this knowledge is of the Rājasa nature. But when one lifts up himself with a broader view even above this stage and realises that there is only one soul in all beings; looking upon them even mindedly as various fragments of his own—this type of knowledge is perfect and Sāttvika. In short, seeing the undivided in that which seems divided or seeing unity in diversity is the true characteristic of knowledge and he, who realises that there is no manifoldness in this universe, reaches the state of Immortality. And one, who sees diversity in this universe, falls into the cycle of taking birth and dying<sup>1</sup> again and again only in one Brahman's Day.<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious from the above discussion that the purpose of human birth is only satisfied by the acquisition of knowledge. It is so important that Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa preached it first in detail and even emphasised that the sacrifice in the form of knowledge is superior to the sacrifice performed with material things, because all doings unexceptionally rise to the highest point through knowledge.<sup>3</sup> That is, the sacrifice of material things is performed by man for attaining the grace of God. But one cannot attain it without being acquainted with the true nature of God. Therefore, the method of acquiring the knowledge of the divine truth and of attaining the Supreme by leading a course of life which is uniform with that knowledge is designated by the Lord as the *Jñāna-Yajña* or the sacrifice of knowledge. This sacrifice being as mental is performed with the help of reason and intelligence. Therefore, it is clear that all actions of all kinds are performed with the help of knowledge. The Gītā preaches mankind that all actions must be performed as a duty for universal welfare, though they may not be useful for one's ownself, let the fruit go to the coming generation or to other fellow-beings. Therefore, man

1. Kathopaniṣad—4 : 11.

2. Bhagavadgītā 9 : 7.

3. Ibid : 4 : 33.

must, by all means, obtain knowledge for the proper performance of his duty fallen to his lot in life due to his nature-born qualities and for attaining the highest perfection in the shape of God-realization in the hereafter. As the actions are not duly performed without acquiring knowledge, in the same way, the acquisition of knowledge is also impossible without the help of actions. To make it more clear thinking, memorizing, remembering, retaining or other functions of the mind rest in mental actions. Therefore, knowledge and action are both correlated to each other leading one to Supreme Bliss. Out of the two, however, the action being easier of practice is superior to knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Hence Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa now tries Arjuna, the warrior prince to make him ready for doing his duty of fighting through His preachings based on the authority of *Karmayoga* or the Yoga of selfless action.

### KARMAYOGA OR THE YOGA OF SELFLESS ACTION

The Sanskrit words '*Karma*' and '*Yoga*' make one compound "*Karmayoga*". The word '*Karma*' springs from the root,  $\sqrt{Kr}$  meaning 'doing', 'affairs' and 'activity' and the same ordinary meaning is represented in the Bhagavadgītā. The word '*Yoga*', is more complicated in its meaning than the word '*Karma*'. The present day ordinary meaning of this word is "controlling the mental impulses by the means of '*Prāṇāyāma*' or the breath-control or the Yoga of mental absorption as prescribed in the Pātañjala Yoga Sūtras. But this restricted meaning is not intended in the Bhagavadgītā. The word '*Yoga*' comes from the root,  $\sqrt{Yuj}$  meaning 'to join' and its root meaning is 'the state of union', 'combination', 'addition', 'co-existence', 'staying together', 'means', 'device', 'method' and thing to be done' that is, the *Karma* or action, which is necessary for acquiring that state.<sup>2</sup> In practical astrology, if some planets have become propitious or unpropitious, we say that they are forming a propitious or unpropitious '*Yoga*'.<sup>3</sup> And the word '*Yoga*' in the compound '*Yoga-Kṣema*' means

1. Bhagavadgītā 2 : 40 and 5 : 2.

2. Amarakośa—3.3, 22.

3. Gītā-Rahasya-Vol. I : B.G. Tilak, Ed. 1936, p. 76.

acquiring such things as one has not got.<sup>1</sup> The word 'Yoga' has been used in the Gītā four or five times in the sense of Pātanjala-Yoga.<sup>2</sup> But the word 'Yoga' is very often used in the sense of 'means', 'skilful device', 'method', 'the thing to be done', 'union' and so on. This word also signifies the 'divine skill' or the 'wonderful power' of the Blessed Lord<sup>3</sup> by virtue of that He has been referred to as 'Yogeśvara'.<sup>4</sup> Again it means some 'special skill', 'device', 'intelligent method' or 'graceful way of performing actions'.<sup>5</sup> The word 'Yoga' is variously meant as 'disinterested action',<sup>6</sup> or 'Karma-Yoga'<sup>7</sup> 'equability of mind towards pairs of opposites' and so on.

The very essence of the Gitaic preachings lies in the statement of the Blessed Lord as, one should lift oneself up by one's efforts, and should not degrade oneself, as one's own self is one's friend and one's own self is one's enemy.

One's own self is the friend of that soul by whom the lower self, e.g., the mind, the senses and the body has been conquered. On the other hand, the very self of him, who has not conquered his lower self, behaves like one's enemy.<sup>8</sup> This statement, based on the doctrine of free will, propounds the principles, that every one must try to achieve higher goals in the world according to his nature-born qualities and that howsoever powerful the nature may be, it is in one's own hands to win it and to bring about one's own betterment.<sup>10</sup> When one's own soul positively becomes one's own friend (and again negatively when that very soul becomes one's own enemy), it is due to one's own good and bad actions by controlling the senses and running after them. Therefore, man must keep his soul good and friendly by his right actions as laid down in the scriptures.

1. The Bhagavadgītā : 9 : 22.

2. Ibid : 6 : 12, 23.

3. Ibid : 7 : 9, 25 ; 10 : 7, 11:8.

4. Ibid : 18 : 75.

5. Ibid : 2 : 50.

6. Ibid : 2 : 38, 39, 5 : 18

7. Ibid : 2 : 47, 48.

8. Ibid : : 6 : 5.

9. Ibid : 6 : 6.

10. Gītā Rahasya—Vol. 1 : B. G. Tilak ed. 1936, pp. 393-391.

In the blessed path of disinterested action, one's intellect must be determinate and one-pointed, treating alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat etc.<sup>1</sup> And one must be continuing to perform action lifelong with a disinterested frame of mind and without adopting the life of a renouncer or forest-dweller even after obtaining the true wisdom. What the *Īśopaniṣad* opines on this point is just in confirmity with the *Gītā* as one should wish for living a hundred years, continuously discharging his allotted duties in the world. Only by doing this one does not incur sin even for one's wrong actions.<sup>2</sup> Thus we see that the *Gītā* supports the path of *Karmayoga* with a great stress. Man must think his right only in action, but never to the fruit thereof and he must not be indifferent to performing actions.<sup>3</sup> It means that duty must be performed for the sake of duty only, ignoring the object of the fruit and attachment. It is clearly preached by the *Gītā* that man's authority extends only to the performance of actions without hoping for fruit or result. For him who is not desirous for the fruit of his doings is natural to be indifferent towards performing actions, but the Lord declares that 'one should not insist on giving up action'. Therefore everyone must necessarily perform his duty fallen to his lot in life without hoping for the fruit or the result of his strivings and be indifferent to success and failure, because the true spirit of action lies in equanimity.<sup>4</sup> Action with a selfish motive is far inferior to the *Yoga* of action in the form of equability. Therefore, all men must be engaged in carrying out their respective duties even-mindedly. He, who is endowed with equanimity, remains untouched both by good and evil in this world. Therefore one should take shelter skilfully in this *Yoga* which is known as *Karmayoga* or the *Yoga* of action in its true meaning.<sup>5</sup> The *Gītā* preaches that the works done with an equable frame of mind, that is, looking upon righteousness and unrighteousness equally, having:

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1. *Bhagavadgītā* : 2 : 38, 41.

2. *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* : 2.

3. *Bhagavadgītā* : 2 : 47.

4. *Ibid* : 2 : 48.

5. *Ibid* : 2 : 49-51.

discarded all selfish motive in performing actions do not affect man. One's cleverness consists in keeping one's *buddhi* or reason stable, holy, equable and untainted. Hence one should do one's own duty in the straightforward way with a calm reason neglecting no worldly activities. Man must cross the mire of delusion for growing indifference to what has been heard and what is yet to be heard about this world and the next, and he must remain steadfast and firm in meditation on God, when his mind has been confused by hearing contradictory statements.<sup>1</sup> When a person, having listened to the description of obtainable fruit laid down in the Vedic hymns, falls into a conflicting way of performing a particular act for obtaining a particular fruit, man's intellect gets all the more confused instead of becoming firm. Therefore man is advised by Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa through His speech given to Arjuna that he should give up paying attention to such statements of Vedic hymns etc., and to attain a steady concentration of mind, so that he may attain the Karmayoga consisting of equanimity of reason and be able to perform action without incurring any sin and without being in need of any further advice. Such an actor or Karmayogin, whose reason has become stable, becomes one stable of mind. For making himself stable of mind, man must thoroughly abandon all cravings of the mind and be satisfied in self through the joy of the self.<sup>2</sup> A man, who attains such state of mind, remains unperturbed in sorrows—his thirst for worldly pleasures totally disappears and he becomes free from passion, fear and anger, unattached to everything, and meeting with desirable and undesirable, he neither rejoices nor recoils. By the steadiness of one's mind one withdraws one's senses from the objects of the senses; therefore, one does not enjoy them with one's senses but the taste for them persists, though one's desire for it altogether disappears on seeing the Supreme through the stability of mind.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, man must by all means develop the stability of mind for the performance of right actions in this world and for attaining salvation in the hereafter.

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1. Bhagavadgītā : 2 : 52, 53.

2. Ibid., 2:55.

3. Ibid : 2 : 56—59.



The sense-organs derive their energy from food; then, if a person does not take food (or observes fast) his sense-organs become weak and incapable of enjoying their respective objects. In this way, getting rid of the enjoyments of these sense-objects is the external action of the enforced tiredness of the sense-organs. But, the desire for the sense-objects is not thereby diminished, therefore, for the total curbing of the senses, one must acquire divine knowledge by which such desire will altogether be destroyed, and thereby his senses also automatically come under control. Hence, it is not necessary to fast or cause any other trouble to the organs of the senses. Non-eating is not preached in the Gītā, only this much is enjoined that Yogins should eat moderately within the limits.<sup>1</sup>

A man dwelling on the objects of the senses develop attachment for them; from attachment springs up desires; from desire on its non-fulfilment ensues anger; from anger arises infatuation; from infatuation confusion of memory; from confusion of memory loss of reason and from loss of reason, he goes to utter ruin. But one self-controlled while enjoying the various sense-objects through one's senses which are disciplined and free from likes and dislikes, attains placidity of mind. With the attainment of such placidity of mind, all one's sorrows come to an end, and the intellect of a person of tranquil mind soon withdrawing itself from all sides, becomes steadily established in God.<sup>2</sup> But he, who has not controlled his mind and senses, has no determinate reason, nor such an undisciplined man has faith in God. The unbeliever can have no calmness, and consequently he cannot attain happiness on account of his lacking peace of mind.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, man must completely restrain his senses from their objects giving up all desires, attachment, egoism and thirst for enjoyments for the attainment of the placidity of mind i.e., state of God-realization.<sup>4</sup>

Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa tells mankind through the agency of

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1. Bhagavadgītā : 6 : 16, 17, and 3 : 6, 7.

2. Ibid : 2:62—65.

3. Ibid : 2: 66.

4. Ibid : 2 : 68-72.

the Gītā, that man is bound to action by his nature-born-qualities.<sup>1</sup> For instance, actions like 'sleeping', 'sitting', 'breathing', etc., do not stop so long as the body exists.<sup>2</sup> It is clearly stated that he, whose mind is not pure but who outwardly restrains the organs of sense and action in order that others should respect him, is not at all a meritorious person, but a hypocrite.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, man must perform his duties disinterestedly, having no regard for worldly pomp and display. Some commentators of the path of renunciation interpret this as meaning that, though this Yoga of action may be superior to the path of hypocrisy, yet, it is not superior to the path of renunciation. This argument is only in support of a particular doctrine, because the doctrine of Karmayoga is decidedly superior to the path of renunciation.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, man must undertake the Yoga of action through the application of his sense-organs, controlling those organs of sense and action by the mind and remaining unattached. As doing is superior to non-doing and desisting from action, one cannot even maintain one's own body, therefore so long as one lives, one must perform one's allotted duty according to one's status in the society.<sup>5</sup>

Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa emphasising His doctrine of action gives an historical example that it was through action without attachment that Janaka and others attained perfection, therefore, casting a glance upon the maintenance of the world order, man ought to take to action.<sup>6</sup> If one is in doubt as to how to act in any particular contingency of life, he should perform action even as a knowledgeable, Yoga-practising religious Brāhmaṇa acts in that matter.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, man must do all actions in the world as a public benefactor does. The generality follows

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1. Bhagavadgītā : 3 : 5.

2. Ibid : 5 : 9 and 18 : 11.

3. Ibid : 3:6.

4. Gītā-Rahasya—Vol. I : B.G. Tilak, pp. 425, 426.

5. Bhagavadgītā : 3 : 7, 8.

6. Ibid : 3:20.

7. Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa 1, 11, 4 and Maṇḍūkya Upaniṣad—Śānti Parva—341, 25

the standard of doings set up by the great.<sup>1</sup> Hence for the sake of public welfare, man must punctually do his duty for merely duty's sake with an equable frame of mind towards success and failure, pleasure and pain etc. In support of His statement the Blessed Lord quotes His own example that 'there is nothing in the three worlds for Me to perform, nor is there anything worth attaining unattained by Me, yet I continue to work for the well-being of the world.' And again, the Blessed Lord says that 'if, I do not act, these worlds will be ruined and I shall be the author of the confusion of castes and of the destruction of these people.' Following the example of Lord Śrī-kṛṣṇa, wise man must act remaining far from attachment and seeking the maintenance of world order.<sup>2</sup> A wise man should not unsettle the mind of the ignorant attached to action, but should get them perform all their duties—duly performing them himself and thus imparting to such ignorant people enlightenment and wisdom.<sup>3</sup>

All actions are performed by Primordial Matter or Modes of Prakṛti; therefore no one can claim himself to be the doer of any act, but he is helplessly driven to action by his nature born-qualities.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, knowing the truth about the respective spheres of Guṇas or modes of Nature and actions, holding that it is the Guṇas in the shape of the mind and senses etc., that move among the Guṇas resting in the objects of perception, should not get deluded by egoism and attachment.<sup>5</sup> Hence, dedicating all actions to God with the mind fixed on God, the self of all freed from hope and sense of meum as well as cured of mental disbalance, man must be engaged in fighting or in trade or in boating or in studying, etc. according to his status in life on the demand of the circumstances.<sup>6</sup>

Attraction and repulsion are rooted in all sense-objects, but man must not be tempted by them, holding them main stumbling-blocks in his way. It should be borne in mind that

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1. Bhagavadgītā 3:21.

2. Ibid : 3 : 22, 24, 25.

3. Ibid : 3 : 26.

4. Ibid : 3 : 27 and 18 : 59.

5. Ibid : 3 : 28.

6. Ibid: 3:29.

one's duty, though devoid of merit is preferable to the duty of another well performed.<sup>1</sup> That is to say, the code of duties prescribed for every individual by the Śāstras, according to the classification of four castes, should be followed by all. The arrangement of the four castes made by the Smṛtis, by allotting duties consistently with the special qualities of each, is for the benefit of everybody. The respective duties of Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras have been fixed with reference to the qualities arising from their inherent natures e.g., from Prakṛti.<sup>2</sup> The inherently natural duties of a Brāhmaṇa are control of the mind, control of the senses, undergoing hardship for the sake of duty, purity, both internal and external, forgiveness, straightness of mind and faith in God, the scriptures and the other world, knowledge of the sacred lore and vision of God based on direct experience.<sup>3</sup> The inherently nature-born duties of Kṣatriya are bravery, majesty, firmness, prowess ingenuity, not running away from the battle, generosity and exercising authority over the subjects. Cultivation, business of keeping cattle and their protection and trade are the duties of Vaiśya born of his own nature, and service of all the three castes is Śūdra's duty born of his nature.<sup>4</sup> To comment on the above, this classification of the castes came into existence as a result of the difference between the inherently nature-born qualities. This arrangement of the four castes has not been introduced in the Gītā for the first time, but had been laid down there earlier in the Mahābhārata.<sup>5</sup> It has been depicted before that the entire activity of the world results from the differences in the constituents of one's nature. Therefore, all doings of the four castes are not led by any worldly authority, but by Nature, having derived their motive power from God.

The distinguishing feature of the science of Karmayoga has been explained in the Gītā where Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa preaches

1. Bhagavadgītā: 3 : 35 and 28 : 59.

2. Ibid., 18 : 41.

3. Ibid., 18:42.

4. Ibid., 18:43, 44,

5. Mahābhārata—Vana Parva—180 and 211 and Śānti Parva—188, Aśvamedha Parva—39.11.

mankind by saying, 'Devoted to his own duty man attains the highest perfection in the shape of God-realization.'<sup>1</sup> As God is pervading everywhere, being present in all beings by virtue of His Omnipresence, therefore, if man, according to the four-caste arrangement, serves the society by performing his duties, devoutly as a result of his nature-born qualities disinterestedly and dedicating all actions to God, serves God, the Provider of the Supreme state in that very form. Thus, we conclude from the above that any member of the society can worship the Omnipresent God through his services rendered for the public welfare. As God Himself continues to work for the public good,<sup>2</sup> therefore He loves those who maintain the world order through their services. In this way, carpenters, tailors, shoe-makers, potters, sweepers, weavers, washermen, farmers, labourers, architects can worship God in His *Virāṭa*-form and attain Immortality through their respective works performing them desirelessly, having no regard for fruit and with the idea of dedicating all actions to the Supreme Being. Man attains perfection by worshipping God through his actions done desirelessly befitting his status in life and not by flowers or by words for Parameśvara, who has created the whole of this world wills its maintenance by His created beings. The meaning of verse 46th of the 18th chapter of the *Gītā* along with its entirety is that by performing actions desirelessly, according to one's own status in life, a man performs a sort of worship, devotion or prayer of that *Virāṭa*-formed Parameśvara, Who is inside all created beings.<sup>3</sup> Here worship of God and devotion do not mean that man should perform the nine kinds of devotion, but he should perform various actions which have fallen to his lot according to the injunctions of the four-caste-arrangements as laid down in the *Śāstras*, in accordance with his inherently natural qualifications. Man must not perform these actions as pertaining to himself, but the idea of God must be in the mind and with a mineless frame of mind, dedicating all

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1. *Bhagavadgītā* 18:45.

2. *Ibid.*, 2:22, 24, 25.

3. *Gītā-Rāhasya*—Vol. I by B.G. Tilak, ed. 1936, p. 612.

actions to God and for the welfare of the society at large, so that the action would not be wasted and amount to the service or worship of God. It is obvious from the above that the path of devotion led by the Gītā is based on action, namely, the worship of God is observed not only by speech or by flowers, but also by actions performed disinterestedly, pertinent to one's own status in life and that such a worship in the form of actions must necessarily be performed by every member of the society. As we have seen above that the Gītā does not recognise the difference between men and women or among Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras in the path of release, but it clarifies that any individual of the society belonging to any of the four castes, whether he may be the vilest sinner, man or woman, Vaiśya or Śūdra can attain the highest perfection in the shape of God-realization by performing his duties fallen to his lot in life with an equable frame of mind without attachment surrendering the fruit of actions to God and for the benefit of the society at large. The Divine will is to do good for the world, so the dearest to the Divinity are those who perform the actions desirelessly without attachment and fruit holding pleasure and pain as equal, dedicating all actions to God and with the idea of the advancement of the world by their respective works. Thus we see that Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa opens the door of paradise even to the vilest sinner, womanfolk, Vaiśyas, Śūdras and even to those who are born of the womb of sin,<sup>1</sup> if they do their work in the prescribed manner, e.g., working disinterestedly being far from fruit and attachment and submitting all actions to God, being mentally devoted to Him. It is clearly observed from the above that the man whose Reason has become equable towards all is the highest of mortals, whether he is a tailor or a shoe-maker or a butcher by profession. The spiritual value of a man does not depend upon the profession adopted by him or on the caste to which he is pertained, but entirely on the purity of his own conscience. God is equally present in all beings, there is none hateful or dear to Him. Those, however, who devoutly worship Him, abide in Him and!

1. Bhagavadgītā 9 : 30, 32 and Mahābhārata—Aśvamedha Parva 19-61.

He too stands revealed in them.<sup>1</sup> Here too worship does not merely mean 'devotion to, or meditation on God having renounced the worldly activity. For, God Himself is the Doer for the advancement of the world, so He expects His created beings also to be the doers for the benefit of the world and He counts the doings of all if performed in the prescribed manner as laid down in the Śāstras, as worship or devotion to Himself. Thus, it can be concluded that God can best be worshipped through the performance of one's own duties fallen to one's lot in life according to one's inherently natural qualities with an equable frame of mind without attachment and fruit submitting all actions to God and with the idea of doing good to the world. Now, we see that the Gītā aims equally at Immortality and universal well-being, that, is, the maintenance and sustenance of the society at large. The possibility of the fulfilment of this Divine Will based on the advancement of mankind depends entirely on the performance of the respective works of all members of the society, like the brave soldier who, wins success in the battlefield for the progress of his nation. Similarly all categories of workers should carry on their respective works for serving the society in the like manner. If Release could be obtained by mere devotion abandoning actions, then, all of these people would have to give up their relative professions, causing a stumbling-block to the development of the society, which is absolutely undesirable to God. But, on the other hand, the Gītā preaches that it is not proper for anybody to give up the profession, which has been allotted to him as a result of his status in life and adopt the profession of someone else on the basis of its superiority. Thus, man must try to serve the society by being well-versed in his own profession once accepted by virtue of his nature-born capabilities. Man must, by all means, carry on his own business which has befallen him as a result of his status in life, unattachedly, however troublesome or undesirable it might be. As the superiority or the inferiority of a man does not depend upon the adoption of a profession, but his worth from the spiritual point of view depends on the frame of mind, where-

with he carries on that profession.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, one should follow his profession with a desireless frame of mind, treating alike victory and defeat, pleasure and pain etc. without attachment and having no hope for the fruit with the idea of the public good and dedicating all activity to God. Thus serving the society successfully by his respective business in life, man reaches the Supreme state. Therefore, having endowed with pure reason, partaking of light and Sāttvika food dwelling in a clean and solitary place, having relinquished sound and other objects of the senses, having restrained the mind and the senses and controlled speech, action and intellect taking a firm stand on dispassion after eradicating passion and prejudice, unbreakably absorbed in the Yoga of meditation, having abandoned egoism, violence, arrogance, lust, anger and greed destitute of the feeling of meum and calm, every member of the society howsoever might be his profession, attains the state of eternity, where he neither grieves nor desires becoming same to all beings.<sup>2</sup> In all public dealings man must regard friends, foes, well-wishers, neutrals, mediators, the objects of hatred, relatives, the meritorious and the sinful alike.<sup>3</sup>

One's own desire and wrath, begotten of the element of Rajas envelop one's knowledge, thus they are grossly wicked and are enemy to one's own self. The senses, the mind and the intellect are the resting place of desire, deluding the embodied soul, therefore, man, first controlling the senses, must kill this wicked desire, which obscures the knowledge to the Absolute or Nirguṇa Brahman and that of the Manifest Divinity.<sup>4</sup> In order that a man should be able to perform all actions for the social welfare according to the four-caste arrangement and having got rid of attachment in the form of desire, he must have perfect control over his senses. Here, the Gītā's view extends only to controlling the senses but not to forcibly killing them and giving up all actions.

While Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa preached to Arjuna to make him ready for fight on the authority of Sāṃkhyayoga or the Yoga

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1. Bhagavadgītā 2:49.

2. Ibid., 18:50-54.

3. Ibid., 6:9.

4. Ibid., 3:37-41.



of knowledge and Karmayoga or the Yoga of action both, then on the question of Arjuna as to which of these two ways is decidedly better, the Supreme Lord replies that the Yoga of knowledge and action both lead to Supreme bliss. Of the two, however, the Yoga of action being easier of practice is superior to the Yoga of knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Here, the blessed Lord declaredly prefers the path of performing actions. We may conclude on the divine authority that even he who has attained knowledge must continue to perform actions desirelessly as a duty for the universal well-being till the last moment of his life. The Gītā emphasisingly declares that the Sāṃkhyayoga and the Karmayoga are both equally productive of Release, yet gives preference to the latter, because of its being easier of practice by virtue of the compulsion of the Nature.<sup>2</sup> The Karmayogin, that is, he who performs his allotted duties fallen to his lot in life, in the detached way, with the equable frame of mind surrendering all actions to God and with the idea of social welfare, is considered a Sannyāsin or renouncer.<sup>3</sup> It is unwise and stupid to say that Sāṃkhyayoga and Karmayoga are productive of divergent results. For he, who is firmly established in any of the two, gets the fruit of both in the shape of God-realization.

With a view to making it more clear, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa emphasises that the Supreme state which is reached by the Sāṃkhyayogin is attained also by the Karmayogin; therefore one must see Sāṃkhyayoga and Karmayoga as one regarding their ultimate results.<sup>4</sup> Without performing actions, however, the yoga of knowledge or renunciation of doership in connection with all activities of the mind, the senses and the body is difficult to attain, whereas the Karmayogin, who keeps his mind focussed on God, attains the highest perfection. The Karmayogin, who has fully conquered his mind and subdued his senses, whose heart is pure and who has identified his self with the self of all beings, namely God, remains unaffected.

1. Bhagavadgītā : 5:2.

2. Ibid., 18:59, 60.

3. Ibid., 5:3.

4. Ibid., 5:4, 5.

even though performing actions.<sup>1</sup> It is clearly stated in the Gītā that even though the knowledge is considered of the great importance in the path of renunciation, yet the knowledge is not perfect unless action is performed. But the proper action is difficult to be performed without the help of knowledge.<sup>2</sup> In this way, the Sāmkhyayoga and the Karmayoga are correlated to each other. Thus, the wise is he who knows the reality of things, even though seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, going, sleeping, breathing, speaking, passing urine and stool, taking and opening or closing the eyes and believes that he does nothing, holding that it is the senses that are acting on sense-objects by force of Nature.<sup>3</sup> As we see from the above that various actions are actions of the different organs of the body which are performed automatically by force of nature, therefore one must remove the egotistical sense of 'I' from the mind in performing actions. 'If a man becomes a *Jñānin*, the organs of breathing, etc., will continue to perform their respective functions. Even remaining alive for a fraction of a second is in itself an action, then where remains the difference that the *Jñānin*, who follows the path of renunciation gives up action, and that the Karmayogin performs action?'<sup>4</sup>

Offering the fruit of actions to God, the Karmayogins perform actions only with their senses, mind, intellect and body as well withdrawing the feeling of meum in respect of them and shaking off attachment simply for the sake of self-purification.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, man must by heart realize that the actions either bodily or mental or intellectual have no relation of doership with his own self. In this way man becomes the self-controlled-Sāmkhyayogin doing nothing himself and getting nothing done by others. Thus the Omnipresent Lord does not partake of the virtue or sin of anyone, realizing the mental state of individuals holding them to be the non-doers. The mind and intellect of such persons are wholly merged in the

1. Bhagavadgītā : 5 : 7, 8,

2. Ibid 6:2.

3. Ibid., 5 : 8, 9.

4. Gītā Rahasya—Vol. II, B.G. Tilak, ed. 1936, p. 973.

5. Bhagavadgītā : 5 : 11, 12.

Supreme soul, therefore their body is guided by the Supreme wisdom for performing the right actions, as a Sannyāsin or renouncer performs his duty without expecting the fruit of actions.<sup>1</sup> Thus we see that there is no difference between a Sannyāsin or Sāṁkhyayogin and a Karmayogin.<sup>2</sup> He is no Sannyāsin who has merely renounced a perpetual sacred fire, even so, he is no Karmayogin who has merely given up all activity, living in the forest and maintaining himself by begging and does not take part in the worldly affairs. But, on the contrary, a Karmayogin must, even in the state of perfection, continue to perform all actions, desirelessly, and merely as duties so long as he is alive.

In the last chapter of the Gītā, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa has summarised His speech delivered on the science of Karmayoga in its 3rd to 6th chapters and at other places thereof. On the wish of Arjuna to know severally the true nature of Sannyāsa or Sāṁkhyayoga and of Tyāga or Karmayoga, the Blessed Lord replies, 'Some men of wisdom understand Sannyāsa as the renunciation of actions prompted by desire and others define Tyāga as relinquishing the fruit of all actions.'<sup>3</sup> Besides, some sages emphasise that all action is evil and as such should be abandoned. While others say that acts of sacrifice, gift and penance should not be given up. Though the dictionary meaning of the words '*Sannyāsa*' and '*Tyāga*' is 'to give up', but this question has not been asked with a view to merely knowing the root-meanings of these words but to know their true spirit. Therefore, quoting the old views regarding *Sannyāsa* and '*Tyāga*', Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa explains that one should only make an abandonment of the hope of fruit,<sup>4</sup> and should dedicate all actions to God.<sup>5</sup> If one considers the Upaniṣads, one comes across statements, describing the path of renunciation, which are indicative of the abandonment of action, such as, many persons have obtained Release by

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1. Bhagavadgītā: 6 : 1.

2. Ibid., 6:2.

3. Ibid., 18:2.

4. Ibid., 12 : 11.

5. Ibid 3 : 30 and 12 : 6.

abandoning or making a *literal* Tyāga of all actions.<sup>1</sup> Thus we see that the Upaniṣads and the Gītā say that actions performed desirelessly should not be given up. Some of the Upaniṣads say that the man who has become fit for Release after all desire has been destroyed in his heart as a result of knowledge, need not perform desire-prompted actions, which lead only to heaven, and other Upaiṣads such as Iśāvāsyā etc., insist that all these actions, nevertheless, be kept going on in order that the activities of the world should go on.<sup>2</sup> It is quite obvious that the Gītā accepts the second view out of these two views prescribed by the Upaniṣads.<sup>2</sup> The second verse of the 18th chapter of the Gītā clearly explains the true spirit of the words 'Sannyāsa' and 'Tyāga' according to the path of Karma-yoga, that only *Kāmya* or desire-prompted actions should be abandoned. But the followers of the path of renunciation have to declare that the '*Nitya*' and '*Naimittika*' actions (daily routine) should also be included in the '*kāmya*-actions.' Even doing so it is asserted that the hope of fruit should be given up and that actions should not be given up. Therefore, it can rightly be interpreted that one must continue to perform actions till death, giving up the hope of fruit and attachment.

According to the terminology of Manu, all actions fall into one of the two divisions—*Kāmya* or Desire-prompted and *Niṣkāma* or desireless. For instance, if a certain action is done for the fulfilment of a certain purpose, having regard to the purpose for which it is prescribed by the Śāstras, say, '*Putreṣṭi*' (sacrifice for obtaining a son), then it becomes desire-prompted action, but if the same thing is done merely as a matter of duty without entertaining the hope of fruit, it becomes desireless action. It is clear by the thorough study of the Gītā that Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa asks everyone to perform only desireless actions. Here we see from the above that in order to impress on the mind of Arjuna that the principles of Sannyāsa and Tyāga both remain constant in Karmayoga, the Lord has in this verse given these two definitions. That is, 'Sannyāsa' means total renunciation of desire-prompted actions and

1. Muṇḍakopaniṣad 3.3.6.

2. Gītā Rahasya : B.G. Tilak, ed. 1936, Vol. I, p. 481.

3. Bhagavadgītā : 5 : 2.

the Tyāga means the abandonment of hope of fruit. Following the order of the Varṇāśrama dharma i.e. Brahmacarya, Gr̥hastha, Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa states sanctioned by Smṛtis is meant here. But, on the contrary, the Gitaic Sannyāsin is he who does not give up actions which have fallen to his lot in life according to his status in the society, but gives up hope of fruit, in all desireless actions which are to be performed.

With a view to explaining the true imports of the words 'Sannyāsa' and 'Tyāga', Lord Śrīkr̥ṣṇa, quoting the views of different schools of philosophy, asserts that some sages (of the Sāṃkhya school) declare that all action is faulty, therefore as such should be abandoned, while others advocate that acts of sacrifice, charity and penance should not be abandoned. Here, we see that the Gītā identifies the renunciation of only desire-prompted actions. But the acts of sacrifice, gift and penance as laid down by the scriptures are Kāmya or desire-born,<sup>1</sup> therefore, one must necessarily give them up. And if that is done, the cycle of Yajñas or Yajña-Cakra will come to an end<sup>2</sup> and the world will run the risk of being wasted. The Gītā provides solution to this conflicting idea by saying that although the scriptures have prescribed the performance of sacrifice, gift and penance for obtaining heaven, but it is not that these very actions cannot be performed desirelessly and for the well-being of the world with the idea that performing sacrifices or giving alms or performing austerities is one's duty in life.<sup>3</sup> Therefore acts of sacrifice, charity and penance, should also be performed according to one's social status in life with the desireless frame of mind and giving up hope of fruit and without attachment like other desireless actions in the worldly affairs are performed. Now, the Supreme Lord gives His Own conclusion about Tyāga or relinquishment that this Tyāga is declared to be of three kinds—Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa, as there is no existence on earth, in the heavens or among the celestials or anywhere else in the creation which is

1. Bvagavadgītā : 2 : 42-44.

2. Ibid., 13 : 16.

3. Ibid., 17 : 11, 20.

free from these three qualities—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas born of matter.<sup>1</sup> But it has been clearly accepted that the True Brahman is beyond these three constituents—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, born of nature, while the whole creation is made up of the perishable opposites of happiness and unhappiness, life and death etc. The qualitylessness of God has also been proved on the ancient authority of the Vedas. For example, in the Nāradya Sūkta of the R̥gveda no adjective is applied to the Pārabrahman and the fundamental element of the universe is described by saying, “at the commencement of the world there was neither Sat nor Asat, but whatever there was, was One”.<sup>2</sup> The idea of Sat and Asat came into being afterwards.<sup>3</sup> It has been declared in the Gītā that he whose reason has become free from the couples of Sat and Asat, hot and cold etc. reaches the Abode of Brahman, which is beyond these couples of opposites.

The Gītā repeatedly confirms that the acts of sacrifice, gift and penance should not be abandoned: they must be performed at all events. As sacrifice, gift and penance performed by wise men purify the heart.<sup>4</sup> That is to say, the performance of these actions causes one's generosity to increase, which is conducive of Release. Though all these ritualistic performances prescribed by the Śrutis are performed in order to obtain the happiness pertaining to this worldly life, but the Gītā does not advocate this sort of conception regarding these performances and adds that one who wishes to obtain Release, must go beyond these ritualistic practices, which are the result of the Sattva, Rajas and Tamas constituents and which bring about only worldly well-being and must concentrate his attention on the Supreme Being, Who is above all these qualities and one should certainly perform these very ritualistic performances prescribed by the Mīmāṃsā writers for the purification of the mind and for public welfare, giving up the hope of fruit and attachment, dedicating all actions to God. Thus we see that the Gītā emphasisingly declares that one must give up desire-promptedness of one's reason, but

1. Bhagavadgītā 18 : 40.

2. Gītā Rahasya Vol. I: B.G. Tilak, ed. 1936 p. 314.

3. R̥gveda, 10 : 129.

4. Bhagavadgītā : 18 : 4, 5.

not the ritualistic sacrifices.<sup>1</sup> The other ritualistic performances sanctioned by the scriptures should also be performed in the same manner. And the same meaning has been expressed by Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa in the subsequent stanzas of the 18th chapter of the Song Divine.

Giving His considered and the best opinion Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa announces that acts of sacrifice, gift and penance and all other duties of the ritualistic kind must be performed relinquishing attachment and fruit. Only the prohibited actions and the actions prompted by desire should, no doubt, be given up, but the relinquishment of the actions prescribed by the scriptures is not proper. Its abandonment through ignorance has been styled as partaking of Tamas.<sup>2</sup> And he who gives up works, because they bring sorrow or are a trouble to the flesh, thus doing Rājasa renunciation, obtaineth not the fruit of renunciation.<sup>3</sup> As has already been stated above, the Mīmāṃsā terminology is not intended here. The word 'Kārya' has been used instead of Niyata in the 19th verse of the 3rd chapter of the Gītā but the words 'Kārya' and 'Niyata' have both appeared in the 9th verse of the 18th chapter. This verse is a justification of the statement in verse second at the commencement of this chapter that performing the actions which fall to one's lot according to the scriptures looking upon such action as a duty<sup>4</sup> is known as a Sāttvika relinquishment or Tyāga in the science of Karmayoga. We may say in other words, he who neither hates action, which does not lead to happiness, nor is attached to action, which is conducive to good, that person imbued with the quality of goodness, has attained freedom from doubts, he is wise and man of true abandonment.<sup>5</sup> As it is quite impossible for embodied beings to renounce all actions completely, hence it is said that he who renounces the fruit of action has truly

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1. Bhagavadgītā : 17 : 11.

2. Ibid., 18 : 6, 7.

3. Message of the Gītā : Anilbaran Roy. p. 226.

4. Bhagavadgītā : 3 : 19.

5. Ibid., 18 : 10.

renounced.<sup>1</sup> Here too Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa repeatedly explains that whosoever becomes a renouncer in this way that by abandoning merely the hope of fruit and action without giving up action itself, is not affected by the bondage of any action.

Describing the various modes of the hope of fruit of action, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa declares, "The three kinds of results; pleasant, unpleasant and mixed in this or other worlds; in this or another life are for the slaves of desire and ego: these things do not cling to the free spirit."<sup>2</sup> The Gītā does not admit the literal abandonment of all kinds of action but it accepts that the true relinquishment is the relinquishment of the hope of fruit which is imbued with selfishness, that is to say, the relinquishment of egoism. With a view to further emphasise this statement, commented opinions are cited by Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa.

The word 'Sāṃkhya' used in the 13th verse of the 18th chapter has been interpreted by some commentators as meaning the 'Vedānta-Śāstra.' But it is advisable here to mean the word Sāṃkhya as 'Kapila-Sāṃkhya philosophy. The assertion that one should not entertain the hope for the fruit of action nor the egotistical idea that one does any particular thing has very often occurred in the Gītā<sup>3</sup> and that very assertion has been further emphasised here by saying that 'man is not the only reason for the effect of any action coming into existence.'<sup>4</sup> The Sāṃkhya philosophy has mentioned the five contributory causes for the accomplishment of all actions. These are—The Adhiṣṭhāna or the body as the seat of all activities and the organs of action. The Kartā or Jīvātmā, Karaṇa or the different kinds of organs, Ceṣṭā or the divergent activities of various kinds and Daiva or the destiny are the contributory causes of all good or bad actions. To make it more clear that whether human beings exist in this world or not, the uninterrupted activity of the world will go

1. Bhagavadgītā 18 : 11.

2. The Message of the Gītā, as interpreted by Aurobindo and Edited by Anilbaran Roy. p. 227.

3. Bhagavadgītā : 2 : 19, 3 : 27, 8 : 11 and 13 : 29.

4. Gītā-Rahasya-Vol. I : Chapter XI B.G. Tilak, 1936.



on in accordance with the driving force of Nature. No one can perform any action merely by his own efforts, but all actions done by man have been brought about by his efforts combined with the other activities in the world. For example, farming does not depend merely on the efforts of a farmer but the natural activities of other things like land, manure, seed, means of irrigation, oxen etc. are necessary for the successful production of the crops. The natural activities are two-fold—favourable and unfavourable to the result of one's efforts. Some of these activities are partly known to us and man makes an effort after considering the favourableness or otherwise of these factors. But there is existence of some unknown activities of nature in the world and which are either favourable or unfavourable to the results of man's efforts and these are known as destiny.

All these activities are necessary in order that man's effort should be successful and if many of these activities are not within one's controlling power or even not known, then boastfully declaring that I will do this or I will do that, or entertaining the hope of fruit of action that a certain result will follow the particular action, is clearly a foolish statement.<sup>1</sup> In this way, I can undoubtedly affirm that according to the teachings of the Gītā one must, in no case, be indulged in the feeling of egoism, while doing works sanctioned by the scriptural directions, as the egotistical frame of mind leads man to unhappiness.

In order to analyse action, the Blessed Lord says that, knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower—these are the three-fold incentive to action, and the doer, the action and the organs of action—these are the three fold-constituents of action.<sup>2</sup> Knowledge, action and doer are spoken of three kinds—Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa, in the system classifying the three Guṇas and the Gītā leads man to gain Sāttvika knowledge, to perform Sāttvika action and to be a Sāttvika doer.<sup>3</sup> Similarly the Buddhi or reason, the Dhṛti or firmness and Sukha or

1. Gītā-Rahasya ; Vol. I : B.G. Tilak, pp. 452-55. (1936).

2. Bhagavadgītā 18:18.

3. Ibid : 18:20, 23 and 26.

joy are also classified into three-fold division according to the three-qualities of the Nature, and in the same way the *Gītā* favours the *Sāttvika* type of these.<sup>1</sup> "In order to see anything, the eyes require the help of the mind."<sup>2</sup> On the authority of this proposition of the *Mahābhārata*, we may also conclude that in order to hear, smell, feel or taste anything, the ears, the nose, the skin or the tongue respectively require the help of the mind. It has been assured that if the mind is vacant, the objects in front of the eyes, the ears, the nose, the skin or the tongue are not seen, heard, smelt, felt or tasted respectively. And as all works are done with the help of these sense-organs and these sense-organs would not carry on their respective works without the help of the mind. Therefore, it is quite clear that proper actions prescribed by the scriptural ordinances can be performed only when one's mind is sound and healthy, as well as capable of proper reasoning. Thus we may even conclude from the above that one must purify one's mind as much as possible before performing any action. For the purification of the mind and the maintenance of the sound health one's duty extends to supplying *Sāttvika* food<sup>3</sup> to oneself and doing physical exercise punctually, performing proper action according to one's natural capacity of performing it, having regard of punctuality in doing one's duty and of pause in order to provide ease and comfort to the mind and the body, being pious and generous etc. Moreover one's sound-mindedness may also be attained by studying the sacred literature, meditation, mental isolation, worshipping in solitude or by intense contemplation of God. Thus having attained this state of purified mind one does not perceive the dualities or differences in the visible world, though they exist before one's eyes, and thereby one realizes the true form of the non-dualistic Supreme, which is the ultimate goal of the humanity. It seems advisable to make it clear that meditation, mental isolation, worshipping etc. as laid down in the *Gītā* are never meant to cause any sort of discomfort, uneasiness,

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1. *Bhagavadgītā*, 18:30, 33, 36 and 37.

2. *Mahābhārata—Śānti Parva* 311:17.

3. *Bhagavadgītā*, 18:8.

pain or injury to the body, but they are meant only to be performed as duties fixing the mind on God without hope of fruit of action and attachment, with the equable frame of mind in the pairs of opposites as well. The ancient saintly statement, *Śarīramādhyam khalu dharmasāadhanam*, that is, 'verily the maintenance of the body in the sound health is the soul of true religion' is quite applicable in the spirit of the Gitaic religion.

The opening verse of the *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* expresses the true spirit of the Gitaic renunciations, 'All this, whatever moves in this moving world is enveloped by God. Therefore find your enjoyment in renunciation; do not covet what belongs to other.'<sup>1</sup> In other words all things which move and change derive their significance from their relation to the one eternal truth. Thus every thing is full of it,<sup>2</sup> no part of anything exists without its entity.<sup>3</sup> Believing in this divine statement, man must, by all means, do his duty fallen to his lot in life according to his status in the society. It must strictly be remembered that one's duty must be performed for the sake of duty only, fixing the mind on God, for the sake of public good and being fully aloof from attachment. All worldly luxuries, in fact, belong to God, therefore they must be enjoyed for his sake according to His directions laid down in the scriptural ordinances. We may, even on the authority of the *Upaniṣads*, conclude that man must continue to perform his works till his last breath for the maintenance of the world-order, surrendering his purpose to God, the Almighty. By doing his works like this man would not be responsible for his doings.<sup>4</sup> Thus, whosoever sees all beings in one Imperishable Being and Him in all beings, can have no ill-feelings to anyone. But on the contrary, he tries his best for the well-being of all, having fully devoted himself to God. Therefore, man must first of all, realise that every soul is a fragment of one Supreme Soul (God) and God in His Omnipresent form prevails in all beings so that he may love all beings for pleasing God, which is the prior duty of a man.

1. *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* : I.

2. *Bhagavadgītā* 9:4.

3. *Ibid.*, 10 : 39, 42.

4. *Ibid.*, 2:30, 51 and 5:10 and *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* : 2.

According to the Gītā the Supreme Lord desires from His bondmen that they should let others earn their livelihood through their respective professions in the society and should let them live peacefully without causing them any sort of damage. Personal enjoyment, illegal cohabitation and lust should totally be forbidden.<sup>1</sup> Man is not commanded even to hold sexual intercourse with his legal wife for his personal enjoyment except for procreating sons and daughters with a view to provide multiplicity to the race.<sup>2</sup> Thus we see that the religion of the Gītā does not teach mankind to perform duties for his own well-being, but for the welfare of the society at large. As the Gītā preaches in the verse 5th of its chapter 6th that 'one should lift one's self up by one's own efforts and should not degrade oneself' etc., here, lifting one's own self up by one's own efforts is also intended to be for the public good. As every individual is a member of the society bearing on his shoulders a responsibility of the social advancement, then, having his self lifted up by his efforts, he must surely work for the public welfare. For example, Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Nehru had lifted their self up by their own efforts, therefore, they tried their level best for the betterment of their nation. On the contrary, if they would not do so, it would be said that they have not lifted their self up. Thus we may conclude that one's own deeds and efforts for the social well-being are the true testimonials of one's self-perfection. While doing his allotted work according to his natural qualities, man should not presume that he has to toil that he himself might reap the fruit of his labour. Man is only to try his best in performing his duties, leaving the generations to come to enjoy that fruit. Thinking that the advantage of one's own toil and work would not be taken in one's own life time, but it would proceed to one's children and their descendants, there ought to be no relaxation in one's efforts. To work alone must be our guiding principle—the work disinterested and well thought-out. It is obvious from the above statement that the Karmayoga is

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1. Bhagavadgītā, 16 : 4,

2. Garbhopaniṣad—Commented by Śrī Muni Mangala Hari, 1936. p. 25.

nothing but the method which leads to the attainment of divine-glory. God has declared His will in the Gītā and that He has willed that self can be exalted only through its own efforts. Man can do everything by the divine grace. The science of Karmayoga does not look upon this world as nothing, it requires only that one's motives should be untainted by selfishness and passion in his daily routine.

In order to give a finishing touch to His speech on the science of Karmayoga, the Blessed Lord imparts His supreme word, the most secret of all, that man must keep his mind fixed on Me (God), be devoted to Me, worship Me and bow to Me so that he may without doubt reach Me.<sup>1</sup> The similar advice has been given in the Kaṭhopanishad in the words, 'Forsake morality and immorality that which is done and that which is not yet done and realize the Supreme Lord beyond all.'<sup>2</sup> Therefore, surrendering all actions to God, man must seek refuge in one Supreme Master alone. The word '*Dharma*' used in the verse 66th of the chapter 18th of the Gītā means the religion of non-violence, truth, serving the parents and preceptors, performing the sacrificial rituals, charity, renunciation and other religious acts for attaining Immortality, which have been prescribed in the scriptural ordinances. The Mahābhārata and the Anugītā also hold this word in the same sense.<sup>3</sup> Taking the word '*Dharma*' in the above mentioned way, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa certainly says in this place with reference to the religion advocated by the Gītā that man should not concern himself with the above mentioned ways of Release but he should surrender himself to God alone.<sup>4</sup> Though the Supreme Lord preaches nominally to Arjuna, but really to every individual through the agency of the Dialogue Divine depicted in the Gītā. Therefore man must be sure that the Gitaic advice is not nominally given to Arjuna but to all mankind. As the Supreme Lord, in order to maintain and keep alive the tradition of this *Gītā-Dharma*, that is, of the selfless action, based on wisdom and holding devotion as the

1. Bhagavadgītā, 18:65.

2. Kaṭhopanishad, 2:14.

3. Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva 4344 and Anugītā Aśva. 49.

4. Gītā-Rahasya, Vol. I : B.G. Tilak, pp. 615-618.

most important factor; further preaches nominally to Arjuna but in fact to every devotee that this secret teaching of the Gītā should never be imparted to a man without austerity, nor to him who has no devotion, nor even to him who is unwilling to hear; nor again to him who finds faults with Me (God). But this divine teaching should be imparted to the devotees. The publicity of the most secret teachings of the Gītā leads man to the highest good.<sup>1</sup> And he who studies this Divine Dialogue, depicted in the Gītā full of faith by him shall I be worshipped through the sacrifice of wisdom. Therefore, man must listen to it in an incarping spirit for the attainment of the happy worlds of the virtuous, which is the ultimate goal of mankind.<sup>2</sup> To make it more clear, man must not only listen to the teachings of Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa but he must try his best to understand the true spirit of the Dialogue Divine and carry out the spiritual bidding by thoroughly utilising his intellect for solving a complicated problem confronting him in the society for the common good.

### BHAKTIYOGA OR THE YOGA OF DEVOTION

In fact, there is no pure devotion in the Gītā, as is generally conceived, but it is emphasised that the devotee of the Divine Lord should perform all worldly actions with the idea of surrendering them to God, with the prideless frame of mind, thinking that the entire activity of the world, belongs to the Supreme Person, Who is the true Doer and the One, Who truly causes every act to be performed by us. Therefore man must perform all actions fallen to his lot in life with the conviction that actions are of the Lord, being devoted to Him, attachmentless and non-inimical towards all beings.<sup>3</sup> It is obvious from the above that the path of devotion as prescribed in the Gītā does not advise us to sit down in a lonely place, doing nothing and merely muttering, 'Rāma' 'Rāma' or 'Harī' 'Harī' or 'Nārāyaṇa', 'Nārāyaṇa' etc. etc., but inspires us to do all acts desirelessly and enthusiastically side by side with possessing an ardent

1. Bhagavadgītā : 18 : 67-69.

2. Ibid., 18 : 70, 71.

3. Ibid., 11 : 55.

devotion. It is not that the only chapter 12th of the Bhagavad-Gītā is based on the path of devotion, but on the contrary, the whole volume of the Gītā is predominantly based on this path, which is, in fact, the path of devotional Karmayoga. Presenting the real example of the Gitaic devotion, Lord Śrī-kṛṣṇa lays down in the Gītā that I consider them to be the best Yogins or devotees who endowed with supreme faith and ever united through meditation with Me, worship Me with the mind centred on Me. And those, however, who, controlling all their senses and even-minded towards all and devoted to doing good to all beings, constantly adore, as their very self, the unthinkable, all-pervading, imperishable, ineffable, eternal, immobile, unmanifest and immutable Brahman, they too attain Me.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, man must solely be devoted to the Imperishable Being and worship Him, surrendering all actions to Him, constantly meditating on him with single-minded devotion for being rescued from the ocean of birth and death.<sup>2</sup> The devotee of the Blessed Lord means the devotional Karma-yogin, who performs his actions in accordance with the commandments of the Divine Lord, as laid down in the Gītā. For the facility of His devotees, the Blessed Lord gives three alternatives in order to attain Himself, 'if you are unable to fix the mind steadily on Me, then you should seek to attain Me through the Yoga of practice. If it is impossible for you even to perform practice, then perform the actions, such as gaining Divine Knowledge, Meditation, Hymn-singing etc., for Me. And, if it is not possible for you even to perform this ritual then subduing your mind, reason etc. relinquish the fruit of all actions.'<sup>3</sup>

Describing the superiority of the abandonment of the fruit of action, the Divine Lord states that knowledge is better than practice, carried on without proper insight, meditation is superior to knowledge and abandonment of the fruit of action is even superior to meditation, for there is acquired tranquillity of mind immediately afterwards.<sup>4</sup> It is not that

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1. Bhagavadgītā : 12 : 2-4.

2. Ibid., 12 : 6, 7.

3. Ibid., 11 : 9-11.

4. Ibid., 12 : 12

this superiority of the desireless Karmayoga has been mentioned here only but it is repeated variously throughout the Gītā.<sup>1</sup> It is clear from the above that the practice of the desireless Karmayoga, that is to say, the abandonment of the fruit of action which includes both spiritual knowledge and devotion is the most superior path of all. In order to explain the true spirit of the Gitaic devotion Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa declares that he, who is free from malice towards all creatures, who is friendly as well as compassionate, who has no feeling of meum and is free from egoism, to whom pleasure and pain are alike and who is forgiving by nature, who is ever contented, controlled, determined and who has dedicated his mind, body and senses and has firm resolve, who has surrendered his mind and intellect to Me—such a devotee of Mine is dear to Me.<sup>2</sup> The Bhagavadgītā further explains devotion as 'he who is not a source of annoyance to the world and who never feels offended with the world, who is free from delight and anger, perturbation and fear, who craves for nothing, who is both internally and externally pure, is clear and impartial and has risen above all distractions, who abandons the feeling of doership<sup>3</sup> in all undertaking;—that devotee is beloved of the Divine Lord.' Moreover, he who neither rejoices nor hates, nor grieves, nor desires, who relinquishes both good and evil and is full of devotion to the Supreme Being, who is equal to friend and foe, honour and ignominy, heat and cold, pleasure and pain etc., and is free from attachment, to whom praise and disparagement are both the same, who is given to contemplation and is contented with whatever comes unasked for, without attachment to home, fixed in mind and full of devotion to the Lord and those who fully partake of this nectar of pious wisdom mentioned above, who are endowed with faith and are solely devoted to the Paramēśvara, those devotees of Divine Master are extremely dear to Him.<sup>4</sup> In short, there is not a single verse available in the Gītā, which preaches mankind to lead a

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1. Bhagavadgītā 3 : 8, 5 : 2, 6 : 46 etc.

2. Ibid., 12 : 13, 14

3. Ibid., 12 : 15, 16.

4. Ibid., 12 : 17—20.



life of an ascetic, abandoning worldly actions. It cannot be said that the Gītā favours the renunciation in the shape of abandonment of action ; because there is side by side another definite proposition of the Gītā that even the wise whose mind is saturated with this abandonment, should with this renunciatory frame of mind, give up the fruit of action, and do all acts which fall to his lot in life. Similarly, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa convincing Arjuna to fight repeatedly preaches him, think of Me at all times and fight with mind and reason fixed on Me, you will doubtless come to Me.<sup>1</sup> Why to bother further on this point, the Blessed Lord Himself condemned the fruit of actions asserting, your right is to work only ; but never to the fruit thereof. Let not the fruit of action be your object nor let your attachment be to inaction. Wise men endowed with equanimity, renouncing the fruit of actions and freed from the shackles of birth, reach the Blissful Supreme state.<sup>2</sup> As it is repeated above that there is no existence of the pure devotion in the Gītā leading to inaction, but there is that of devotional Karmayoga based solely on the abandonment of the fruit of action. Condemning the actionlessness of the Sāṃkhya yogins, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa states that surely none can remain inactive even for a moment—everyone is helplessly driven to action by his nature-born qualities.<sup>3</sup> While the Divine Lord says thus, how can a devotee live inactive as action is surely included even in thinking or muttering the divine names. In order to give examples of His preachings to all mankind, the Blessed Lord Himself advises Arjuna to perform his duties dwelling in Yoga, relinquishing attachment and being indifferent to success and failure.<sup>4</sup> Thus we see that the Gītā undoubtedly preaches Karmayoga accompanied by spiritual knowledge and devotion. This is why we emphasise on the fact that the Gītā does not preach pure devotion as is generally conceived, but it certainly preaches the devotional Karmayoga. Therefore, man must continue to work throughout his life time in the above mentioned manner.

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1, Bhagavadgītā 8:7,

2. Ibid, 2 : 47, 51

3 Ibid, 3:5

4, Ibid 2 : 48

## MISCELLANEOUS

One must bear in mind that the Gītā teaches men to worship only one God,<sup>1</sup> yet it tolerates the worship of other gods too, taking it as the improper way thereof.<sup>2</sup>

The religion of the Gītā is but a guide to lead mankind to the performance of proper action for the maintenance of the world order.<sup>3</sup>

Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa condemns the traditional and customary misleading beliefs of ancient times which were argued by Arjuna in the words<sup>4</sup> age-long family traditions disappear with the destruction of a family, with the destruction of a family and virtue having been lost, sin takes hold of the entire family, thus with the preponderance of vice, the women of the family become corrupt and the corruption of women, there ensues an intermixture of castes. And thereby intermixture of castes leads the destroyer of the race, as well as the race itself to hell. Deprived of the offerings of lumps of rice and water (*Śrāddha*, *Tarpaṇa* etc.); the manes of their race also fall.<sup>5</sup> According to the tradition of the Vedas, these *Śrāddha*, *Tarpaṇa* etc. could only be offered by the serving offsprings of the manes. Therefore, people were too afraid of the intermixture of the blood and consequently they were not ready to kill even the desperadoes of their family, out of fear of accruing to them thereby.<sup>6</sup>

One must believe that those who are obsessed by desire and devoted to the sacrifices and other ritualistic performances sanctioned by the latter of the Vedas, Ṛk, Yajus and Sāma, who look upon heaven as the supreme goal and argue that there is nothing beyond heaven are foolish. They utter high-flown speech recommending many acts of various kinds for the attainment of pleasure and prosperity with rebirth as their

1. Bhagavadgītā : 9 : 27, 34 and 18 : 65, 66,

2. Ibid., 9: 23.

3. Gītā Aur Qur'an—Pt. Sundar Lal, Allahabad, 1946, p. 159.

4. Bhagavadajitā 2 : 2—10.

5. Ibid., 1 : 40—42

6. Ibid., 1 : 36, 45.

fruit, And know that those whose minds are carried away by such words and who are deeply attained to worldly pleasure and prosperity, cannot attain the determinate intellect concentrated on God.<sup>1</sup>

One must remember that the Karma-Kāṇḍa or religious practice of the Vedas makes men indulge in the three qualities of the Prakṛti—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas but the Gītā teaches mankind to be above them. Therefore, the authority of the Vedas in this respect is definitely opposed by the Blessed Lord.<sup>2</sup>

Know that the seeker of the Yoga of equanimity or performing proper action transcends the fruit of actions performed with some motive as laid down in the Vedas.<sup>3</sup>

Be sure that the most fruitful four armed-form of Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa is neither seen through the study of the Vedas, nor by penance, nor by charity, nor by ritualistic performances, nor by sacrifices, but it can be seen through the single-minded devotion in performing actions proper to one's nature in the world.<sup>4</sup>

The Gītā prefers the sacrifice in the form of knowledge, as all action without exception culminate in knowledge. Therefore, man must believe that by acquiring this knowledge one will no more be subjected to delusion and through which he will see all things first in his own self and then in God.<sup>5</sup>

As regards austerity, the Gītā says, 'the worship of gods, Brāhmaṇas, elders and the wise, purity, straightness, continence and non-violence—these are the austerity of the body. And unoffensive, truthful, agreeable and wholesome speech, practice of study or the sacred texts and the Japa of the divine name—these are the austerity of speech.<sup>6</sup> Cheerfulness of mind, serenity, habit of meditation on God, self-control and purity of heart—these are the austerity of mind.<sup>7</sup>

1, Bhagavadgītā : 2 : 42—44.

2, Ibid., 2 : 45, 46, 53,

3, Ibid., 6 : 44.

4, Ibid., 11 : 48, 53, 54.

5, Ibid., 4 : 33-35, 38.

6, Ibid., 17 : 14, 15.

7, Ibid., 17 : 16.

Be sure that those who are completely deluded by the three modes of Prakṛti remain attached to these Guṇas and actions, the wise should not unsettle the mind of those insufficiently knowing fools, but should get them perform all their duties duly performing them themselves.<sup>1</sup>

As regards the *Varṇa-Vyavasthā* or caste system, the Gītā does not recognise the racial affiliation to the various castes of the society, but it accepts the natural bent of mind of mankind, in order to divide them into different castes. For example, the castes of Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Sūdras are not accepted by the Gītā on account of their birth but they are judged by virtue of their nature-born qualities.<sup>2</sup>

Know that the Sāṃkhyayoga and Karmayoga are not productive of divergent results, but he who is firmly established in either of the two, gets the fruit of both. Therefore one must see Sāṃkhyayoga and Karmayoga as one as far as their result goes.<sup>3</sup>

The Gītā says that there are three gates to hell—desire, anger and infatuation.<sup>4</sup>

Remember that the true righteousness of the Gītā rests in lifting the self up by one's own efforts, as one's own self is one's own friend and one's own self is own enemy,<sup>5</sup> treating alike pleasures and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat as well as acting without attachment in order to seek maintenance of the world order and establishing oneself in God.<sup>6</sup>

The Gītā says that the dear to God are those who are not a source of annoyance to the world, who never feel offended with the world, who are free from delight and anger, perturbation and fear, who crave for nothing, who are both internally and externally pure, who are clever and impartial and

1. Bhagavadgītā : 3 : 26, 29.

2. Ibid., 18 : 41, 44.

3. Ibid., 5 : 4, 5, 6 : 1, etc.

4. Ibid., 16 : 21.

5. Ibid., 6 : 5.

6. Ibid., 3 : 25, 2 : 38, 5 : 25, 11 : 55, 12 : 4, etc.

have risen above all distractions, who renounce the feeling of doership in all undertakings and those who neither rejoice, nor hate, nor grieve, nor desire, who renounce both good and evil and are full of devotion, who are alike to friend and foe, honour and ignominy, heat and cold, pleasure and pain etc. And those who take praise and dishonour alike, who are given to contemplation and content with whatever comes unasked for, without attachment to home and fixed in mind. Moreover the Gītā stresses that the extremely dear to God are those who fully partake of this nectar of pious wisdom in the form of Gītā, who are endowed with faith and are solely devoted to God.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Bhagavadgītā. 12: 15-20.

## Human Duties in the Quran and their Classification

The duties of man as prescribed in the Holy Qur'ān are also like those of the Bhagavadgītā, two sided—divine and worldly. That is to say, every duty of the Qur'ān is both divine and worldly as well. We may call these two types of human duties as Ḥuqūqullāh (duties towards God) and Ḥuqūq-ul-'Ibād (social duties). The divine duties or the duties towards God rest in Prayers, Almsgiving, Fasting, Pilgrimage and the Confession of the Islamic faith which are called the five pillars of the Quranic religion. Believing in Allāh, His Apostles, Angels, Scriptures, Death, Resurrection, the Day of Judgment, Paradise, Hell, the Divine Decrees, Nature of man, Sin, the nature of Salvation, the conditions of Salvation, Repentance, Righteousness etc. constitute the Faith of Islām. And the Ḥuqūq-ul-'Ibād or the worldly duties of the Qur'ān extend to all affairs of human life, say, political, social, military, civil and legal duties as well.

According to the holy volume of the Qur'ān man's ultimate goal is to attain salvation and the same can only be attained by following the path suggested by God in the Qur'ān itself. Thus, we may conclude that whatever duty divine or worldly is

laid down in the Qur'ān for its performance is deemed to be for the attainment of man's ultimate goal—Salvation. As the Qur'ān is the complete code of human life passed by Allāh Himself to be enforced among mankind, it appears quite inevitable to understand the true spirit of all the outlines of the Qur'ān before their enforcement. The Quranic verses were not revealed in their continuation having regard to the unbreachability of their subject matter or theme, but they were revealed occasionally in the scattered manner. It is, therefore, attempted to represent the Quranic theme in the re-arranged way.

### DUTIES TOWARDS GOD

The divine duties take in their fold the duties relating to the doctrines of God, Revelation, Judgment and Salvation etc. As no action or enforcement can be successful without knowing the nature of the act itself; therefore, man due to his nature-born qualities desires to know about the object to which he owes some duty. As God is Himself, the Author of the Divine Code, therefore, man naturally desires to know, who is God ? What are His attributes ?

### CONCEPT OF GOD

Man's prior duty must be to conceive God, the Creator of the whole universe, the Embodiment of Existence, Knowledge and Might. God introduces Himself in the Qur'ān by the mystic letters—'Alif, Lām, Mīm,' meaning, 'I am Allāh, the best knower.'<sup>1</sup> God Himself inspires unto His apostle Muḥammad to declare among mankind that He is God, One God, the Everlasting Refuge, Who has not begotten and has not been begotten and equal to Him is not any one.<sup>2</sup> Of the five fundamental principles of Islamic belief, viz., faith in God, Angels, Scriptures, Apostles, Last Day, and the life after death, the first is the belief in God. The Qur'ān, in the first place preaches a God, Who is above all tribal deities and national gods. The:

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1. The Holy Qur'ān : As interpreted by Maulvi Muḥammad Ali, Second Edition 1920, Al-Baqarah : 1.

2. The Holy Qur'ān : as translated by A.J. Arberry First Edition, 1953., Al-Ikhlās : 1—4.

Quranic God is not the God of a particular nation. He is described in the opening words of the Holy Qur'ān as being the 'Lord of the Worlds' and thus, while widening the conception of the Divine Being it also enlarges the circle of the brotherhood of man so as to include all nations of the earth in its fold and so widens the outlook of human sympathy. Unity of God is the noble theme on which the Qur'ān has laid a greater stress.<sup>1</sup> There is absolute unity in Divine Nature; it admits of no participation or manifoldness. Unity is the keynote to the conception of the Divine Being in Islām. God's are the sublimest and most perfect attributes, but the attribute of mercy reigns over all, as every chapter of the Qur'ān opens with the names 'Ar-Raḥmān' and 'Ar-Raḥīm'. His mercifulness has been declared by God Himself in the words, "My mercy encompasses all things." This is why the apostle who preached this conception of the Divine Being is rightly called in the Qur'ān as 'Raḥmatullil-ālamīn' or a mercy to the worlds.<sup>2</sup> Thus we may conclude from the above that every one must, by all means, worship and praise God who is the Creator of all beings, the Knower, the Wise, the Responsive, the Aware, the Omnipresent, the Omnipotent, the Defender, the Almighty and the Owner of the Glory etc., as the opening words of the Qur'ān communicate, "Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds, the Beneficent, the Merciful, the Owner of the Day of Judgment. Thee (alone) we worship; Thee (alone) we ask for help. Show us the straight path, the path of those whom Thou hast favoured; not (the path) of those who earn Thine anger, nor of those who go astray."<sup>3</sup> This very prayer was already there in the Vedas in the words, "*Tamaso mā jyotirgamaya*" etc.

#### *God's Attributes :*

Imām Ḥanīfā says, 'just as God's essence is unchangeable so is His name, and that Allāh has always been the name of the

1. The Holy Qur'ān : Āl-i-'Imrān : 151.

2. Ibid., Al-Ambiyā : 107.

3. The meaning of the Glorious Koran—M.M. Pickthall, London Ed. 1930, Al-Fātiḥah : 1—7.



great Eternal Being. God's attributory names are said to be ninety-nine on the authority of the Qur'ān for invoking Him by them.<sup>1</sup> The table of those names is given by Muslim and Bukhārī in their collections of traditions.<sup>2</sup> Therefore one must realise that God is the Creator and the Restorer of all things. He is the First and the Last and the Outward and the Inward and He is the Knower of all things.<sup>3</sup> He is with every-body wheresoever one be.<sup>4</sup> He is closer to man than his neck vein.<sup>5</sup> His face is in all directions.<sup>6</sup> And He encompasses all things.<sup>7</sup> He does whatever He likes, He is the Master of the Glorious Throne,<sup>8</sup> and the Mighty Force and directs His sincere servants to the right path and favours those who have once borne testimony to His unity by preserving their confession from the darkness of doubt and hesitation. He directs men to follow His chosen messenger and to go after his most honourable companions to whom He vouchsafed His assistance and direction, which is revealed to them in His essence and operations by the excellencies of His attributes, to the knowledge, whereof no one attains but He has been taught by hearing. To these as touching His essence He makes known that He is One<sup>9</sup> and has no partner, Singular without anything like unto Him, Uniform having no contrary, Separate having no equal.<sup>10</sup>

"He is Ancient, having no first ; Eternal, having no beginning ; remaining forever, having no end ; continuing to eternity without any termination. He persists without ceasing to be ; remains without falling and never did cease, nor ever shall cease to be described by glorious attributes, nor is subject to any decree so as to be determined by any precise limits or

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1. The Holy Qur'ān : Al-A'rāf : 180.

2. Notes on Mohammadanism : T.P. Hughes pp. 249 253.

3. The Holy Qur'ān : Al-Hadīd : 3 and Isāwasyopaniṣad : 4, 5.

4. Ibid., Al-Hadīd : 4.

5. Ibid., Qāf : 16.

6. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 115.

7. Ibid., An-Nisā : 126

8. Ibid., Al-Hadīd 4.

9. Ibid., At-Taubah : 129.

10. Ibid., ; 4.

set times, but is the First and the Last, and is within and without."<sup>1</sup>

On the contrary, "God is not a being embued with form, nor a substance circumscribed with limits or determined by measure ; neither does He resemble bodies as they are capable of being measured or divided. He sits upon the throne, after that manner which He Himself hath described and in that sense which He Himself means, which is a sitting for removed from any notion of contact, or resting upon, or local situation ; but both the throne itself and whatsoever is upon it, are sustained by the goodness of His power and are subject to the grasp of His hand."<sup>2</sup>

#### *God's Power*

God is Everliving, Powerful, Mighty, Omnipotent, not liable to any deficiency or impotence, neither slumbering, nor sleeping, nor being abnoxious to decay or death. To Him belongs the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth.<sup>3</sup> His is the dominion and the excellency, and the creation, and the command thereof. The heavens are folded up in His right hand and all creatures are couched within His grasp. His excellency consists in His creating and producing and His unity in communicating existence and a beginning of beings. He created men and their works and measured out their maintenance and their determined times.

#### *His Knowledge*

As regards the knowledge of God He Himself declares in the Qur'ān, 'I am Allāh the best Knower.'<sup>4</sup> He comprehends whatsoever comes to pass from the extremities of the earth to the highest heavens. Even the weight of an ant could not escape Him either on earth or in heaven ; but He can perceive the black ant in the dark night, and discerns the motion of an atom in the open air. He knows what is secret and conceals it, and views the conceptions of the minds and the motions of the thoughts

1. Notes on Mohammanidanism : by T.P. Hughes, London, . 69.

2. Ibid., p. 70.

3. The Holy Qur'ān—Yūnus : 4 and Hūd : 7 Āl-I-'Imrān : 26.

4. Ibid.,—Al-Baqarah : 1, 115 etc'

and the utmost recesses of secrets by a knowledge, ancient and eternal, that never ceased to be His attribute from eternal eternity, and not by any new knowledge, superadded to His essence, either inhering or inventitious.

### *His Will*

"Nothing passes in the empire or the kingdom, neither little nor much, nor small, nor great, nor good, nor evil, nor profitable, nor hurtful, nor faith, nor infidelity, nor knowledge, nor ignorance, nor prosperity, nor adversity, nor increase, nor decrease, nor obedience, nor rebellion, but by Allāh's determinate counsel and decree and His definite sentence and will."<sup>1</sup> It is Allāh who is the Creator and the Restorer of all things. He is the sole operator of what He likes, there is no reversing His decree nor delaying what He has determined. There is no refuge to man from his rebellion against Him, but only His help and mercy. No man has any power to perform any duty towards Him, but through His love and will. All men, Jinns, angels and devils are quite unable to put one single atom in motion or cause it to cease its motion without His will and approbation, His will subsists in His essence amongst the rest of His attributes. Allāh creates what He wills." If He decreeth a thing, He saith unto it only : "Be ! and it is."<sup>2</sup>

### *His Hearing and Sight*

No audible object, how still soever escapes His hearing; nor is anything visible so small as to escape His sight ; for distance is no hindrance to His hearing, nor darkness to His sight. "He sees without pupil or eyelids, and hears without any passage or ear, even as He knoweth without a heart, and performs His actions without the assistance of any corporeal limb, and creates without any instrument, for His attributes or properties are not like those of men, any more than His essence is like theirs."<sup>3</sup>

1. Notes on Mohammandanism—T.P. Hughes, p. 73.

2. The Meaning of the glorious Koran, translated by M.M. Pickthall p. : 47.

3. Notes on Mohammadanism—T.P. Hughes, 1877, London p. 75.

*His Speech*

Allāh speaks, commands, forbids, promises and threatens by an eternal, ancient word, through the agency of His archangel Gabriel. His voice is not similar to that of the creatures, and it does not consist in a voice arising from the commotion of the air and the collision of the bodies. But He speaks, commands, forbids, promises and threatens by His revelations—the Qur'ān, the Torah, the Gospel and the Psalms as well as other scriptures revealed from time to time to His apostles as divine guides to mankind. Of these, the Qur'ān is the final scripture preached by God Himself through His revelations. It is the complete code of human life for all times to come. This is why God commands all mankind to recite and understand the Qur'ān. Therefore man must give ear to its recitation, when it is recited.<sup>1</sup>

*His Works*

Allāh is wise in His doings and the just in His decrees. But His justice is not similar to the justice of men. There is nothing that belongs to any other besides Himself, so that wrong is not imputable to Him as meddling with things not appertaining to Him. All things—Jinns, men, satan, angels, heavens, earth, paradise, hell, animals plants, substance, accident, intelligibility, sensibility etc., were all created by Him, by His mere uttering 'Kum' i.e. Be ! He created all things originally for the manifestation of His power and will, and the confirmation of His word which was true from all eternity. It is not that He stood in need of these things ; but He manifestly declared His glory in creating, producing and commanding without being under any obligation, nor out of necessity. He is the author of kindness, compassion, mercy, favour, grace and beneficence. It is in His power to pour forth upon men a variety of torments

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1. The Meaning of the Glorious Kōran—translated by M.M. Pickthall. Al-A'rāf p. 204.

2. Ibid., p. 75.

and afflict them with various kinds of sorrows and diseases, which, if He were to do, His justice could not be arraigned, nor would He be chargeable with injustice, yet He rewards those who worship Him for their obedience on account of His promise and beneficence, not of their merit, nor of necessity. There is nothing for which He can be tied to perform ; nor can any injustice be supposed in Him, nor can He be under any obligation to any person whatsoever. These are, in short, the attributes, powers, works, knowledge and will of Allāh, whereby, 'Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds' is asserted in the opening words of the Glorious Qur'ān. Therefore, it is the binding duty of a man to praise and worship Allāh, the Master of Divine and Imperious glories.

### ṢALĀT OR PRAYER

Prayer is the first pillar of the Islamic faith. It is prescribed for all mankind in the opening words of the Holy Qur'ān as, 'Thee alone we worship.'<sup>1</sup> It is clear from this statement that the prayer should be offered to One Eternal Being, Allāh, Who is the Lord of the Worlds, the Beneficent, the Merciful, the Owner of the Day of judgment.<sup>2</sup> The worthy of the worship, according to the Quranic religion, is He, who has no partner, eternally besought of all, Who has not begotten, and has not been begotten and equal to Him there is none.<sup>3</sup> While introducing the Qur'ān in the Qur'ān itself, God gives importance to the establishment of worship in the words, 'This is the scripture, whereof there is no doubt a guidance unto those who ward of evil, who believe in the unseen and establish worship, and spend of that We have bestowed upon them. And who believe in that which is revealed unto Thee (Muḥammad) and that which was revealed before Thee, and are certain of the:

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Fātiḥah: 4.

2. The Meaning of the Glorious Koran—pp. 1-3.

3. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Ikhlāṣ 1-4.

Hereafter. These depend on guidance from their Lord. These are the successful.'

In judging the spiritual character of Islām, we must take into careful consideration the precise character of that devotional service which every Muslim is required to render to God at least five times a day. It is remarkable to note that there is but one passage in the Qur'ān in which the stipulated times of prayer are enjoined and that it mentions only four and not five periods e.g., 'Glorify God when it is evening (*samā*), and in the morning (*ṣubḥ*), and to Him be praise in the heavens and in the earth at afternoon (*'Aṣr*) and at noon time (*Zuhar*).'<sup>2</sup> But all commentators are of the opinion that the evening prayer includes both sun-set-prayer (*Maghrib*) and after sun-set-prayer (*'Iṣā*). It is absolutely necessary that the service of the prayer should be performed in Arabic; and that the clothes and the body of the worshipper should be clean, and that the praying-place should be free from all impurity. It may be said either privately, or in company, or in a mosque—although services in a mosque are more meritorious than those said elsewhere.

The worship is always preceded by *Vuḍū* or ablution e.g., by washing of the face, hands, feet etc. Thus *Vuḍū* is necessary before every time of prayer. And the *Gḥusl* or the washing of the whole body is performed after certain legal defilements. Then the prayer begins with the Quranic wording, '*A'ūzubillah*'... viz., 'I seek refuge in God from Satan the outcast.' After which the *Tasmiyah* is repeated—"In the name of Allāh the Beneficent, the Merciful." Then follows the opening *Sūrah* of the Qur'ān—'*Al-Fātiḥah*.'

"After this, the worshipper can repeat as many chapters of the Qur'ān as he may wish; he should, at least, recite one long or two short verses."<sup>3</sup> And thus, the prayer should be performed in the prescribed manner according to the times.

1. The Holy Qur'ān: *Al-Baqarah* 2-5.

2. Ibid.. *Ar-Rūm* 17, 18.

3. Notes on Muḥammadanism—T.P. Hughes. p. 107.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE QURANIC PRAYER

The Qur'ān has laid much stress on the necessity of the worship because it wants the world to turn to be devotee of God. If one claims himself to be a Muslim, but his heart is devoid of that divine love, he is like an almond crust which has no kernel within it. For that kernel which the Qur'ān offers is the requisition of the human-being's practicability in having his hand at his allotted work and his soul in the remembrance of Allāh at the same time. The Qur'ān represents the words of Allāh, "I created the Jinn and mankind only that they might worship Me."<sup>1</sup> In fact, he who has surrendered himself to the love of God, is said to have attained the highest perfection in the form of God-realization.

Several persons, ignorant of the Islamic teachings, often say that when their hearts are enlightened with the divine Love, they need not to express it by the outward motions of their limbs. In saying that when one's heart is blazing with the divine Love the outward physical motions are useless, is an apparent lack of understanding. It is quite impossible that there is love in one's heart, but it does not express itself outside. The inward and the outward of a human being are linked together with a deep relation. It is absolutely impossible that we have deep love concealed without its effects on our outside. Therefore, the practical worship of Islām, resting in the physical limbs is quite natural and praise-worthy. We very often experience even in this world that when we love a person, we pay him respect by standing and bowing our head to him, when he comes to us. This expression of love and respect is never deliberately done, but it is rather instinctive and spontaneous.

While offering Namāz, a person stands respectfully. This way of standing teaches him that he should stand in respect to the every command of God, similarly with as much respect that he should eradicate pride, envy, hatred, self-conceit and other evils of different kinds from his heart. His stooping down after standing teaches him that humility before God is the

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1. Meaning of the Glorious Koran—Trans. by M.M. Pickthall. p. 56.

precious element of a true Muslim's nature. After this he must straighten himself once more which makes him realise that it is humility that exalts a man. His final prostration in order to pay homage to his Creator indicates of his sincerity along with his self transportation where having served himself from worldly connections, he pleads of his inferiority before his Maker. The best way of expressing one's helplessness is prostration and it is only for this reason that paying homage by way of prostration in Islām to else other than Allāh is strictly prohibited."<sup>1</sup>

Further the acts of standing, stooping and prostrating in Islamic prayer after observing Vuḍū or ablution are surely a kind of physical exercise for the maintenance of sound health. Performing bodily exercises along with the prayers are highly appreciated even by the Indian seers in the words, "*Sarīramadham khalu dharmasādhanam*" (Keeping sound health is necessary for proper performance of religious duties). In the Yoga of Patañjali, the practice of *Yogāsanas* are prescribed for maintaining sound health along with the prayers. The bodily movements in Islamic prayers are just in conformity with the Yoga practices for achieving perfect union with God along with the achievement of sound mind and body. Therefore, the outward motions along with the blazing heart with divine Love in Islamic worship are absolutely justified.

The prayer is one of the most fundamental principles of the Islamic religion. It is so important a duty imposed on every Muslim that any one who deliberately avoids prayers is a nominal Muslim. Such a man cannot please his Maker, Allāh, the Almighty, who does not offer Him prayers five times a day; and that he should not shirk in his duty in this respect at any rate, whether merry or angry. This duty of offering prayers in Islām is imposed on everybody, whether child or aged, whether man or woman, whether boy or girl. "When a man does not offer his prayers it is supposed that his heart is absolutely blackened by the hostile ideas against Islām."<sup>2</sup>

By imposing on everybody the five-times' prayers, the

1. Fear Allāh and Take Your own part by Al-Haj-Qassim Jairazbhoy. 1931. p. 105.

2. Ibid., pp. 108, 109.



Qur'ān teaches us that we should not forget our Lord anyway, whether we are in comfort or discomfort. The Quranic prayers are like thanksgiving. The collective prayer is guessed to be preferred on the authority of the Qur'ān when the Almighty says, 'Bow down yourselves with those who bow down (in worship).'<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, all believers of the Qur'ān, should pray to God five times a day, in all conditions—whether in happiness or in misery for pleasing their Maker.

### THE ALMSGIVING

The almsgiving plays the secondary role in the five pillars of Islamic faith. The Arabic equivalent for the word Almsgiving or poor-due is Zakāt (lit. 'Purification'). The Qur'ān does not itself fix the amount of the charity but it declares about the amount, 'Do not make your hand to be shackled to your neck nor stretch it forth to the utmost limit of its stretching forth.'<sup>2</sup> It is hereby clear that in teaching almsgiving Islām asks its followers to be moderate. The necessity for almsgiving besides being a help to the poor, is that it keeps a person aloof from becoming hard heartened. If a person is not charitable, the people say about him that he is not good, because he has failed to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and shelter the homeless.

Islām tells of the methods in which charity can be given, unlike charity in Hinduism in which it is very restricted, that is, alms can only be given to the Brāhmaṇas and to none else. However the almsgiving prescribed in the Gītā is not restricted to the Brāhmaṇas only, but it is open to all deserving and rightful claimants of charity according to their nature-born qualities. The Gītā does not preach orthodoxy in any matter whatsoever, but it preaches humanitarianism for the maintenance of the world-order. In Islām it is not so, but it is open to all poor-ones. Like the Gospel, the Qur'ān asks its followers that alms should be given, but hastens to add unlike Gospel, that only when a person wishes the improvement of the self.

1. Alcoran—as explained by George Sale. London, 1877, p. 6.

2. The Holy Qur'ān—Bani Isrā'īl :29.

Again, unlike Gospel it asks that it should be given openly, so that others may get inclined to follow the example and that children may learn about it. About giving alms openly the Qur'ān says, 'Those who spend their property by night and by day secretly and openly, they shall have their reward from their Lord and they shall have no fear come upon them, nor shall they grieve.'<sup>1</sup> The reason for such almsgiving, is given in the Qur'ān in the words, "If ye publish your almsgiving it is well, but if you hide it and give it to poor, it will be better for you and will atone for some of your ill-deeds."<sup>2</sup>

The almsgiving is repeatedly commanded in the Qur'ān.<sup>3</sup> The importance of the Quranic charity is fully realised when we go through the divine version, "It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces to the East and the West; but righteous is he who believeth in Allāh, and the Last Day and the angels and the Scriptures and the prophets; and giveth his wealth for love of Him to kinsfolk, and to orphans, and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free and abserveth proper worship and payeth the poor-due."<sup>4</sup> It has also been commanded in the Holy Qur'ān that alms are for the poor, who are straightened for the cause of Allāh, who cannot travel in the land for trade.<sup>5</sup> Allāh says in the Qur'ān that 'the likeness of those who spend their wealth in Allāh's way is as the likeness of a grain which groweth seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains.' Allāh gives increase manifold to whom He will.<sup>6</sup> 'And those who spend their wealth for the cause of Allāh and afterwards make not reproach and injury to follow that which they have spent, their reward is with their Lord and there shall no fear come upon them, neither shall they grieve. According to Qur'ān a kind word with forgiveness is better than almsgiving followed by injury.'<sup>7</sup> Allāh commands

1. Fear Allah and Take Your Own Part-by Al-Haj Qassim Ali Jarazbhoy ed. 1931, pp. 151, 152.
2. Meaning of the Glorious Koran as trans.: M.M. Pickthall, Al-Baqarah: 272.
3. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarha: 43, 83, 110 etc.
4. Meaning of the Glorious Koran as Trans by M.M. Pickthall, Al-Baqarah: 177.
5. Ibid., p. 273.
6. Ibid., Al-Baqarah: 261
7. The Holy Qur'ān-Al Baqarah: 262, 263.

His believers by saying, "O Ye who believe ! Render not vain your almsgiving by reproach and injury, like him who spends his wealth only to be seen of men and does not believe in Allāh and the Last Day. The likeness of such an almsgiver is as the likeness of a rock whereon there is dust of earth, a rainstorm smites it, leaving it smooth and bare."<sup>1</sup> "And the likeness of those who spend their wealth in search of Allāh's pleasure and for the strengthening of their souls is as the likeness of a garden on a height. The rainstorm smites it and it brings forth its fruit twofold."<sup>2</sup> In order to make the believers aware of the fact as to what should be spent in alms, Allāh declares in the Qur'an, 'O Ye believers ! Spend of the good things which you have earned, and of that which we bring forth from the earth for you, and do not seek bad with intent to spend thereof in alms when you would not take it for yourselves except with disdain, and know that Allāh is Absolute, Owner of Praise'.<sup>3</sup> This divine statement has been commented by the eminent scholars of Islamic theology in the following manner : 'Almsgiving should be given annually of five descriptions of property, provided they have been in possession a whole year ; that is money, animal, grain, fruit and merchandise.' There are several minor differences amongst the various sects as to the precise explanation of the law with reference to these legal alms. The general rules regarding almsgiving observed by the Sunnī Muslims are cited, in short, in the chapter entitled 'Zakat or Legal Almsgiving' of the book suggested in the foot-note.<sup>4</sup> Allāh emphasises in the Qur'an : 'Whatsoever good thing you spend, it is for yourselves, when you spend not save in search of Allāh's countenance and whatsoever good thing you spend, it will be repaid to you in full and you will not be wronged.'<sup>5</sup>

Believing in the divine statement depicted in the Qur'an,

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1. The Holy Qur'an—Al-Baqarah : 264.

2. Ibid., : 265.

3. Ibid., 267.

4. Notes on Mohammadanism : T.P. Hughes, London pp. 125-129.

5. The Holy Qur'an—Al-Baqarah : 272.

man's duty extends to pay the poor-due to the following classes of persons on whom it is lawful to bestow the Zakāt or legal alms :

1. Such pilgrims to Mecca as have not the means of defraying the expenses of the journey,
2. Religious mendicants,
3. Debtors who are unable to discharge their debts,
4. Beggars,
5. Poor Travellers,
6. Proselytes to Mohammadanism and
7. The slaves for setting them free.

It is clear from the above categories of the recipients of alms that Islamic alms is not restricted to the Muslims alone, but it can be given to any deserving person belonging to any religion.

#### RATE OF ALMSGIVING FROM VARIOUS KINDS OF PROPERTY

##### (a) *Money*

He who has saved forty rupees in a year, must pay alms at the rate of one rupee from every forty.

##### (b) *Cattle*

He who has only sheep or goats in his possession is not obliged to give alms, until they amount to forty in number. He must then give one for one hundred and twenty, two for the next eighty and thereafter one per cent. For camels, the following is the rate : From five to twentyfour, one sheep or goat; from twenty-five to thirty-five, a one-year old female camel; from thirty-six to forty-five, one two-year old female camel; from forty-six to sixty, one three-year old female camel; from sixty-one to seventy-five, one four-year old female camel; from seventy-six to ninety, two two-year old female camels; from ninety-one to one hundred and twenty, two three-year old female camels and from one hundred and twenty-one and upwards, either a two-year old female camel for every forty or a three-year old female camel for every fifty.

*Cows and Bulls*

If one has thirty cows, he must give in alms, a one-year old female calf; if forty, a two-year old female calf and thereafter, a one-year old female calf for every ten.

Zakāt for buffaloes is the same as for sheep or goat.

For horses, either the same rate as for camels or  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent for every horse, whose value exceeds one hundred rupees.

Animals used for riding and loading are exempted from almsgiving.

*Fruits*

For fruits watered by rain a 10th is given, but if irrigated, then a twentieth part.

*Grain*

The same rate as for fruits.

*Merchandise*

For the capital, as well as for the profits, the alms is given at the rate of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, provided the owner be a *Ṣāhib-i-Niṣāb*. For gold bullion, half a *Misqāl* or  $67\frac{1}{2}$  grains should be given for every 20 *Misqāl*-weight. For silver bullion at the rate of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. For whatever is found in mines, if over 240 *Dirhams* in weight, a fifth is required, and if the money be laid out in merchandise, alms are to be given on the profits.

Wood, pearls and clothing are exempted from almsgiving but not jewels.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, man must not fail to give alms out of his various kinds of properties as mentioned above, if he is *Ṣāhib-i-Niṣāb* (person possessing forty rupees or property of the same value at the completion of the year).

## THE FASTING

Among the strictly religious duties, as laid down in the

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1. Note on Mohammadanism : T.P. Hughes, p. 127.

Qur'ān one is the fasting during the month of Ramadān. The Qur'ān has made it obligatory on every mature Muslim, except those who are ill, in travel, or on a Holy War, to fast and offer extra prayers called Tarāwīḥ for a month in the year. The beneficent Lord ordains fasting to mankind by revealing, 'O ye believers ! Fasting is prescribed for you, even as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may ward off evil. Therefore, man must fast a certain number of days and for him who is sick among you or on a journey, the same number of other days must be fasted later on. And for those who can afford it there is a ransom—the feeding of a man in need. But who does good of his own accord, it is better for him.'<sup>1</sup> During the period of fasting in the day-time, man is strictly prohibited to hold intercourse even with his legal wives. But it is permitted to cohabit with them on the night of the fast. Like intercourse with the legal wives, man is also permitted to eat and drink until the white thread of the dawn. Then he must strictly observe the fast till night-fall and must not touch them, but he should be at devotion in the mosques.

The excellence of the month of Ramadān was much extolled by the Holy prophet of Islām. He said that 'during this month the gates of Paradise are open and the gates of hell are shut, the devils are chained by the leg'; and that 'only those who observe fast during this month will be permitted to enter by the gate of heaven called 'Rayyān' and will be pardoned all their sins.

The fast does not commence until some Muslim is able to state that he has seen the new moon. If the sky be clouded and the moon cannot be seen, the fast begins, upon the completion of thirty days from the beginning of the previous month. 'The Laylat-ul-Qadr' or the 'Night of Power' is said by Muḥammad to be either on the twenty-first, twenty-third, twenty-fifth, twenty-seventh or twenty-ninth. The exact date of this solemn night has not been discovered by any except the Prophet himself.<sup>2</sup>

All religions admit the close interrelation between fast and spirituality. Through the practice of fasting, Muslims are

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah :183-185.

bound to do good works by controlling their senses and worldly desires by checking their speech, by abstaining from conjugal relations and by dedicating their actions, words and deeds to God. Therefore, the spiritual advantage that one gradually gets is that he becomes strong enough to control himself for a year or for the whole life by being engaged in observing fast during the month of Ramadān. Therefore, in accordance with the injunctions of the Qur'ān, all major Muslims must observe fast during the whole month of Ramadān with the exceptions mentioned before.

### THE PILGRIMAGE

The Hajj or the Pilgrimage to Mecca is said by the Prophet of Islām to be of divine institution and has the authority of the Qur'ān for its observance. Its performance is incumbent on those men and women who have sufficient means to meet the expenses of the journey and to maintain their families at home during their absence.

'The merits of the pilgrimage are so great that every step taken in the direction of the Ka'bah blots out a sin and he who dies on his way to Mecca is enrolled on the list of martyrs.'<sup>1</sup> The pilgrimage is ordained by Allāh, the Beneficent revealing, 'Complete the Hajj or 'Umrah in the service of God. But if you are prevented from completing it, send an offering for sacrifice, such as ye may find and do not shave your heads until the offering reaches the place of sacrifice. And if any of you is ill or has an ailment in his head (necessitating shaving), he should in compensation, either fast or feed the poor or offer sacrifice. And when you are in peaceful conditions again, if anyone wishes to continue to 'Umrah or to the Hajj, he must take an offering, such as he can afford. But if he cannot afford it, he should fast three days during the Hajj and seven days on his return, thus making ten days in all. This is for those whose household is not in the precincts of the sacred mosque and fear God and know that God is strict in punishment. For Hajj are the months well known. If anyone undertakes the duty therein, let there be no obscenity

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1. Notes on Mohammanism : T.P. Hughes. p. 131.

nor wickedness, nor wrangling in the Ḥajj. And whatever good ye do, be sure, God knoweth it. And take a provision with you for the journey, but the best of provision is the right conduct. So fear Me, Oh ye that are wise ! And it is no crime in you, if you seek of the bounty of your Lord during pilgrimage. Then when ye pour down from Mount Arafat, celebrate the Praises of God at the sacred monument.' 'Then hasten onward from the place whence the multitude hasteneth onward and ask forgiveness of Allāh.<sup>2</sup> After having completed the devotions one must remember Allāh as he remembered his forefathers in the times of ignorance and must pray to God for His bounties in the world and the hereafter. The Qur'ān testifies the importance of the Ḥajj by stating, pilgrimage to the House, where Abraham stood up to pray is a duty unto Allāh for mankind.'<sup>3</sup>

'As the mountains—Aṣ-Ṣafā and Al-Marvah are among the indications of Allāh. It is, therefore, no sin for him who is on pilgrimage to the House of God or visits it, to go round them, according to Pagan custom.'<sup>4</sup> As the pilgrimage is commanded by Allāh in the Qur'ān for every able Muslim to perform it as a strictly religious duty, one must, by all means, perform pilgrimage in the prescribed manner if the means permit him to do so.

### THE RECITAL OF THE CREED OR KALIMAH

The meaning of the Islamic creed is that, 'There is no deity but Allāh and Muḥammad is His apostle.' This Kalimah is the soul of the whole faith of Islām. Therefore, man must recite it by mouth as well as he should believe in this statement by his whole heart.

The five time prayers, the fasting, the almsgiving, the pilgrimage and the recital of the creed are the most fundamental religious duties of man and these are, thereby, called

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1. The Holy Qur'ān-as translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Ed. 1938, Lahore, Al-Baqarah: 196-198.
  2. Meaning of the Glorious Koran-as translated by M.M. Pickthall, London. Al-Baqarah: 199.
  3. The Haly Qur'ān-Āl-i- 'Imrān : 97.
  4. Ibid., Āl Baqarah : 158



the five pillars of the Qur'ānic religion. Now, we may conclude from the above that man's prior duty in accordance with the Qur'ān, is to perform these most preliminary duties in the prescribed manner.

Apart from these five pillars of Islām, there are other fundamental tenets of the faith which are of the secondary importance in the assemblage of the strictly religious duties of man.

### THE FUNDAMENTAL TENETS OF THE QURANIC FAITH

The conception of Deity is the basis and foundation of the Quranic religion, to which all conceptions of divinity are correlated. Much has been stated already about the glories, powers, deeds and the supremacy of God. As the role of divinity has been played in all affairs of the universe, therefore it is quite clear that if we really believe in God, we must think of Him, not merely as Creator of the worlds, but as their Guide and Sustainer too. It is we who should serve the cause of Allāh, for we are His bondmen, and He, the Ruling Divine. We should, therefore, ought to seek out His will and shape our individual and collective life in accordance with it, should try to discover His cause and give up loyalty to all other causes, associating ourselves finally and irrevocably with him. As Allāh is the Provider of all things to mankind, therefore, man must remember all His bounties humbly and in secret.<sup>1</sup> Having faith in Allāh one must necessarily be steadfast, truthful, obedient, spender in the way of Allāh and observer of the prayers for having pardoned his evil-deeds.<sup>2</sup> According to the divine command, man must be sure that Muḥammad is but an apostle of Allāh like those who have passed away before.<sup>3</sup> Allāh commands mankind to meditate on the Qur'ān which is the last scripture containing the complete code of humanity.<sup>4</sup> Man must not fear mankind but

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1. The Holy Qur'ān-Al A'raf: 55, 69, 74

2. Ibid : Āl-i-Imrān : 17

3. Ibid : 144

4. Ibid : Muḥammad : 24

fear God.<sup>1</sup> As God is Alone, so no one can claim to be a God,<sup>2</sup> neither one should coin similitudes for Him. As Allāh is the only Trustworthy, therefore one must trust in Allāh and contribute for His cause.<sup>3</sup> One of the strictly religious duties of the Qur'ān is that one should not make distinction between Muḥammad, Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Ismā'il (Ismael), Ishāq (Isaac), Ya'qūb (Jacob), Mūsā (Moses), Yūsuf (Jesus) and other prophets<sup>4</sup> of the earth including Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Guru Nanak and so on. Man must be sure on the authority of the Qur'ān that asking good portion in the hereafter as in this world is better.<sup>5</sup> And man must strictly prohibit the worship of the idols.<sup>6</sup>

In order to describe the human duties directly relating to God, a few more extracts of the Qur'ān are being given below :

No human being should invent a lie against Allāh through his disbelieving.<sup>7</sup>

Man must not despair of the mercy of Allāh.<sup>8</sup> The Qur'ān commands, 'Do not be hypocrites and disbelievers.'<sup>9</sup>

Man must surrender his worship, sacrifice, living and dying to Allāh.<sup>10</sup>

One should follow that which the devils falsely related against the kingdom of Sulaimān (Solomon).<sup>11</sup>

Allāh says in the Qur'ān that man must reject false deities,<sup>12</sup> and he must warn or remind mankind by Qur'ān.<sup>13</sup>

The Qur'ān commands mankind by saying, 'Don't commit forgery concerning the scripture for purchasing small gain

1. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 150.

2. Ibid., Al-Ambiyā : 29.

3. Ibid., At-Taubah : 54.

4. Ibid., Āl-i-'Imrān : 84.

5. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 201, 202.

6. Ibid., Al-Māidah 60.

7. Ibid., 103.

8. Ibid., Az-Zumar : 53.

9. Ibid., An-Nisā : 140.

10. Ibid., Al-An'am 163.

11. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 102, 168, 208.

12. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 256.

13. Ibid., Al-An'am : 51, 70.

therewith. Don't earn by writing the scripture with your hand.<sup>1</sup>

Man must turn in penitence to his Creator<sup>2</sup> and he must surrender his purpose to Him.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover Allāh says in the Qur'ān, 'Establish religion and be not divided.'<sup>4</sup> It is commanded with a view to tie all mankind in the thread of common brotherhood.

Man must not call 'dead' to those who are slain in the way of Allāh.<sup>5</sup> They are martyrs in the real sense of the term.

Don't take angels and the prophets for Lords.<sup>6</sup>

Turn towards believers striving in the way of Allāh and fear not the blame of any blamer.<sup>7</sup>

Be guardians of your prayers especially of the midmost prayer ('Aṣr, which is observed before sun-set) and stand up with devotion to God.<sup>8</sup>

Regard the house of Allāh at Macca as sanctuary, the Inviolable place of worship.<sup>9</sup>

Seek help in patience and prayer,<sup>10</sup> and hinder not from the way of Allāh.<sup>11</sup>

Believe in the Qur'ān and other revelations of the Past.<sup>12</sup>

Don't exaggerate in your religion<sup>13</sup> and take for your friends Allāh, His apostle and the believers.<sup>14</sup>

Know that the spoils of war belong to Allāh and His apostle.<sup>15</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān : Al-Baqarah : 79, and Āl-i-'Imrān : 77.

2. Ibid., Āl-Baqarah: 54, 58,

3. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 108, 136; Āl-i-'Imrān 20, 85, 102.

4. Ibid., Ash-Shūrā: 13.

5. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 154.

6. Ibid., Āl-i-'Imrān: 80

7. The Meaning of the Glorious Koran : Trans. by M.M. Pickthall, Al-Maidah : 54.

8. Ibid., Al-Baqarah: 238.

9. Ibid., Al-Baqarah: 125.

10. Ibid., Al-Baqarah: 45, 177, 238, 239.

11. Ibid., An-Nisā : 167

12. Ibid., An-Nisā : 162.

13. Ibid., 171.

14. Ibid., Al-Maidah: 55.

15. Al-Anfāl: 1.

Prefer as Allāh preferred Ādam, Nūḥ (Noah), the family of Ibrāhīm (Abraham) and the family of 'Imrān above all creatures.<sup>1</sup>

Know that game is made unlawful on the pilgrimage and profane not Allāh's monuments, sacred months, offerings, garlands and the repairers of the House (Kabah at Mecca).<sup>2</sup>

Mention Allāh's name upon food<sup>3</sup> and judge according to Qur'ān.<sup>4</sup>

Stress not in your religion other than the truth and follow not the vain desires of the folk who erred of old and led many astray and erred from plain road.<sup>5</sup>

Remember Allāh much and praise Him in the early hours of night<sup>6</sup> and morning and never pray for disbelievers.<sup>7</sup>

It must be born in mind that man must abide by the commandments of God as mentioned above in accordance with the Qur'ān.

### THE QURANIC RIGHTEOUSNESS

About righteousness, Allāh emphatically declares in the Qur'ān that 'it is not righteousness that ye turn your faces to the east and the west, but righteous is he who believes in Allāh, Last Day, and the angels, and the scriptures and the prophets, who giveth his wealth for love of Him, to kinsfolk, and to orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free, and observe proper worship, and payeth the poor-due. And those who keep their treaty when they make one, and the patient in tribulation and adversity and time of stress. Such are they who are sincere—Such are the God-fearing.'<sup>8</sup> Further Allāh says in the Qur'ān, 'Those who believe and do good works are the rightful owners of the gardens of paradise. According to Qur'ān man's

1. The Holy Qur'ān : Āl-i-'Imrān: 33.

2. Ibid., Al-Mā'idah: 2.

3. Ibid., 4.

4. Ibid., 45.

5. Ibid., 77.

6. Ibid., Āl-i-'Imrān : 41.

7. Ibid., Al-Taubah : 84.

8. The Meaning of the Glorious Koran : As trans. by M.M. Pickthall, London. Al-Baqarah: 177.

foremost duty is to be a righteous person and to become the righteous one, man must try his best to please God by abiding by His commandments depicted in the Qur'ān. Righteous are those who are dear to God and they too themselves God-loving. Thus, man to be a righteous, must, in short, believe that there is but One God, the Beneficent, the Merciful, the Lord of the worlds, the Almighty and Muḥammad is but His apostle, a man from amongst us, and a final preacher of the God's will<sup>1</sup> believing likewise in the past prophets too, like Abraham, Ismael, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Jesus and others,<sup>2</sup> as Allāh preferred Ādam, the family of Abraham and the family of 'Imrān above all creatures.<sup>3</sup>

Man must believe in the Qur'ān and also other revelations of the past<sup>4</sup>—'the psalms (Zubūr) revealed to Daūd (David), the Torah (Taurāt) revealed to Moṣes and the Gospel (Injīl) revealed to 'Isā (Jesus Christ). It is said that ten divine books were revealed to Ādam, fifty to Sīsh, thirty to Idris and ten to Abraham. Thus one hundred scriptures given to Adam, Seth (Sīsh), Enoch (Idris) and Abraham are termed as 'Sahifahs' and the remaining four Kitāb, but all that is necessary for a Muslim to know of these books is supposed to have been retained in the Qur'ān."<sup>5</sup>

"The number of prophets, which have been sent by God is said to be 224000 or according to another tradition, 124000. Of these 313 were apostles sent with special commissions to reclaim the world from infidelity and superstition." And the number of scriptures revealed to man as mentioned above is said to have been one hundred and four. As Allāh declares in the Qur'ān, 'We sent messengers for every nation with guidance and the religion of truth<sup>6</sup> to preach mankind in the language of their own people for the clarification of the message to them.'<sup>7</sup> To make it more clear Allāh further

1. The Holy Qur'an, Al-Aḥzāb : 40.

2. Ibid., Al-i-'Imrān : 84.

3. Ibid., 33.

4. Ibid., An-Nisā : 162.

5. Notes on Mohammadanism-by T.P. Hughes, Second Edition 1877, London. p. 85.

6. The Holy Qur'an Yūnus: 47. An-Naḥl : 36 and Al-Malā'ikah : 24.

7. Ibid., Ibrāhīm : 4

proclaims, 'We sent messengers before Muḥammad also.' For every thing there is a time prescribed, God effaces whatever He wills and establishes whatever He wills, and the source of all divine guidance (Umm-ul-Kitāb) is entrusted with Him.<sup>1</sup> And Allāh suggests mankind to believe in the Quranic passage that nothing new has been given to Prophet Muḥammad which was not given to the prophets before him.<sup>2</sup> Some of the messengers are mentioned in the Qur'ān and some of them are not mentioned.<sup>3</sup> Allāh, therefore, commands all mankind to believe in the Qur'ān and all other scriptures revealed before it.<sup>4</sup>

Thus we may conclude from the above statement and authority that the divine authors of the Vedas, the Rāmāyaṇa, the Gītā, the Tripitaka, the Guru Grantha Śāhib etc. are sure to be apostles of God and their sacred books to be the scriptures as accepted by the Qur'ān. Therefore, the believers of the Qur'ān must respect these spiritual personalities and their sacred books, as they respect the Quranic apostles and scriptures.<sup>5</sup>

The existence of angels and their purity are absolutely required to be believed in, and he who denies that there are such beings or hates any of them or asserts any distinction of the sexes, is reckoned as an infidel. The Qur'ān reckons four archangels—Jibrīl (Gabriel) who is the revealer of the Divine Message to the apostles, Mikāīl (Michael), who is the Protector of the Jews, Isrāīl, who will sound the last trumpet at the resurrection and 'Izrāīl, the angel of death. There are thousands of angels in the heavens and the earth, as the Qur'ān declares, 'Is it not sufficient for you that your Lord should support you with three thousand angels sent down for your help. The Qur'ān again says about the angels that, 'your Lord will help you with five thousand angels sweeping on.'<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the duty of believing in all the angels is incumbent on all believers of the Qur'ān. But I, in my personal capacity agree to the opinion of Mr. Mahmud Muhtar Pasha, who

1. The Holy Qur'ān Ar-Ra'd : 38, 39.

2. Ibid., Fūḡilat: 43.

3. Ibid., Al-Muamjin: 7 8.

4. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 4.

5. Notes on Mohamadanism : T.P. Hughes p. 84.

6. Meaning of Glorious Koran: Trans. by M. M. Pickthall, London Al-i-'Imrān: 124, 125.

opines about the angels that they are non-existent entities—they are but high ideals, rather refined moral tendencies of one's heart coloured with one's deepest spiritual notions.<sup>1</sup> This is true that the most virtuous man is sometimes regarded as an angel in the society. Thus the concept of angels in the Qur'ān appears to be allegorical representing the highest degree of righteousness with divine powers.

As believing in the Last Day or the Day of Judgment is commanded by Allāh in the Qur'ān, therefore, man must, by all means believe in it.<sup>2</sup> It is a time which is a perfect secret and is known only to God. But the approach of the Day of Judgment will be known by the following signs :

1. The Decay of faith among men,
2. The advancing of the meanest persons to dignity,
3. A maid-servant shall become the mother of her mistress.
4. Tumults and seditions,
5. A war with the Turks,
6. Great distress in the world,
7. The provinces of Iraq and Syria shall refuse to pay tribute,
8. The buildings of Madīnah shall extend to Yabab,
9. The sun rising in the west etc. etc.<sup>3</sup>

The Last Day is variously known as 'Yaum-i-Qiyāmat,' 'Yaum-ul-Ḥisāb' etc. The sad tidings of overwhelming on this day to evil doers and the glad-tidings to the righteous ones are emphasisingly described in the Qur'ān.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, man must have faith in the Last Day for pleasing his Lord.

## WORLDLY OR SOCIAL DUTIES

### *Morality in the Qur'ān :*

The Qur'ān contains in its fold a huge number of moral

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1. The Wisdom of the Qur'ān : Mahmud Mahtar Pasha : Introduction pp. 39-41.
  2. The Meaning of the Glorious Koran : M.M. Pickthall, Londou, Al-Baqarah: 62.
  3. Notes on Mohammadanism: T.P. Hughes, Second Ed. 1877 London, pp. 87-89.
  4. The Holy Qur'ān : Al-Ghāsiyah : 1-20.

obligations incumbent on humankind, which are, in short, being given below :

Whoso commits a delinquency or crime, then throws the blame thereof upon the innocent, has burdened himself with falsehood and a flagrant crime, therefore, after committing a delinquency or crime, one must not throw the blame thereof on the innocent.<sup>1</sup>

Allāh preaches morality to mankind through the Qur'ān by commanding :

O ye who believe ! Follow not passion.<sup>2</sup>

Women must not be guilty of lewdness.<sup>3</sup>

Don't deal in wrong.<sup>4</sup>

Know that man excels woman because he spends of his property for the support of woman, therefore, woman should obey their husbands.<sup>5</sup>

Serve Allāh and attribute no partners unto Him, and show kindness unto parents, near kindred, orphans, the needy and neighbour who is not of kin, the fellow traveller, wayfarer and the slaves. Be not proud and boastful.<sup>6</sup>

Man must not squander his money wastefully.<sup>7</sup>

Break not the covenant of Allāh after ratifying it.<sup>8</sup>

Don't slay the captives, nor drive them out of their houses by sin transgression or ransom.<sup>9</sup>

Be good to parents, mankind, orphans and the needy,<sup>10</sup> and let not your conduct grieve thee.<sup>11</sup>

Utter kind words or speak gently, and when you enter houses salute one another with a greeting from Allāh, blessed and sweet.<sup>12</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān : An-Nisā : 112.

2. Ibid., 135.

3. Ibid., 15, 16.

4. Ibid., 168.

5. Ibid., 34.

6. Ibid., 36.

7. Ibid., An Nisā : 29.

8. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 27, 63, 84.

9. Ibid., 84, 85.

10. Ibid., 83.

11. Ibid., Āl-i-'Imrān : 176.

12. Ibid., An-Nūr : 61.



Lower your gaze and be modest,<sup>1</sup> and overcome evil with good.<sup>2</sup>

Don't choose disbelievers for your friends in preference to believers,<sup>3</sup> but cut the root of the disbelievers by reforming them.<sup>4</sup>

Forgive and protect the seekers of your help and protection.<sup>5</sup>

Don't slay the sacred life save in justice.<sup>6</sup>

Don't commit mischief.<sup>7</sup>

Speak words straight to the point.<sup>8</sup>

Fulfil your undertakings.<sup>9</sup>

Shun only indecencies.<sup>10</sup>

Strive not after corruption in the land,<sup>11</sup> and oppose and admonish the wrong doers and address them in plain terms about their souls.<sup>12</sup>

Man must deal justly.<sup>13</sup>

Don't be a pleader (Vakīl) for the treacherous.<sup>14</sup>

Help not one another unto sin and transgression.<sup>15</sup>

When you are greeted with a greeting, greet with a better greeting than it or return it.<sup>16</sup>

Intervene not in a good cause, but intervene in an evil cause.<sup>17</sup>

Forgive and be indulgent towards those who long to make

1. The Holy Qur'ān : An-Nūr : 30.

2. Ibid., Ar Ra'd : 22.

3. Ibid., Āl-i-'Imrān : 28.

4. Ibid., Al-Anfal : 7.

5. Ibid., At-Taubah : 6.

6. Ibid., Al-An'ām 152.

7. Ibid., 153.

8. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 205.

9. Ibid., Ahzāb : 70.

10. Ibid., Al-Maidah : 1.

11. Ibid., 33.

12. Ibid., An-Nisā : 63.

13. Ibid., Al-Maidah : 8.

14. Ibid., An-Nisā : 105.

15. Ibid., Al-Maidah : 2.

16. Ibid., An-Nisā : 86.

17. Ibid., 85.

you disbelievers after your belief through envy.<sup>1</sup>

Be obedient and civil in your speech and be loyal to Allāh.<sup>2</sup>

Don't be proud and don't be a corrupter.<sup>3</sup>

Proclaim your real parentage.<sup>4</sup>

Judge justly according to the Qur'ān.<sup>5</sup>

Keep your souls good<sup>6</sup> and perform your words justly, even though it may be against a kinsman.<sup>7</sup>

Be emigrants to escape the persecution and strive in the way of Allāh.<sup>8</sup>

Give not unto the foolish, what is in your keeping of their wealth, which Allāh has given you to maintain, but feed and clothe them from it and speak kindly unto them.<sup>9</sup>

Disregard noxious talks.<sup>10</sup>

The women must observe Pardah, if they fear annoyance after their recognition by bad characters or eve-teasers.<sup>11</sup>

Forbid strong drink and games of chance.<sup>12</sup>

Man must work according to his strength.<sup>13</sup>

Forbid prayer in the state of drunkenness.<sup>14</sup>

Come not nigh unto adultery.<sup>15</sup>

Be not prodigals.<sup>16</sup>

Leave the idolaters with their devices.<sup>17</sup>

Don't conceal the truth knowingly.<sup>18</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah 109.
2. Ibid. Muḥammad : 21, Āl-i-'Imrān : 17, 43, 82.
3. Ibid., Al-Māidah : 64.
4. Ibid., Al-Aḥzāb : 5.
5. Ibid., An-Nisā : 58, Al-Māidah : 45.
6. Ibid., Yūnus : 109.
7. Ibid., Al-An'am : 153.
8. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 218.
9. Ibid., An-Nisa : 5.
10. Ibid., Al-Aḥzāb : 48,
11. Ibid., Al-Aḥzāb : 59.
12. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 219.
13. Ibid., Al-An'am : 136.
14. Ibid., An-Nisa : 43.
15. Ibid., Bani Isrā'il : 32.
16. Ibid., An-An'am : 142,
17. Ibid., Al-An'am : 138.
18. Ibid., Āl-i-'Imrān : 71.

Fulfil your pledge.<sup>1</sup>

Break not your oaths.<sup>2</sup>

Man must not be disheartened at a time of crisis.<sup>3</sup>

One must not be exultant and not draw nigh to lewd things, whether open or concealed.<sup>4</sup>

The code of moral precepts has to be gathered from scattered passages of the Qur'ān, yet the most systematic commands on these moral obligations are available in the Sūrāh "Banī Isrā'īl", which are as follows :—(1) Attribute no partners unto Allāh; (2) Be kind and respectful to parents; (3) Give what is due to kinsmen, the poor and the travellers; (4) Be not wasteful; (5) Slay not your children for fear of poverty; (6) Draw not nigh unto fornication; (7) Slay not the soul which Allāh has forbidden you except for just cause; (8) Draw not near the wealth of the orphans; (9) Fulfil your compacts; (10) Give just measure and weight; (11) Follow not that of which you have no knowledge (probably referring to the slanderous reports); (12) Walk not on the earth proudly<sup>5</sup> and so on.

Man must be mindful in abiding by the above mentioned commandments in accordance with the prescribed ways in the Qur'ān. We may add to the above mentioned moral teachings of the Qur'ān that Allāh desires all mankind to be, ideal, righteous, generous, just and perfect ones in all affairs of life. We have seen that the Qur'ān teaches man to believe in the phrase, "Justification by works." To attain salvation man must believe in the message of the Qur'ān to be true and he must do the works commanded therein by the Creator. The strictly religious conditions of attaining salvation have been outlined above. But we have also seen that the authority of the Qur'ān as the representative of the God's will, extends to all affairs of human life. As the Qur'ān is the final divine guidance to mankind and clear proof of God's sovereignty and the criterion of right and wrong,<sup>6</sup> hence the moral and the legal obligations

1. The Holy Qur'ān Āl-i-'Imrān : 76.

2. Ibid., An-Nahl : 91.

3. Ibid., 200.

4. Ibid., Al-An'ām : 152.

5. Ibid., Banī Isrā'īl : 23—40.

6. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 185.

of the Qur'ān extend to all spheres of human affairs e.g., domestic, social, legal, political, ceremonial as well as strictly religious.

### A-DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL OBLIGATIONS

#### *Treatment of Women :*

The legislation regarding the various aspects of the women folk is the most prominent element in the Qur'ān. Regarding the treatment of women Allāh asserts that 'the women who are guilty of an indecency, four witnesses are required to witness against them. If they bear witness, the guilty must be confined to the houses until death takes them away or Allāh opens some way for them. And as for the two who are guilty of lewdness from amongst you, give them both a slight punishment, then if they repent and amend leave them. The women must not be taken as heritage against their will and they must not be straitened in order that one may take part of what you have given them, until they are guilty of manifest lewdness. They should be treated kindly and should not be hated. And if one wishes to have one wife in the place of another and he has given one of them a heap of gold, it should not be taken back.'<sup>1</sup>

### MATRIMONIAL AFFAIRS

#### *Prohibited Dergees in marriage :*

The Qur'ān permits man to marry all women except mothers, daughters, sisters, paternal aunts, maternal aunts, brothers' daughters, sisters' daughters, suckling-mothers, foster sisters, wives' mothers, step-daughters, who are in your guardianship, born of your wives to whom you have gone in, but if you have not gone in to them, there is no blame on you in marrying them, Sons' wives, two sisters together except what has already passed, all married women, except those whom your right hands possess and the women whom your father married, except what has already happened of this sort.'<sup>2</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān : An-Nisā : 15-21.

2. Ibid., 22-24.

'And whosoever among you has not within his power ample-ness of means to marry free believing women, then, (he may marry) of those whom your right hands possess from among your believing maidens and Allāh knows best your faith, you are sprung the one from the other, so marry them with the permission of their masters and give them their dowries justly, they being chaste, not fornicating, nor receiving paramours, and when they are taken in marriage, then if they are guilty of indecency, they shall suffer half the punishment which is inflicted upon free women.'<sup>1</sup>

When you have divorced your wives and they have ended their terms of waiting (that is three monthly courses), then do not prevent them from marrying their husbands when they agree among themselves in a lawful manner.<sup>2</sup> Allāh gives further commands concerning marriage, 'Do not marry the idolatresses until they believe and certainly a believing maid is better than an idolatress even though she may please you and do not give believing women in marriage to idolaters until they believe, and certainly a believing servant is better than an idolater, even though he may please you.'<sup>3</sup>

*Mehr (Dower) :*

'As man is benefitted by marrying a woman, therefore he has upon himself a binding duty to pay her dower as stipulated. There is no blame on you about the non-payment of the dower if it is agreed upon by the couple.<sup>4</sup> But if you have divorced your wives before you have touched them and appointed for them a Mehr (dower), then you should pay to them half of what you have stipulated. Unless they relinquish or he should relinquish in whose hand is the marriage tie, and it is nearer to righteousness that you should relinquish and should not neglect the giving of free-gifts between you.'<sup>5</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'an—as translated by Maulvi Muhammad Ali Second Edition, 1920, Lahore Punjab—An-Nisā : 25.
2. The Holy Qur'an—Al-Baqarah : 232.
3. Ibid., 221.
4. Ibid.. An-Nisā : 24.
5. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 237.

*Duty of Husbands :*

Allāh commands mankind in the Qur'ān, 'O ye who believe ! Don't devour your property among yourselves falsely, except that it be trading by the mutual consent of the couple and do not kill your people. Don't covet that by which Allāh has made some of you excel others. Men should have the benefit of what they earn and women should have the benefit of what they earn. And to everyone We have appointed heirs of what parents and near relatives leave and as to those with whom your right hands have ratified agreements give them their portion.'<sup>1</sup> Men are commanded in connection with divorcing their wives, 'Men cannot, however, divorce their wives without payment to them of the dowry stipulated at the time of marriage. The woman also can procure divorce from a law-court if she can show evidence of maltreatment by her husband.'<sup>2</sup> We may conclude from the above statement that men should not treat their wives with harshness and should divorce them in lawful manner, if they are displeased with them. Though man has no power to do justice between his wives, even though he may covet it, but he should not be disinclined from one with total disinclination.<sup>3</sup> And one must not accuse chaste believing women unaware of the evil.

*Menstruation :*

To cohabit with the wives in the state of their menstrual discharge is a little harmful, therefore one must keep aloof from the women and must not go near them until they have become clean, then when they have cleansed themselves go in to them as Allāh has commanded you to take your wives as tilth for you for the production of the good harvest in the shape of offspring.<sup>4</sup> The prescribed time for menstruation is three months, but for those who are pregnant, their period shall be till they bring forth their burden<sup>5</sup>.

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1. The Holy Qur'ān—An-Nisā : 29-33.

2. What is Islam : M. Mazharuddin Siddiqi. pp. 82, 83.

3. The Holy Qur'ān—An-Nisā : 129.

4. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 222, 223.

5. Ibid., A't-Talāq : 4.

*Divorce*

The Qur'ān says that if one wishes to divorce his wives he should divorce them for their prescribed time, and he should not drive them out of his house, nor should they themselves go forth, unless they commit an open indecency. When they have reached the prescribed time, he can either retain them with kindness or separate them and call to witness two men of justice from amongst you and give upright testimony for God. And Allāh further commands in the Qur'ān, 'As for those of your wives, who have despaired of menstruation, if you have a doubt, and of those too who have not had their courses and as for the pregnant ones their prescribed time of separation is that they lay down their burden. And lodge them where you can lodge according to your means and do not injure them in order that you may straiten them. If they are pregnant, spend on them until they lay down their burden.'<sup>1</sup>

'The divorce may be pronounced twice then keep them in good fellowship or let them go with kindness and one must not take any part of what he has given to his wife before divorce. But there is no blame on man if his wife gives up to become free thereby. If one divorces his wife, he shall not be lawful to remarry her until she be remarried; then if the new husband divorces her, there is no blame on them both if they return to each other by re-marriage. And when you divorce women and they reach their prescribed term mentioned above, then you should either retain them in good fellowship or set them free and should not retain them for injury.'<sup>2</sup>

And the divorced women should keep themselves in waiting for three periods of menstrual discharge in the unmarried state, and they should not conceal their pregnancy. And their husbands have a better right to take them back in the meantime, if they wish for reconciliation.<sup>3</sup>

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1. The Holy Qur'ān-A't-Talāq : 4-6.

2. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 229-231.

3. Ibid., 228,

*Suckling :*

'The divorced women should suckle their children for two whole years for him who desires to complete the time of suckling and their maintenance and clothing must be borne by the father according to usage. No mother shall suffer harm on account of her child, and no father on account of his child, and a similar duty devolves on the father's heirs but if both desire weaning by mutual consent and counsel there is no blame on them. And if you wish to engage a wet-nurse for your children there is no blame on you so long as you pay what you promised for according to usage.'<sup>1</sup>

*Widowhood :*

If one dies leaving behind his wife and making a bequest in her favour for her maintenance for a year without turning her out, then if she herself goes away, there is no blame on him for what she did.

'*Iddat* : The widows should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days ; then when they have fully attained their term of '*Iddat*, there is no blame on them if they get remarried in a lawful manner. And there is no sin if one asks directly to marry such woman. In this connection one must not promise to marry such woman in secret, but should speak in a lawful manner and should not confirm the marriage-tie until the record is fulfilled.'<sup>2</sup>

## TREATMENT OF ORPHANS

*Duties of Guardians Towards Their Orphan Wards :*

'The guardian should deliver the property of the orphans to them and they should not devour their property as an addition to their own property, as it is certainly a great sin. And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then you should marry such women as seem good to you, two or three or four, but if you fear that you could not do

1. The Holy Qur'an, Al-Baqarah : 233.

2. Ibid., 234, 235, 240.



justice between them then marry only one or what your right hands possess.

In case of marrying the orphan women, you should give them their dowers, as free gifts, but if they of themselves be pleased to give up to you a portion of it, then eat it with enjoyment and with wholesome result. And Allāh further commands, 'Do not give away your property to the weak of understanding and maintain them out of the profit of it and clothe them and speak to them words of honest advice.'<sup>1</sup> And one must test one's orphan wards until they attain puberty then if you find in them maturity of intellect, you should make over to them their property and do not consume it extravagantly and hastily, lest they attain to full age, and whoever is rich let him abstain altogether and whoever is poor let him eat reasonably. When you deliver their property to them you should call witnesses to do so.<sup>2</sup>

At the time of division of the inheritance, if there are present the relatives, the orphans and the needy, then they must also be given something out of it and be spoken kind words to them. Emphasising on the complete safeguard of the property of the orphans, the Qur'ān announces, 'those who swallow the property of the orphans unjustly, surely they only swallow fire into their bellies and they shall enter blazing fire of hell.'<sup>3</sup>

### DEALING WITH THE SLAVES

The slavery in the Qur'ān is a domestic institution and as an accompaniment of warfare. The murder of the captives after the battle of Badr is referred to in the Sūrah Al-Anfāl of the Qur'ān. 'It has not been for any prophet to possess captive until he hath slaughtered in the land.'<sup>4</sup> The slave is not, as Stanton says, 'the slave is the absolute property of his master as man is of Allāh, 'Islām forbade the use of harsh language and the giving of the cruel and severe punishments

1. The Holy Qur'ān-An-Nisā : 2-5

2. Ibid., 6.

3. Ibid., 7-10.

4. The Teaching of the Qur'ān : H.U.W. Stanton, p. 66.

to slaves. It made the duty of owners to help the slaves if the task given to them was a hard one, and to attend to them in sickness. In short they had a comfortable existence and were free from cares, because it was the owners to attend to all their needs, troubles etc.<sup>1</sup>

'The female slaves may be taken as concubines at discretion but their master should not hire them out as prostitutes. On the contrary, if he does not want them himself he should make provision for their marriage. A married women may be taken as wife if made captive in war'.<sup>2</sup> It is better to marry a believing slave than a free idolater.<sup>3</sup>

The master should treat the slaves kindly, if they are able to redeem themselves, they should not create any hindrance in their way of so doing. The slaves are so much relieved in the Qur'ān that they were content so much with their lot that they often refused freedom. Take the case of Zayd who preferred to remain a slave instead of being freed.

### OTHER FRIENDLY AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

'The Qur'ān does not forbid you to make friendship respecting those who have not made war against you on account of your religion and have not driven you forth from your homes, therefore you should show them kindness and deal with them justly. Allāh only forbids you to make friendship with those who made war upon you on account of your religion and drove you forth from your homes and backed up others in your expulsion.<sup>4</sup>

And if believing women come to you then you should examine them concerning their religion, then if you find them to be believing women, you should not send them back to disbelievers and give them what they have spent. And there is no blame on you if you should marry them in lawful manner. But you never marry the disbelieving ones. If any thing

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1. Fear Allāh and take your Own Part : Al-Haj Qāssim Ali Jarazbhoy p 191.
  2. Teaching of the Qurān : H.U.W. Stanton, p. 66
  3. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 221.
  4. Ibid., Al-Mumtahnah : 8-9.

out of the dowers of your wives has passed away from you to the disbelievers, then you should in your turn, give to those whose wives have gone away the like of what they have spent. Man is commanded by Allāh that he should marry a woman who comes to him giving him a pledge that she would not associate ought with Allāh and would be aloof from stealing, fornication, infanticide, disobedience and calumny. Don't make friendship with the opponents of God.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Trading :*

Although the prophet himself was, originally, a trader yet little mention is made in the Qur'ān on trade. Selling is permitted but usury is prohibited. The Qur'ān which legalises the almsgiving has banned the taking of interest on money. But believers may carry on trade while engaged in pilgrimage.<sup>2</sup> For the enrichment of mankind Allāh commands men to carry on trade honestly.<sup>3</sup>

### THE FORBIDDEN THINGS

#### *Unclean Food :*

'The Qur'ān forbids for food, the rotten flesh, blood, swine-flesh and that which has been dedicated unto any other than God, the strangled, the dead through beating, the dead through falling from a height, that which has been killed by the goring of horns, the devoured of wild beasts, except that which you make lawful by the death stroke and that which has been immolated to idols.

Moreover, that which you swear by the divining arrows is also forbidden for mankind to take into food.<sup>4</sup> But whoever is driven to necessity, not desiring nor exceeding the limit, then there is no blame on the eater.<sup>5</sup> On the authority of the divine command given in the Qur'ān, we may assert that man must not eat the above mentioned food, except he is driven

1. The Holy Qur'ān-Al Mumtaḥnah : 10-13.

2. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 198.

3. The Teaching of the Quran : H.U.W. Stanton, p. 68

4. Ibid., Al-Māidah : 3, and Al-Baqarah : 173.

5. Ibid., Al-An'am : 146.

by urgent necessity. All should prefer for food all sorts of fruits,<sup>1</sup> all good things produced from earth, like wheat, barley, gram and other foodgrains, pulses and vegetables.<sup>2</sup> It is implied to know that the Qur'ān permits for food the meat of all animals except the above list and milk, butter and their products. The Qur'ān had originally been revealed in Arabia, where the food of the people is meat on account of their nature-born qualities and geographical situations. Had it been revealed in India it would not suggest meat to be the chief diet of the people, which is quite opposed to the natural qualities and geographical situations under the given time, place and circumstances. As the divine guidance came to mankind only for the maintenance of the world order, it may, therefore, be interpreted according to the needs of humanity under the given circumstances.

*Gambling, Wining and Idolatry etc. :*

Allāh condemns gambling, wining, idolatry and divining arrows by declaring, 'O ye who believe ! Strong drink, games of chance, idols and divining arrows are only an infamy of satan's handiwork and to turn you from remembrance of Allāh. Therefore, one must not indulge oneself in these sinful things.'<sup>3</sup>

*Magic Incantation and superstition :*

Magic in the sense of sorcery is vehemently condemned by the prophet's frequent repudiation of the charge brought against him of being a magician. On the contrary, there is no prohibition of incantations, as the ending two Sūrahs of the Qur'ān (113th and 114th) appear to be of that nature and are extensively used as such by believers all over the world.

Along with the putting an end to polytheism, idolatry, gambling, wining, etc. the Qur'ān also condemns the superstitious beliefs prevailing during the age of Paganism. For instance, the Qur'ān forbids men from putting their wives

1. The Holy Qur'ān : An-Nahl : 69.

2. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 168, 172.

3. Ibid., 219-221.

away by likening their backs to the backs of their mothers through their superstitious belief<sup>1</sup> as well as other superstitious notions in connection with the spirits and ghosts prevailing all over the land in pre-Islamic age.

### *Infanticide :*

Allāh commands against infanticide prevailing from the time immemorial—Do not kill your children for fear of poverty as we give them sustenance and yourselves too.<sup>2</sup>

### *Usury and Bribery :*

Usury is prohibited by Allāh in the Qur'ān declaring, 'Those who swallow usury cannot rise up, save as he rises whom the devil has prostrated by his touch. Allāh has blighted usury and made legal alms fruitful. Therefore, man must by all means, forsake usury and must continue to give alms.'<sup>3</sup> To my personal view this belief is suicidal for human progress on a firm footing, as it gives encouragement to beggars without offering an incentive to commerce and trade, which are essential ingredients for the prosperity of a nation through banking involving usury. This belief kept Muslim nations financially weak for centuries. Perhaps the theologians were misguiding people on this point through their ill-advised commentaries on this belief. What is wrong in accepting usury for a good cause? How can God forbid it? Only exorbitant rates of interest could be forbidden. The sensible Muslim nations have now started banking establishments etc. in their countries and are progressing.

Similarly the bribery is also condemned by the Qur'ān stating, 'Do not eat your property in vanity, nor seek by it to gain the hearing of the judges, that may knowingly devour a portion of the property of others wrongfully.'<sup>4</sup> It is obvious from the above statement that one must, in no case, go nigh unto bribery.'

1. The Holy Qur'ān : Al-Mujādilah : 2.

2. Ibid., Banī Isrā'īl : 31,

3. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 275-279,

4. Ibid., 188.

## LEGAL DUTIES

*Criminal Laws :*

The laws relating to crimes occur in the form of penalties enacted for the commission of certain crimes—such as murdering, injuring, stealing, fornicating, unchastity and so on.

*Retaliation :*

The Qur'ān says that the retaliation is prescribed for mankind in the matter of the murdered in the following manner—If the man has been murdered, then only free man from amongst the accused can be killed by the relatives of the murdered in retaliation. In the similar manner, the slave for the slave and the female for the female can be slaughtered. And for him who is forgiven somewhat by his injured brother, prosecution according to usage and payment unto him in kindness should follow.<sup>1</sup> The Qur'ān further emphasises concerning retaliation that there should be life for the life, the eye for the eye, the nose for the nose, the ear for the ear and the tooth for the tooth. This is the retaliation prescribed for the wounds. But whoso forgoes it in the way of charity it shall be an expiation for him.<sup>2</sup>

*Stealing :*

The judges are commanded by the Qur'ān to cut off the hands of the thief, whether male or female.<sup>3</sup>

*Fornication :*

The punishment for the fornicatress and the fornicator is prescribed to inflict each of them a hundred stripes. The judge should not feel pity in ordering such punishment enjoined by the Qur'ān.

And the fornicator is not allowed to marry any but a fornicatress or an idolatress and for the fornicatress none shall marry her but a fornicator or an idolater. And those who accuse free

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1. The Holy Qur'ān : Al-Baqarah : 178, 179.

2. Ibid., Al-Māidah : 45.

3. Ibid., 38.

women, then do not bring four witnesses, flog them giving eighty stripes and do not admit any evidence from them, except those who repent afterwards and act aright. And as for those who accuse their wives and have no witnesses except themselves, the evidence of one of them should be treated as that of four, bearing God to witness about their truthfulness.<sup>1</sup>

It does not behove a believer to kill a believer except by mistake and whoever kills a believer by mistake, he should free a believing slave and blood-money should be paid to his people unless they remit it as alms. But if he be from a tribe hostile to you and he is a believer, the freeing of a believing slave suffices, and if he is from a tribe between whom and you there is a covenant, the blood-money should be paid to his people along with the freeing of a believing slave. But he who cannot find a slave, should fast for two months successively as an expiation.

And if one kills a believer intentionally his punishment is hell.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Unchastity :*

The unchaste woman may be immured alive or confined for life. In the case of sodomy, the offenders are to receive an undefined punishment or if penitent to be forgiven.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Rebelling against the Religion :*

The rebels of the religion are liable for punishment by impalement or mutilation or banishment.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Civil Regulations :*

The rules relating to this category too are fragmentary and deal with special needs that arose out of developments in the prophet's career, being a specimen for mankind, so that one cannot draw a clear line between moral precepts and legal injunctions. For example, property is not to be expended on

1. The Holy Qur'an : An-Nūr : 2-6.

2. Ibid., 92-93.

3. The Teaching of The Qur'an : H.U.W. Stanton p. 464.

4. Ibid., p, 66.

vanity or on bribery,<sup>1</sup> but no penalty is laid down for the offender.

*Bequest :*

Equitable testamentary provision should be made verbally for parents and kinsmen and the witnesses are not to alter the terms of the bequest. Legacies should be shared by men and women and a residue left for the poor and the orphan.<sup>2</sup> In the case of those of you who are about to die, and have behind them wives, they should bequeath unto their wives a provision for a year without turning them out, but if they go out of their own accord, there is no blame on you.<sup>3</sup> There are provisions for the portions of husbands and wives and of distant kindreds and the husband is not to inherit the estate of the wife against her will. Discretions are also given for attesting a will by oath.<sup>4</sup>

*Inheritance :*

The men of the family get a share of that which parents and near kindred leave and the women get a share of that which parents and near kindred leave, whether it be little or much—a legal share.<sup>5</sup> 'As concerns the provision for your children out of the inheritance, the male offsprings get the equivalent of the portion of two females. And if there be women more than two, then theirs is two-thirds of the inheritance, and if there be only one, then the half. And to his parents a sixth of the inheritance, if he has a son and if he has no son and his parents are his heirs, then to his mother appertains the third. If he has brothers, then to his mother appertains the sixth, after any bequest he may have bequeathed or debts have been paid.<sup>6</sup>

Allāh further communicates in the Qur'ān concerning the inheritance—Unto you belongs a half of that which your wives

1. The Holy Qur'ān : Al-Baqarah : 188.

2. Ibid., 177, 180-182.

3. Ibid., 240.

4. The Teaching of the Quran : H. U. W. Stanton, p. 67.

5. The Holy Qur'ān-An-Nisā : 7,

6. Ibid., 11.



leave, if they have no child. But if they have a child, then unto you the fourth of that which they leave, after any legacy they may have contracted, has been paid. And unto them belongs the fourth of that which you leave, if you have no child, but if you have a child, then the eighth of that which you leave, after any legacy you may have bequeathed or debt you may have contracted, has been paid. And if a man or a woman has a distant heir having left neither parent nor child and he or she has a brother or a sister only on the mother's side, then to each of them twain the sixth. And if they be more than two, then they shall be sharers in the third of the whole, after any legacy that may have been bequeathed or debt contracted not injuring the heirs by willing away more than a third of the heritage, has been paid.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the share of distant kindred, the Qur'ān pronounces, 'If a man dies childless, and he has a sister, hers is half of the heritage. And he would have inherited from her, had she died childless. And if there be two sisters, then theirs are two-thirds of the heritage, and if there be brethren, men and women, unto the male is the equivalent of the share of two-females.'<sup>2</sup>

## DUTIES IN POLITICAL AFFAIRS

### *Warfare :*

The warfare is ordained by Allāh in the characteristic term 'Jihādan Fī Ṣabīlillāh' (Strife in the way of Allāh) commanding — 'Fight in the way of Allāh against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities.'<sup>3</sup> The believers should slay the disbelievers wherever they find them and should drive them out of the places, whence they drove them out, as persecution is worse than slaughter, but they must not fight at the Inviolable Place of Worship until they first attack them. And if they desist from attacking, then leave them. The fighting for the safeguard of the religion should be until the persecution is no-

1. The Holy Qur'ān : An-Nisā : 12.

2. Ibid., 177.

3. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 190, 216 ; 244 ; An-Nisā 75, 76.

more, attacking them in the like manner as they attacked them.<sup>1</sup> Fighting in the sacred months is a great transgression, except turning men from the way of Allāh and the Inviolable Place of Worship.<sup>2</sup>

The believing warriors are to strike off the heads and fingertips of enemies. Certain tactics and precautions are enjoined as, 'leaders are to beware of insincere mediation and not allow overtures at a time of vantage. It was Allāh who slew the enemies in the victory of Badr,<sup>3</sup> the warrior is His helper and the slain in the path of Allāh are not dead but living—they are martyrs. Death in Allāh's way is better than wealth and is rewarded by paradise. To the living is granted rich booty and there is more to come, but it must be remembered that the booty belongs at the first place to Allāh and His apostle. Prisoners of war are in the power of the captors to kill, sell as slaves, hold to ransom, liberate or convert them to Islām.<sup>4</sup>

But I do not agree that the prisoners of war are in the absolute power of the captors, to kill, sell, hold to ransom or liberate them as slaves. Even slaves are not under the wholesome control of their masters to kill them on their own accord.<sup>5</sup> For the provision of easement to the slaves, the reader may please consult the article 'Dealing with the Slaves' of this chapter and as for the facilities provided by the Qur'ān to the captives, one must go through the Quranic passages, when Allāh repeatedly declares, 'Begin not hostilities,'<sup>6</sup> if the opponents desist, then let there be no hostility except against wrong doers.<sup>7</sup> O Prophet! Say unto those captives who are in your hands, 'If Allāh knows any good in your hearts He will give you better than that which has been taken from you and will forgive you,'<sup>8</sup> and if they seek help from you concerning religion, then it is your duty to help them except against a folk between whom and you there is a treaty.'<sup>9</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah 191-194.

2. Ibid., 217.

3. Ibid., Al-Anfāl 17.

4. The Teaching of the Qur'ān : H.U.W. Stanton, pp. 65-66.

5. The Holy Qur'ān, An Nisā : 102-103.

6. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 190.

7. Ibid., 193-194.

8. Ibid., Al-Anfāl 17.

9. Ibid., 72.

Moreover, 'about the prisoners of Badr-battle he (prophet Muḥammad) strictly ordered that they should be treated well, the result was that the disciples themselves only lived on dates and gave the good food to the prisoners. In the battle of Hunen six thousand persons were captured as prisoners. The Holy Prophet not only set them free, but gave each of them a suit of clothes.'<sup>1</sup>

### POLICY AND TREATY

The Quranic policy may be learnt from the problems of Israilites, Jews and Christians, as well as the slaughter of enemies enforced by the stories of Saul, Goliath, Joseph and others. As the Quranic religion is a religion of peace, therefore it orders war with the following words, 'If two parties of believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them. And if one party of them does wrong to the other, fight against that which does wrong till it returns to the ordinance of Allāh, then if it returns make peace between them justly and equitably. The believers are not else than brothers, therefore you should make peace between your brothers.'<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'ān enjoins on other sects and nations to bring about honourable and just peace by negotiation and appointment of a Board of Arbitration between the two dissatisfied and trouble-brewing sects instead of promising to help one or the other and making them fight. The bloodshed should be avoided. If one or the other party does not agree to it and insists on fighting then it is duty of all to join to fight it.<sup>3</sup> The Qur'ān has preached a valuable principle for the maintenance of the world-peace. It has asked the Muslims to keep themselves ready for defensive action against all external aggressions.<sup>4</sup>

The Qur'ān, by its watch-word, "There is no compulsion in religion"<sup>5</sup> has wedded the love of the country with that of humanity. We may proclaim on the authority of the Qur'ān that a nation should not regard the other as mean and

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1. Fear Allāh and Take your Own Part : Al-Haj Qassim Ali, p. 231.
  2. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Hujurāt : 9,10.
  3. Fear Allāh And Take your Own Part Al-Haj Qassim Ali pp. 29, 30.
  4. Ibid : p. 35.
  5. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 256.

degraded. One must be sure on the divine prediction than no nation can ever remain high, the greatest empires have fallen and will fall and the lowest have risen and will rise. Having faith in this statement, there is no room left for grieving over the defeat or pleasing over the victory. Thus we may conclude that believing in the cycle of fortune and misfortune, man must not bother in any condition of his life, but he should continue to work according to his strength<sup>1</sup> seeking assistance from patience and prayer.<sup>2</sup>

Regarding the establishment of the intimacy, the Qur'ān declares, "Do not take for intimate friends from among others who are disbelievers. Allāh encourages believers, while fighting against the disbelievers saying, 'Does it not suffice you that your Lord should assist you with three thousand angels sent down and with the five thousand of the havoc-making angels.'<sup>3</sup> And further He promises that one hundred believers would be enough to defeat two hundred disbelievers.<sup>4</sup> And if there be only twenty steadfast they shall overcome two hundred and if there be a hundred steadfast, they shall overcome a thousand by Allāh's Grace.<sup>5</sup> Therefore believers should not loose their heart even before a mighty army of the disbelievers."

As the Jews and the Christians were the great enemies of Islām in those days, therefore divine command comes against them, 'Do not take the Jews and the Christians for friends, they are friends of each other.'<sup>6</sup> Emphasising on the friendship Allāh repeatedly declares, 'Do not take My enemy and your enemy for friends. This relationship of yours would profit neither you nor your children.'<sup>7</sup>

About keeping the treaty, the Qur'ān suggests that those who keep their treaty, when they make one and are patient in tribulation, adversity and times of stress, such are they who are the sincere.<sup>8</sup> Therefore man must, in all conditions of his life, keep his treaty in accordance with the terms stipulated.

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-An'ām : 136.

2. Ibid.-Al-Baqarah : 113.

3. Ibid., Āl-i-'Imrān : 124, 125.

4. Ibid., Al-Anfai : 66.

5. Ibid., 65.

6. Ibid., Al-Maidah : 51.

7. Ibid., Al-Mumtahnah : 1-3.

8. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 177.

## CEREMONIAL REGULATIONS

*Ablution :*

The fragmentary directions contained in the Qur'ān concerning external and internal purity rest on the background of Arab customs, the contents of which supplemented by the words of the scripture were afterwards elaborated in tradition and eventually codified by the theology.

The Qur'ān, thus, proclaims the rules regarding ablution in the following way, 'When rise up for prayer, you should wash your faces and your hands upto the elbows and lightly rub your heads and wash your feet upto the ankles. And if you are unclean, you should purify yourselves. If you are sick or on a journey or one of you comes from the Privy or you have had contact with women and you find no water betake yourselves to pure earth and wipe your faces and your hands therewith. Allāh would not like to place a burden on you but He desires to purify you and to perfect His Grace on you, so that you may give Him thanks in the shape of abiding by His commandments.'<sup>1</sup>

Allāh further declares about the ablution : 'Draw not nigh unto prayers when you are drunken, until you know what you say, nor when you are polluted, except when journeying upon the road till you have bathed.'<sup>2</sup>

*Sacrifices :*

The Qur'ān announces the performance of sacrifices in the words, 'To every nation We (Allāh) appointed acts of devotion that they may mention the name of Allāh on what He has given them of the cattle. And as for the camels Allāh has made them of the signs of the religion for you, as there is much gain for you in them. Therefore you should invoke the name of Allāh on them as they stand in a row, then when they fall down, eat of them and feed the poor men who are contented and the

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1. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Maidah : 6.

2. Ibid., An-Nisā : 43.

beggar. Thus Allāh has made them subservient to you that you may be grateful. Though neither flesh nor blood of them reaches Allāh, but to Him is acceptable the guarding against evil on your part.<sup>1</sup>

We may conclude from the above pronouncement concerning the sacrifice that the Quranic sacrifice is intended like almsgiving, to help the poor and the needy. The sole attitude of the Quranic teachings is to promote universal brotherhood and so not to tolerate the poverty of other fellows. This is why the Qur'ān intends to help the needy variously by prescribing almsgiving, sacrifices and feeding the poor by way of expiation, etc. As the cattle were the main property of the Arabs, therefore men were commanded to sacrifice animals with a view to help the poor and the needy. This is the essence of the philosophy of the Islamic sacrifices.

### MISCELLANEOUS OBLIGATIONS

A few remaining obligations of the Qur'ān are being dealt with, hereunder, in the shape of plain commandments of the Creator :

To set right for orphans their affairs is good, and if you become co-partners with them, they are your brethren. Therefore, you treat them likewise.<sup>2</sup>

One should not make God, because of one's swearing by Him, an obstacle to one's doing good and guarding against evil as well as making peace between men. One should be sincere in one's oaths and should not break them.<sup>3</sup> And those who swear, that they would not go unto their wives, should wait for four months ; then, if they go back, it is pardonable by Allāh.<sup>4</sup>

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.1 The Holy Qur'ān Al-Hajj:34-37. Al-Baqarah:67-71  
Al-Kauthar : 2 and so on.

.2 Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 220.

.3. Ibid., 224, 225, An-Nahl : 91.

.4. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 226.

As regards the objects of oath, it is customary to swear by those that are beloved ones to man. God Himself confirms the objects of swearing through swearing Himself by the declining day,<sup>1</sup> fig and olive,<sup>2</sup> morning hours,<sup>3</sup> the sun and his brightness<sup>4</sup> and the stars.<sup>5</sup> Here one point of enough importance arises itself that God swears by various objects only once and also while swearing by sun and stars, neglects the swearing by moon which very often comes into the co-ordination of the triple—sun, moon and stars and appears to pay more and more attention towards stars in swearing throughout the scripture.<sup>6</sup> Thus, we may conclude from this divine attitude towards repeated preference to the stars in swearing that stars are the most beloved objects for swearing by.

Man is allowed to hunt when he is free from the obligations of the pilgrimage, and let not hatred of a people—because they hindered you from the sacred Mosque—incite you to exceed the limits; but help one another in goodness and piety and do not help one another in sin and transgression.<sup>7</sup>

Man should know that whatever he acquires as spoils of war, a fifth thereof should be spent for the cause of Allāh (e.g., erecting mosque etc.) and His apostle, and for a kinsman who is needy, orphans, the poor and the wayfares.<sup>8</sup>

Turn in penitence to your Creator.<sup>9</sup>

Do not call "Dead" to those who are slain in the way of Allāh.<sup>10</sup> They are martyrs in the true sense of the term.

Take off your shoes in the holy valley of Tuwā, while you are on pilgrimage.<sup>11</sup>

Do not take Messiah, son of Mary, for the Creator.<sup>12</sup>

1. The Holly Qur'an Al-'Asr : 1.
2. Ibid., At-Tīn : 1.
3. Ibid., Ad-Duhā : 1.
4. Ibid., Ash-Shams : 1.
5. Ibid., An-Najm : 1.
6. Ibid., A't-'Tāriq : 1. Al-Burūj : 1 etc.
7. Ibid., Al-Māidah : 2.
8. Ibid., Al-Anfāl : 41.
9. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 54, 58.
10. Ibid., 154.
11. Ibid., Ta Hā : 12.
12. Ibid., Al-Māidah : 17.

One must migrate for the cause of God.<sup>1</sup>

Do not say, as the Jews say, "Allāh's hands are fettered."<sup>2</sup>

Invent not a lie against Allāh through your disbelieving.<sup>3</sup>

Faint not, nor grieve, before an army ; you would surely be victorious if you are true believers.<sup>4</sup>

Man must be slain in the way of Allāh for his good provisions in the hereafter.<sup>5</sup>

Establish religion and be not divided.<sup>6</sup>

When you are in a battlefield and the time of prayer has approached, let only a party of you stand for prayer and the remaining take their arms. When they have performed their prostration, let them fall to the rear of the army, and let remaining party, which has not worshipped stand for prayer and let others take their precautions and their arms. But there is no blame on you to lay aside your arms, if rain impedes you or you are sick.<sup>7</sup>

When you have performed the act of worship, you should remember God, standing, sitting and reclining. And when you are in safety, you should observe proper prayer as prescribed.<sup>8</sup>

Strive not after corruption in the land.<sup>9</sup>

Grieve not over the wrong-doing folk.<sup>10</sup>

Be stern towards disbelievers, striving in the way of Allāh, and fearing not the blame of any blamer.<sup>11</sup>

Allāh further preaches 'mankind in the Qur'ān saying, 'Know that whoso repents after wrong-doing and amends himself, Allāh will relent towards him, as He is forgiving, Merciful.'<sup>12</sup>

Allāh says in the Qur'ān : 'Lo ! I am forgiving towards

1. The Holy Qurān An-Nisā : 100.

2. Ibid., Al-Mā'idah : 64.

3. Ibid., 103.

4. Ibid., Āl-i-'Imrān : 139.

5. Ibid., Muḥammad : 4.

6. Ibid., Ash-'Shūrā : 13.

7. Ibid., An-Nisā : 102.

8. Ibid., 103.

9. Ibid., Al-Mā'idah : 33.

10. Ibid., 26.

11. Ibid., 54.

12. Ibid., 39.



him, who repents, and believes and does good deeds and afterwards walks aright.<sup>1</sup>

Know that Allāh is the True, the High, the Great.<sup>2</sup>

Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth, He is the Light upon light, He guides unto His Light whom He wills. He speaks unto mankind in allegories, as He is the knower of all things.<sup>3</sup>

Be sure, that mankind were one community and Allāh sent unto them prophets as bearers of good tidings and as warners and revealed therewith the scripture with the truth that they might judge between parties concerning that wherein they differ.<sup>4</sup>

Know that there is not an animal on the earth, nor a flying creature flying on two wings, but they are people like you. Allāh has neglected nothing in the Qur'ān. All of them will return to Allāh in the end.<sup>5</sup>

There is no doubt that those who are Muslims or Jews or Christians or Sabaeans—whosoever believes in God in the Day of Discrimination, and does good—surely his reward is with his Lord and there shall no fear come upon him, neither shall he grieve.<sup>6</sup> And whosoever surrenders his purpose to God and walks aright, he will be awarded by his Lord.<sup>7</sup>

Man must be sure that Allāh sent messengers to mankind before Muḥammad and it was not given to any messenger that he should bring a portent except by Allāh's permission. For everything there is a time prescribed.<sup>8</sup>

Know that every scripture or revelation is recorded in the 'Umm-ul-Kitāb' (Mother of the scriptures) entrusted with Allāh.<sup>9</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān 'Tā-Hā : 82.

2. Ibid., Al-Ḥajj : 62.

3. Ibid., An-Nūr : 35.

4. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 213, Yūnus : 20,  
Ambiyā : 92, 93.

5. Ibid., Al-An'ām : 38.

6. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 62, Al-Māidah : 69.

7. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 112.

8. Ibid., Ar-Ra'd : 38, Al-An'ām : 48.

9. Ibid., An-Nabā : 29, Al-i-'Imrān : 7.

Know that for every announcement of God, there is a term and you will come to know it.<sup>1</sup>

Be sure that Allāh sent His messengers to every nation.<sup>2</sup>

Know that Allāh has never sent a messenger save with the language of His folk, so that He might make the message clear to them.<sup>3</sup>

Those who believe in the words of a messenger of Allāh believe in those of Allāh Himself; and one must be sure that Allāh does not task a soul beyond its scope.

Recite that which hath inspired in thee of the scripture, and establish worship. Lo ! worship preserves from lewdness and inequity, but verily remembrance of Allāh is more important. And Allāh knows what ye do. And argue not with the people of scriptures unless it be in a way that is better, save with each of them, as do wrong and say : 'We believe in that which has been revealed unto us and revealed unto you; our God and your God is one and unto Him we surrender.'<sup>5</sup>

Those who disbelieve in Allāh and His messengers and seek to make distinction between Allāh and His messengers and say : 'We believe in some and disbelieve in others and seek to adopt a way in between, 'such are the *kāfirūn-e-Ḥaqqā* (disbelievers of the truth). And for such disbelievers there is a shameful chastisement.<sup>6</sup>

Be careful that some of the messengers of God are mentioned in the Qur'ān and some of them are not mentioned.<sup>7</sup> Indian messengers of God like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa etc. are not mentioned in the Qur'ān. But they should be treated as mentioned in the Qur'ān.

Know that the Qur'ān confirms all sacred books that existed before itself.<sup>8</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-A'rāf : 37, Banī Isrā'īl : 58, Al-Hajj : 40.

'Tāhā : 52, An-Naml : 75 etc.

2. Ibid., Al-An'ām : 67.

3. Ibid., Yūnus : 48, Ar-Ra'd : 7, 26, Al-Malā'ikah : 24., Al-Hijr : 10, An-Nahl : 63.

4. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 285, 286.

5. The Meaning of the Glorious Kouran : as translated by M.M. Piekthal, p. 408.

6. The Holy Qur'ān An-Nisā : 150, 151.

7. Ibid., 164, Al-An'ām : 42, Al-Mu'min : 78.

8. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 91, 97.

One must learn that Muḥammad is the bringer of the Truth and the confirmer of those who brought Truth before him.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing new is said to Muḥammad which was not said to other messengers before him.<sup>2</sup>

Man must believe that Allāh has revealed the Qur'ān to Muḥammad with the Truth confirming whatever scriptures were before it. Therefore, mankind must judge between them by the revelations of Allāh, and they must not follow their desires away from the divine Truth.<sup>3</sup> And man must believe that Allāh has appointed a Divine Law and traced-out a way for every community. Had Allāh willed He could have made you one community. But He desires to judge mankind in their respective obligations. Therefore they should vie with one another in righteousness.<sup>4</sup>

The Qur'ān declares that, 'there should be no compulsion in religion.'<sup>5</sup> Had Allāh willed He could have made all mankind believing together. Would you, then, compel men to accept your religion until they are believers?<sup>6</sup>

Be mindful that Allāh does not forbid good treatment towards those (even though non-Muslims) who did not wage war against you on account of your religion, nor drove you out of your houses; but He forbids you that with those who go averse.<sup>7</sup>

Know that Muḥammad is but an apostle of Allāh like those who passed before him. Will it be that, when he dies or is slain, you will turn back from your religion?<sup>8</sup> (This very verse was recited by Caliph Abū Bakr to the people after the death of the prophet).

Be sure that Muḥammad is but a warner and a bearer of

1. The Holy Qur'ān Aṣ-Ṣaffāt : 37.

2. Ibid., Aṣ-Ṣaffāt : 37.

3. Ibid., Fuṣṣilat : 43.

4. Ibid., Al-Mā'idah : 48.

5. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 256.

6. Ibid., Yūnus : 100, Al-Mā'idah : 107-107.

7. Ibid., Al-Mumtaḥnah : 8, 9.

8. Ibid., Āl-i-'Imrān : 144, Banī Isrā'īl, 98.

good tidings unto believers,<sup>1</sup> and he is only a mortal like mankind.<sup>2</sup>

Know that those who fight in the way of Allāh, who sell the life of this world for the hereafter, and whoso fight in the way of Allāh, whether they be slain or emerge victorious, will be rewarded by his Lord.<sup>3</sup>

The Qur'ān says that when you go forth to fight in the way of Allāh, be careful to examine the situation, and if some disbeliever wants with you a peaceful agreement, then do not say to him: 'Thou art a disbeliever, therefore we would not want to make an agreement with you.'<sup>4</sup>

Be careful that the freedom from obligation is proclaimed from Allāh and His apostle towards those idolaters with whom you had made a treaty.<sup>5</sup>

Man must believe that none can kill any one except by Allāh's leave and you cannot be arrayed with the weapons, but at Allāh's will.<sup>6</sup>

Allāh commands that the captives of war should either be put to freedom as a gratitude to the enemy or should be freed receiving some compensation for each of them till the war is over.

While striving for the propagation of religion, one must remember that there is no compulsion in religion.<sup>7</sup>

Man should be sure that he cannot attain righteousness until he pays for it off that which he loves.<sup>8</sup>

Know that believers are not others than brethren. Let not a folk deride a folk who may be better than they are, nor let women deride women who may be better than they are, neither defame one another nor insult one another by nicknames. Man must shun much suspicion. Lo! suspicion is a crime; and spy not, neither backbite one another. And be guard that

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-A'rāf : 188.

2. Ibid., Al-Kahf : 111, Fusilat : 6, Sa'd : 71.

3. Ibid., An-Nisā : 74.

4. Ibid., 94, Al-Anfāl : 72.

5. Ibid., At-Taubah : 1, 7.

6. Ibid., Al-Anfāl : 17.

7. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 256.

8. Ibid., Āl-'i-'Imrān : 92.

Allāh has created you as males and females and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another.<sup>1</sup>

The gardens of paradise are for those who restrain their souls from lust and fear Allāh,<sup>2</sup> and know that repelling evil with good is better.<sup>3</sup>

Be sure that the life of this world is but comfort of illusion.<sup>4</sup>

Remember that Allāh does not change the condition of a folk until they first change that which is in their hearts.<sup>5</sup>

Be expectant and know that hardship is followed by ease.<sup>6</sup>

According to a tradition of the prophet, Allāh says that whatever reward is prepared for the righteous it is concerned neither with the visibility of the eyes, nor with the audibility of the ears, nor with any feeling, experience or imagination of human heart or mind.<sup>7</sup>

In the foregoing chapters the human duties laid down in the Gītā and the Qur'ān were compared and contrasted. This chapter is intended to bring into light as many similarities as can be possible between both the scriptures. Many a points which were held as dissimilar till yesterday, have, today, been proved as similar on the authority of the Gītā and the Qur'ān and other sources.

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1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Hujurāt : 10-13.

2. Ibid., Al-Hajar : 45, An-Nabā : 40.

3. Ibid., Al-Mu'minīn : 96.

4. Ibid., Āi-'i-'Imran : 185.

5. Ibid., Ar-Ra'd : 11.

6. Ibid., Al-Inshirah : 5.

7. Gītā Aura Qur'ān by Pt. Sundar Lal, Hindustani Culture Society, Allahabad, Ed. 1946, p. 267.

## Gitaic and Quranic Duties: Compared

Having minutely gone through the Gītā and the Qur'ān, one may easily realize that both these sacred volumes are so similar in their intrinsic nature that they stand as a neck-vein to each other. Truly speaking, a true believer of 7th and 8th verses of the 4th chapter of the Gītā as well as the 48th verse of the Quranic Sūrah 'Al-Mā'idah' will find no point of dissimilarity between these holy volumes. If there is, yet, any point of dissimilarity between these, it would be on account of their time, place and circumstance in which they were originally preached. Both of these scriptures intend to establish religion on a firm-footing for the protection of the virtuous, for the destruction of the evil-doers and for restoring order and peace in the society. The fundamental principles of religion and ethics are quite the same, in all respects in both except a few matters in which merely the ways are different. This difference is just like that of two different doctors who may cure a patient with the application of two different remedies or medicines in their own ways from the same disease. Or, this difference may be just like that of two real brothers who may

seem to be unreal on account of their being born under the compulsion of time, place and circumstance or due to some other physical 'pleasure or pain' of the parents.

The points of similarity between the Gītā and the Qur'ān may, in divine affairs, be observed as under :—

### DIVINE AFFAIRS

#### *Statements of the Gītā and the Qur'ān about themselves :*

In order to gather the points of similarity between these two holy volumes, we may start our attempt from the very titles of both.

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both are so similar to each other that the very titles of them mean the same—the recital. Having installed the Gītā in the Mahābhārata, Śrī Vedavyāsa says in the end about it :

'The Gītā should be carefully sung, that is, after reciting the text, its meaning and message should be gathered and held in the mind. It has emanated from the lotus-like lips of Bhagavān Viṣṇu Himself from whose navel sprung the lotus. What is the use of studying other elaborate scriptures.'<sup>1</sup> In the same way, having received divine command for the honour and dignity of the Qur'ān, prophet Muḥammad declares, 'The Qur'ān is an insight from your Lord and a guidance and a mercy for believers. Therefore, when the Qur'ān is recited, one must give ear to it and pay heed so that one may attain divine mercy.'<sup>2</sup>

As regards the promulgation of the Gītā among human-kind, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa proclaims, 'This sacred teaching of the Gītā should never be imparted to a man without austerity, nor to one without devotion, nor even to one who is unwilling to hear, nor again to one who finds faults with Me.'<sup>3</sup> Emphasising on the wide publicity of the Gītā, the Blessed Lord further declares that one who, having shown the highest love to Me, shall impart this most sacred teaching of Mine to My devotees,

1. Bhagavad Gītā : by Goyandka, J.D. 1954, p. 7.

2. The Holy Qur'ān : Al-A'rāf 203, 204,  
Al-i-Imrān : 79, An-Nisā : 82 and so on.

3. Bhagavad Gītā 18: 67.

shall attain Me, there is no doubt about it. Among men there is none who does Me a more loving service than one who does so, nor shall any one be dearer to Me than him on this earth. And whoso shall study this sacred dialogue of ours, by him shall I be worshipped through the sacrifice of knowledge. Such is My view. As though to multiply the readers and followers of the Gītā, the Lord further declares, 'A man who listens to it full of faith and in an uncarping spirit freed from evil, even he shall reach the happy worlds of the virtuous.'<sup>1</sup> With a view to publishing the message of the Qur'ān widely and to make it applicable in all matters of life, Allāh pronounces in the Qur'an that judging authorities should pass their judgments in accordance with the prescribed rules in the Qur'ān.<sup>2</sup> Just like the Gītā, to multiply the true followers of the Qur'ān, God forcefully declares, 'Will they, then, not meditate on the Qur'ān; or are there locks on their hearts? Certainly, those who turn back after the guidance has been manifested unto them, Satan has seduced them and God gives them destruction.'<sup>3</sup> As the Quranic verses are mostly repeated in all the five-time prayers of Islām, therefore, for the recital of the Quranic verses more and more Allāh proclaims in the Qur'ān, 'Man must observe prayer at the going down of the sun until the dark of night (both the prayers—Samā and 'Ishā). Lo! the recital of the Qur'ān at dawn is ever witnessed.'<sup>4</sup> Further, announcing the greatness of the Qur'ān, Allāh, states, 'We have displayed for mankind in this Qur'ān all kinds of similitudes. If mankind and the Jinn should assemble together to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they could never produce the like thereof.'<sup>5</sup>

Further, the preachers of the two scriptures, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa and prophet Muḥammad, both practised polygamy. They did not write the scriptures with their own hands, but retained and confirmed the most prevalent religious ideologies of their past. Interestingly enough, both of them were originally cattle-grazers.

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1. Bhagavadgītā 18 : 68-71.

2. The Holy Qur'ān, Al-Mā'idah : 45, and Al-An'ām : 51, 70.

3. Ibid., Muḥammad : 24, 25 and Banī-Isrā'īl : 78.

4. Ibid Banī-Isrā'īl : 78.

5. Ibid., 88, 89.



As the second chapter of the Gītā is a summary or essence of the whole theme thereof, in the same way the second Sūrah of the Qur'ān is an abstract of the whole theme thereof.

One may be doubtful regarding total similarity between the Gītā and the Qur'ān, but then the former is more than hundred times shorter than the latter in bulk. Before taking in hand a comparative study of these two sacred books, one must carefully look into the 'time, place and circumstance' in which they were originally preached. As the Gītā was originally preached in India, at a time when the people were far advanced in grasping the essence and true meaning even of a briefly suggestive piece of literature, for India was enriched with vast literature in those days. Therefore, the Gītā was preached in brief, leaving its meaning on the consultation of the immense literature of the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the Brāhmaṇa-literature, the Rāmāyaṇa and other sacred ones prevailing at that time. On the contrary, the Qur'ān was, originally preached in Arabia, where barbarism was prevailing everywhere at that time. The people were so backward that they were not capable of understanding the meaning of a simple phrase, nor was there any other sacred code or scripture free from abrogation for the consultation of any commandment given in brief. Had the Qur'ān, like the Gītā, been preached in short, no one save a few could understand the true import thereof. This is why a thing which is preached by the Qur'ān expressly, is understood to be preached by the Gītā implicitly.

The similarity between the Gītā and Qur'ān extends on a larger scale, as most of the verses of the Qur'ān were preached under similar circumstances in which the Gītā was preached. For instance, Kauravas being in the state of a disbelief were oppressing the land tyrannically. The virtuous and upright people were much tormented in a cruel bondage. They were bitter opponents of Pāṇḍavas—their cousins who were pious and charitable. They were torturing them through aggression in various ways. Similarly, the Qurayshites of Mecca were bitterly against the prophet and the believers and were oppressing them through all sorts of torments and tyrannies to the extent of making them flee from their homeland. When the prophet with his faithful companions migrated to

Madinah for safety from the aggression of the Qurayshites, they continued their tyrannical attitude towards the prophet and believers by attacking them again and again with huge armies. Like the first chapter of the Gītā, in which a picture of the armies of Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas is drawn, many of the verses of the Qur'ān are also revealed to a similar effect.<sup>1</sup>

The Gītā names Kauravas as 'ātatāyinaḥ' or desperadoes who should at once be killed without the slightest thinking whether they be Gurus or elders or kinsmen howso respectable. In the same way the Qurayshites of Mecca were repeatedly called 'kāfirūn' or non-believers by the Qur'ān, justifying their killing by waging war against them.

Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa repeatedly commands Arjuna to fight against the desperadoes. In the same way, the Qur'ān enjoins war against disbelievers saying, "Why do you not fight for the children who are crying: 'Our Lord! Bring us from out of this town (Mecca) of which the people are oppressors! Oh, give us from Thy presence some defender!'"<sup>2</sup> Those who believe fight for the cause of Allāh, and those who disbelieve fight for the cause of idols. So, fight the favourite servants of the devil, certainly the devil's strategy is ever weak.<sup>3</sup> The attitude of the Kauravas towards the Pāṇḍavas was as tyrannical as that of the Qurayshites of Mecca towards Muslims; therefore, the Gītā and the Qur'ān both justify war against them. Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa's whole Discourse of the Gītā is based on convincing Arjuna to be ready for fight against wrong-doers. He, for this very purpose, adopts three methods, Sāṅkhyayoga or the Yoga of knowledge, Karmayoga or the Yoga of action, and Bhaktiyoga or the Yoga of devotion. Similarly, the Qur'ān justifies war against disbelievers in plain commandments: Warfare is ordained for them against those who have driven them from their houses unjustly only because they said: 'Our Lord is Allāh.' Had it not been for Allāh's repelling some men by means of others would certainly have pulled down cloisters,

1. Bhagvadgītā 1 : 1-23.

2. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Hajj : 40, 49, An-Nisā : 74, etc.

3. Ibid., An-Nisā : 75, 76.

churches, oratories and mosques wherein the name of Allāh is often mentioned.<sup>1</sup>

Just as Arjuna, according to the Gītā, having seen stationed there in both the armies, his relatives, elders, teachers and well-wishers was overwhelmed with infatuation and gave expression to his faint-heartedness, tenderness and grief; in the same way some believers, according to the Qur'ān, even on receiving the divine command to wage war against the oppressors, seem to hesitate concerning the actual fighting. For instance, the Qur'ān says, 'Holy War is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you, but it may happen that you hate a thing which may be good for you, and it may happen that you love a thing which may be bad for you. God knows better, you do not'.<sup>2</sup>

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both regard war for the right cause to be Holy or religious. The Gītā holds the words, 'Dharma-Kṣetra', 'Svarga-Dvāra', 'Dharma-Yuddha' or 'Dharma-Saṅgrāma'; and the Qur'ān the phrases 'Jihādān Fī Ṣābilillāh' and 'Qitāl Fī Ṣābilillāh'.<sup>3</sup> After a minute observation, one can easily realise that the Holy War is the noble theme of the Gītā and the Qur'ān both. As the Holy War is justified by the Blessed Lord throughout the Gītā, in the same way it is justified by the Qur'ān also in many matters, such as, 'If two parties of believers fall to fighting, then it is the duty of the other believers to make peace between them. And, if one party does wrong to the other, then other believers should fight against the wrong-doing party, till it returns to the ordinance of Allāh. Then if it returns they should make peace between them on justly and act equitably as Allāh loves the equitable. Believers are not other than brethren. Therefore, make peace between your brethren and observe your duty to Allāh that haply you may obtain mercy.'<sup>4</sup>

In similar manner, the Gītā and the Qur'ān both justify war for the defence of all the righteous causes.

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 216, Al-Hajj : 40.

2. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 216.

3. Bhagvadgītā, 1 : 1 : 31-33 etc.

The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 216 etc.

4. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Hujurat 9, 10.

The basic trend of both the scriptures is to attain salvation through performance of proper actions as prescribed in the scriptures. According to both these volumes, this world is but a place for preparing oneself for the attainment of Supreme Bliss by one's deeds.

Now, I shall concern myself with attempting to bring out similarities in the fundamental principles of both the scriptures. The conception of God, being the prime pillar of almost all the major religions of the world, claims discussion in the first place.

### *Concept of God :*

The conception of God is almost the same in both the scriptures—the Gītā and the Qur'ān. Most of God's attributory names are also the same in both, such as, Sustainer, Creator, Destroyer, Omniscient, Eternal, Perceiver, Incomparable, True, Provider, Almighty, All-Powerful and so on.

According to the Gītā, God is the Light of lights, as well as the Light of the moon and the sun.<sup>1</sup> Maintaining the same spirit, the Qur'ān says about God that He is the Light of the heavens and the earth. He is Light of lights.<sup>2</sup>

The Supreme Lord says in the Gītā that he dispels darkness born of ignorance by the shining light of wisdom.<sup>3</sup> And the Qur'ān says on this point that Allāh guides unto His light whom He wills.<sup>4</sup> Allāh is the protecting Friend of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into light.<sup>5</sup>

In the same way, prayers have been offered to God somewhere in the Upaniṣads, in the words, 'Take us to unlight out of darkness.'<sup>6</sup> There is a famous prayer of the prophet Muḥammad, 'O God ! give me a light.'<sup>7</sup>

1. Bhagvadgītā—13 : 11-16, 17 : 23.

2. Notes on Muhammadanism by Hughes, T.P. 1877, pp. 249-253.

3. Bhagvadgītā—10, 11.

4. The Holy Qur'ān An-Nūr : 35.

5. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 257, Al-Mā'idah : 16.

6. Tamaso mā iyotir gamaya.

7. Gītā Aur Qur'ān by Pt. Sundarlal, 1946, p. 21.

The Gītā says that God's face is on all sides.<sup>1</sup> And the Qur'ān says on this point, unto Allāh belongs the east and the west, and whithersoever you turn there is Allāh's countenance.<sup>2</sup>

In the Gītā God is described as 'sarva-loka-maheśvaraḥ' or 'the Supreme Lord of all the worlds'. In these very words He is mentioned in the Qur'ān also.<sup>3</sup>

According to the Gītā, God is *sat* or Truth out of His three fold designation; in like manner He is described in the Qur'ān also in words like Allāhu-Wal-Ḥaqqu', i.e. God is Truth.<sup>4</sup>

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both say about God that He is without birth and without beginning, and the Supreme Lord of the universe, and that there is none like unto Him.<sup>5</sup> The Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad of the Yajurveda holds that there is neither equal unto God nor superior to Him.

The Gītā, along with the Īsopaniṣad states that all this is pervaded by God in His unmanifest aspect. The Qur'ān also says the same thing on this point, as 'Innahu Bikulli Shai-im-Muḥīt,' viz., 'Is He not surrounding all things?'<sup>6</sup>

According to Gītā, God is the Self seated in the hearts of all beings, therefore He is the beginning, the middle and also the end of all beings, and what the Īsopaniṣad states on this point that He is the walker and the non-walker, He is far and near, and He is inside and outside of all beings. And the Qur'ān to this effect holds that He is the first and the last and the outward and the inward of all and He is the Knower of all things.<sup>7</sup>

The Gītā proclaims that in this world there are two kinds of entities—perishable and imperishable. The bodies of all beings are perishable and the jīvātman, that is, God Himself

1. Bhagvadgītā : 10 : 33, 11 : 16.

2. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 115.

3. Bhagavadgītā-5 : 29, The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Fatiḥah : 1.

4. Ibid., 17 : 23. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Hajj : 62.

5. Ibid., 10 : 3, 11 : 43.

The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Tauḥīd : 1-4.

6. Bhagvadgītā-9 : 4; The Holy Qur'ān-Hā Mīm : 54.

7. Ibid., 10-20; The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Ḥadīd : 3.

(as soul is a fragment of God),<sup>1</sup> is said to be imperishable. The Qur'ān also enjoins the same things in its own way stating, 'Everyone thereon (on the earth) will pass away, there remains but the countenance of thy Lord of Might and Glory.'<sup>2</sup>

Describing the Glories of God, the Gītā says that if there be brilliance of a thousand suns bursting forth all at once in the heavens, even that would hardly approach the splendour of the mighty Lord. And the Qur'ān describes the Divine Glories in its own way revealing, 'The Beneficent Lord has made known the Qur'ān, He has created man and taught him utterance. The sun and the moon are made punctual and the stars and the trees adore. He has uplifted the sky.'<sup>3</sup>

The Gītā recognizes God as 'Unthinkable' and 'Higher than the intellect'. And the Qur'ān says to this effect that (Human) vision cannot comprehend Him, but He comprehends all visions.<sup>4</sup>

The Gītā declares that God dwells in the hearts of all beings. But He specially dwells in the hearts of the devotees, as their protecting friend, as it is stated by Lord Śrīkrṣṇa Himself, "I am equally present in all beings, there is none hateful or dear to Me. Those, however, who whole-heartedly worship Me, abide in Me, and I also stand revealed in them." In order to shower My Grace on them (devotees) I, dwelling in their hearts, dispel the darkness born of ignorance by the shining light of wisdom.<sup>5</sup> According to a tradition of the prophet Muḥammad, human heart is the dwelling place of Raḥmān (God). The Qur'ān also says the same thing in

1. Bhagvadgītā, 1:7.

2. Ibid., 15:16, The Holy Qur'ān Ar-Raḥmān: 26, 27.

3. Bhagvadgītā-11:12, 10:12-41, Ch. XI Full,

The Holy Qur'ān Ar-Raḥmān: 1-7, 8-78, An-Nūr, 41-45,

Al-An'ām: 102-104, Al-Baqarah: 255, 286, Qāf:16, Ash-Shūrā: 29

Az-Zumar: 53, Yūsuf: 92, An-Naḥl:119, An-Nisā: 110-112,

Al-Māidah: 39, 'Tā-Hā: 82, Ar-R'ad: 6, Al-Burūj:14, 15, Al-Hajj

62, An-Nūr: 35, Al-Baqarah: 115, Luqmān: 18, Al-A'rāf: 205,

Hūd: 115, etc.

4. Bhagvadgītā 2:25 and 3:43; The Holy Qur'ān-Al-An'ām: 104.

5. Bhagvadgītā-18:61, 10:11, 9:29,

its own way, stating, 'Surely I (God) am nigh and answer the prayer of the suppliant, when he cries unto Me (God). So let them hear My call and let them trust in Me, so that they may be led aright.<sup>1</sup> We (God) are nearer to man than his jugular vein.'<sup>2</sup>

In order to describe the divine Glories the Blessed Lord proclaims in the Gītā that I am the sapidity in water and the light of the noon and the sun. I am the sacred syllable 'Om' in all the Vedas, sound in ether and manliness in men, I am pure odour in the earth and pure effulgence in the flame, I am life in all beings and austerity in ascetics.<sup>3</sup>

The Mathnavī of Maulānā Rūm, which is considered to be the Qur'ān in the Persian language contains a lot to this effect. For instance, 'I (God) am the sweetness of the sweets and the oil or essence of the almonds.'<sup>4</sup> Again, the Gītā says on this point that the sacrifice in which the ladle (a big spoon with which the oblation is poured into the Yajña fire etc.) is Brahman, the oblation itself is Brahman, even so the act of pouring the same into the fire, which is again Brahman, by the sacrificer, who is himself Brahman, certainly the goal to be reached by him, who is absorbed in such sacrifice as Brahman, is also Brahman or Absolute.<sup>5</sup> The same idea has been imparted by a Muslim Ṣūfī saint in the words, 'He, Himself is the Cup, Himself is the Potter, Himself is the Clay of the Cup and Himself is the Drinker from that Cup. He himself purchases the Cup and Himself goes away after breaking that Cup.'<sup>6</sup> It has become quite clear from the above discussion that the conception of God according to both these scriptures is absolutely the same.

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 186,

2. Ibid., Qāf : 16.

3. Bhagavadgītā 7 : 8, 9, 10 : 13.

4. Man Qandhā Rā Lazzatam Bādāmhā Rā Raughanam.

5. Bhagavadgītā 4 : 24.

6. Khud Kūzāo Khud Kuzāgaro Khud Gile Kūzā Khud Rind Subūkash  
Khud Barsare Ankūzā Kharīdar Barāmad Bašikasto Ravān Shud.

## CONCEPT OF SOUL

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both conceive the soul in the similar manner, in accordance with their own ways of conceiving as follows :

Soul, according to the Gītā is a fragment of God, deriving its motive power resting in mind and five senses from Nature by God's leave.<sup>1</sup> Therefore all attributes of God are equally applied to soul also. For example, showing the imperishability of soul, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa preaches, 'In fact, there was never a time, when I was not, or you or these kings were not nor will it happen that hereafter we shall all cease to be.'<sup>2</sup> The soul is imperishable, indefinable, eternal, it is not capable of killing anyone, nor is killed by anyone. It is never born, nor dies, nor does it exist on coming into being. For it is unborn, eternal, everlasting and primeval, even though the body is slain, the soul is not. Further, this soul cannot be cut, burnt and made wet. It is omnipresent, immovable, constant, unmanifest, unthinkable, immutable as well as it resides in the bodies of all beings.<sup>3</sup>

What Qur'ān opines concerning the soul is, 'This soul is by command of God, Who vouchsafed to mankind a little knowledge about it.'<sup>4</sup> It means, the soul is, as the Gītā says, unthinkable. Supporting the oneness of soul, God clarifies in the Qur'ān revealing, 'Be careful of your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and from it Who created its mate that is, spouse, and from them twain spread a multitude of male and female.'<sup>5</sup> The Qur'ān says that 'all are Allāh's and unto Him they are returning.'<sup>6</sup> Man without soul is but nothing. Therefore man is nothing, but soul therein'. Thus, the phrase, 'souls are Allāh and unto Him they are returning' may properly be asserted instead of 'all are Allāh's and unto Him they are returning'. By this interpretation, it has, automatically, been

1. Bhagavadgītā-15 : 7, 5 : 14

2. Ibid, 2 : 12-27

3. Ibid., 2 : 18-29

4. The Holy Qur'ān-Banī Isrā'īl : 85

5. Ibid., An Nisā : 1, Al-A'raf : 189.

6. Ibid., Al Baqarah : 156.



proved that the souls in different bodies are, as the Gītā says, the fragments of God. Therefore, all attributory names of God are equally applicable to the soul also. God is Imperishable so is the soul. But one may doubt on the genuineness of the translation by M.M.Pickthall of the 185th verse of the Quranic Sūrah 'Āl-i-'Imrān' as, 'Every soul will taste of death.'<sup>1</sup> The Quranic words for soul are 'Rūḥ' and 'Nafs' both, but here in the above verse Mr. Pickthall has translated the word 'Nafs' as soul, instead of 'being' which would be more proper.<sup>2</sup> Though, the word 'Nafs' means soul also. But at this place it appears improper. It strikes a little when the Qur'ān speaks, 'No soul can ever die, except by God's permission and at a term appointed.'<sup>3</sup> The true spirit of the Quranic conception of soul rests in the first half of the above phrase, 'No soul can ever die', and the later half thereof, 'except by Allāh's leave and at a term appointed,' has, merely, been added to protect the discretionary or veto powers of God, the Almighty, the Able to do all things.<sup>4</sup>

The Gītā also says the same thing on this point impliedly. Can the Gītā deny that soul may be put to perishability by God's permission, had He willed so? Nay, it cannot.

Thus it has, inevitably, been proved from the above discussion that the conception of soul, according to both these scriptures, is also the same.

### RELATION BETWEEN THE CREATOR AND THE CREATED

As regards the relation between the Creator and the created, the Gītā proclaims, 'He who sees God, the universal self, present in all beings and sees all beings existing in Him, He is never out of sight of him, nor is he out of sight of Him. He who established in unity, worships God as residing in all beings as their very self, that Yogin, though, engaged in all sorts of activities, dwells in Him.'<sup>5</sup> The famous Muslim Šūfī saint

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Ambiyā : 35.

2. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 48, 223, 265, 286, Āl-i-'Imrān : 185.

3. Ibid., Āl-i-'Imrān : 145.

4. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 20.

5. Bhagavadgītā 6 : 30, 31.

Muḥiuddīn Ibn 'Arabī opines on this point, 'Behold not God apart from His creation, nor the creation a form of any other else than Him.'<sup>1</sup> The Qur'ān also says the same thing in its own way, 'All are Allāh's and unto Him they are returning.'<sup>2</sup>

The doctrines of 'Dvaita' and 'Advaita', and Waḥdat-ush-Shūd and 'Waḥdat-ul-Wujūd' have been derived respectively from the above mentioned basis of the Gītā and the Qur'ān. The doctrine of Dvaita of Indian philosophy is the same as 'Waḥdat-ush-Shuhūd' of Muslim philosophy and that of Advaita is the same as 'Waḥdat-ul-Wujūd', respectively. The followers of Advaita or Waḥdat-ul-Wujūd believe that whatever there exists on earth is all God in His universal or Virāṭ-form, and whatever is seen other else is nothing but mere illusion or Māyā. On this very basis, some Indian philosophers say, 'Aham Brāhma' (I am God) or 'Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma' (All that is God alone). In the same manner, some Muslim Ṣūfīs like Maṣṣūr and others claimed themselves to be God saying, 'Anal Ḥaqq' (I am God) or 'Hamā Ost' (All that is God alone).

On the other hand, the followers of Dvaita or Waḥdat-ush-Shuhūd believe that the existence of Creator is quite separate from that of the created things. The Muslim preceptors express this notion in the words, 'Hamā as Ost' that is, 'Every thing is from God.' It is interesting to note that the believers of the doctrines of Dvaita or Waḥdat-ush-Shuhūd and Advaita or Waḥdat-ul-Wujūd both try to support their views on the authority of the Gītā and the Qur'ān respectively. Thus, it may also be concluded from this statement that a thing may be proved at an averse direction by a talented person. It depends wholly on the capacity of understanding, guts and calibre of a man.

### WAYS OF DIVINE GUIDANCE

Lord Śrīkrṣṇa provides a solid example of Advaitavāda or Non-Dualism by claiming Himself to be God throughout His

1. Falā Tanzur Ilal I ḥaqqi Fat Arih Anil Khalqi Wala Tanzur Ilalkhalqi Watasohu Siwal Ḥaqqi.
2. The Holy Qur'ān, Al-Baqarah : 156.

Holy Discourse of the Gītā. In fact, He was not God Himself, as is generally conceived. He claims Himself to be so on account of His being fully devoted to the Brāhmī state through His belief in the Advaita theory of Indian philosophy or being totally Brāhmamaya or absorbed in Brahma. It was not Śrīkṛṣṇa alone who claimed himself to be God, but, many Muslim saints like Maṣṣūr, Sarmad, Shamsatabrīz etc. also being absolutely surrendered to their Maker through their firm faith in the theory of 'Waḥdat-ul-Wujūd' or 'Advaitavāda' claimed themselves to be God by uttering, 'Anal Ḥaqqā. With this very frame of mind, the prophet Muḥammad also, while preaching the Qur'ān himself, remains a non-preacher and transfers all the credit of the Quranic preachings to Allāh or he was so deeply sunk in Allāh that he could not be separated from Him. Thus like Kṛṣṇa Muḥammad also believed in the philosophy of Waḥdat-ul-Wujūd, while preaching the Qur'ān. As the prophet Muḥammad was initially preaching the most ignorant folk of Arabia, he also made it clear that he was not God himself but a mortal like all beings. But Śrīkṛṣṇa did never declare in the Gītā that he was a mortal like all beings. This He did under the pressure of time, place and circumstances. It is, undoubtedly, admissible that Kṛṣṇa was not God himself, but he was a high-souled person, a holy man, a sagely authority, a divine guide, a God's representative or a God's apostle like Muḥammad. But one may doubt on the statement that while Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa Himself claims to be an incarnation of God,<sup>1</sup> then how can He be merely an apostle of God or a holy man? In order to answer to this quest I may say that it is not Śrīkṛṣṇa alone who is an incarnation of God but everything on earth whether animate or inanimate is an incarnation of God in His Virāṭ or Universal form.<sup>2</sup> In this way, how can, Muḥammad, be aloof from the incarnationship of God? As every soul is a fragment of God, therefore, Kṛṣṇa and Muḥammad, both being fragments of God, are surely, the incarnations of God, like all things of the creation. Now the question arises, while everything on earth whether animate or

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1. Bhagavadgītā 4 : 7, 8.

2. Ibid., 7 : 8-11, 10 : 20-41, 11 : 12-43, 9 : 16-19 etc.

or inanimate is an incarnation of God, then why Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha etc. are specially designated as the incarnations of God? The answer hereto runs as, 'It is because of their being greatly popularized as the divine preachers in the social environments of their times in which they flourished.' The admittance of the public opinion does not recognize any relevancy or irrelevancy in its opining. Therefore, though all are incarnations of God, but the Indian generality recognizes only the ten to be so. The Gītā itself recognizes the incarnationship of Śrīkṛṣṇa. In this case, it appears to be following the opinion of the generality for their facility in understanding the divine discourse. It was not a rare conception of recognition of an opinion by the generality. Even today, though all beings are of God, but Muslim community very often regards a virtuous man as a 'Banda-e-Khudā' or 'Mard-e-Khudā', i.e. 'Man of God'! Can it be concluded from this notion that others are not men of God? Thus, it has, spontaneously, been proved that it was not only Śrīkṛṣṇa who was an incarnation of God but everything on earth, being a part of God, is an incarnation of God. Śrīkṛṣṇa and others are specially designated as the incarnations of God by virtue of their mere popularity as spiritual guides among the generality of the time and place. It seems improper that God Himself comes down to a certain piece of land on earth for the reformation of its misleading folk leaving others elsewhere on other planets to run the risk of their going astray in His absence. Truly speaking, He does not come personally, but He sends His apostles endowed with His own spark and spiritual calibre from time to time when there is a decay of righteousness and the unrighteousness is in the ascendant, for the safeguard of the virtuous, for the destruction of the wrong-doers and for establishing the right path on a firm footing.<sup>1</sup>

What the Qur'ān opines on this point is, 'For every nation there is a messenger.'<sup>2</sup> Allāh further proclaims in the Qur'ān that We never sent a messenger except with the language of his own folk, so that he may make the message clear to them.

1. Bhagvadgītā 4 : 7,8.

2. The Holy Qur'ān Yūnus : 48 and Ar-Ra'd : 7 A'sh-Shūrā : 7, Az-Zukhruf : 3, Ad-Dukhān : 58, Fusilat : 44.

Allāh sends whom He will astray, and guides whom He will.<sup>1</sup> Allāh sent His messengers to mankind before Muḥammad also, and it was not given to any messenger that he should bring a portent except by God's permission. For every thing there is a time prescribed. It is Allāh Who effaces what He wills and establishes what He wills, and with Him is the source of ordinance.<sup>2</sup> For every announcement (of God) there is a term.<sup>3</sup> God, further advises mankind by revealing, 'O Children of Ādam! If messengers of your own come to you who narrate unto you My revelations, then whosoever refrains from evil and amends, there shall no fear come upon them; neither shall they grieve.'<sup>4</sup> Allāh, verily sent messengers before Muḥammad. Allāh says in the Qur'ān, 'We have sent thee with the Truth, as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner and there is not even a single nation wherein divine warners did not pass through.'<sup>5</sup> And verily some of the messengers of God are mentioned in the Qur'ān and some of them are not mentioned.<sup>6</sup> For example Indian messengers of God are not mentioned in the Qur'ān. How could it be possible to mention all the 2,24,000 messengers of God in a scripture like the Qur'ān?

### WORLDLY AFFAIRS

#### *Communal Feelings Forbidden :*

With a view to instigate mankind to be aloof from communal feelings, the Blessed Lord proclaims in the Gītā, 'Howsoever men approach Me, even so do I seek them, for all men follow My path from all sides.'<sup>7</sup> I am equally present in all beings, there is none hateful or dear to Me. Those, however, who whole-heartedly worship Me, abide in Me and I also stand revealed in them.<sup>8</sup> Even if the vilest sinner worships Me with

1. The Holy Qur'ān Ibrāhim : 4, Al Aḥqāf : 12, 13.

2. Ibid., Ar-Rā'd : 38, 39 and An-Naḥl : 63.

3. Ibid., Al-An'am : 67.

4. Ibid., Al-A'raf : 35, Al-An'am : 48.

5. Ibid., Al-Ḥijr : 10, Al-Malā'ikah : 24, Ar-Rā'd : 27.

6. Ibid.: An-Nisā : 164.

7. Bhagavadgītā : 4 : 11.

8. Ibid : 9-29.

exclusive devotion, he should be considered a saint, as he has rightly resolved. He forthwith becomes virtuous and secures lasting peace. Be sure, Arjuna, My devotee never falls. Woman-folk, Vaiśyas, Śūdras, and even those who are born of the womb of sin, such as pariah etc. taking refuge in Me, they too attain the highest goal.<sup>1</sup> Even those devotees who endowed with faith worship other gods with some interested motives, they too worship Me alone, though not in accordance with the prescribed rules, that is, without proper knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

It is quite clear from this statement of the Gītā that all persons belonging to any religion or sect or caste or creed, such as Hindus and Muslims along with all their sects, Christians, Jews, Bauddhas, Sikhs, Parsis and whosoever else can all attain the supreme goal, if they properly carry on their duties allotted to them in the world, side by side with devoting their hearts in the remembrance of the Supreme Lord, as true believers in Him.

The Qur'ān also enjoins the same thing on this point in its own way. Addressing Muḥammad Allāh says, 'We have revealed unto thee the Scripture with the Truth, confirming whatever scripture was before it (the Qur'ān) and a watcher over it. Therefore, mankind should judge between them by that which God has revealed and should not follow their desires away from the truth which has come unto thee. For each We have appointed a divine law and a traced-out way. Had God willed He could have made you one community. But He desires you to try by that which He has given you (of the scripture). Therefore, all should vie one with another in good works. All of you will return unto Allāh, then He will tell you of that wherein you differ. And each one has a goal towards which he turns. Wheresoever you may be, Allāh will bring you all together. Lo ! Allāh is able to do all things.'<sup>3</sup> God further proclaims in the Qur'ān, 'Mankind were one community, and Allāh sent unto them apostles as bearers of good

1. Bhagavadgītā, 9 : 30-32.

2. Ibid., 9-23, 4 : 11-13

3. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Māidah : 48, Al-Baqarah : 20, 29, 148.

tidings and as warners and revealed therewith the scripture with the truth that it might judge between mankind regarding that wherein they differ.<sup>1</sup> Addressing all mankind God commands in the Qur'ān, 'Lo ! This your religion is one religion, and I am your Lord, so worship Me, and they have broken their religion into fragments among them by being divided into various castes and sects. Though all are returning unto Us.<sup>2</sup> There is not an animal on the earth, nor a flying creature, flying on two wings, but they are 'Ummahs' or 'Peoples' like unto you. We have neglected nothing in the Qur'ān. Unto their Lord all will be gathered.'<sup>3</sup> As though to put communal feelings to an end the Qur'ān emphasisingly declares, 'Lo ! those who believe or are Muslims or Jews or Christians or Sabaeans—whosoever believes in God and the Last Day and does meritorious deeds—surely their reward is with their Lord and there shall no fear to come upon them, neither shall they grieve !'<sup>4</sup>

Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa throughout His speech of the Gītā inspires mankind to perform their actions as a duty only for duty's sake, dedicating all actions to God, being totally indifferent in the pairs of opposites and relinquishing the fruit of all actions.<sup>5</sup> Having not entered into the details of all matters, Lord 'Śrī-kṛṣṇa cuts the very root of all communal feelings by his discourse full of deepest moral precepts as cited above in brief. Therefore there remains no room for any communal feeling after meditating on such a divine lecture, as depicted in the Gītā.

The Qur'ān further commands, 'Argue not with the people of scripture (Jews, Christian, Hindūs, Bauddhas, Parss, etc.), who have their own sacred books, unless it be in a way that is better and sweet. Leave those who do wrong and say : 'We are believers of our own scriptures as well as of your scriptures. Our God and your God is One and we and you surrender to

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1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 213.

2. Ibid., Al-Ambiyā : 92, 93.

3. Ibid.,—Al-An'am : 38.

4. Ibid.,—Al-Baqarah : 62, Al-Māidah : 69. Al-Baqarah : 11, 112.

5. Bhagavadgītā : 2 : 46, 47, 56, 57, 59-64. 3 : 30, 34, 35, 18 : 57, 58, 66 etc.

Him.<sup>1</sup> Addressing all prophets and religious leaders of the world the Qur'ān exhorts, 'O ye prophets ! Eat of the good things and act aright and be sure that this your religion is one religion, and I am your Lord, so keep your duty unto Me. But mankind have broken their religion into various fragments, each-fragment rejoicing in its tenets. It is an open ignorance. Therefore, leave them in their error till a time.'<sup>2</sup> The Qur'ān again commands, 'Don't concern yourselves with those who have cut asunder their religion and become schismatics. Their case will go to Allāh for His decision, Who then will inform them what they used to do.'<sup>3</sup> Those who disbelieve in Allāh and His messengers and seek to make distinction between Allāh and His messengers and say : 'We believe in some and disbelieve in others, thus seek to choose an intermediate way in between.' Such are disbelievers in truth and for disbelievers God has prepared a shameful chastisement.<sup>4</sup> It (the Qur'ān) is the truth confirming that which they possess in the form of previous scriptures like, Torah, Gospel, Psalms and others (such as the Vedas, the Rāmāyaṇa, the Mabābhārata, Tripiṭaka and so on).<sup>5</sup> He (the Muḥammad) brought the truth and confirmed those who were sent before him.<sup>6</sup> The Qur'ān, further says that nothing new has been said to Muḥammad which was not said to the other prophets sent before him.<sup>7</sup>

An attempt has already been made on the authority of the Gītā towards proving Lord Śrīkrṣṇa to be a God's apostle like Muḥammad. Now, I shall concern myself in proving him to be so on the authority of the Qur'ān also.

According to the Qur'ān as stated above, God sent His prophets to every country before Muḥammad with the truth and guidance to mankind in the languages of their own peoples for their facility to understand it. As India is one of the biggest countries of the world, therefore, God's

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1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-'Ankabūt: 46.

2. Ibid., Al-Mu'minūn : 51-54.

3. Ibid., Al-An'ām : 159.

4. Ibid., An-Nisā : 150, 151.

5. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 91, 97, Al-Malā'ikah : 31,

6. Ibid. Aṣ-Ṣaffāt : 37.

7. Ibid., Fusṣilat : 43.



messengers must have, surely, come to India also before Muḥammad with truth and guidance in Sanskrit, Pālī or Prākṛti languages which were the most popular languages of ancient India from the time immemorial. According to one tradition there came 2,24,000 messengers of God to various parts of land for showing the straight path to the wandering folk, whereas another tradition holds that there came only 1,24,000 God's messengers. Out of this vast number, only 28 messengers of God are expressly mentioned in the Qur'ān, leaving the rest unmentioned, but strictly ordaining to believe in them. It means that the messengers of God who came to India are not mentioned in the Qur'ān along with a large number of other messengers sent to different lands. Now, the questions arise what are the names of the messengers who came to India ? Whether Śrīkṛṣṇa with whom I am directly concerned at present is a messenger of God or not ? Suppose, he is not a God's messenger but a mere saintly preacher ! Then, who may surely, be a God's messengers in India ; If one suggests Rāma to be so, then, in my personal opinion Kṛṣṇa's position as a divine preacher is above the Rāma's one. Because a devotee of Rāma may be benefitted by the standard set forth by his actual ideal life, gaining nothing as a divine discourse from his very mouth. On the other hand, a Kṛṣṇa's devotee obtains much by the standard set forth by his practical dealings as well as much more by that which he has poured forth from his very mouth in the form of the Gītā and other discourses made elsewhere in the Mahābhārata etc. According to my personal view Kṛṣṇa has, thus, a preferential claim to be a God's messenger. How can God's justice do such injustice that even the names of the actual prophets exist no more on the earth, while others Kṛṣṇa etc., are universally being honoured as divine preachers ? Nay, God being Truth cannot do such injustice. Śrīkṛṣṇa, along with very many others who are regarded by generality to be incarnations of God, is decidedly a God's messenger like Muḥammad and the Gītā, along with many other scriptures, is, in the like manner, a sacred book.

In my personal opinion formed on the basis of the Qur'ān, all the seers of the Vedas, Vedavyāsa, the author of the Mahābhārata including the Gītā, Vālmīki, the author of the Rāmāyaṇa.

Manu, the author of the Manusmṛiti, Rāma, Kautilya and very many more were God's messengers sent to India before Muḥammad.

### REVELATION AND INSPIRATION

The revelation means the scripture or the unveiling of divine preachings and mysteries. This has, most elaborately been asserted regarding the Qur'ān, but the same is applicable to the Gītā and other scriptures. Inspiration or Waḥī, according to the Qur'ān, means the divine speech to men, conveying occasionally the objective message as well as the subjective method of its imparting.

Prophet Muḥammad repeatedly declares by God's command that the Qur'ān is that which is inspired unto me through the Grace of the Lord of the worlds. Therefore, it is a revelation of God or a revealed book, like Torah, Gospel, Psalms and other scriptures.<sup>1</sup>

Now, we have to judge, impartially, whether the Gītā is a revealed book like the Qur'ān or not? It is, undoubtedly, admissible that the Qur'ān clarifies its position itself, as to be a revealed volume throughout itself, while the Gītā remains silent on this point. But it is our duty to unveil the reality. For instance, one of the two sagely authorities comes on, claiming himself to be a sage, while the other comes on calmly claiming nothing, but it becomes the duty of the beholders to discover their reality by judging them equitably on their own merits. Same is the case of the Gītā before us.

It is true to say that not even a single phrase full of spiritual import can be uttered nor a meritorious deed can be done by anyone on his own accord without being inspired by God.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, it was not Śrīkṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva and Devakī, a cow-grazer, who preached on his own accord, such a divine secret, full of all sorts of sovereign sciences, mysteries, deep philosophy and high spirituality utilizable for all times to come. But it was God, Who inspired him to do so, as his own Representative to preach mankind on his own

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah ; 4, 37, 39, 106, 129, 144, 146, 151, 211, 219 and so on.

1. Bhagavadgītā : 7 : 8, 9 : 16, 10 : 11-41, 11 : 1-43,

behalf. This is why Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa claims himself to be God throughout the Gītā.

As regards the merits of the Gītā, it is marvellous to note that the Gītā being revealed thousands of years before the Qur'ān, yet it contains the whole theme of the latter. If it would be of the later age than the Qur'ān, it could, however, be said that the Gītā might be dictated from the Qur'ān. Therefore, it being quite original in its intrinsic nature, can never be a creation of man. Thus, it has, automatically, been established that the Gītā is, undoubtedly, a revealed book, like the Qur'ān and the Quranic statement that, 'nothing new has been preached in the Qur'ān which was not preached in the previous scriptures',<sup>1</sup> stands here worthpraising.

As regards the personal merits of the agents—Śrīkṛṣṇa and Muḥammad through whose agency the Gītā and the Qur'ān were respectively preached, they were both but cattle-grazers, non-capable of creating such sacred books as the Gītā and the Qur'ān on their own accord. And, in fact, it was not that they themselves wrote these scriptures with their own hands, but they were written down by Vyāsa and Muḥammad's personal scribe and other literary companions respectively.<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'ān says that those who disbelieve in Allāh and His messengers and seek to make distinction between Allāh and His messengers, and say : 'We believe in some and disbelieve in others and seek to choose a way in between. They are disbelievers or persons endowed with demoniacal properties and will be punished by a shameful doom.'<sup>3</sup>

We have, authentically, made it clear that both of these sacred books are not the inventions of a human mind but they are revelations of God, like, Torah, Gospel, Psalms and other scriptures. Therefore, a true believer is he who looks both of these books with a similar eye.<sup>4</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Fusilat : 43.

2. See Heads' Authenticity of the Gītā and 'Authenticity of the Qur'ān in Chapters III and IV of this book.

3. The Holy Qur'ān—An-Nisā : 150, 151.

4. Bhagavadgītā : 5 : 18, 15 : 1, 2, 24, : The Holy Qur'ān—An-Nisā 150 etc.

## WAYS OF SALVATION

The faith in Divinity, according to the Qur'ān, rests in five things : 1. Prayer, 2. Almsgiving, 3. Fasting, 4. Pilgrimage, and 5. The confession of the faith—called the five pillars of the religion. Of these five, the Gītā and Qur'ān both opine in the similar manner according to time, place and circumstances, in connection with the three—Prayer, Almsgiving and Faith. For instance :

*Prayer :*

The Gītā says about the prayer that, 'God considers them to be the best Yogins, who endowed with supreme faith, and ever united through meditation with God, worship Him with their mind centred on Him. Those, who, controlling all their senses and even minded towards all, and devoted to doing good to all beings, constantly adore as their very self the unthinkable, all-pervading, imperishable, ineffable, eternal, immobile, unmanifest and immutable Brāhman, they too attain God.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, man must fix his mind on God and establish his reason in Him alone, thereby he will, assuredly, abide in Him.<sup>2</sup> Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa gives three choices or ways for attaining salvation, 'If man cannot steadily fix his mind on God, then he should seek Him through the Yoga of practice—Karmayoga.<sup>3</sup> If he is unable even to take to practice or action, then he should be intent on performing all actions for God, he will attain salvation even by performing actions for His sake. If taking recourse to the Yoga of God's realization, one is unable to do even this, then he should, subduing his mind, senses etc., abandon the fruit of all actions.<sup>4</sup> This is, in short, the concept of prayer, as laid down in the Gītā, on the authority of the trinity—Sāṃkhya yoga, Karmayoga and Bhakti yoga.

The concept of Quranic prayer is also the same as that of Gitaic one. The Qur'ān opines on this point in its own way as mentioned here under:

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1. Bhagavadgītā ; 12 : 2-4.

2. Ibid., 12 : 8, 18 : 65, 66 etc.

3. Ibid., 17 : 9, 2 : 38, 3 : 4-8, 19, 30, 35, 1g : 41-48.

4. Ibid., 12 : 10, 11.

Thee alone we worship, Thee alone we ask for help. Show us the straight path<sup>1</sup>. The same prayer has also been made to the Fire-God in the R̥gveda.<sup>2</sup> God commands mankind in the Qur'ān to establish worship.<sup>3</sup> The true nature of the Quranic prayer rests in righteousness. Therefore, describing the righteousness, God proclaims in the Qur'ān, 'It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East and the West, but the true righteous is he who has faith in God, the Last Day, the angels, the scriptures and the prophets, and spends his wealth for His Love to kinsfolk, orphans, the needy, the wayfarer, and to those who ask, to set slaves free, and who observes proper worship and pays the poor-rate. And those who keep their treaty when they make once and are patient in tribulation, adversity and times of stress. Such are they who are faithful and God-fearing.'<sup>4</sup>

### *Almsgiving*

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both enjoin almsgiving to mankind in order to cleanse their hearts for enabling them to believe in the common brotherhood of the world.

The Gītā communicates about almsgiving that there is no existence here on earth, in the heavens or among the celestials or anywhere else in the creation, which is free from the three qualities born of matter—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.<sup>5</sup> Thus the gift has also necessarily been divided into the three divisions—according to the three modes of nature—Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa. For example, the gift which is made to one who does nothing in return with the idea that it is one's duty to give alms and with due regard to the time, place and the recipient of the gift is the Sāttvika or the best type of almsgiving. The gift, however, which is made in a grudging mood with the object of getting some service in return or with a view to gain something is the Rājasa or the middle or mixed type of charity. But the gift which is made at an improper place and

1. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Fātiḥah: 4, 5.

2. R̥gveda—*Agne Naya Supatha*.

3. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Baqarah: 3, 43 etc.

4. Ibid.,—Al-Baqarah: 177.

5. Bhagavadgītā: 18: 40.

time and in a disregardful and insulting manner to undeserving recipients is the Tāmasa or worst type of the gift.<sup>1</sup> Of these three types of almsgivings, the first category, that is, the Sāttvika type of giving is ever considered the best. What the Qur'ān opines concerning almsgiving is, 'the charity should be given for the love of God to the kinsmen, the orphans, the needy, the wayfarer and to those who beg and to set slaves free.'<sup>2</sup> The Quranic equivalent for almsgiving is 'Az-Zakāt' which is fixed at a rate from all kinds of property in proportion to the worth thereof, collected from the well-to-do and distributed among the poor Muslims.<sup>3</sup>

I do not agree with this opinion that the alms can only be distributed among the poor Muslims, while the Qur'ān expressly declares that charity can also be given to those who beg, those who are orphans, the needy, the wayfarer, and to set slaves free.<sup>4</sup> Here, in the original text it has not been mentioned that the above mentioned recipients of gift should, necessarily, be Muslims, and that the Qur'ān publicly announces that there is no compulsion in religion.<sup>5</sup> Then, how can alms, be given to Muslims only while Hindus, Jews, Christians, Bauddhas, Parsis, Sikhs etc. may also ask, be orphans, needy, wayfarers or slaves? Therefore, it is undoubtedly clear that alms, according to the Qur'ān can be given to any deserving recipient belonging to any religion or sect. The true nature of the Quranic almsgiving can be observed from the statement of the Qur'ān itself, 'A kind word with forgiveness is better than almsgiving followed by injury.'<sup>6</sup> The Qur'ān further declares about almsgiving that the likeness of those who give alms in the way of Allāh is as the likeness of a grain which grows seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. Allāh gives increase manifold to whom He wills.<sup>7</sup> Spend of the good things which you have earned, and of that which We (God) bring forth from the

1. Bhagavadgītā 17 : 20-22.

2. Meaning of the Glorious Koran-Pickthall p. 23, footnote.

3. The Holy Qur'ān - Al-Baqarah : 177.

4. Ibid., 17.

5. Ibid., 256.

6. Ibid., 263.

7. Ibid., Al-Baqarah 261, 262 264, 266.

earth for you, and seek not the bad with intent to give thereof, in gift, when you have not taken it for yourselves save with disdain and know that God is Absolute, Owner of praise.<sup>1</sup>

The same spirit has also been maintained in the Gītā, concerning the proper recipient of the alms. As the generality commonly conceives that only the Brāhmaṇas can be the proper recipients of the alms, is quite an improper conceiving. The Blessed Lord makes it explicit that at the time of giving alms man should have due regard to the time, place and recipient of the gift, but he does not say that alms should only be given to the Brāhmaṇas. Therefore, it may easily be concluded that the almsgiving according to the Gītā is open to all deserving recipients, whether they are Brāhmaṇas. Śūdras, Vaiśyas, Muslims, Jews, Christians, Bauddhas, Parsis or Sikhs etc., but they must be as Qur'ān says, 'orphans, the needy, the wayfarers, or slaves etc.' But it is, however, admittable that whosoever is the recipient of the alms is a Brāhmaṇa by nature at that time, though he may be by birth a Muslim, a Christian or even a Śūdra.

### *Divine Faith*

Keen attention has been paid to the divine faith by the Gītā and the Qur'ān both, as cited in brief, hereunder :—

Lord Śrīkrṣṇa prescribes in the Gītā regarding the faith that the man who listens to the Gītā, full of faith and in an uncarping spirit, freed from evil even he shall obtain the happy worlds of the virtuous.<sup>2</sup> Those who fully partake of this nectar of pious wisdom in the form of the Gītā, set forth above, who are endowed with faith and are solely devoted to me, are extremely dear to me.<sup>3</sup>

The Gītā further states about the divine faith for stabilizing it that those men of the Sāttvika disposition who endowed with faith, worship other gods, ignoring the scriptural injunctions, worship God alone.<sup>4</sup> The faith also, like all other

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah 267, etc.

2. Bhagavadgītā : 18 : 71.

3. Ibid., 12 : 20.

4. Ibid., 9 : 23, 17 : 1, 4.

entities of the of creation is of three kinds—Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa. The faith of every body is formed, in accordance with his own mental constitution. The faith constitutes the very being of a man, therefore, whatever is the nature of his faith, that verily he is. Hence, the man of a Sāttvika disposition has faith in the gods or angels. Those of a Rājasa disposition worship Yakṣas and Rākṣasas (demons); while others of a Tāmasa disposition worship evil spirits and ghosts.<sup>1</sup> Whatever celestial form a devotee, craving for some worldly object, seeks to worship with faith, God stabilizes the faith of that particular devotee in that very form. Endowed with faith he worships that deity and gains through him without doubt his desired enjoyment as ordained by Him.<sup>2</sup> The Qur'ān also, in support of this Gitaic faith, says, 'the flesh and blood of the sacrificed animal does not reach Allāh but the piety or faith from you reaches Him.'<sup>3</sup>

The faith is the pet preaching of the whole volume of the Qur'ān. If a keen stress has been given on anything throughout it, that verily is the faith. For example, 'God publishes in the Qur'ān, 'This is the scripture (The Qur'ān) whereabout there is no doubt a guidance unto those who ward off evil, who believe in the unseen, establish worship and spend of that which We have bestowed upon them'. And who have faith in that which is revealed unto Muḥammad (the Qur'ān) and that was revealed before him and are certain of the hereafter. These depend on guidance from their Lord. These are the successful.'<sup>4</sup>

#### *Fasting :*

The Qur'ān enjoins fasting expressly with a detailed description as given before.<sup>5</sup> The Gītā, though, does not enjoin fasting expressly, yet it appears to be in favour of fasting while it suggests regulative food to the Yogins—This Yoga is not for him who eats too much, nor for him who does not eat at all. But, this

1. Bhagavadgītā 17 : 2—4 18 : 40,

2. Ibid., : 7 : 21, 22, 7 : 23, 16 : 1-3, 9 : 25.

3. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Ḥajj : 37. Al-Baqarah : 62, 177.

4. Ibid., 2-5, 177, throughout The Qur'ān, Al-Māidah : 69 etc.

5. Ibid., 183-187 (whole volume)



Yoga which rids one of woe is accomplished only by him who is regulated in diet.<sup>1</sup> I came to conclusion from this statement that Gītā allows fasting to mankind to the extent of remedying one's physique for enabling him to perform his duties properly.

Fasting is ordained by the Qur'ān for restraining the sense-organs from the sense-objects for refreshing the body and mind of an individual. The Gītā also says the same thing on this point. For instance, sense-objects cease for him, who does not partake of food, but the taste for them persists.<sup>2</sup> Here, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa clearly enjoins fasting for the proper functioning of the human body and mind.

### *Pilgrimage :*

The pilgrimage, according to the Qur'ān, is one of the most fundamental ways of salvation, which has, already, been discussed in chapters IV and VII of this Volume. The Gītā, though, does not expressly recognize pilgrimage, but it appears to be in favour of it, or at least does not oppose it, when addressing all mankind it preaches, 'Attain this knowledge by all means.' If you prostrate yourself at the feet of the wise, render them all forms of services, and question them with a guileless heart, again and again, those wise seers of truth will unfold that knowledge to you.<sup>3</sup> Certainly the wise seers generally dwell at the sacred places, and the Gītā ordains that the knowledge should, by all means, be gained by way of meeting with the wise personally, rendering them services for making them please in order to gain knowledge. Sacred places like Haridwar, Mecca, Madinah, Vrindavan, Kashi and so on, are the centres of the divine learning. These are the places which are endowed with the divine grace providing inspiration to the seekers of knowledge. Having seen such places, meeting with the saints and observing prayers on such pilgrim-places, one feels divine enlightenment and satisfaction in him. Therefore, for the attainment of divine knowledge and inspiration, if

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1. Bhagavadgītā : 6 : 16, 17.

2. Ibid., 3 : 2 : 59.

3. Ibid., 4 : 34.

one performs pilgrimage, the Gītā considers it befitting and fruitful, like the Qur'ān.

### *Sacrifice*

As regards the performance of sacrifice both the Gītā and the Qur'ān recognize it alike. But it is befitting to note that the Gītā appears to be very keen in describing the sacrifice in detail, while the Qur'ān even being a detailed code mentions it in brief. This distinction, however, does give room for a doubt concerning the similarity between the two. It was because of the time, place and circumstances, in which, they were originally given. In the olden days, the predominance of the sacrifice was prevailing all over the soil of India, therefore, it was quite worthy on the part of Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa to describe it in the detailed way. In the same way, it was absolutely proper on the part of the prophet Muḥammad to cast a light glance upon it, on account of its not being so important a problem in those days on the land of Arabia. How both of them enjoin sacrifice in their own ways is mentioned, in brief, as hereunder :

The Gītā enjoins, in connection with the sacrifice that man is tied by shackles of Karma only when engaged in actions other than acts done for the sake of sacrifice. Therefore man should perform his duty, free from attachment for the sacrifice alone<sup>1</sup> This divine statement may be interpreted as, 'the sacrifice is threefold—bodily, mental and vocal. The bodily sacrifice may include benevolence and kind dispositions. The mental one rests in goodwill, pious thinking, self-control and knowledge, whereas the vocal one, in uttering kind, sweet and pleasing words.<sup>2</sup> Of these, the sacrifice in the form of knowledge is superior to the sacrifice performed with material things, as all actions without exception rise to the highest point through knowledge.<sup>3</sup> The Gītā further commands, 'Foster the gods by sacrifice, and let the gods foster you. Thus fostering one another disinterestedly you will attain the Supreme goal.'<sup>4</sup>

1. Bhagavadgītā : 3 : 9, 3 : 10.

2. Ibid., 4 : 33.

3. Ibid., 4 : 33.

4. Ibid., 3 : 11 3 : 12.

The sacrifice also, like all other things of the entire creation, is threefold, Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa.<sup>1</sup> Of which the Sāttvika type thereof which is performed only for the duty's sake without attachment is ever held high. The virtuous who partake of what is left after sacrifice are absolved of all their sins. Those sinful ones, however, who cook for the sake of nourishing their own body alone eat only sin.<sup>2</sup>

But what the Qur'ān opines about sacrifice is, 'God commands you to sacrifice a cow, neither with calf, nor immature, of bright yellow colour, neither yoked nor used in agricultural performances, whole and without mark.'<sup>3</sup> Here, it has not been mentioned, along with all these details about the cow to be sacrificed that she should necessarily be slaughtered. Therefore it may be concluded that the cow could be given as alms by way of sacrifice. The performance of sacrifice, in accordance with the ordinances of the Gītā and the Qur'ān both is intended to help the poor and the needy by giving them food and other things for widening the outlook of universal brotherhood of mankind.<sup>4</sup> Unlike the cows, the camels are expressly declared by the Qur'ān to be slaughtered by way of sacrifice as, 'We (God) have appointed camels among the ceremonies of Allāh. There is much gain in them. Therefore, mention the name of Allāh over them when they are drawn up in lines. Then when they fall dead, eat thereof and feed the beggar and the suppliant. God appointed a ritual for every nation.'<sup>5</sup> It is clear from the above that God made provisions for helping the poor and the needy variously by sanctioning sacrifices, almsgiving and expiations by way of feeding or clothing them.

According to the Gītā if a sacrifice is performed without attachment and hoping for the fruit thereof, then it brings with it the twofold fruit—in the form of pleasures in the world and the hereafter.<sup>6</sup> Same is the case in the Qur'ān also. Concern-

1. Bhagavadgītā 18 : 40, 17 : 11—13.

2. Ibid., 3 : 13, 4 : 31.

3. The Holy Qur'ān—A-Baqarah : 67-71 Al-Kauthar : 2.

4. Bhagavadgītā 5 : 13, 4 : 31.

5. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-Hajj : 38.

6. Bhagavadgītā 17 : 11-25.

ing the sacrifice the Qur'ān says, 'The flesh and blood of the sacrificed animals do not reach Allāh but the piety from you reaches Him. The glad-tidings of Allāh's defence are for those who are good in performing sacrifices and are truthful.<sup>1</sup>

*Concept of Gods or Angels :*

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both hold the words, 'Malāikah' and 'Devatā' for gods or angels respectively, recognizing their existence with equal interest.

The Gītā says, 'Of the two paths—white and black<sup>2</sup> departing when Yogins do not or do return to this world according to their deeds and that in which are located the all effulgent fire-god and the gods presiding over day-time the white fortnight and the six months of the northward course of the sun, proceeding along with it after death. Yogins, that is Karma-yogins, engaged in performing actions, who have known Brahman are successively led by above gods, and finally reach God. And the path, that is, black path, in which are located the gods dominating smoke, night, the dark fortnight and the six months of the southward course of the sun—the Yogins devoted to action with an interested motive, taking to this path after death, are led by the above gods, one after another, and attaining the lustre of the moon and having enjoyed the fruit of their righteous works in heaven, return to this mortal world.<sup>3</sup>

The Qur'ān opines concerning these, 'Praise be to Allāh, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, Who appoints the angels as messengers having wings two, three and four.<sup>4</sup> Of these angels Gabriel (Jibrīl), Michael (Mikāīl), Isrāfīl and Izrael ('Izrāīl) are the mightiest ones being allotted to them the duties of bringing the revelations to the prophets, providing livelihood, presiding over death blowing the Šūr on the

1. Bhagavadgītā 4 : 3 ; The Holy Qur'ān Al-Hajj : 37 : 38.

2. Bhagavadgītā 8 : 23, 26.

3. Ibid., 8 : 24, 25, 10 : 21, 23, 29, 34, 11 : 6, 22, 39, 17 : 4, 9 : 21.

4. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Fā'tir : 1, An-Nisā : 97, An-Nahl : 2, Al-Hajj : 75.

doomsday and presiding over death respectively.<sup>1</sup> In the same way, the Gītā also recognizes the four mightiest gods—Indra, Rudra, Śiva and Yama.<sup>2</sup> Various types of duties have been allotted to the gods by God as detailed in a couple of preceding chapters. The Qur'ān further declares about the angels addressing the disheartened believers before a huge army of the disbelieving enemies revealing, 'Is it not sufficient for you that your Lord should support you with three thousand angels sent down for your aid. And if the enemy attacks you suddenly, then your Lord will help you with five thousand angels sweeping on?'<sup>3</sup>

It is, undoubtedly, clear that the concept of the Gītaic 'Devatā' and that of Qur'ānic 'Malak' is, in all respects, the same. For the words 'Devatā' and 'Malak', it is quite reasonable to substitute the English words 'god', 'angel' or 'celestial being'. Though, there is no point of dissimilarity in the recognition of the gods or angels between these two scriptures, yet if there remains any point to be dissimilar in one's point of view, it may become so under the compulsion of time, place and circumstances.

#### *Concept of Evil Spirits*

The evil spirits or ghosts are equally recognized by both these scriptures in the terms—Bhūtas or Pretas or Piśācas and Jinns respectively.

The Gīta says about these, 'Bhūtāni Yānti Bhūtejyā', that is, 'those who adore the spirits attain the spirits'. Again the existence of ghosts can easily be ascertained when the Gītā condemns a nature, which is fiendish, demoniacal and delusive.<sup>4</sup>

The Qur'ān speaks of the Jinns in its own way as this. Qur'ān revealed to Muḥammad that a company of the Jinns gave ear. It has been supposed that mankind and Jinn would not tell a lie concerning God.<sup>5</sup> It has, generally, been conceived that a lunatic is nothing but possessed by a Jinn.

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 87, 98, 97, 177, 253, Al-Māidah 110, An-Nahl : 102, Ash-Shūrā 193 etc.

2. Bhagavadgītā 3 : 14, 11, 6: 39, 10 : 21-23, 29-34.

3. The Holy Qur'ān Āl-i-'Imrān : 124, 125.

4. Bhagavadgītā 9 : 12, 25.

5. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Jinn : 5.

or Preta. Mr. Yaqub Husain of Madras has opined about Jinns in his Urdu book 'Kitāb-ul-Hudā' as 'clever foreigners.' It has also been applied to a magician king: Solomon.<sup>1</sup>

### *Concept of Satan :*

The 'Satans' variously known as 'devils', 'demons' etc. are similarly existent in the Gītā and the Qur'ān both, with the names 'Rākṣasas', or 'Yakṣas' or 'Daityas' or 'Asuras' and 'Shay'tāns' respectively.<sup>2</sup>

The recognition of Satan by the Gītā can well be observed when Lord Śrīkrṣṇa shows His glories and universal form to Arjuna, as a representative of God by His leave.<sup>3</sup>

The Qur'ān recognizes Satan throughout itself, as a deluder and deceiver of mankind causing them to go astray from the plain road led by the scriptures. Like the Gītā that names 'Prahād' as the mightiest of all devils, the Qur'ān recognizes 'Iblīs' to be so.<sup>4</sup>

It is, undoubtedly, true that the devils, according to these two sacred books, are hurtful, deceitful and open opponents to the believing folk.

### *Believers and Disbelievers :*

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both define and explain the believers and disbelievers with a due detail in their own ways. The Gitaic and the Quranic equivalents for these are 'Daivīm Sampadām Abhijātaḥ' and 'Āsurīm Sampadām Abhijātaḥ' and 'Mu'minūn' and 'Kāfirūn' respectively. The Gitaic words for believers and disbelievers mean 'the persons endowed with divine properties' and 'the person endowed with demoniacal properties,' which are equally applicable to the Quranic words- 'Mu'minūn' and 'Kāfirūn' sprung from their singular 'Mu'min' and 'Kāfir'. Thus, the Gitaic 'Daivīm Sampadām.

1. The Meaning of the Glorious Koran : Pickthall, p. 613.

2. The Holy Qur'ān, Al-Baqarah : 102.

3. Bhagavadgītā 10-23, 30, 11 : 22, 36.

4. Ibid., 17 : 4; The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 14, 102.

The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 14, 102, Al-Mulk : 5, An-Nisā : 38, Al-A'rāf : 11, 12, 20, Al-Hajj : 31-39, 95 etc.

'Abhijāt' and 'Āsurīm Sampadām Abhijāt' accurately mean the same as the Quranic 'Mu'min' and 'Kāfir.' For example :

The Gītā says about the believers as 'the marks of those who are endowed with divine properties are, 'fearlessness, absolute purity of heart, constant absorption of mind in meditation for self-realization, the Sāttvika type of almsgiving, control of the senses, worship of God, the performance of Agnihotra i.e., pouring oblations into the sacred fire, other auspicious acts, study of the Vedas and other sacred texts, chanting of divine names and glories, bearing of hardships for the sake of one's own Dharma or duty and straightness of mind, body and senses, non-violence in thought, word and work, truthfulness and geniality of speech, absence of anger even on arrival of provocations, abandonment of the idea of doership in action, placidity of mind, being aloof from malicious gossip, kindness to all beings, absence of attachment to the objects of senses, even during their contact with the senses, gentlemanliness, feeling shame in doing things not sanctioned by the scriptures or usage and abstaining from the idle pursuits, sublimity, forgiveness, fortitude, external purity and absence of malice and feeling of self-importance.' These are the signs of one who is naturally endowed with divine virtue.<sup>1</sup>

On the contrary, the marks of disbelievers or those who are endowed with demoniacal properties are, hypocrisy, arrogance, boastfulness, anger, harshness and ignorance.<sup>2</sup>

The divine virtues are regarded as conducive to liberation and the demoniacal qualities as conducive to bondage.<sup>3</sup>

The Qur'ān also defines and explains the believers and disbelievers throughout itself in the similar manner, as the Gītā does. For instance, it says, 'This is the scripture (the Qur'ān) whereof there is no doubt, a guidance unto those who ward off evil, who believe in the unseen, establish worship, spend benevolently of that We (God) have bestowed upon them. And who have faith in that which is revealed unto

1. Bhagavadgītā 16 : 1-3.

2. Ibid., 16 : 4.

3. Ibid., 16 : 5, 16 : 6-24.

Muhammad and that which was revealed before him in the form of Torah, Gospel, Psalms and other scriptures and are certain of the hereafter. These depend on the guidance from their Maker. These are the successful.<sup>1</sup>

As regards the disbelievers, they are never influenced by any divine guidance or warning, because of the steadfastness of their disbelief. God has sealed their hearing and their hearts and on their eyes there is a covering. They will taste the chastisement of an awful doom.<sup>2</sup> Those who disbelieve in Allāh and His messengers and seek to make distinction between Allāh and His messengers and say: 'We believe in some and disbelieve in others and seek to choose an intermediate way. Such are disbelievers (Kāfirs) of truth and for disbelievers We (God) have prepared a shameful chastisement.'<sup>3</sup>

Just like the Gitaic divine virtues the Quranic belief (Imān) is conducive to liberation and like Gitaic demoniacal properties Quranic disbelief (Kufr) is conducive to bondage.<sup>4</sup>

The Gītā says that a disbeliever can have no peace, then how can there be happiness for one lacking peace of mind.<sup>5</sup>

Further, according to the Qur'ān, a true believer is he who believes in God, the Last Day and the gods or angels, the scriptures, the God's apostles and gives his wealth for Love of God, to kinsfolk, orphans, the needy, the wayfarer, those who ask and to set slaves free and observes proper worship and pays the poor-due. And those who keep their treaty when they make once, the patient in tribulation, adversity and critical times—Such are they who are the faithful and the God-fearing.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, those who become renegades and die in their disbelief—such are they whose deeds have fallen both in the world and the hereafter. Such are rightful owners of the flaming fire.<sup>7</sup> The Gītā also says the same thing in

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 2-5.

2. Ibid., 67.

3. Ibid., An-Nisā : 150, 151.

4. Ibid., Al-Ghāshiyah : 1-20.

5. Bhagavadgita 2 : 66.

6. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 177.

7. Ibid., 217.



this regard enjoining, 'Those who die during the predominance of Tamas, e.g. in disbelief are born in the wombs of stupid creatures at the commencement of the next Brahmā's day after the doomsday'.<sup>1</sup>

Further, in accordance with the Gītā, a man released from the triple gate of hell-passion, anger and greed acts his own salvation and thereby reaches the Supreme goal.

But he who having cast aside the communications of the scriptures acts on his own accord, attains not perfection, nor the highest goal, nor even happiness.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, man should determine a thing on the authority of the scriptures, as to what ought to be done and what ought not to be done.<sup>3</sup>

In the same way, the Qur'ān also guides mankind to determine things on the authority of the scriptural ordinances.<sup>4</sup>

It has become obvious from the above discussion that both these scriptures recognize believers and disbelievers in the similar manner. The reward for believers and the punishment for disbelievers have, equally, been sanctioned by these both sacred volumes.

#### *Other Scriptures :*

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both recognize the authority of the previous scriptures. Both of them, though yielding all the sacred books of the past to be true, expressly mention only the three—R̥gveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda and Torah Gospel and Psalms respectively.<sup>5</sup>

The Gītā recognizes the authority of the Vedas in performing sacrifices and other ritualistic observances.<sup>6</sup> 'For the establishment of the authority of the previous scriptures, the Blessed Lord commands in the Gītā, 'Let the scripture be your authority in determining what ought to be done and what ought not

1. Bhagavadgītā 14 : 2, 15, 9 : 7-10.

2. Ibid., 16 : 21-23.

3. Ibid., 16 : 24.

4. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Māidah : 5, 47, 48, 77, 110; Muḥammad : 24 etc.

5. Bhagavadgītā 9 : 17, 4 : 32, 9 : 20, The Holy Qur'ān Āl-i-'Imrān : 3, 48, 49, 65, 93, 184, Al-Māidah 43, 44, 46, 66, Al-A'rāf 157, At-Taubah : 111, Al-Fath : 29, Hud : 27, An-Nisā : 163, Banī-Isrā'il : 255, Al-Malā'ikah : 25, etc.

6. Bhagavadgītā 3 : 9-15, 9 : 17, 20, 4 : 32.

to be done. And you should do only such action which is sanctioned by the ordinances of the scriptures.<sup>1</sup> As Gītā is preached in very short, therefore, it necessarily depends upon the ordinances of the previous scriptures for unfolding its meaning. The finishing touch of every chapter thereof informs us that the Gītā being itself an Upaniṣad admits the authority of all Upaniṣads.

The Gītā stands witness itself to the fact that it is not a new preaching, but it is a confirmation of that which was preached before. As Lord Śrīkrṣṇa proclaims himself in the Gītā that I taught this immortal Yoga in the form of the Gītā, to Vivasvān (Sun-god) ; Vivasvān conveyed it to his son Manu, and Manu imparted it to his son Ikṣvāku. Thus handed down from father to son, this Yoga remains known to Rājaraṣis (royal sages, whereby called Rājayoga or Rāja-Vidyā). By great afflux of time, nevertheless, it has more or less disappeared. The same ancient Yoga, has, today, been imparted to you (Arjuna by Me, because you are My devotee and friend and also as this is a supreme secret.<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'ān also opines the same thing on this point revealing, 'Lo ! We (God) inspire unto Muḥammad the same thing as We inspired unto Noah (Nūḥ) and the prophets after him, Abraham (Ibrāhīm), Ishmael (Ismā'īl), Isaac (Ishāq), Jacob (Ya'qūb), Jesus (ʿIsā), Job (Ayyūb), Jonah (Yūnus), Aaron (Hārūn) and Solomon (Sulaimān) as We inspired unto David (Dāūd) the Psalms (Zabūr).<sup>3</sup>

It is quite clear from the above assertion that the Qur'ān is also like the Gītā, but a confirmation of the past scriptures, as it throughout itself bears witness to this effect.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, the Blessed Lord repeatedly takes the position of the other scriptures with a welcoming enthusiasm throughout the Holy Volume of the Gītā.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, we see that these two sacred books being quite similar to each other, in connection with all affairs mentioned

1. Bhagavadgītā 16 : 24.

2. Ibid., 4 : 1-3.

3. The Holy Qur'ān-An-Nisā : 163, Āl-i-'Imrān-84.

4. Ibid., Āl-Baqarah : 3, 87, 121, 136, 177 etc.

5. Bhagavadgītā 16 : 1, 2, 4 : 1-4.

above, are absolutely similar concerning the previous scriptures too.

### CREATION, DEATH, HEREAFTER, DOOMSDAY OR LAST DAY, DAY OF RESURRECTION OR DAY OF JUDGMENT AND NEW CREATION

The Gītā announces relating to the creation of the world that all beings were unmanifest before their birth and will become unmanifest again when they will die. They are manifest only in the intermediate stage.<sup>1</sup> This statement of the Blessed Lord means that all creatures before their being born were not embodied in any form playing an active part in this world or somewhere else in the creation. They were without bodies, that is, souls only and were not separate from God or were entrusted with Him in a divine world called 'Paraloka' or Hereafter enshrouded with Brahmā's night till the beginning of a new Kalpa or Creation or Brahmā's day. As Gītā clearly states on this point that at the end of every Kalpa or Brahmā's day, all beings enter God's Prakṛti (the prime cause) and at the commencement of every Brahmā's day, He brings them forth again.<sup>2</sup> With God as the president, Prakṛti brings forth this whole creation afresh again and again after doomsdays. This is why the wheel of the world is revolving.<sup>3</sup>

The Qur'ān also enjoins the same thing in this regard announcing, 'We (all beings) are Allāh's and unto Him we are returning.'<sup>4</sup> This Quranic statement perfectly means the same as the Gitaic one above. Such as, all creatures being Allāh's should, before their being born in the world be a part of God or be beside Him under His direct supervision as the Gītā and the Qur'ān say in the next world called 'Paraloka' and 'Āqbat' respectively. In that state, they were, doubtlessly, not embodied in any form playing a practical role in the world, but they were without bodies i.e., the souls only therefore they were unmanifest in that stage. As regards the

1. Bhagavadgītā 2 : 28.

2. Ibid., 9 : 7.

3. Ibid., 9 : 8, 10.

4. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 156.

Quranic phrase, 'unto Him we are returning', I may interpret it as, 'without going away or being apart from God what occasion for returning to Him?' Therefore it is absolutely clear that the souls which were under the trusteeship of God or His fragments are sent to the world in the embodied form by causing them to take birth. Thus the birth of all beings has, automatically, been ascertained. This is the state of their manifestness. Thereafter all living beings are sure to die. This is the very thing which is described by the Qur'ān in the words, 'Innā llayhi Rāji'ūn' i.e., 'Unto Him we are returning.' The Gītā says about the inevitability of death that the death of him who is born is certain and the rebirth of him who is dead is inevitable,<sup>1</sup> at the commencement of a new creation. The Qur'ān also justifies the certainty of death by revealing, 'Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you, even though you were in lofty towers.'<sup>2</sup> In order to make it more clear, the Gītā further emphasises that, 'really, there was never a time when I (Kṛṣṇa) was not or when you (Arjuna) or these kings (Kauravas and their allies) were not existent. Nor is it a fact that hereafter we shall all cease to be.'<sup>3</sup> Here Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa establishing the imperishability of the soul intends to clarify that the living beings are the aggregate of the body and the soul, of these the body is perishable element and the soul is not<sup>4</sup> and the soul is not the least injured on the destruction of the body.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the imperishable part, that is, the soul of a being is all that for his recognition. Therefore the souls of all beings being permanent entities go direct to God on the death or destruction of the bodies for their absorption in Him or to be very close to Him under His direct supervision. This is the very intention of the Gītā and the Qur'ān veiled in the above statements.

The Gītā says that mankind were created along with the natural bending towards the sacrifice at the beginning of the creation. The Qur'ān also recognizing man's nearness to the

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1. Bhagavadgītā 2 : 27 and 9 : 7.
  2. The Holy Qur'ān-An-Nisā : 78.
  3. Bhagavadgītā 2 : 12.
  4. Ibid., 2 : 20, 22.
  5. Ibid., 2 : 13-30.

ritualistic performances from the very beginning of the creation supports the Gitaic view by revealing, 'We (God) appointed a ritual for every nation.'<sup>1</sup>

The Gītā further specifically declares regarding the creation of the world that, 'My (God's) Prakṛti in her primordial undeveloped state is the womb of all creatures, in which I (God) place the seed of consciousness. The birth of all beings follows from this combination of matter and spirit. This primordial Matter is the Mother and I am the procreating Father of all beings that take birth from different wombs.'<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'ān also proclaims in its own way about the creation of the world to mean the same as, 'God created mankind from a single soul and that single soul, as already stated, is God Himself and from it He created a wedded pair and from them twain He spread a multitude of men and women.'<sup>3</sup>

The Gītā regarding the various attributes of beings declares 'discrimination, true wisdom, sanity, forgiveness, truth, control over the senses and the mind, pleasure and pain, evolution and dissolution, fear and fearlessness, non-violence, equanimity, contentment, austerity, charity, fame and disrepute—all these feelings of creatures emanate from God, Who is the source of all creation—everything in the world moves because of Him.'<sup>4</sup>

According to the Qur'ān, God is the goal of all beings, He is the Maker of laugh and lamentation, Giver of death and life, and He creates the two consorts—male and female from a drop of semen when it is poured forth and that He has ordained the second (drop of semen) bringing forth from the female sex and that He it is Who enriches and contents.'<sup>5</sup>

With a view to clarify that the creation of all things follows the will of God, Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa proclaims in the Gītā—'The seven great seers (Marīci etc.), the more ancient four

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Hajj : 34.

2. Bhagavadgītā 14 : 3, 4.

3. The Holy Qur'ān An-Nisā 1, Al-A'rāf : 189.

4. Bhagavadgītā 10 : 4, 5, 8.

5. The Holy Qur'ān An-Najm : 42-48.

(Sanaka etc.) and the fourteen Manus (Progenitors of mankind) who are all devoted to Me, are born of My will, from them all these creatures in the world are sprung.<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'ān also says the same thing on this point stating—'When God, the Originator of the heavens and the earth wills to decree a thing, He says unto it only 'Kun' ! i.e., 'Be!' and it is.<sup>2</sup>

The Gītā leaves no room for any commentary regarding the creation of the universe by its stating—'All the worlds from Brahmaloṅka or the Abode of Brahman downwards are subject to appearance (taking birth) and disappearance (dying). But the great souls who have gained highest perfection, having come to Me (God) are no more subjected to rebirth, which is the cause of pains and transitory by nature.'<sup>3</sup> In order to make known the period of a creation or a Brahmā's day the Gītā announces 'those who know from realization a Brahmā's day as extending to a thousand Mahāyugas<sup>4</sup> and a Brahmā's night as extending to another thousand Mahāyugas, they alone know the reality about time. All embodied souls are originated from the Unmanifest or Brahman's subtle body at the commencement of the Brahmā's day and at the commencement of His night, they merge in the same subtle body of Brahman or the Unmanifest.'<sup>5</sup>

This multitude of beings, being born, again and again under compulsion from Prakṛti is dissolved at the commencement of Brahmā's night and rises again at the beginning of his day.<sup>6</sup>

The Gītā, further, describing the importance of the acquisition of knowledge opines, 'Those who, having acquired this knowledge have entered My Being (God) are not subjected to being born again at the commencement of the new

1. Bhagavadgītā 10 : 6.

2. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 117, Āl-I-Imrān : 47, Yāsin : 81, Al-Mu'amin 68 etc.

3. Bhagavadgītā 8 : 15, 16, 8 : 21.

4. A Mahāyuga comprises in its fold all the four Yugas, viz. Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali.

5. Bhagavadgītā 8 : 17, 19.

6. Ibid., 8 : 19.

creation, nor they are tormented during the final dissolution or Doomsday.<sup>1</sup>

It is quite clear to conclude from the above statement that beings are not subjected to rebirth just after their death as the believers of the transmigration generally conceive. They most probably seem to be misled on the verse, 'As a man discarding worn-out clothes, takes other new ones, likewise the embodied soul, casting off worn-out bodies enters into other new ones.'<sup>2</sup> Here it is not explicitly mentioned by the Blessed Lord that the embodied soul, casting off worn-out bodies enters into other new bodies,' just after the destruction of the previous ones. On the other hand, it has, clearly, been explained that any dying soul is subjected to rebirth, except those great souls who have attained highest perfection in the shape of God-realization<sup>3</sup> at the commencement of the new creation. Further it should be borne in mind that the meaning of the 22nd verse of the 2nd chapter of the Gītā is quite impossible to understand without properly understanding the true import of the verse 19th of the chapter 8th, verses 7th and 10th of the chapter 9th and the verse 2nd of the chapter 14th of the Gītā. After going through these verses and having gathered their meanings and ideas minutely, one may easily realize that the transmigration of the soul after death into another body is justifiable only at the commencement of the new creation after the Doomsday. It seems improper to believe that the soul of a dying creature forthwith enters into the body of an infant on the day of its delivery. How can it be possible while the soul enters into the body of human infant laid into the mother's womb in the seventh months of the pregnancy as Garbhopaniṣad clearly lays down, '*saptame māse jīvena sanyukto bhavati*' i.e., the body becomes enlightened with the soul in the seventh month (into the mother's womb).<sup>4</sup> But the rumours are very common to be heard that a particular person died today from the house of a particular carpenter is.

1. Bhagavadgītā 14 : 2.

2. Ibid., 2 : 22.

3. Ibid., 8 : 19, 9 : 7, 10, 14 : 2.

4. Garbhopaniṣad : as Commented by Muni Mungal Hari Ed. 1936, P. 32.

born in the house of a particular cobbler on the very moment, through the transmigration of soul. Though such statements may happen to be true, but at least the Gītā does not regard them to be so. These statements, according to the Gītā, are nothing else than rumours. However an exception is always there.

To make it more clear, I may, further, explain this point as, 'the common opinion of the Hindu generality is that a person after his death becomes '*Paralokavāsī*' that is, 'dweller in the next world.' This common concept of the Hindu community so widely accepted must by all means, be derived from the above mentioned Gitaic injunctions, as well as some other scriptural ordinances. Suppose, a person takes birth in this world in some other form just after his death, then how can he be a '*Paralokavāsī* or *Svargavāsī*?' He is still living in this very world. According to divine rule as laid down in the Gītā, no man can take birth in this world just after his death but he may be put to rebirth after Doomsday and completing a Brahmā's night, which is as long as a thousand Mahāyugas. The soul takes rest in the sleeping state till the Brahmā's night is over, but rises again at the commencement of his day or a new creation. As day is followed by night and night is followed by day in the same way, the wheel of Saṁsāra is revolving by means of Brahmā's days and nights, moving one after another. In the Brahmā's days soul becomes embodied but in his night it becomes free from the body. This is the philosophy of the appearance and disappearance of the soul. Doomsday is nothing but the commencement of Brahmā's night and the resurrection is but the beginning of his day. Thus 'Yaum-i-Qayāmat' or the Day of Resurrection' accepted by the Qur'ān is justified by the Gītā also.<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'ān also deals in the similar terms in connection with the above affairs as summed up hereunder :

Allāh declares in the Qur'ān that, 'how can you disbelieve in Allāh when you were dead and He gave you life ? Then He

1. Bhagavadgītā 9 : 7, 10, 8 : 19, 14 : 2.

The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 85, 113, 174, 212.



will give you death, then life again and then unto Him you will return.<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'ān repeatedly emphasises on this point as :

He (God) it is Who gave life to you, then He will cause you to die and will give you life again.<sup>2</sup>

He (God) brings forth living from the dead and is the bringer forth of the dead from the living.<sup>3</sup>

We (God) meted out death among you and we are not to be outrun. We may transfigure you and make you what you do not know. Verily you know the first creation. Why do you not think ?<sup>4</sup>

The Qur'ān, further, ascertains the reality about the new creation by its revealing, 'Have they not seen that Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth and was not worn-out by their (beings') creation, is able to give live to the dead ?'<sup>5</sup>

The Qur'ān, again, proclaims about the new creation, 'Were We (God) then wearied by the first creation ? Nevertheless they are in doubt about a new creation.'<sup>6</sup>

Having understood the meaning of the above verses of the Qur'ān, one may be quite certain of the new creation after Doomsday. It is quite strange to note that generally, all commentators understand the word, 'Yumītu' in the 28th verse of the Quranic Sūrah 'Al-Baqarah' as non-existent even after translating it as 'dead'. There is much difference between the words 'non-existent' and 'dead'. Non-existent means that which never came into being while 'dead' means that which came into being before, but disappeared. Thus, the previous deaths and births of beings have, automatically, been proved by the Quranic uttering, 'Yumītukum' that is, 'you were dead', and 'Summa Yuhyikum' that is 'then He gave life to you.'

So far as the question of new creation and dissolution is

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 28.

2. Ibid., Al-Hajj : 66.

3. Ibid., Al-An'ām : 96.

4. Ibid., Al-Waqi'ah : 60-62.

5. Ibid., Al-Aḥqāf : 33.

6. Ibid., Qāf : 15.

concerned, God specifically clarified it in the Qur'ān, 'Were We (God) wearied by the first creation, whereby people are in doubt about the new creation.' By this Quranic statement, the concept of new creation appears to be so easy to understand that God does not give answer Himself to the above question but He expects its answer from the people. This very style of expression will suffice to establish the reality of a new creation. Moreover, the Qur'ān holds the phrase 'Khalqin Jadīd' for a new creation. Hence, I do agree with the opinions of Maulvi Mohammad Ali, Abdullah Yusuf Ali and others who take the phrase 'Khalqin Jadīd' for Resurrection along with the word 'Qayāmah' as a prelude to a new creation.<sup>1</sup>

The orthodox theologians would possibly oppose the idea of a new creation merely on the grounds that believers and disbelievers shall live forever in the heaven and hell respectively, paying no heed towards the plain commandments regarding the justification of a new creation. I perfectly agree with the opinion of Maulvi Mohammad Ali on this point that the idea of any soul to dwell forever in the Heaven or Hell is quite averse to the Qur'ān.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, a tradition of the prophet of Islām runs, 'verily a day will come when no one will remain in Hell.'<sup>3</sup>

The Gītā also says the same thing in its own way adopting the negative method as, 'Having enjoyed the excellent heaven-world, men return to this mortal world on the stock of their merits being exhausted. Thus taking recourse to action with interested motive enjoined by the three Vedas as the means of attaining salvation and seeking worldly enjoyments, they repeatedly come and go by process of taking birth and dying on account of their meritorious deeds and return to earth when their fruit has been enjoyed.'<sup>4</sup>

Having believed in the above discussion, there should

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1. The Holy Qur'ān as interpreted by Abdullah Yusuf Ali 1938, Lahore, Shaikh Md. Ashraf, Kashmiri Bazar p. 1412, footnote No. 4451, Al-Aḥqāf : 33 and also see foot-note 4813 and p. 1376.

2. The Holy Qur'ān as interpreted by M. Mohammad Ali, pp. 472-473.

3. Kanzal-Ummāl Vol. VII p. 245.

4. Bhagavadgītā 9 : 21, 7 : 10, 14 : 2, 8 : 15-19.

remain no room for the non-belief in connection with a new creation.

The general rules regarding the death and rebirth of beings have been set forth above. But besides these, there are discretionary powers of God to infringe or violate any rule whatsoever, in order to exercise them according to His own sweet will. There are certain Divine Mysteries which are never made known to men. God's discretionary powers scarcely come under the boundary of the general injunctions laid down in the scriptural ordinances. God alone knows better about the proper opportunity to exercise His discretionary powers. God, being Almighty is Able to do all things,<sup>1</sup> through His discretionary powers, without caring for the infringement of any of His own rules. Taking discretionary doings of God for His general rules is not proper. Therefore, one should not believe that man takes birth in this very world in some other form just after his death even after obtaining solid proofs in the shape of the clear statements of the persons concerned to such effect. Such cases are not common to be conceived, but these come under the province of the discretionary powers of God. And the Qur'ān, not only variously admits the discretionary powers of God, but expressly holds examples, such as God having ordained Adam and his wife to dwell in the Garden of Paradise expelled them therefrom at discretion, on account of their committing a mistake on Satan's persuading by his will alone and made for them twain on earth a habitation and provision for a time.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, it is not a general rule of Divinity that the body of a person also flies along with the soul, when he expires, but Yudhiṣṭhira's soul flew along with the body when he expired. In the same way, some persons may take birth in some other form in this world just after the death at God's discretion. In this way numerous examples may be enumerated to show the discretionary powers of God.

With a view to justify the previous births of mankind, Maulānā Rūm brings forth in his Mathnavī, which is considered

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1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Aḥqāf : Al-Baqarah : 20, 100, 109 etc.

2. Ibid., Al-Baqarah : 35, 36.

to be the Qur'ān in the Persian language as, 'I am born again and again like vegetables. I have seen seven hundred and seventy bodies.'<sup>1</sup>

In order to make this point more clear I may further explain it as, 'God being just can never be expected to do injustice in punishing the innocent newly born babies who take birth in poor and down-trodden families along with some bodily discomfort—such as, being blind, deaf, lame or with other bodily disabilities and diseases. Why this advance punishment is inflicted to the innocent ones, who did nothing of good and evil in this world? Even the law of the land relaxes the doings of the children in the words, 'Nothing is an offence which is committed by a child under seven years of age.'<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, other babies being born in wealthy and well-to-do families with sound health enjoy the pleasures of luxurious life from their very birth without doing anything as meritorious. Why this advance reward is awarded, while the former wretched ones suffer a lot from the moment of their delivery? Is this justice? Do such innocent babies suffer or enjoy on account of their own deeds in this world? Can God being Manager of such reward and punishment, be a just one? Nay, in the eyes of the orthodox theologian God can never be unjust and no injustice can be exercised by His judging. Certainly, the innocent babies are also rewarded or punished by virtue of their own deeds, for no soul is tasked beyond its scope. Every one attains that which he has earned. Man deserves or disqualifies on account of his own deeds.<sup>3</sup> A good defence to the above statement of both the scriptures can only be meted out in believing in the previous births of beings. I am, therefore, sure to believe in the Gitaic statement that 'he who has fallen from Yoga having gained the higher worlds—heaven etc. to which men of meritorious deeds alone are entitled and having resided there for numberless years takes birth in the house of pious and rich men in a new creation.'<sup>4</sup> The innocent babies who did nothing of good and

1. Ham Chū Sabzā Bārha Roidā Am : Haft-sad Haftād Qālib Didā Am.

2. Indian Penal Code—General Exceptions—SS : 76, 77 etc.

3. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 286, etc. Bhagavadgītā 6 : 41, 42 etc.

4. Bhagavadgītā 6 : 41, 13 : 20, 14 : 15 etc.

evil in this world still they are being rewarded and punished, must, by all means, pass through a previous birth in a preceding creation; wherein they must have committed good or evil deeds respectively for entitling them to reward or punishment according to their deeds in this world at God's discretion. Thus the reality of the previous births has, automatically, been ascertained on the authority of the communications of the Gītā and the Qur'ān both. But to me, as has been explained earlier, punishing an offender after such a long time-at a time when the offender remembers nothing about his offence is not justifiable. Hence punishing a criminal in a later birth is also an act of God's discretion. In my personal view punishing an offender without telling him about his offence is wrong with the firm faith that God will be highly pleased with my capability to criticize His doings with the help of the intellect given to me by Himself. It is not I who is seeing lacunae in God's doings, but it is He Himself, Who is doing so, as I am a part of Him, as a son is a part of his father. I always rejoice when my son points out my mistakes.

### *Heaven and Hell :*

As regards the concreteness of the Heaven and Hell, the Gītā and the Qur'ān both recognize it in their own ways. According to both the scriptures the Heaven is the Abode of all sorts of pleasures whereto only righteous and virtuous ones, are entitled, whereas the Hell is the place of all sorts of sorrows, pains and tortures, whereto only evil-doers and vicious ones are entitled.<sup>2</sup>

Those who believe and did good deeds are made to enter gardens underneath which rivers flow, to abide therein peacefully by God's permission. Man does not see how God coins a similitude 'A goodly saying as a goodly tree, its roots set firm, its branches reaching into heaven, giving its fruits at every season by God's leave. And the similitude of a bad saying is as a bad tree, uprooted from upon the earth, possessing no stability. God coins similitude for mankind in order

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1. Bhagavadgītā 6 : 40-42 etc. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Ghāshiyah: 1-20 etc..

that they may reflect.<sup>1</sup> It appears from the above example of the Qur'ān that the notion of the Heaven and Hell according to the Qur'ān is just like allegories to show the result of man's good and evil works in the world. For instance, every good work is like a good tree which gives fruits in every season; that is, the fruit of man's deeds availed in the paradise will be in his easy reach. The trees of paradise are, in fact, man's deeds. The rivers of paradise are nothing but man's faith, as our life is evolved from water and is maintained therewith. Therefore, the righteous men are described as believers and doers of meritorious deeds and the paradise is described as a Garden wherein rivers flow. Maulvi Mohammad Ali also opines in the similar manner in this regard<sup>2</sup>.

The description of the scenes of rivers, fruitful trees and boiling water etc. in the Qur'ān is also nothing but allegories.<sup>3</sup> The tortures born of one's own deeds, suffered in this world is also designed as the hell-fire.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes the pleasures of the wordly gardens etc. achieved by men by virtue of his good deeds are said to be paradise.<sup>5</sup> According to a tradition of the prophet the rivers of Egypt, Iraq and Iran are said to be the rivers of Paradise.<sup>6</sup>

The word 'Ĥūr with its masculine gender 'Aḥwar' has at least been used four times in the Qur'ān along with the Paradise. The word 'Ḥaurā' sprung from 'Ĥūr' stands in plural number of both feminine and masculine genders. The habitation and provision in paradise have been proclaimed by Almighty for men and women both on account of the merits of their deeds. It appears from the words which bear the mention of the Ĥūrs that they have no concern with the worldly desires and lusts.<sup>7</sup> It is, of course, not that there is an actual existence of fairies in Paradise. But man will gain therein all that he loved in the world most. Thus, the Ĥūrs of paradise:

1. The Holy Qur'ān Ibrāhīm : 23-26.

2. Ibid., as interpreted by Maulvi Mohammad Ali p. 517, footnote.

3. Ibid., Muḥammad : 16, Al-Ghā'siyah 4-6, 9-12 etc.

4. Ibid., Al-Mu'āmin : 6.

5. Ibid., Ar-Raḥmān : 46.

6. Muslim Vol. II, p. 351.

7. The Holy Qur'ān Aṣ-Ṣāffāt : 48. Ad-Dukhān : 54, Al-Wāqī'ah : 36.

are nothing but the worldly damsels, who are ever Hūrs for their lovers. Therefore, the achievement of Hūrs is nothing but the achievement of beloved ones, such as, Laylā by Majnūn, Sītā by Rāma. Hīra by Rānjhā and so on. Maulvi Mohammad Ali has already supported my views on this point in his commentary on the Holy Qur'ān.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, according to a tradition of Muḥammad God says that 'whatever fruit has been prepared by God for His bondmen has no concern either with the perceiving of the eyes, the hearing of the ears or any feeling, experience or imagination of human heart and mind.'<sup>2</sup>

The Gita also describes the attainment of Heaven and Hell allegorically, with the simile of a pīpal tree, stating, 'He who knows the pīpal tree, which is said to be imperishable with its roots in God, whose stem is represented by Creator and whose leaves are the Vedas is a knower of the true import of the Vedas. Its branches in the shape of the various species of beings, nourished by the three Guṇas or qualities of nature and having sense-enjoyments for their tender leaves, extend both downwards and upwards and its roots in the shape of egoism, the feeling of meum and vain desires, which get the soul tied down, according to one's action in this mortal world are also spread in all regions—higher and lower. Its nature what it is stated to be, is not actually perceived here, for it has neither beginning nor end, nor even steadiness. Therefore, cutting asunder this pīpal tree, whose roots are so deep-laid by the formidable weapon of dispassion one should diligently seek that supreme state, having reached which, one never returns to this mortal world and uttering to himself, 'I seek refuge in the primal being from whom has sprung this beginningless flow of creation', one should meditate on Him. Those undeluded ones, who are above pride and infatuation, who have got over the vice of attachment and dwell constantly in identity with God and whose desires have totally disappeared—being aloof from the pairs of opposites, they attain that imperishable supreme Abode (Paradise).'<sup>3</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān as interpreted by Maulvi Mohammad Ali, p. 87.  
Foot-note.

2. Hadith-Bukhārī.

3. Bhagavadgītā 15 : 1—5.

It has been unveiled form what has been attempted above that how similar are the Gītā and the Qur'ān in connection with the conception of Heaven and Hell. The conditions of salvation and entitling one to Heaven and the Hell are allegorically described by these scriptures. The man and his deeds are mentioned here through the example of a pīpal tree. The tree in fact, is the man himself, being the soul imperishable in him. Its roots are in God means that man is a fragment of God or His own.<sup>1</sup> The leaves of this tree are the Vedas, means that man's deeds should be done in accordance with the Vedic injunctions. Its branches are nothing but the different species of living beings such as righteousness, desire, anger, greed etc. Being downwards and upwards of these branches means that these mental tendencies of man lead him to Hell (the lower abode) and paradise (the higher abode) according to his deeds. To cut down this pīpal tree' means to kill one's egoism, feeling of meum and wicked desires etc. Moreover, the Gītā does not recognize worldly pleasures too inferior in comparison with the pleasures of paradise, as it says, 'If slain in the battle, you will attain paradise or gaining victory you will enjoy the sovereignty of the earth.'<sup>2</sup>

Thus we see that even the style of mentioning the attainment of Heaven and Hell in both the scriptures is also the same in its intrinsic nature. If there is any difference between the Gītā and the Qur'ān regarding the conception of Heaven and Hell, it may occur in connection with the detailed and brief descriptions. The Gītā does not describe the conditions and situations of the Heaven and Hell in detail, while the Qur'ān pays more and more attention towards these. This difference is by virtue of the time, place and circumstances of both the scriptures in which they were originally preached, along with the capability of their followers to understand them. The Indian generality, on account of its being advanced in the sacred literature, was already well aware of the conditions of Heaven and Hell, while the Arabs by virtue of their lack

1. Bhagavadgītā 15 : 7. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 156.

2. Bhagavadgītā 2 : 37.



of knowledge and barbarism were not familiarized with them. Moreover, the Arabs were so backward and wandering in those days that they could not tread on the right path without making them afraid of the flaming fire of Hell. This is why, the Gītā and the Qur'ān both, even after conceiving the Heaven and Hell in the similar terms, the former describes their conditions in brief, while the latter in detail.

### *Divine Decrees :*

The Gītā and the Qur'ān equally conceive the divine decrees. God has determined the fate of all creatures beforehand, leaving nothing in their hands to do anything of their own. A true believer of the divine decrees will heartily appreciate the Mīr's conviction, 'God does everything of His own accord, we people are blamed in vain.'<sup>1</sup> The Qur'ān specifically declares about the pre-destination of beings by revealing, 'As for the disbelievers, whether they are warned or not, it is all one for them, they will not believe. Because God has sealed their hearing and their hearts and on their eyes there is a covering. Theirs will be an awful doom.'<sup>2</sup>

The Gītā also admits the pre-destination of men by announcing, 'These warriors stand already slain by Me (God) ; be you only an instrument.'<sup>3</sup> Further, this concept may be described as Mr. Goyandka says, 'Though from the point of view of the world, all forms of activities are observed as taking place through the body of that person under the force of Prārabdha and the world gains a lot by such activities.'<sup>4</sup>

Having believed in the divine decrees, it becomes quite clear that any activity whatsoever of a being is done by force of his fate predestinated by God Himself. This belief gives room to believe that if man is only an instrument in doing an act, which is, really, done under the compulsion of divine decrees, then he should not be held liable for the commission

1. Jo cāhain so āp karen hain, hamko 'abath Badnām Kiya-Mīr.

2. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 6, 7, Al-An'ām : 138.

3. Bhagavadgītā 11 : 33, 34.

Bhagavadgītā by Jai Dval Goyandka, 1955, p. 400.

of any sin committed by his body, mind and speech, nor is he doer of any meritorious deed. But whatever has been done by his body, mind and speech is by force of his fortune predetermined by God. It appears from this belief that indulging in any sort of good or bad activity is no cause for any botheration to mankind regarding the rewards and punishments attached to their works. Still man is bound to do good works only as he is commanded to do so by Almighty in the Gītā and the Qur'ān along with the other scriptures of the world.

In order to indicate the omnipresence of God, the Gītā proclaims, 'The sacrifice in which the ladle or the large spoon with which the oblation is poured into the sacred fire etc. is Brahman, the oblation itself is Brahman, even so the act of pouring the same into the fire, which is again Brahman by the sacrificer who is himself Brahman —verily the goal to be achieved by him is Brahman through a sacrifice which is itself a Brahman.'<sup>1</sup>

A Muslim Sūfī opines on this point as 'He (God) Himself is the Cup, Himself Potter, Himself the Clay thereof, Himself the Drinker therefrom, Himself the Purchaser of that Cup and He Himself goes away after breaking it.' It is quite clear from this statement that God is present in every thing through His aspect of omnipresence. The same idea has also been deeplaid in the Quranic injunctions.<sup>2</sup>

The Blessed Lord makes this point more clear in the Gītā by asserting, 'God determines not the doership nor the doings of beings, nor again their contact with the fruit of action. But it is Nature that functions deriving its motive power from 'God.'<sup>3</sup> It means that God is the only able to do all things—man is nothing to do anything of his own accord.<sup>4</sup>

1. Bhagavdgītā 4 : 24, 7 : 8-11, 9 : 16-19, 10 : 20-41 and 11 : full.

2. Khud Kūzao Khud Kūzāgaro Khud Gile Kūzā, Khud Rind Subukashud. Khud Barsare ū Kūzā Kharīdār Barāmaḥ Bashakisto Rawān shud. see also Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 6, 7, 177.

3. Bhagavadgītā 5 : 14.

4. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 20.

## WORLDLY AFFAIRS

*Right Conduct :*

In order to guide mankind to right conduct the Gītā enjoins, 'He who works for the sake of God, depends on Him, is devoted to Him, has no attachment and is free from malice towards all beings, reaches the Supreme Abode of Brahman.<sup>1</sup> The seers whose sins have been washed away, whose doubts have been dispelled by wisdom, whose mind is firmly established in God and who are actively engaged in promoting the public welfare, attain Brahman, Who is all peace.<sup>2</sup> Wise man is he who acts without attachment for seeking the maintenance of the world order.<sup>3</sup> He who looks on all beings as one on the analogy of his own self and looks upon the pleasure and pain of all with a similar eye, such a Yogin is regarded as supreme.<sup>4</sup> The virtuous, who partake of what is left after sacrifice are absolved of all sins. Those sinful ones, who cook only for the sake of nourishing their own body alone, eat only sin.<sup>5</sup> And, having created mankind along with the spirit of sacrifice at the beginning of creation, the Creator, Brahman said to them, 'Do you multiply through this ; may this yield the enjoyment you seek.'<sup>6</sup>

The Qur'ān also opines in the same way on these lines as, 'righteous is he who believes in God and the Last Day, the angels, the scriptures, the prophets, and spends his wealth for love of Him to kinsfolk, the orphans, the needy, the wayfarer, those who beg and to set slaves free and to him who observes proper worship and pays the poor-rate. Those who are steadfast on their treaty when they make one and patient in tribulation and adversity are the faithful, the God-fearing.<sup>7</sup> Confine not truth with falsehood, nor knowingly conceal the truth. Seek help in patience and prayer.<sup>8</sup> Those who hide the scripture and

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1. Bhagavadgītā 11 : 55 see also 16 : 1-3.

2. Ibid., 5 : 25.

3. Ibid., 3:25.

4. Ibid., 6 : 32 see also 5 : 18.

5. Ibid., 3:13.

6. Ibid., 3:10.

7. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 177.

8. Ibid., 42, 45.

purchase a small gain therewith, they eat into their bellies nothing else than fire.<sup>1</sup> A kind word with forgiveness is better than almsgiving followed by injury.<sup>2</sup> The flesh and the blood of the sacrificed animal does reach Allāh but the piety from the sacrificer reaches Him.<sup>3</sup>

*Benevolence and Manhood :*

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both teach mankind an exhaustive lesson on benevolence by their respective discourses. The Gītā preaches benevolence through the following injunctions :

Action with a selfish motive is far inferior to this Yoga in the form of equanimity. The poor and wretched are those who crave for fruit of action.<sup>4</sup> The perfect and dear to God is he who is free from malice towards all beings, who is friendly as well as compassionate, who has no feeling of meum and is aloof from egoism, to whom joy and sorrow are alike and who is forgiving by nature, who is ever content and mentally united to God, who has subdued his mind, body, and speech and has a firm resolve, who has surrendered his mind and intellect to God.<sup>5</sup> The truly benevolent and dear to God is he, who is not a source of annoyance to the world and who never feels offended with the world, who is free from delight and anger, perturbation and fear. He who craves for nothing, who is both internally and externally pure, is clever and impartial and has risen above all distractions, who renounces the feeling of doership in all undertakings. He who neither rejoices, nor hates, nor grieves nor desires, who abandons both good and evil and is full of devotion to God, who is equal to friend and foe and likewise to honour and ignominy, who is alike to heat and cold, pleasure and pain etc. and is free from attachment, who takes praise and slander alike, who is given to contemplation and satisfied with whatever comes unasked for, without attachment to home, stable of mind and full of devotion and who fully partake of this nectar of pious wisdom.

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1. The Holy Qur'an Al-Baqarah : 174.

2. Ibid., 263.

3. Ibid., Al-Hajj : 37.

4. Bhagavadgītā 2 : 49.

5. Bhagavadgītā as trans. by Jai Dayal Goyandka, p. 265.

set forth in the form of the Gītā, who are endowed with faith and the wholeheartedly devoted to God are dear to Him.<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'ān also intends to say the same thing in this connection by revealing, 'God has decreed that men should worship none save Him and should show kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age, then do not say 'Fie' unto them, nor repulse them, but speak unto them a gracious word and pray for their well-being. The kinsman, the needy and the wayfarer should be given their dues and man should not squander his wealth in wantonness. One should not slay his children fearing a fall to poverty and should not come nigh unto adultery. It is, verily, an abomination and an evil way. Slay not the life which God has forbidden save with justice. Come not near the property of an orphan except with that which is better till he attains strength and keep your covenant. Give full measure and balance. Man should not follow that whereof he has no knowledge and should not walk on earth exultant. Be aloof from all sorts of evil. The Qur'ān further enjoins that whosoever had done evil, his sin surrounds him. Such are the rightful owners of the Hell-fire. And those who believe and do good works are the truthful claimants of the Gardens of Paradise.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, 'In all the eighteen Purāṇas Vyāsa said only two things—benevolence is for virtuousness and the violence for viciousness.'<sup>3</sup>

The same thing has been proclaimed by a Hindu saint in the words, 'In all the four Vedas and six Śāstras, there have been enjoined only two things—pleasure is attained by pleasing others and pain is gained by oppressing others.'<sup>4</sup> Bhakta poet Gosvāmī Tulasīdāsa also aims at the same thing by pronouncing, 'O brother ! there is no better religion than

1. Bhagavadgītā 12 : 15-20, 2 : 55-72, 5 : 18.

2. The Holy Qur'an-Banī-Isrā'īl : 23-39, Al-Baqarah, 177. Al-An'am : 152-154, At-Ta'tfif : 1-3. The Holy Qur'an Al-Baqarah : 81, 82.

3. Aṣṭādas'purāṇeṣu Vyāsasya Vacanadvayam. Paropakāraḥ Puṇyāya Pāpāya Parapīḍanam.

4. Cār Veda Chah Śāstra Men Bāta Likhī Hai Doi,  
Dukha Dīne Dukha hota hai sukha dīne Sukha Hoi.

doing good to others and there is no graver disbelieving than afflicting injury to others.<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'ān also enjoins the same thing by repeating—'Innallāh Yuḥibbul-Muḥsinīn', i.e., verily God loves those who do good to others benevolently.

The same point has been clarified in plain terms by many a Muslim Ṣūfī. For instance a Muslim Ṣūfī says, 'There is no way to attain salvation apart from discharging services to the fellow beings. God cannot be reached by revolving Tasbīḥ or Mālā along with muttering Divine Names, by observing prayer or by wearing rags.'<sup>2</sup> Shaikh Sa'dī opines on this point as, 'If thou avoidest distress even of a single person is better than performing pilgrimage accompanied by thousand Rak'ats of prayer at every station of thy journey to Mecca.'<sup>3</sup>

It is true that prayer, pilgrimage, fasting etc., are intended to invite mankind to benevolence, manhood and right conduct, which is the sole matter of righteousness as enjoined by the Gītā and the Qur'ān both. Therefore, he who performs prayer etc., but does evil to his fellow beings is not righteous. As the Qur'ān rightly says, 'Ah, Woe unto worshippers who are heedless of their prayer resting in doing good to others, who are seen at worship, yet refuse small kindnesses (giving alms etc.) to the poor and helping the needy.'

The Qur'ān further enjoins in this regard, 'Be you steadfast witnesses for Allāh in equity and let not hatred of any people seduce you that you do not deal justly. Therefore, man must, by all means, be a just dealer.'<sup>4</sup> God has guided mankind to the parting of the mountain ways. But man has not attempted the ascent, which is to set free a slave and to feed an orphan near of kin or some poor wretched fellow in misery in the times of hunger. And to be of those who believe and exhort one another to perseverance and pity. Their place will be on

1. Parahita sarisa dharma bahin Bhāī, Para Pīrā sama nahin Adhamāī.

2. Tarīqat Bajuz Khidmate Khalq Nest Batasbīḥo sajjādo dalq nest.

3. Cūn az dard āzād kardī kase Bih az alf rak'at bahar manzile.

4. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Māidah : 8.

the right hand—a comfortable abode. On the other hand those who disbelieve God's revelations, their place will be on the left hand—an awning abode with flaming fire.<sup>1</sup> Serve Allāh and ascribe nothing as partner unto Him. Show kindness unto parents, near kindred, orphans, the needy, the neighbour whether he be of kin or not of kin, the fellow-traveller, the wayfarer and the slaves, whom your right hands possess. Lo ! God loves not those who are proud and boastful.<sup>2</sup> He who misrepresents the religion is he who repels the orphan and urges not the feeding of the needy.<sup>3</sup>

The Qur'ān further communicates that, 'If one wants to retaliate from some one, he should punish with the like of that wherewith he was afflicted. But if he endures patiently, it is no doubt better for him. God is with those who keep their duty unto Him and who are the doers of the meritorious deeds.'<sup>4</sup> And whoso is free from his own avarice is, indeed, a successful man.<sup>5</sup> As regards the doing good even to the enemies, the Qur'ān proclaims, 'Let not your hatred of a folk who once stopped your going to the Inviolable Place of Worship seduce you to transgress, but help one another unto righteousness and pious duty. Help not one another unto sin and transgression, but keep your duty to Allāh, Who is severe in punishment.'<sup>6</sup>

*Compulsion in Religion Forbidden :*

According to the injunctions of the Gītā and the Qur'ān both, there is no compulsion in religion. The Gītā appears to be fundamentally indifferent in connection with the botherations of various religions, when it communicates — 'the wise look with the same eye on a Brāhmaṇa endowed with learning and culture, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a pariah.'<sup>7</sup> The soul of the Gitaic religion rightly rests in its statement, 'Devoted

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Balad : 10-20.

2. Ibid., Al-Nisā : 36.

3. Ibid., Al-Mā'ūn : 1-3.

4. Ibid., An-Nahl : 126-128.

5. Ibid., Al-Hashr : 9.

6. Ibid., Al-Mā'idah : 2.

7. Bhagavadgītā 5 : 18, 6 : 32.

to his own duty man attains the highest perfection in the shape of God-Realization.<sup>1</sup> This divine statement leaves no room for any compulsion in religious affairs. The Gītā, further, clarifies that one's own duty, though devoid of merit is preferable to the duty of another well executed. Even death in the performance of one's own duty brings blessedness: Another's duty is fraught with fear.<sup>2</sup> Having ordained mankind to perform their allotted duty in the above mentioned way, how can the Gītā tolerate any compulsion in religion? God is present in every thing whether animate or inanimate.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, if one worships even a stone or tree or river or anything else of the creation, he still worships God in His omnipotent or Universal form, as the Gītā clearly lays down that, 'howsoever, men approach Me (God), even so do I seek them; for all men follow my path from all sides. In this mortal world, mankind seeking the fruition of their doings worship the god, as success born of action follows quickly.<sup>4</sup> Even those devotees who endowed with faith worship other gods with some interested motive, they too worship Me (God) alone, though not in accordance with the scriptural ordinances.<sup>5</sup>

I may conclude from the above statement that if some body compels others to embrace a particular set of rules of any scripture or religion by compulsion, he commits a great sin. He is only to convey the message, his right does not extend to compulsion in religion, as Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa specifically prescribes in the Gītā as, 'This sacred teaching of the Gītā should never be imparted to a man without austerity, nor to one without devotion, nor even to him who is unwilling to hear, nor again to him who finds faults with Me (God).'<sup>6</sup>

As regards the prohibition of compulsion in religion, the Qur'ān forcefully declares in the plain terms—"There is no

1. Bhagavadgītā-18 : 45.

2. Ibid., 3 : 35, 18 : 47.

3. Ibid., 9 : 16-19, 7 : 8-11, 10 : 20-41, 11 : Full.

4. Ibid., 4 : 11, 12, 9 : 15.

5. Ibid., 9 : 23, 9 : 24-32.

6. Ibid., 18 : 67, 18 : 68-71.



compulsion in religion.<sup>1</sup> Had God willed, all mankind would have believed together. Would you, then, compel men to believe in your religion until they are disbelievers? It is not for any person to believe save by God's leave.<sup>2</sup> Allāh forbids you not those who warred not against you on account of your religion and drove you not out from your houses, that you should show them kindness and deal justly with them. Verily God loves the just dealers. But He forbids you only those who waged war against you on account of your religion and have driven you out from your houses and helped to drive you out, that you cultivate friendship with them.<sup>3</sup> The above quoted two verses are of the time when there was a great conflict between the Muslims and the non-Muslims in Arabia. Addressing the prophet Muḥammad, God preaches all mankind through His revelation, '(O Muḥammad!) Tell those who have faith in divine rules to forgive those who do not hope or are not certain of the day of resurrection, wherein they would be brought unto God, so that He may remind the people what they used to do. Whoso does right, it is for his own soul and whoso does wrong, it is against it and after all you would be brought back to Him.'<sup>4</sup> Man is further commanded in the Qur'ān—'Follow that which is inspired in thee (Muḥammad) from thy Lord; there is no God save Him; and turn away from the idolaters. Had God willed, the idolaters had not been idolatrous. We (God) have not appointed thee (Muḥammad) as a keeper or a watcher over them, nor art thou (Muḥammad) responsible for them. Therefore do not abuse their idols unto whom they pray beside God, lest they wrongfully revile God through ignorance. This is from God that every one loves his own faith, as unto every community God has made its deed seem fair. Afterwards, all will return to Him and He will inform them what they used to do.'<sup>5</sup> God

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1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 256.

2. Ibid., Yūnus : 100, 101.

3. Ibid., Al-Mumtaḥnah : 8, 9.

4. Ibid., Al-Jāthiyah : 14, 15.

5. Ibid., Al-An'am : 107-109.

inspires Muḥammad, the prophet of Islām not to convass the disbelievers to embrace Islām as against their nature-born bent of mind towards idolatry, but to address them in plain terms : 'O disbelievers ! I do not worship that which you worship, nor you worship that which I worship. And I shall not worship that which you worship, nor you will worship that which I worship. Your religion is for you and my religion is for me.'<sup>1</sup>

As regards the promulgation of the religion the Qur'ān allows man to publish the religion with certain limitations as set forth hereunder :

If you (Muslims) call them (disbelievers) to guidance they hear not and thou (Muḥammad) seest them looking towards thee, but they see not. Then keep to forgiveness and enjoin kindness as well as turn away from the ignorant. And if a slander from devil caused by some irrelevant arguments etc., wound thee to burst into anger, then seek refuge in Allāh. Lo ! He is Hearer, Knower.<sup>2</sup> If anyone of the idolaters seeks your protection, then protect him, so that he may hear the words of Allāh, if he still remains in disbelief then afterwards convey him to his place of safety. Because he is an ignorant fellow.<sup>3</sup> If one tells you a liar, then tell him, 'unto me my work and unto you your work.' You are innocent of what I do and I am innocent of what you do. Though some of them listen to your words, but can you make the deaf to hear, even though they apprehend not ? Some of them though look towards you, but can you guide the blind ? Lo ! God wrongs not mankind but they wrong themselves.<sup>4</sup> The Qur'ān suggests the best way for inviting mankind to the divine guidance by commanding, 'Call unto the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation and reason with them (disbelievers) in the better way, Lo ! God is best aware of him who goes astray from His way and He is best aware of those who go aright.'<sup>5</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Kāfirūn : 1-6.

2. Ibid., Al-A'rāf : 198-200.

3. Ibid., At-Taubah : 6.

4. Ibid., Yūnus : 42-45, Al-Baqarah : 16, 7.

5. Ibid., An-Nahl 125-128.

The meaning of the glorious Koran : M.M. Pickthall pp. 522-523.

It is quite clear from what has been examined above that the Qur'ān also like the Gītā is the keen opponent of any sort of compulsion in religion. Thus, I am sure to conclude that according to both these scriptures, whoso compels others to be converted into his own religion is an enemy to his own faith and, consequently, a great sinner.

*Prayer in the Battlefield :*

The observance of prayer is so important a duty that man is not relaxed from it even on the ground of war. The Gītā enjoins worship along with fighting in the words, 'O Arjuna ! Think of Me (God) at all times and fight. With mind and reason, thus surrendered to Me, you will doubtless come to Me.<sup>2</sup> Treating alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, get ready for the fight, then fighting in this way, you will not incur sin. The Gītā further commands in this regard 'Perform your duties (of fighting) dwelling in Yoga, relinquishing attachment and indifferent to success and failure ; equability is called Yoga.'<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'ān also sanctions worship for the fighters in the following way :

'O believers ! when you meet an army, hold firm and think of God much. When you (Muhammad) are among the fighters, arrange their worship for them, then let only a party of them stand with you for worship and the rest take their arms. Then, when they have performed their prostrations, let them join the rear and let another party, which has not observed prayer come and let them worship with you, and let others, who have worshipped take their precautions and their arms. Those who disbelieve long for you to neglect your arms and baggage so that they may attack you once for all. It is no blame on you to lay aside your arms, if rain impedes you or you are sick. But take your precautionary measures. When you have performed the prescribed acts of worship, remember your Lord standing, sitting and reclining. And when you are in safety,

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1. Bhagvadgītā 2 : 38, 48. 3 : 8-10, 30, 8 : 7, 18 : 59, 60.

observe proper worship. Worship at fix hours is enjoined for believers.<sup>1</sup>

*Righteousness :*

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both are very keen to preach mankind to perform their allotted duties in the way of Almighty for His sake only and surrendering all actions to Him, for example :

The Gītā says, 'He who works, offering all actions to God and shaking off attachment, remains untouched by sin, as the lotus-leaf by water.'<sup>2</sup> Therefore, dedicating all actions to Me (God) with your mind fixed on Me, the self of all, freed from hope and the feeling of meum and cured of mental disbalance O Arjuna ! Be ready for doing your duty of fighting.<sup>3</sup>

The Qur'ān also says the same thing by revealing, 'Call not 'dead', those who are slain i.e., 'Fi Sabīlillāh' 'in the way of Allāh' Nay, they are surviving, only you perceive not. And the likeness of those who spend their wealth in the God's way is as the likeness of a grain which grows seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. God gives increase manifold to whom He wills.<sup>4</sup> The alms are only for those who are poor and needy and those who collect them, those whose hearts are to be reconciled, i.e., the people of Mecca who were converted after the capture of the city and to free the prisoners and debtors for the cause of Allāh, such as, erecting mosque etc., and for the wayfarer. This is a duty incumbent on all beings imposed by God, the Knower, the Wise.<sup>5</sup>

What the Gītā, further, opines on this point is, 'Whatever you (Arjuna and all mankind) do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer as oblation to the sacred fire, whatever you give as alms and whatever you do by way of penance, dedicate it all to Me (God).<sup>6</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān An-Nisā : 102, 103 Al-Baqarah : 239.

2. Bhagavadgītā 5 : 10.

3. Ibid., 3 : 30.

4. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 154, 261 etc.

5. Ibid., At-Taubah : 60 etc.

6. Bhagavadgītā 9 : 27.

God commands His apostle Muḥammad in the Qur'ān by inspiring him to say, 'My worship, my sacrifice, my living and dying are all for God, the Lord of the worlds.'<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with the ordinances of the Gītā and the Qur'ān both, man should perform his allotted duties with the equable frame of mind in the pairs of opposites—pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, success and failure etc.' and without attachment to the fruit of his actions. The Gītā designates such actions as, 'Niṣkāma Karma' while the Qur'ān as, 'Ikhlās.'

The Gītā announces in this connection that 'your right is to work only, but never to the fruit thereof. Let not the fruit of action be your object, nor let your attachment be to inaction. But perform your duties dwelling in Yoga, abandoning attachment and indifferent to success and failure ; for equilibrium is called Yoga.'<sup>2</sup>

What the Qur'ān opines on this point is, 'Remember the name of thy Lord and devote thyself with a complete devotion.'<sup>3</sup> Imām Razi commented on this verse as, 'Whosoever desires reward for his good works or wills to escape from the result of his evil-deeds is not attachmentless. And who is ever engaged only in the act of worshipping or in gaining knowledge is also not wholly devoted to God. On the contrary if all his works and worship are dedicated to God alone, he alone according to this verse is whole-heartedly devoted to God.'<sup>4</sup>

The Gītā, further, enjoins, 'He, who does his allotted duty without expecting the fruit of his actions is a Sanyāsin (Sāṃkhyayogin) and a Yogin (Karmayogin) both. He is no Sanyāsin or renouncer, who has only abandoned the sacred fire, in the same way, he is no Yogin, who has merely given up all activity.'<sup>5</sup>

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-An'ām : 163.

2. Bhagavadgītā 2 : 47, 48.

3. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Muzammil : 8.

4. Tafsīr-i-Kabir : Imām Razi commentary on the Holy Qur'ān-Al-Muzammil : 8.

5. Bhagavadgītā 6 : 1.

A Muslim saint Ṣufiyyān Saurī who was a great authority of Islamics proclaims in this regard, 'It is no Zuhad (relinquishment) that the rough and hard garments be worn and dry breads be eaten. But Zuhad is that one's desire and longing be overcome.'<sup>1</sup>

The Gītā says in this connection that, 'he who does his works with a selfish motive, being attached to the fruit of actions, through desires, gets tied down.'<sup>2</sup>

And the Qur'ān says that, whosoever puts his trust in God, He will suffice him.<sup>3</sup>

The Blessed Lord answers to the Arjuna's question, 'Impelled by what does man commit sin even involuntarily, as though driven by force?' as 'It is desire and anger, begotten of the element of Rajas, unable to be satisfied and grossly wicked, know these to be the enemy in this case.'<sup>4</sup> Giving stress on the same point the Lord, further, asserts that, 'Passion, anger and greed—these constitute the triple gate to hell, leading to the damnation of the soul. So, one should kill all these three.'<sup>5</sup>

Maulānā Rūm opines on this point in his Mathnavi as, 'All trouble is in desire and lust otherwise this world is full of juice under juice.'<sup>6</sup>

As concerns the means as to how to get over the desire, wrath, lust and greed, the Gītā and the Qur'ān both suggest solutions in the similar manner.

The Gītā points out that, 'he whose senses are mastered, his mind has become stable, the man dwelling on sense objects develops attachment for them, from attachment springs up desire and from desire ensues anger. From anger arises infatuation, from infatuation confusion of memory, from confusion of memory loss of reason and from loss of reason

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1. Sharḥul Minnat-Ṣufiyyān Saurī.

2. Bhagavadgītā 5 : 12.

3. The Holy Qur'ān A't-Talāq : 3.

4. Bhagavadgītā 3 : 36, 37.

5. Ibid., 16 : 21 3 : 34 etc.

6. Āfte in dar Havāo Shahbat Ast.

Warna injā sharbat andar Sharbat ast

one goes to utter ruin. But the self-controlled practisant, while enjoying the various sense-objects through his senses, which are disciplined and free from likes and dislikes attains placidity of mind. By virtue of the attainment of such tranquillity of mind, all one's sorrows come to an end and the intellect of such a person of stable mind, soon withdrawing itself from all sides, becomes firmly established in God.<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'ān also says the same thing in its own way, 'God wills to turn to you in mercy, but those who follow vain desires long for you to go tremendously astray.<sup>2</sup> There is no more wandering than him, who follows his lust without guidance from Allāh.<sup>3</sup> The Qur'ān, further, commands in this regard—'Vie one with another for forgiveness and for a paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth prepared for those who ward off evil. And those who spend of what God has bestowed on them in ease and adversity, those who control their anger and are forgiving towards mankind by nature are loved by God.'<sup>4</sup>

Supporting the above quoted Quranic views Bū 'Alī Shāh Qalandar pronounces as, 'man is he who overcomes his wrath, lust and greed.'<sup>5</sup>

Maulāna Rūm proclaims, 'Wrath and lust make man blind and gone astray from his right state.'<sup>6</sup>

To instigate mankind to be stable of mind the Gītā again enjoins, 'He whose mind has become stable is he who is unattached to everything and meeting with good and evil, neither rejoices nor recoils. But he like a tortoise who withdraws in its limbs from all sides, he withdraws his senses from the sense-objects.'<sup>7</sup>

1. Bhagavadgītā 2 : 61-65.

2. The Holy Qur'ān-An-Nisā : 27.

3. Ibid., Al-Qasas : 50.

4. Ibid., Al-i-'Imrān : 133, 134,

5. Mard Bāyad tā nihad bar nafs pā.  
Baguzarad az shahbato hīrso hawā.

6. Khashmo Shahbat mardra ahwal kunad.  
Zistqāmat Mardra abdal kunad.

7. Bhagavadgītā 2 : 57, 58.

The Qur'ān also aims at the same thing by its revealing, 'Those who have believed and whose hearts have rest in the remembrance of Allāh, certainly in His remembrance do hearts find rest.'<sup>1</sup> With the example of the stability of Abraham's mind, the Qur'ān preaches mankind to be stable of mind as, 'verily Abraham came unto his Lord with a whole-heart.'<sup>2</sup> This small phrase includes in its fold the complete idea of all the 18 verses—from 55th to 72nd of the 2nd chapter of the Gītā. For one cannot be said to be whole-heartedly devoted to God as Qur'ān says, 'without being thoroughly free from all cravings of the mind, satisfied in the self through the joy of the self, unperturbed in sorrows, total disappearance of the thirst for pleasures and free from passion, fear and anger.'<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, the Gītā enjoins, 'He who with reason firm and free from doubt, rejoices not on getting what is agreeable and does not feel perturbed on meeting with the unpleasant, that knower of Reality lives eternally in identity with it.'<sup>4</sup>

The Manusmṛiti also aims at the same thing in its statement as, 'the conqueror of his senses is he who neither rejoices nor recoils even after hearing, touching, perceiving, eating and smelling anything whatsoever'.

And the Qur'ān says that, 'grieve not over that which has been lost, nor exult because of that which has been given. For God does not love the prideful boasters.'<sup>5</sup>

According to a tradition of the prophet, 'He shall only be benefitted in truth, whose heart has been cleansed by God for faith and has made his heart whole, tongue true, self confident, mind stable, ear audible and eye perceptible.'<sup>6</sup>

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1. The Holy Qur'ān Ar-Rā'd : 28.

2. Ibid., Aṣ-Ṣaffāt : 83, 84.

3. Bhagavadgītā 2 : 55, 56.

4. Ibid., 5 : 20.

5. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Hādīd : 23.

6. Hadith-Shuabul Imān.



An Iranian Sūfī justifies the equanimity of mind in the words, 'We neither overjoyed on attaining prosperity, nor felt pain on meeting with a loss. Before our courage whatever came of pleasure and pain, came as a guest and went away.'<sup>1</sup>

Thus we see that the Gitaic term 'Sthitaprajña' is equally conceivable by the Islamic term 'Qalb-i-Mu'tamainnah' or 'Nafs-i-Mu'tamainnah'.<sup>2</sup> These terms aim at what has been set forth above.

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both recognize the greatness of the Gurus or Pirs (Preceptors) as they guide men to the right path through their knowledge already acquired from the scriptures.

Showing the importance of the preceptors, the Gītā proclaims, 'Attain this knowledge by all means, if you prostrate yourself in respect at the feet of the wise preceptors, render them all sorts of services and question them with a guileless heart again and again, thou wise seers of Reality will unveil that knowledge to you.'<sup>3</sup>

The Qur'ān also enjoins the same thing in this regard as, 'Follow the Path of him who repents unto Me (God).'<sup>4</sup>

And what Maulānā Rūm opines on this point is, 'He who wills to sit beside God, should sit beside Walīs (Sages) and devotees to Him.'<sup>5</sup>

The respect of Murshid or Guru is so important a duty that even Moses (Mūsā) who was himself a prophet fell in need of a Guru, who examined him thrice, but he failed. In the end he taught him gracious word.<sup>6</sup>

The Gitaic 'Yoga' and 'Yogi' are just equivalent to the Islamic 'Salūk' and 'Sālik'.

1. Na shādī dād sāmāne na gham āwurd nuqsāne.

Ba peshe himmate mā har chī āmad būd mahmāne.

2. Bhagavadgītā-2 : 55-72.

The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Fajr : 27, 28.

3. Bhagavadgītā-4 : 34.

4. The Holy Qur'ān Luqmān : 15.

5. Har ki khāhad hamnashini bā Khudā  
ū nashinād dar hūdūre auliā.

6. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Kāhf : 64-83.

The Gītā lays down certain rules for Yoga, for instance, 'The Yogī who has subdued his mind and body and who is above the desires and bereft of occupations, living in seclusion all by himself alone he should constantly engage his mind in meditation.'<sup>1</sup>

In a tradition, the prophet of Islām praises him who having sat alone in a cave of mountain engages himself in the remembrance of his Creator.<sup>2</sup>

The Gītā futher says, 'Having restrained all the media of perception, fixing the mind in the heart and by the controlled mind fixing the life-breath in the head and remaining steadfast in Yogic concentration on God, he who expires reciting, 'Om' (one syllabled Brahman) and dwelling on Me (God) in My absolute aspect, reaches the Supreme state.'<sup>3</sup>

Maulānā Rūm also opines the same thing in his Mathnavī as, 'Shut your eyes, lips and ears, if you would not yet perceive God, then be laughing on me in a ridiculous way.'<sup>4</sup>

#### *Work :*

The Gītā and the Qur'ān enjoin work for the maintenance of the world order. Man's duty lies in the performance of his allotted work properly as enjoined by the scriptures.

The Gītā proclaims in this regard as, 'Man does not get liberty from action without entering upon action, nor does he attain perfection merely by abandoning action. Verily no one can remain inactive even for a moment as, everyone is helplessly driven to action by his nature-born qualities.'<sup>5</sup> Therefore, always do your duty efficiently without attachment. Doing work without attachment man attains the highest goal. It is through action alone that Janaka and other wise

1. Bhagavadgītā 6 : 10.

2. Hadith-Abū Sa'īd Khadrī- Prophet. See also Ar-Ra'ad : 28.

3. Bhagavadgītā, 8 : 12, 13.

4. Cashm Bando lab bibando gosh band.  
Gar nabini sirri haq bar man bikhand.

5. Bhagavadgītā, 3 : 4, 5.

men reached perfection. Having an eye to the maintenance of the world order too, you (Arjuna and all mankind) should continue to work. As whatever a great man does, that very thing others also do. Whatever standard he sets up, the generality follow the same.<sup>1</sup> There is nothing in the three worlds for Me (The Blessed Lord) to do, nor is there any thing worth attaining unattained by Me, yet I constantly take to action. Should I (God) not engage in action unwearied at any time, great harm will affect the world, because all men follow My path in all matters. Therefore, if I do not perform work, these worlds will destroy and I shall be the Author of the confusion of castes and of the destruction of all these people.<sup>2</sup>

Thus we see that God is not bound to perform any duty but He Himself continues to work on His own accord only for the advancement of the world. Both of the Gītā and the Qur'ān agree on this point. As though to justify the workmanship of God, we may get assured on the authority of His ninety nine attributory names,<sup>3</sup> to which some work has been attached. Having gone through the whole volume of the Qur'ān, one may easily realize that God is the Ever-Doing Authority, as His doership has been mentioned throughout it.

God, being Himself a Doer commanded His Prophet Muḥammad to preach mankind as, 'O my people! Work according to your power, Lo! I (Muḥammad) too am working.'<sup>4</sup> Here work is sanctioned to be done according to one's power or capacity. One's power or capacity of working rests in nature. Therefore, according to Qur'ān also, man should perform his allotted work, as the Gītā says, 'by utilizing his nature-born qualities.'<sup>5</sup> As Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa points out mankind to do their works by following the standard set up by Himself, even so, the prophet Muḥammad does.

1. Bhagavadgītā 3 : 19-21.

2. Ibid ; 3 : 22-24.

Notes on Mohammanism-by T.P. Hughes, 1877, pp. 249-253.

4. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-An'ām : 136, Hūd : 93.

5. Bhagavadgītā, 3 : 4, 18 : 41-46 etc.

It has become quite clear from what has been examined above that none of the Gītā and the Qur'ān, discriminates among mankind on account of their birth, regarding the allotment of works to them, but both of them allot them work by virtue of their nature-born capabilities in performing a particular undertaking.

*Food :*

All beings are evolved from food,<sup>1</sup> therefore, of whatever kind is the food, of the same kind, verily its eater is.

The food, according to the Gītā is of three kinds—Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa.<sup>2</sup> Whatever quality of food, one takes he verily becomes the same. It appears quite relevant to state that, having gone through a critical study of the evolution of man minutely, one will arrive at, to conclude that the fundamental cause of man's progress and backwardness is food alone. If I would discuss this matter in a little detail, then I would rather reach the opposite extreme causing a later return to the point. Therefore, this point being itself enough for a separate research is left here as it is, catching the relevant point as the Gītā prescribes three types of food in the following manner.

The foods which promote longevity, intelligence, strength, health, happiness and delight, which are sweet, bland, nourishing and agreeable are liked by the Sāttvika type of men.<sup>3</sup>

Foods which are bitter, salted, acid, very hot, pungent, dry, burning and giving rise to pain, grief and sickness are dear to the Rājasa type of men.<sup>4</sup>

And the food which is half-cooked, insipid, putrid, stale, polluted and impure is dear to the Tāmasa quality of men.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Bhagavadgītā-3: 14.

2. Ibid., 17: 8-10.

3. Ibid., 17: 8.

4. Ibid., 17: 9.

5. Ibid., 17: 10.

Of these three categories of food, the Gītā prefers the Sāttvika type thereof, which includes for the dwellers of the hot countries like India, with the exception of those of sea-side, all food-grains—wheat, barley, maize, millet etc., all pulses—gram, peas, lentil, etc. all vegetables—potatos, jack-fruits, pumpkin, carrot etc. all green and dry fruits—bananas, mangoes, pine-apples, pomegranates, grapes, fig, tamarind, dates, chestnuts, cocounts, cashewnuts, musk-melon, water-melon etc., milk and its products—Ghee, Butter, cheese, whey, cream, sweets etc. and other products of earth like sugar, groundnuts and so on. Man's diet should be regulatory having full regard of the digestion of a particular food.<sup>1</sup>

The Gītā does not forbid meat for those who live on hunting by their nature-born qualities. According to the natural law, the nearest food suits a man, therefore, those who are dwellers on a sea-shore would naturally prefer to include fish in their food. The Gītā does not forbid meat for anyone who is driven by necessity for the safety of life, as meat is obtained by killing an animal or a bird. It is, no doubt, a sin, but man's life is more valuable than saving an animal or a bird. Therefore for saving a man's life an animal or a bird can rightly be slaughtered. I am quite confident to assert that the Gītā, permits meat for Arabians and all others whose chief diet is meat alone, but, not for Indians and others who may avail much more provision for their dietary in the best possible form from God's earth. The Gītā, however, allows Bengalis and Madrasis etc., who cannot pull on without it, to eat meat, as it comes into the boundary of food's definition set forth by it.

What the Qur'ān suggests for food is, all sorts of fruits, such as, olives, pomegranates, dates, products of water—fish, Singhārās etc.<sup>2</sup> The Qur'ān commands, 'O mankind ! Eat of that which is lawful and wholesome in the earth. But eat of the good things which We (God) have provided you and

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1. Bhagvadgītā-6 : 16, 17.

2. The Holy Qur'ān—Al-An'ām : 142, 143, An-Nahl : 69.

render thanks to God.<sup>1</sup> In this statement in connection with food, the Qur'ān appears to be very keen to prefer for food, all that which is produced from the earth. Therefore, it is quite advisable to include in food all foodgrains, pulses, vegetables, all green and dry fruits, milk and its produces as enlisted in the food prescribed by the Gītā above. The Qur'ān, further, sanctions for food all meat except carrion, blood, swine flesh, that which has been dedicated unto any other than God, the strangled, the dead by beating, the dead through falling from a height, that which has been slaughtered by goring of the horns, the devoured of wild beasts, saving that which you make lawful by the deathstroke, that which has been immolated unto idols and that which you swear by the divining arrows. But whosoever is forced by hunger, not by will, there is no blame on him.<sup>2</sup>

The basic intention of the Qur'ān in forbidding these things rests mostly in the reason that in the above prohibition for food the name of Allāh is not invoked upon, for no food is lawful, unless the name of Allāh is invoked upon it.<sup>3</sup>

The utterance of the divine name over food can be justified by the Gītā also on the authority of its statement, 'The acts of sacrifice, gift and penance as enjoined by the Śāstras are always commended with the utterance of the word 'Om' by those who are entitled to chant the Vedas (sincere students of the Vedas).<sup>4</sup> And also, as remembrance of God has been enjoined by the Gītā in carrying on all undertakings of life,<sup>5</sup> therefore, without invoking the divine name upon food it should, by all means, be unlawful by the Gītā also.

The total boycott of the swine-flesh by the Qur'ān is justified on the grounds that the chief diet of the swine is filth, stool and foul matter, therefore its flesh is the essence of the

1. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 168, 172.

2. Ibid ; Al-Māidah : 3, Al-Baqarah : 173.

3. Ibid ; Al-Ḥajj : 36, Al-Māidah : 4.

4. Bhagavadgītā-17 : 24.

5. Ibid ; 8 : 7.

same, which should, by all means, be forbidden. From the definition of the unlawful food set forth by the Gītā, it appears quite reliable that the Gītā also would not permit swine-flesh for food to a Sāttvika type of man if he is entitled to eat meat under the compulsion of the geographical circumstances.<sup>1</sup> The exception is ever secured in connection with the both.

*The Meaning of the Words 'Yoga' and 'Jihād'*

Having gone through the Gītā and the Qur'ān minutely one may easily observe that the Sanskrit word 'Yoga' as used in the Gītā means the same as the Arabic word 'Jihād' used in the Qur'ān. The word 'Yoga' springs from the Sanskrit root  $\sqrt{yuj}$  meaning 'to join' and its root meaning is 'the state of union', 'combination', 'addition', 'co-existence', 'staying together', 'means', 'device', 'method', 'the thing to be done' that is the action which is necessary for acquiring that state. And the word 'Yoga' in the compound 'Yogakṣema' means acquiring such things as one has not acquired.<sup>2</sup> Though this word has been used in the Gītā four or five times in the sense of Pātanjala Yoga,<sup>3</sup> but it is commonly used in the meaning of 'means', 'skilful device', 'method', 'the thing to be done', 'union' 'combination' 'addition' 'joining together', etc. This word also signifies the divine skill or the wonderful powers of the Blessed Lord.<sup>4</sup> Further it means some 'special skill', 'device' 'intelligent method', or 'graceful way of performing duties', etc., etc.<sup>5</sup>

The meaning of the Quranic word 'Jihād' goes side by side with that of the Gitaic one 'Yoga' as explained here-under :

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1. Bhagavadgītā-17 : 9, 10.
  2. Amarako'sa-3. 3. 22.
  3. Bhagavadgītā-9 : 22.
  4. Ibid ; 6 : 12, 23.
  5. Ibid ; 7 : 25, 9 : 5, 10 : 7, 11 : 8 etc.
  6. Ibid ; 2 : 50,

According to the Qur'ān the word 'Jihād' means 'to amend and reform a thing in a graceful manner' that is 'to try one's level best for a meritorious undertaking'. The phrase 'Jihādan Fi Sabīlillāh' i.e., 'the strife in the way of Allāh' is of repeated in the Qur'ān. The migration of the Muslims of Mecca to Habsha on account of the aggression of the disbelievers is designated as an act of 'Jihād' by the Qur'ān.<sup>1</sup> The most excellent 'Jihād' is for the conquest of self, as has been enjoined that he who is slow to anger is better than the mighty and he who rules his spirit than he takes a city.<sup>2</sup> The meaning of the word 'Jihād' to be 'to apply one's skilful devices for one's reformation' rests in when God commands the prophet saying, 'O prophet! strive against the disbelievers and hypocrites.' It means, 'O Muḥammad! you must try your best applying skilful devices for leading disbelievers and hypocrites to the Divine Guidance.' It is never meant that he should fight against them for pressing them to embrace his religion. How can it be meant when there is no compulsion in religion.<sup>3</sup> On the authority of these verses Maulvi Mohammad Ali opines that, 'meaning the word 'Jihād' as fighting with weapons is mere an indication of non-familiarity with Arabic language.'<sup>4</sup> All meritorious deeds and virtues, such as, almsgiving feeding the poor and the orphans, helping others, enduring hardships in the way of Allāh etc., come under the enclosure of 'Jihād'. The habitual performance of worship, fasting, almsgiving etc., is called 'Mujāhadā' and the agent thereof 'Mujāhid' in Islām. These two words are originated from the word 'Jihād'. Therefore Jihād in Islām means, 'to perform actions as enjoined by the scriptural ordinances in graceful way and applying skilful and intelligent methods having regard of the maintenance of the world order.'

Thus we have seen from what has been attempted above that the absolute similarity between the words 'Yoga' and

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The Holy Qur'ān Al-Anfāl : 72, 74, 75, An-Naḥl : 110.

2. Glances at Islam-by Valgi Govind Ji Desai, ed. 1939, p. 24.

The Holy Qur'ān-At-Taubah : 73, Al-Baqarah : 256, At-Tahrim : 9.

The Holy Qur'ān as interpreted by Mohammad Ali, p. 720.



'Jihād' of the Gītā and the Qur'ān respectively, has been established in a few words, which are intended merely as instances.

### MISCELLANEOUS

#### *Divine Affairs :*

The Gitaic word 'Yajña' for sacrifice means 'to come near' or 'to be combined'. The Quranic words 'Qurbān' and 'Zulfa' etc., also mean the same. According to both these scriptures, the performance of sacrifice is intended to make man nearest God or absorbed in Him.

As the Gītā admits the authority of the older scriptures, therefore, it also admits the authority of the Nārada-Smṛti which proclaims that the women are the farms and the men the farmers to sow seeds in them.<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'ān also says the same thing by revealing, 'Your women are farms for you to cultivate, therefore go to your farms, as you like and send good deeds in the form of the production of righteous offsprings for your soul.'<sup>2</sup>

During the ages of the Nārada Smṛti and the Qur'ān the problem of population explosion was not causing concern to the society. On the contrary, there was a general craze for larger number of children for increasing population, which was not in proportion to the land to live on. The agricultural development on the vast surface of the land was decreasing due to lack of population thereon. Thus keeping in view the time, place and circumstances such preachings on begetting more and more children were laid down in these scriptures, which are absolutely out of tune these days. Now the situation is different and the family planning is a must not only for human beings, but also for a certain categories of animals.

What Garbhopaniṣad opines about holding intercourse with

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1. Gītā Aur Qur'an Pt. Sundar Lal ed. 1946, p. 253.

2. The Holy Qur'ān, Al-Baqarah : 223.

the wife is as, 'for the maintenance of the family traditions by producing sons and grandsons for attaining salvation, a provision for marrying woman is sanctioned and by protecting her the religion, wealth, etc., are protected.<sup>1</sup> Here we see that the Garbhonaiṣad protects the rights of women by suggesting mankind that one's religion is not secured through the ill-treatment of women. Therefore men, must, by all means, please women by giving them their dues. The Gītā also appears to be very keen regarding the safeguard of the women as, 'with the preponderance of vice, the women of the family become corrupt and with the corruption of women, there ensues an intermixture of castes. The intermixture of castes lead the destroyers of the race along with the race itself to hell. Deprived of the offerings of lumps of rice and water etc. (Śrāddha, Tarpaṇa etc.), the manes of the family also fall.'<sup>2</sup>

The safeguard of the position of women has already been discussed in detail on the authority of the Qur'ān in the seventh chapter of this volume.

It should be borne in mind that neither the Gītā nor the Qur'ān allows man to hold intercourse even with his own wife only for the fulfilment of his lust and desire, but mainly for the multiplication of the race and thereby for the maintenance of the social order.

Regarding the fruits born of action, the Gītā announces that, 'those who worship gods go to gods, those who worship the manes attain the manes, those who adore the spirits reach the spirits and those who take to the worship of Me (God) come to Me. That is why My devotees are never subjected to rebirth.'<sup>3</sup>

What the Qur'ān opines on this point is, 'Whoso desires the harvest of the Hereafter, God gives him increase therein. And whoso desires the harvest of the world, He gives him thereof, but he shall have no portion in the Hereafter.'<sup>4</sup>

1. Garbhonaiṣad by Swami Muni Mangal Hari, Ed. 1936, p. 24.

2. Bhagavadgītā-1 : 41, 42, etc.

3. Ibid; 9 : 25, 7 : 23.

4. The Holy Qur'ān Ash-Shūrā : 20.

As regards the life of this world and Hereafter both of them prefer the life of the Hereafter. The Gītā regards this world to be perishable so does the Qur'ān.<sup>1</sup>

The Gītā says, 'The worldly pleasures which are born of sense-contacts are verily sources of pain. They have a beginning and an end. The world is without any foundation and altogether false. Therefore he, whose reason is not affected by worldly objects and activities is not bound by sin. This is why, a wise does not indulge in them (the worldly achievements).'<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'ān says on this point that, 'the life of this world is but a pastime and a game. The home of Hereafter is life indeed. The life of this world is but comfort of illusion. The Qur'ān repeatedly proclaims about the life of this world as, 'know that the life of this world is only a play, an idle talk, pageantry boasting and rivalry in respect of wealth and children.....The life of the world is but a matter of illusion.'<sup>3</sup>

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both honour the martyrs with the same spirit. The Gītā says, 'If you will be slain in the battle fought for the right cause, you will attain paradise.'<sup>4</sup>

The Qur'ān also says in this regard, 'Call not those who are slain in the way of Allāh, 'dead'. Nay, they are surviving in heaven only you perceive not?''<sup>5</sup>

Giving stress on the oneness of the Supreme worshipable Deity Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa announces in the Gītā, 'casting away all religions, seek refuge in God alone. And the Qur'ān also says the same thing by declaring - 'Your God is

1. Bhagavadgītā-8 : 19, 9 : 7, 10 : 14 : 2 etc.

The Holy Qur'ān Al-'Aṣr : 1-3, Al-Qāri'ah : 1-11.

2. Bhagavadgītā-5 : 18, 22, 16 : 8, 18 : 17, 14 : 24 etc.

3. The Holy Qur'ān Al-'Ankabūt : 64, Āl-i-'Imrān : 184,

Al-Hadīd : 20, Ar-Ra'd : 26 etc.

4. Bhagavadgītā-2 : 37.

5. The Holy Qur'ān Al-Baqarah : 14, Āl-i-'Imrān 168.

One God, there is no God save Him, the Beneficent, the Merciful.<sup>1</sup>

According to the injunctions of the Gītā and the Qur'ān every auspicious act should be commenced with the mattering of the divine name. The Gītā expressly sanctions the word 'Om' as one syllabled-Brahman to be mentioned, while the Qur'ān '*Bismillāhirrahmānirrahīm*', i.e., 'with the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful,' impliedly, as every Sūrah of the Qur'ān begins with it except the Sūrah '*At-Taubah*' by virtue of its containing stern commandments against idolaters.<sup>2</sup>

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both regard the fig tree to be holy.<sup>3</sup>

As Arjuna was not able to behold the Divine Splendour so was Moses (Mūsa) a Quranic prophet.

As the Qur'ān declares all mankind to be the '*Ashraf-ul-Makhlūqāt*' i.e., 'the best kind of the creatures' so does the Gītā practically, as it deals with the special mention of only mankind ignoring other creatures—animals, beasts, birds, worms, insects, reptiles and so on.

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both prescribe endurance for the best life of man.<sup>4</sup>

The Both condemn those who expire during the predominance of Tamas or disbelief.<sup>5</sup>

The Gītā says about the devotees of God that those who devoutly worship God, dwell in Him and He also stands revealed in them. And the Qur'ān says, 'Remember God, He will remember you.'<sup>6</sup>

Whatever has been depicted in the Gītā in connection with

1. Bhagavadgita : 18 : 66, the Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 163, etc.

2. Ibid : 17 : 24, The Meaning of the Glorious Koran: p. 191.

3. Ibid : Trans. by Jai Dayal Goyandka, 1955, p. 218.

The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Tin : 1.

4. Ibid : 16 : 1, The Holy Qur'ān-Āl-I-'Imrān : 200, Al-Baqarah : 45.

5. Bhagavadgita-14 : 15.

The Holy Qur'ān At-Taubah : 84, An-Nisā : 18.

6. Bhagavadgita-9 : 29, The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 152.

the meditation on God, the Qur'ān summarizes it as, 'Call upon your Lord humbly and in secret.'<sup>1</sup>

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both equally pay attention towards the ablution. For example, the Gītā says in this regards as, 'who is both internally and externally pure...is dear to God.'<sup>2</sup>

What the Qur'ān enjoins on this point is, 'O believers ! When you rise up for prayer wash your faces and hands upto the elbows, lightly rub your heads and wash your feet upto the ankles. And, if you are polluted, purify yourselves. If you are sick or on a journey or anyone of you comes from the privy or you have had contact with women and you find no water, then go to clean high soil and rub your faces and hands with some of it.'<sup>3</sup>

It is surely worthy of note that the geographical conditions affect the dwellers of a country along with its codes. As the water is hardly available in the desert of Arabia, therefore relaxation has been made to its people even in the Qur'ān by allowing them to purify themselves through rubbing their faces and hands with clean soil. On the other hand, there is no lack of water in India being easily available everywhere the Gītā pays no attention towards pointing out some alternative in its wantage.

Coining similitudes for God is forbidden by the Gītā and the Qur'ān both.<sup>4</sup>

According to the communications of the Gītā and the Qur'ān both, no one can be a believer in God unless he carries on His biddings laid down in the scriptures.

#### *Worldly Affairs :*

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both preach man to be of stable mind, being aloof from those who waver.<sup>5</sup>

1. Bhagavadgītā 6: 11-32, The Holy Qur'ān-Al-A'raf: 55, Āl-I-'Imrān: 17..

2. Ibid., 12: 16, 17: 14, 16, 16: 1 etc.

3. The Holy Qur'ān Āl-Mā'idah: 6, An-Nisā: 43, Al-An'am: 121, etc..

4. Bhagavadgītā: 18: 66, The Holy Qur'ān-An-Nahl: 74.

5. Ibid; 2: 55-72, Āl-I-'Imrān: 60.

Both these scriptures encourage the believers who fight for the right cause.<sup>1</sup>

Modesty has been proclaimed by the Gītā and the Qur'ān both.<sup>2</sup>

Overcoming evil with good is considered the best in these two scriptures.<sup>3</sup>

The trading has been allowed by the injunctions of these scriptures.<sup>4</sup>

Mankind are ordained to keep their duties to God.<sup>5</sup>

Man is strictly commanded by both not to grieve over the wrong-doing folk.<sup>6</sup>

The prideful boaster or the exultant who say, 'I am wealthy and high-born' is equally condemned by the communications of both the scriptures. Here one point appears to be worth noting that 'Kubera', 'the god of riches' of the Hindu legends appears to be 'Qārūn' or 'Korah' who is mentioned in the Qur'ān as an exultant one by virtue of his immense riches.<sup>7</sup>

According to the Gītā and the Qur'ān both, God does not accept any ritualistic performance done without faith. For instance, the Gītā says, 'Sacrifice, gift and penance and any other act done without faith is declared as non-existent, having existence neither here nor Hereafter.'<sup>8</sup>

What the Qur'ān enjoins on this point is, 'the flesh and the blood of the sacrificed animal does not reach God, but the faith of the sacrificer reaches Him.'<sup>9</sup>

1. Bhagavadgītā-11 : 33, 34, 2:37 etc. The Holy Qur'ān-Āl-i-Imrān-139, 124, 125, Al-Anfāl : 66.

2. Ibid ; 16 : 2, The Holy Qur'ān-An-Nūr : 30.

3. Ibid ; 16 : 2, The Holy Qur'ān-Ar-R'ad : 22.

4. Ibid ; 18 : 44 ; The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 198.

5. Ibid ; 18 : 64-66, The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 41, 212, 231, 233, Āl-i-Imrān : 50, 102 etc.

6. Ibid ; 2 : 11 ; The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Māidah : 26.

7. Ibid ; 16 : 15, 16, The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Qaṣaṣ : 76-82.

8. Ibid ; 17 : 28.

9. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Ḥajj : 37.

Both these scriptures lead man to the religion of peace.<sup>1</sup>

Lifting up one's self or keeping it good is very eagerly ordained by the both.<sup>2</sup>

The Gītā and the Qur'ān both seem to be very keen on preaching mankind to proclaim their real parentage.<sup>3</sup>

The implied prohibitions of the Gītā embrace all express ones of the Qur'ān.<sup>4</sup>

The both of these Holy Volumes pay a careful attention towards the safeguard of the decency of women. The prescription of observing 'Pardah' by the Qur'ān and keeping aloof from the preponderance of vice, according to the Gītā aim at the same thing.<sup>5</sup>

I may, however, add that there is no need of observing pardah by women in a civilized society as there is no danger of eve-teasing or hooliganism by hoodlums. Placing women in pardah is a clear stumbling-block in the way of all round development of a nation, as almost a half population is chained behind pardah in the four walls of a house-hold.

The refraining from the noxious talks and malicious gossip is equally forbidden by the Gītā and the Qur'ān.<sup>6</sup>

According to both, the divine preachers are not allowed to force deniers to embrace the divine guidance.<sup>7</sup>

Man is commanded by both to speak words straight to the point.<sup>8</sup>

1. Bhagavadgītā-2 : 55-72, 12 : 13-20, 16 : 1-3 etc.

The Holy Qur'ān Hūd : 69, Ar-R'ad : 22, etc.

2. Bhagavadgītā-6 : 5, 6. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 223, 265, An-Nisā : 40, Yunus : 109 etc.

3. Bhagavadgītā-1 : 41-44, The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Aḥzāh : 5.

4. Bhagavadgītā-by Jai. D. Goyandka, 1955, pp. 372-398.

The Holy Qur'ān-Banī Isrā'il : 23-40, Al-Baqarah : 219, Al-Mā'idah : 3, etc.

5. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Aḥzāh : 59.

Bhagavadgītā-1 : 41-44,

6. Ibid., 16 : 2, The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Aḥzāh : 48.

7. Ibid., 18 : 67, The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Muzamnil : 11.

8. Ibid., 16 : 2, The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Aḥzāh : 70.

Not to relent in pursuit of the enemy is equally ordained by both of these scriptures.<sup>1</sup>

Both of these scriptures though prefer endurance and returning good for evil, they do permit retaliation.<sup>2</sup>

As the Qur'ān expressly condemns the game of chance in the same way, the condemnation of gambling according to the Gītā also may be derived from the ill-effects of the battle of the Mahābhārata fought on account of the indulgence in it.<sup>3</sup>

The hatred and malicious attitude towards any of one's fellow beings is absolutely forbidden by the Gītā and the Qur'ān both.<sup>4</sup>

It has, authentically, been ascertained from what has been examined above that the Gītā and the Qur'ān both are equally similar in all matters of human life. Truly speaking there is not even a single point of dissimilarity between these books. Though some points of dissimilarity between these appear to those alone whose comparative study of these two scriptures is not deep-laid. A thing which is enjoined by the Gītā expressly, the same has also been supported by the Qur'ān impliedly, and vice versa. As the Qur'ān is a bulky volume, therefore, it teaches mankind through examples of more prophets and meritorious persons of the past, but the Gītā is a small scripture, so it only provides examples of a few meritorious persons, such as Janaka etc., to make its lesson more impressive.<sup>5</sup>

It is, unavoidably, true that no code on earth can claim to be complete in itself. Therefore, it is quite natural that the Gītā and the Qur'ān, along with all scriptures of the world are

1. Bhagavadgītā 21 : 3-38 etc. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 216, 217, An-Nisā : 74, 75, 84, 104 etc.
2. Ibid., 2 : 31-38 and so on. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 178, Al-Māidah : 45 and so on.
3. The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Baqarah : 219, Al-Māidah : 91.
4. Bhagavadgītā-12 : 13, 16 : 2, 3.  
The Holy Qur'ān-Al-Falaq : 5.
5. Bhagavadgītā-3 : 20,  
The Holy Qur'ān Hūd : full, Al-Qaṣaṣ : full etc.



not expected to contain all rules and regulations regarding all things of the creation for all times to come. Rules are amended and abrogated according to the demand of time, place and circumstances. And it is quite impossible and even not necessary to codify all laws in one book. So, the Gītā and the Qur'ān both can claim themselves to be complete in themselves to the extent that the mankind should utilize their intellect gifted by God Himself in accordance with the rules laid down in the scriptures. An orthodox Maulvi, may, boastfully assert that our Qur'ān is complete guidance on all matters of human life for all times to come. In the same way, a Paṇḍita, may, pridefully proclaim that the Gītā contains all things in its fold for the advancement of humanity. But I believe that neither the Gītā nor the Qur'ān contains all directions concerning all wisdom in connection with the social welfare for all times. For example, none of these scriptures provides guidance for mankind to vie one with another in this scientific age wholly dependent on engineering, technology, energy, ophthalmology, surgery and other sciences. Both provide every minor detail of heaven and hell to be seen after death, but they are silent on the environments of the different planets, facilitating space scientists to expedite their explorations for shifting mankind to the wider surface of Moon, Venus, Jupiter and other planets. Even America was not hinted at; it was Columbus who very late discovered it. None of these predicted that the day is not very far when dwellers of earth would establish their colonies on the planets or the baby-boom be stopped by a doomsday. It can, of course, be accepted that both of these sacred books preach mankind to cultivate their intellect to be properly utilizable in all matters of human progress with its ever changing values to cope with various situations.

Thus, I may, rightfully, conclude on the basis of what has been attempted above in all the eight chapters of this volume that in the words of Khūbullāh Shah Qualandar, 'The Gītā is the Qur'ān of India and the Qur'ān, the Gītā of Arabia', for both of them preach a valuable lesson on humanity and national integration.

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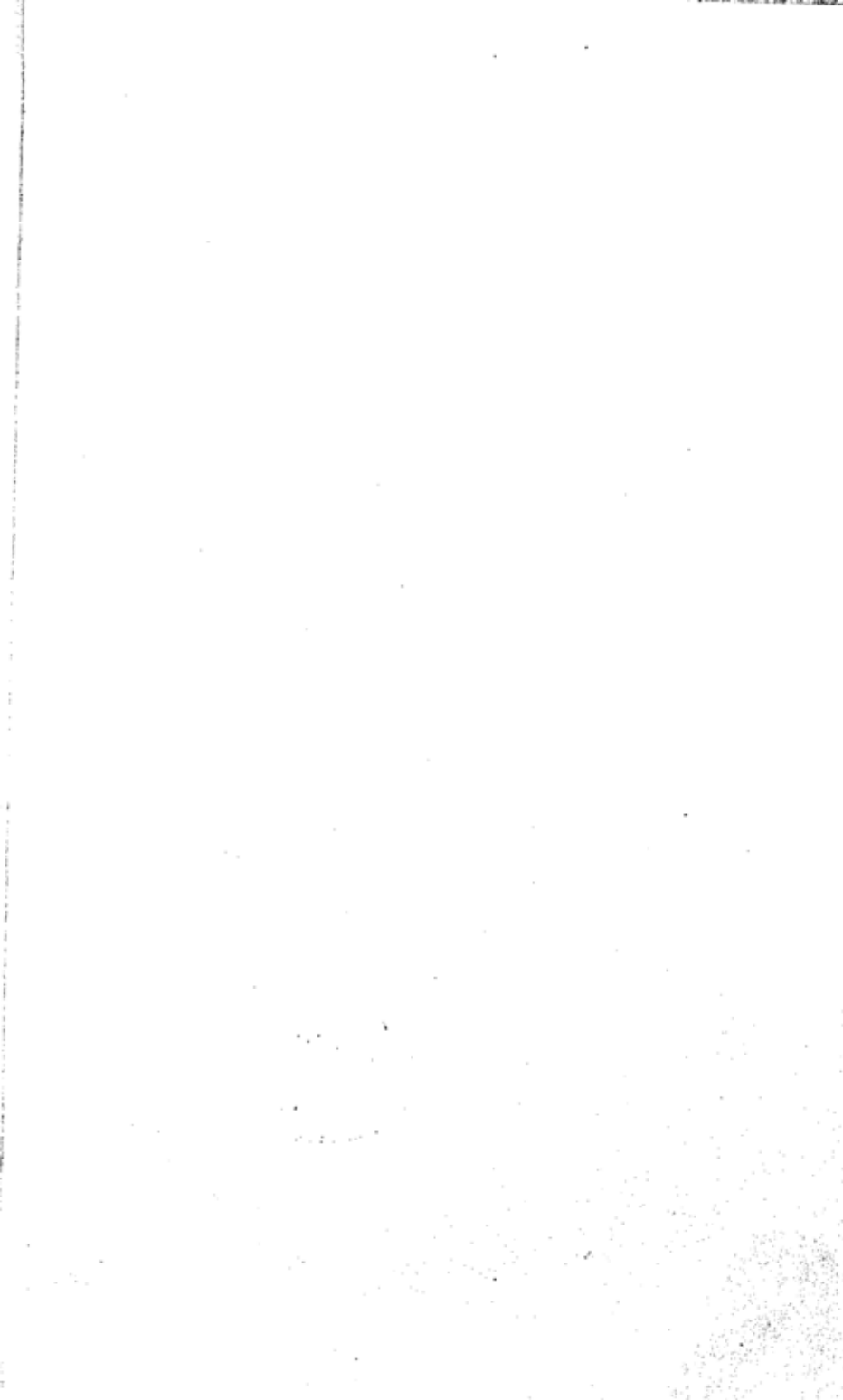
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