

BHAGAVADGITA

English translation of Sri Ramanuja's Sanskrit Commentary - Swami

Adidevananda

Chapter 10

RO

10.1 The Lord said -- Listen with rapt attention to these words which I shall utter --- words which are supreme and which give you a much wider understanding of My greatness. I shall speak out to you about the rise and growth of devotion to Me, as you are pleased with listening to My greatness and as I too love you.

10.2 However supernatural the vision and however great the knowledge of the host of the gods and the wise seers may be, they cannot comprehend My powers. They do not know My name, actions, essence, attributes etc., for the reason that I am the source in every way of these gods and great seers. I am the source of their nature and knowledge, power etc. The knowledge given to them by Me according to their meritorious deeds constitutes the cause of their being gods, the great seers etc. That knowledge is limited. Thus, they have limited knowledge and do not know the real nature of My essence. Sri Krsna proceeds to explain that knowledge about His real nature, which is beyond the grasp of gods etc., and which is the means for release from the evil that stands in the way of the rise of devotion.

10.3 He who exists 'without being born' at any particular time unlike other beings is 'unborn' in the sense of being eternal. For, this attribute

denotes a unique state distinct in kind both from insentient things which are subject to modifications, and from the self in its state of involvement in Samsara when it is united with insentient matter. In that state the birth of the self involved in matter is generated by Karma. The term 'Anadi', or without beginning, is used to distinguish the state of the Lord, which is distinct in kind, from that of the liberated state which is birthless but can be said to have a beginning. For, to the liberated self, the state of liberation has a beginning, because, in regard to this, conjunction with matter which deserves to be abandoned, existed previously. Hence the term 'Anadi' implies that the Lord is without such conjunction and does not deserve the same description. The Sruti also says: 'Him who is stainless' (Sve. U., 4.19). Thus, he who is undeluded among the mortals understands Me as 'the great Lord of the worlds,' as the Lord of the lords of the worlds. My nature is incompatible with association with evil which has to be given up. What is called 'delusion' is the wrong knowledge of taking Me as one among other entities of the same kind. To be bereft of this delusion is to be 'undeluded'. Such a person is released from all sins which stand against the rise of Bhakti to Me. The meaning is this: In this world, the king who rules over men is only like all those men. He has become a ruler by some good Karma. Such is not the case with the Lord of the gods (the Supreme Being). Even the lord of the cosmic egg (Brahma) is of the same class as other beings in Samsara, because he too is a created being coming within the threefold classification of beings according to the three innate tendencies for growth --- namely Karma-bhavana, Brahma-bhavana and Ubhaya-

bhavana. These three are described respectively as fitness to practise work alone, fitness to practise meditation alone and fitness to practise both together. Brahma comes under the third group. The Sruti also says, 'He who creates Brahma' (Sve. U., 6.18). The same is the case with all those who have acquired the eight superhuman powers like becoming atomic etc. But I, the Supreme Being, is the great Lord of the worlds. He who is not subject to the delusion of regarding Me as of the same order as others, --- such a person knows Me as distinct in kind from non-conscious matter in its states as cause and effect, from the self whether bound or free, and from everything else, on account of all of them being subject to My control. I am antagonistic to all that is evil and I am the sole centre of innumerable auspicious attributes, unsurpassed and incomparable. It is also My inherent nature to be the controller of everything. One who understands Me to be all this is released from every sin. Thus, after showing the annihilation, by meditation on His nature, of all evil impeding the rise of Bhakti, and also of the rise of devotion, through implication, by the destruction of such opposing factors, Sri Krsna now explains the way in which Bhakti develops by meditation on His sovereign power and on the multitude of His auspicious attributes:

10.4 - 10.5 'Intelligence' is the power of the mind to determine.

'Knowledge' is the power of determining the difference between the two entities --- non-sentient matter and the individual self. 'Non-delusion' is freedom from the delusion of perceiving as silver the mother-of-pearl etc., which are different from silver etc., previously observed.

'Forbearance', is a non-disturbed state of mind, even when there is a cause for getting disturbed. 'Truth' is speech about things as they are actually seen, and meant for the good of all beings. Here, the working of the mind in conformity with the ideal is intended, because the context is with reference to the working of the mind. 'Restraint' is the checking of the outgoing organs from their tendency to move towards their objects and generate evil. 'Self-control' is the restraint of the mind in the same manner. 'Pleasure' is the experience of what is agreeable to oneself. 'Pain' is the experience of what is adverse. 'Exaltation' is that state of elation of the mind caused by experiences which are agreeable to oneself. 'Depression' is the state of mind caused by disagreeable experiences. 'Fear' is the misery which springs from the perception of the cause of future sufferings. 'Fearlessness' is the absence of such feelings. 'Non-violence' is avoidance of being the cause of sorrow to others. 'Equability' is to become equable in mind whether good or bad befalls and to look upon with the same equanimity on what happens to oneself, friends and enemies. 'Cheerfulness' is the natural disposition to feel pleased with everything seen. 'Austerity' is the chastising of the body by denying to oneself pleasures, as enjoined by the scriptures. 'Beneficence' is giving to another what contributes to one's own enjoyment. 'Fame' is the renown of possessing good qualities. 'Infamy' is notoriety of possessing bad qualities. The workings of the mind which are in accordance with fame and infamy must be understood here, because it is the subject-matter of the context. Austerity and beneficence are to be understood in the same way. All these mental

faculties --- these functioning of the mind --- resulting either in activity or inactivity, are from Me alone, i.e., are dependent on My volition. Sri Krsna declares: 'Thos agents who direct the creation, sustentation etc., of all beings, have their activity dependent on My Will.'

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10.6 'The seven great Rsis of yore', namely, those seven great Rsis like Bhrgu etc., were from the mind of Brahma in the cycle of the past Manu to perpetuate the creation permanently; and the four Manas called the sons of Savarna existed for the work of eternal sustentation. All creatures in the world are their progeny. So they are the generators of this progeny as also their sustainers till the time of Pralaya. These Bhrgu etc., and the Manus, derive their mental condition from Me. Their disposition is My disposition --- they subsist on My disposition. The meaning is they follow My will.

10.7 'Supernal manifestation' is the glory (Vibhuti) of the Lord. He who in truth knows this supernal manifestation that all origination, sustentation and activity depend on Me, and also that Yoga of Mine which is in the form of auspicious attributes antagonistic to all that is evil --- such a person becomes united with the Yoga or Bhakti of an unshakable nature. Of this, there is no doubt. The meaning is: You yourself will see that the knowledge concerning the supernal manifestation and auspicious attributes of Mine will increase devotion. Sri Krsna now shows that the growth of devotion is of the form of the development of knowledge of His supreme state.

10.8 I am the 'origin', namely, the cause of originating everything in this universe consisting of wonderful sentient and non-sentient beings. From Me proceed everything. Thinking thus of My sovereignty, natural and unhindered, and knowing Me as endowed with a multitude of auspicious attributes like condescension, beauty, parental affection etc., the wise or the men of knowledge worship Me with devotion endowed as I am with all auspicious attributes. 'Bhava' is a particular disposition, here a loving disposition, of the mind. The meaning is that they worship Me with intense yearning of the heart. How?

10.9 They live with their minds 'focussed' on Me, namely, with their minds fixed on Me; with their 'Pranas', i.e., life, centred on Me --- the meaning is that they are unable to sustain themselves without Me. They 'inspire one another' by speaking about My attributes which have been

experienced by them and narrating My divine and adorable deeds. They live in contentment and bliss at all times. The speakers are delighted by their own speech, because it is spontaneous, without any ulterior motive; the listeners too feel the speech to be unsurpassingly and incomparably dear to them. They thus live in bliss.

10.10 To those 'ceaselessly united with Me,' namely, those who desire ceaseless union with Me, and who are worshipping Me, I grant with love, that same 'Buddhi-yoga' or devotional attitude of a mature state. By that they come to Me. Likewise:

10.11 To show favour to them alone, abiding in their mental activity, i.e., established as the object of thought in their mind, and manifesting the host of My auspicious attributes by the brilliant lamp called knowledge relating to Me, --- I dispel the darkness incompatible with knowledge. This darkness is born of ignorance in the form of old Karma consisting of attachment to objects other than Myself, to which they were previously habituated. Thus having heard of the Lord as having a host of auspicious attributes, and of the extent of His sovereign glories which are unique and different from all others and which generate unsurpassed bliss in listeners, --- Arjuna desired to listen to the details about them and said:

10.12 - 10.13 Arjuna said -- You are He whom the Srutis proclaim as the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Light, the Supreme Sanctifier. Thus

the Srutis assert: 'From whom all these beings are born, by whom, when born, they live and unto whom they go when they perish --- desire to know that well. This is Brahman' (Tai. U., 3.1.1); 'He who knows Brahman attains the Highest' (Ibid., 2.1.1); and 'He who knows the Supreme Brahman becomes the Brahman' (Mun. U., 3.2.9). Likewise He is the Supreme Light. The term 'Dhaman' connotes light. He is the Supreme Light as taught (in the Upanisads): 'Now, the light which shines higher than this heaven ...' (Cha. U., 3.13. 7); 'Attaining the Supreme Light. He appears with His own form' (Ibid., 8.12.2); 'The gods worship Him as the Light of lights' (Br. U., 4.4.16). So also He is the Supreme Sanctifier: He makes the meditator bereft of all the impurities, and also destroys them without any trace. The Srutis declares: 'As water clings not to the leaf of a lotus-flower, so evil deeds cling not to him who knows thus' (Cha. U., 4.14.3): 'Just as the fibre of Isika reed (reed-cotton) laid on a fire is burnt up, so also all his sins are burnt up' (Ibid., 5.24.3); and 'Narayana is Supreme Brahman, Narayana is Supreme Light, Narayana is Supreme Self' (Ma. Na., 9.4). Sages are those who know in reality the higher truth (the Supreme Brahman), and the lower truth (individual selves); they speak of You as the eternal Divine Person, Primal Lord, the unborn and all-pervading. So also divine sage Narada, Asita, Devala and Vyasa declare: 'This Narayana, Lord of Sri, the resident of the Milk Ocean, has come to the city of Mathura abandoning his Serpent-couch.' 'Where Madhusudana is, there is the blessed Dvaravati. He is the Lord Himself, the ancient One and Eternal Dharma (Ma. Bh. Vana. 88. 24-25). Those who know the Vedas and

those who know the self declare the great-minded Kṛṣṇa to be the eternal Dharma. Of all sanctifiers, Govinda is said to be the most sanctifying, the most auspicious among the auspicious. The lotus-eyed God of gods, the eternal, abides as the three worlds ... Hari who is beyond thought, abides thus. Madhusudana is there alone' (Ma. Bha. Vana., 88.24-28). Similarly it is stated: 'O Arjuna, where the divine, the eternal Narayana the Supreme Self is, there the entire universe, the sacred water and the holy shrines are to be found. That is sacred, that is Supreme Brahman, that is sacred waters, that is the austerity grove ... there dwell the divine sages, the Siddhas and all those rich in austerities where the Primal Lord, the agent Yogin Madhusudana dwells. It is the most sacred among the sacred. For you, let there be no doubt about this' (Ibid., 90.28-32); 'Kṛṣṇa Himself is the origin and dissolution of all beings. For, this universe, consisting of sentient and non-sentient entities, was generated for the sake of Kṛṣṇa' (Ma. Bha. Sabha., 38.23). And you yourself say so in the passage beginning with 'Earth, water, fire, ether, mind, intellect and Ahankara --- this Prakṛti, which is divided eightfold, is Mine' (7.4) and ending with 'I am the origin of all; from Me proceed everything' (10.8).

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10.14 Therefore, I deem all this to be a statement of facts as they are in reality, and not merely an exaggeration --- all this which You tell me of Your sovereign glory and infinite auspicious attributes which are unique, unbounded, unsurpassed and natural. Therefore, O Lord, O Treasure of unsurpassed knowledge, power, strength, sovereignty, valour and radiance! --- neither the gods nor the demons who possess limited knowledge know 'Your manifestation', the way in which You manifest Yourself.

10.15 O Supreme Person, You Yourself know Yourself by Yourself; namely, by virtue of Your knowledge! O Creator of beings, namely, O Originator of all beings! O Lord of all beings, namely, O Controller of all beings! O God of gods, namely, O the Supreme Deity even of all divinities! Just as the gods surpass men, animals, birds, reptiles etc., in beauty, condescension and the host of auspicious qualities, You, O Lord, in the same manner, transcend all these gods in all these attributes! O Ruler of the universe, O Master of the universe!

10.16 Whatever manifestations there be that are divine, unique to Yourself --- You alone are capable of describing them without exception. 'You reveal them Yourself' is the meaning. With these innumerable Vibhutis, these instances of your manifestation indicating Your will to rule, You abide, pervading all these worlds as their controller. What is the need for such description? The answer follows:

10.17 I, 'Your devotee' (Yogin), namely, one engaged in Bhakti Yoga, and 'constantly meditating on You' with devotion, namely, embarked on meditation on You, --- how am I to know You, the object of meditation, as possessing a multitude of auspicious attributes like sovereignty etc.? And in what varied modes of mental dispositions, which are as yet untold and which are different from the intelligence, knowledge etc., described earlier, are You the Controller of all, to be meditated upon by me.

10.18 Speak to me again in full, your association with the qualities of being the creator etc., and Your sovereignty, Your rulership, which have been briefly described in 'I am the origin of all; from Me proceed everything' (10.8). For I am not satiated by hearing Your ambrosial words. The meaning is, 'My enthusiasm to know more and more of your ambrosial teachings is known to You.'

10.19 The Lord said -- O Arjuna, I shall tell you My auspicious manifestations --- those that are prominent among these. The term 'Pradhanya' connotes pre-eminence. For it will be said, 'Know Me to be the chief among family priests' (10.24). I shall declare to you those that are prominent in the world. For it would not be possible to tell or listen to them in detail, because there is no limit to them. To be a Vibhuti, the manifestation referred to should be under the control of the Lord; because it is stated: 'He who in truth knows this supernal manifestation and the seat of auspicious attributes' (10.7), after listing the various kinds of mental dispositions like intelligence etc., of all beings. Similarly it has been stated there that 'being the creator etc.,' is meant by the term Yoga, and that their 'being actuated,' meant by the term Vibhuti. Again it is stated: 'I am the origin of all; from me proceed everything; thinking thus, the wise worship Me with all devotion' (10.8). Sri Krsna clearly declares that he rules over all creatures by actuating them from within as their Self. He also declares His being the creator, sustainer and destroyer of everything, as connected by the term Yoga.

10.20 I am the Self dwelling in the heart of all beings who constitute My body. What is called 'Self' is in every way the supporter, controller and the principal of a body. It is further declared: 'And I am seated in the hearts of all; from Me are memory, knowledge and their removal' (15.15), and 'The Lord dwells, O Arjuna in the heart of every being causing them to spin round and round by His power, as if set on a wheel' (18.61). The Srutis also declare: 'He who, dwelling in all beings, is within all beings, whom all beings do not know, whose body all beings are, who controls all beings from within, is your Inner Controller, immortal Self (Br. U., 3.7.15); and 'He who, dwelling in the self is within the self, whom the self does not know, whose body the self is, and who controls the self from within, He is your Inner Controller and Immortal Self' (Sata. Br., 14.5.30). Thus, I am the Self of all beings and I am their beginning, the middle and also the end. The meaning is that I am the cause of their origination, sustentation and dissolution. Thus, having explained that the Lord's immanence in all beings, which are His manifestations having Him, as their Self, is the ground for naming them in the manner of Samanadhikaranya or co-ordinate predication with Him (i.e., predication that they are He Himself), Sri Krsna proceeds to present some specific or distinguished manifestations in the same style of co-ordinate predication. As the Lord abides as the Self in all, the final significance of all terms culminates in Him. Terms such as god, man, bird, tree etc., though they signify the respective physical forms of those objects, they culminate through them in the selves in them as their final significance. Just like that here it is going to be stated in the conclusion of the

account of the manifestations of the Lord, that the Lord's immanence in them all as their Self is the basis for describing them in such co-ordinate predication (as He Himself). The text 'There is nothing, moving or unmoving, apart from Me' (10.39) says that they are inseparable from Him, and this inseparability is the result of their being under His control. This has been initially declared in the words 'All proceed from Me' (10.8).

[This word Samanadhikaranya is translated by some also as 'grammatical co-ordination.' It is a context in which a number of words, usually having varying denotations, are used to signify an identical object. This kind of co-ordinate relation occurs in all the following verses in which Sri Krsna equates Himself with various objects having different denotations as Atman, Visnu among the Adityas, Indra, Marici, Sankara, Kubera, etc. Further explanation is given in the commentary.]

10.21 Of Adityas, who are twelve in number, I am the twelfth Aditya, called Visnu, who is paramount. Of luminuous bodies, namely, among luminaries in the world, I am the sun, the most brilliant luminary. Of Maruts I am the paramount Marici. Of constellations, I am the moon. The genitive case here is not to specify one out of many included in a group. Its use is the same as what is exemplified in the statement 'I am the consciousness in all beings' (10.22). I am the moon who is the Lord of the constellations.

10.22 Of the Vedas, namely, Of Rk, Yajus, Saman, Atharva, I am that Samaveda which is the paramount one. Of the gods, I am Indra. Of

eleven sense-organs, I am the sense-organ called Manas which is most paramount. Of living beings, namely, of those with consciousness, I am that consciousness. Here too the genitive is not used for specifying.

10.23 Of eleven Rudras I am Sankara. Of Yaksas and Raksasas I am Kubera, son of Visravas. Among the eight Vasus I am Agni. Of mountains, namely, of those mountains which shine with peaks, I am Meru.

10.24 I am that Bhraspati who is paramount among family priests. Of generals, I am Skanda. Of reservoirs of waters, O am the ocean.

10.25 Of great seers like Marici etc., I am Bhrgu. Words are sounds that convey meaning. Of such words, I am the single-lettered word Pranava (Or Om). Of the sacrifices, I am the sacrifice of Japa (sacred formula silently repeated) which is the most prominent form of sacrificial offerings. Of immovables or mountains, I am the Himalaya.

10.26 - 10.29 Of trees I am Asvattha which is worthy of worship. Of celestial seers I am Narada. Kamadhuk is the divine cow. I am Kandarpa, the cause of progeny. Sarpas are single-headed snakes while Nagas are many-headed snakes. Aquatic creatures are known as Yadamsi. Of them I am Varuna. Of subduers, I am Yama, the son of the sun-god.

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10.30 Of those who reckon with the desire to cause evil, I am the god of death --- (here an emissary of his who records the time of death of creatures is meant).

10.31 Of moving things, namely, of things whose nature is to move, I am the wind. Of those who bear weapons, I am Rama. Here the quality of bearing weapons is the Vibhuti, as no other sense is possible. Aditya

etc., being individual selves, constitute attributes of the Lord, who is their Self as they constitute His body. Therefore they stand in the same position of the attribute as that of bearing weapons.

10.32 Those that undergo creation are 'creatures'. Their beginning is the cause. The meaning is that, of the creatures which are being created at all times, I am Myself the creator. Similarly, I am the end, namely the destroyer of everyone of those who are being destroyed at all times. Similarly I am the middle, namely, the sustentation. The meaning is, I am the sustainer of those who are being sustained at all times. Of those who indulge in Jalpa (argument) and Vitanda (perverse criticism) etc., I am the fair reasoning which determines the truth.

10.33 Of letters I am the alphabet 'a', which is the base of all letters as established in the Sruti: 'The letter 'a' itself is all speech' (Ai. Ai., 3.2.3). Samasika means collection of compound words. In it, I am the Dvandva compound; it is eminent because the meanings of both constituent terms are important. I am Myself imperishable Time composed of (divisions like) Kala, Muhurta etc. I am the four-faced Hiranyagarbha who is the creator of all.

10.34 I am also death which snatches away the life of all. Of those that shall be born I am that called birth. Of women (i.e., of goddesses who are the powers of the Lord) I am prosperity (Sri); I am fame (Kirti); I am speech (Vak); I am memory (Smrti); I am intelligence (Medha); I am

endurance (Dhrti); and I am forgiveness (Ksama).

10.35 Of Saman hymns, I am the Brhatsaman. Of meters, I am the Gayatri. Of seasons, I am the season of flowers (spring).

10.36 Of those who practise fraud with a view to defeat each other, I am gambling such a dice-play etc., I am the victory of those who achieve victory. I am the effort of those who make effort. I am the magnanimity of those who possess magnanimity of mind.

10.37 Here the Supreme Vibhuti (manifestation) is that of being the son of Vasudeva, because no other meaning is possible. Of sons of Pandu, I am Dhananjaya or Arjuna. Of sages who perceive truth by meditation, I am Vyasa. The seers are those who are wise.

10.38 I am the power of punishment of those who punish, if law is transgressed. In regard to those who seek victory I am policy which is the means of getting victory. Of factors associated with secrecy. I am silence. I am the wisdom of those who are wise.

10.39 Of all beings, in whatever condition they may exist, whether manifest or not, I alone am that state. Whatever host of beings are said to exist, they do not exist without Me as their Self. In the statement, 'Nothing that moves or does not move exists without Me', it is taught that the Lord exists as the Self, as said in the beginning: 'I am the Self,

seated in the hearts of all beings' (10.20). The purport is that the entire host of beings in every state, is united with Me, their Self. By this He makes it clear that He, being the Self of all things, is the ground for His being denoted by everything in co-ordinate predication.

10.40 There is no limit to the divine and auspicious manifestations of My will to rule. But it has been described to some extent by Me in brief by means of a few illustrations.

10.41 Whatever host of beings has 'power', namely the capacity and means to rule over; has 'splendour', has beauty or prosperity in wealth, grains etc., has 'energy,' namely, is engaged in auspicious undertakings --- know such manifestations as coming from a fragment of My 'power'. Power (Tejas) is the capacity to overcome opposition. The meaning is, know them as arising from a fraction of My inconceivable power of subduing.

10.42 What is the use to you of this detailed knowledge taught by Me? I sustain this universe with an infinitesimal fraction of My power --- this universe consisting of sentient and non-sentient entities, whether in effect or causal condition, whether gross or subtle --- in such a manner that it does not violate My will in preserving its proper form, existence and various activities. As said by Bhagavan Parasara: 'On an infinitesimal fraction of this energy, this universe rests' (V. P., 1.9.53).

