

# The Eighteen Questions raised by *Arjuna*, a seeker of Integral Truth:

“There are indeed **three things** in *the Gita* which are spiritually significant, almost symbolic, typical of the profoundest relations and problems of the spiritual life and of human existence at its roots; they are (1) the divine personality of the **Teacher**, (2) his characteristic relations with his **disciple** and (3) the **occasion** of his **teaching**. (1) The **teacher** is God himself descended into humanity; (2) the **disciple** is the first, as we might say in modern language, the representative man of his age, closest friend and chosen instrument of the Avatar, his protagonist in an immense work and struggle the secret purpose of which is unknown to the actors in it, known only to the incarnate Godhead who guides it all from behind the veil of his unfathomable mind of knowledge; (3) the **occasion** is the violent crisis of that work and struggle at the moment when the anguish and moral difficulty and blind violence of its apparent movements forces itself with the shock of a visible revelation on the mind of its representative man and raises the whole question of the meaning of God in the world and the goal and drift and sense of human life and conduct.”<sup>14</sup>

**Sri Aurobindo**

“(1) The **disciple** (*Arjuna*) has to rise beyond this Force and its three modes or *gunas*; he has to become *trigunatita*. (2) Not to her has he to surrender his actions, over which he has no longer any claim or “right”, but into the being of the Supreme. (3) Reposing his mind and understanding, heart and will in Him, with self-knowledge, with God-knowledge, with world-knowledge, with a perfect equality, a perfect devotion, an absolute self-giving, he has to do works as an offering to the Master of all self energisings and all sacrifice. (4) Identified in will, conscious with that consciousness, That shall decide and initiate the action. This is the solution which the Divine Teacher offers to the **disciple**.”<sup>15</sup>

**Sri Aurobindo**

1: “**Arjuna said:** How, O *Madhusudana* shall I strike *Bhisma* and *Drona* with weapons in battle, both being worthy of worship, O slayer of enemies?” The Gita-2.4

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** The family members, human teachers, elders and other kith and kin represent divisible consciousness. To begin Spiritual life all attachment to the knot of distorted consciousness must be completely destroyed. Self-fulfilment of this existence comes when one is related with the world without attachment, without desire and without ego which are identified as distortion of Divine Love, Divine Delight and Divine Will

respectively. Self-fulfilment with the Divine comes when one is attached in his mind, heart and body only with the Divine, *Majyasakta*.<sup>6</sup>

“*Arjuna* in his reply to *Krishna* admits the rebuke even while he strives against and refuses the command. He is aware of his weakness and yet accepts subjection to it. It is poorness of spirit, he owns, that has smitten away from him his true heroic nature; his whole consciousness is bewildered in its view of right and wrong and he accepts the divine Friend as his teacher; but the emotional and intellectual props on which he had supported his sense of righteousness have been entirely cast down and he cannot accept a command which seems to appeal only to his **old standpoint and gives him no new basis for action**. He attempts still to justify his refusal of the work and puts forward in its support the claim of his nervous and sensational being which shrinks from the slaughter with its sequel of blood-stained enjoyments, the claim of his heart which recoils from the sorrow and emptiness of life that will follow his act, the claim of his customary moral notions which are appalled by the necessity of slaying his gurus, *Bhishma* and *Drona*, the claim of his reason which sees no good but only evil results of the terrible and violent work assigned to him. He is resolved that on the old basis of thought and motive he will not fight and he awaits in silence the answer to objections that seem to him unanswerable. **It is these claims of *Arjuna*'s egoistic being that *Krishna* sets out first to destroy in order to make place for the higher law which shall transcend all egoistic motives of action.**”<sup>7</sup>

““I am Time the waster of the peoples arisen and increased whose will in my workings is here to destroy the nations. Even without thee all these warriors shall be not, who are ranked in the opposing armies. Therefore arise, get thee glory, conquer thy enemies and enjoy an opulent kingdom. By me and none other already even are they slain, do thou become the occasion only, O Savyasachin. Slay, by me who are slain, *Drona*, *Bhishma*, *Jayadratha*, *Karna* and other heroic fighters; be not pained and troubled. Fight, thou shalt conquer the adversary in the battle.” The fruit of the great and terrible work is promised and prophesied, not as a fruit hungered for by the individual, — for to that there is to be no attachment, — but as the result of the divine will, the glory and success of the thing to be done accomplished, the glory given by the Divine to himself in his *Vibhuti*. Thus is the final and compelling command to action given to the protagonist of the world-battle.”<sup>8</sup>

2: “***Arjuna said:*** It is the poorness of Spirit that has smitten away from me my true heroic higher Nature, my whole consciousness is bewildered by three *gunas* and cannot discern truth and falsehood, right and wrong. I ask Thee how can I discern truth, right and good? —That tell me decisively. I am thy disciple and seek refuge in Thee; enlighten me.” The Gita-2.7

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** The Lord sets out to destroy *Arjuna's* egoistic being misled by the flowery word of many branching intelligence and desire so that he will be established in purified *buddhi* and subsequently in higher consciousness of essential and multiple concentration above *buddhi*. In this pure consciousness, one is able to discern truth and falsehood and can train himself to accept the former and reject the latter.

3: “**Arjuna said:** How can I be liberated from sorrow that dries up the senses, even if I attain the riches and unrivalled kingdom on earth and even all the sovereignty of the kingdom of Gods?” The Gita-2.8

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** Therefore, O *Arjuna*, arise and go beyond the limitations of three *gunas*, make grief and happiness equal, realise the immortality of the Soul, get the glory, conquer the enemies through righteous battle and enjoy an opulent kingdom. By Me and none other already even are they slain, do thou become the Divine’s instrument only.

“This heroic appeal may seem to be on a lower level than the stoical spirituality which precedes and the deeper spirituality which follows; for in the next verse the Teacher bids him to make grief and happiness, loss and gain, victory and defeat equal to his soul and then turn to the battle, —**the real teaching of the Gita**. But *Indian* ethics has always seen the practical necessity of graded ideals for the developing moral and spiritual life of man. The *Kshatriya* ideal, the ideal of the four orders is here placed in its social aspect, not as afterwards in its spiritual meaning. This, says *Krishna* in effect, is my answer to you if you insist on joy and sorrow and the result of your actions as your motive of action. I have shown you in what direction the higher knowledge of self and the world points you; I have now shown you in what direction your social duty and the ethical standard of your order point you, *svadharmam api caveksya*. Whichever you consider, the result is the same. But if you are not satisfied with your social duty and the virtue of your order, if you think that leads you to sorrow and sin, then I bid you rise to a higher and not sink to a lower ideal. Put away all egoism from you, disregard joy and sorrow, disregard gain and loss and all worldly results; look only at the cause you must serve and the work that you must achieve by divine command; “so thou shalt not incur sin.” Thus *Arjuna's* plea of sorrow, his plea of the recoil from slaughter, his plea of the sense of sin, his plea of the unhappy results of his action, are answered according to the highest knowledge and ethical ideals to which his race and age had attained.”<sup>9</sup>

4: “**Arjuna said:** What is the sign of the man in *Samadhi*, man of stable intelligence, *Sthitaprajna*? How does, O *Keshava*, the sage of settled understanding speak, how sit, how walk?” The Gita-2.54

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** The man of stable intelligence, *sthithaprajna*, after getting established in the Spiritual experience of trance, *Samadhi*, is he who (1) expels all desires from mind and is satisfied in the Self and by the Self; (2) his mind is undisturbed in the midst of sorrows and pleasures and is free from desire, wrath and fear; (3) he is without affection towards good and evil in all things and neither hates nor rejoices with all happenings; (4) he draws away the senses from the objects of sense like tortoise draws in his limbs into the shell; (5) his drawing away from sense does not remove the sense hunger but it ceases when the Supreme is seen; (6) even the mind of the wise man is hurried and carried away by the vehement insistence of the senses; (7) having brought all the senses under control he must sit firm in Yoga wholly consecrating his life to the Divine; (8) he moves among the object of senses which is free from attraction and repulsion and under the control of the Self and he attains supreme felicity; (9) in that felicity all his miseries ceases and he is rapidly established in the steady intelligence; (10) to the self-mastering sage, *samyami*, the higher planes of consciousness is his waking trance in which he gains truth, knowledge and power; (11) he enters peace when all his desire enters into motionless Self like water entering into sea; (12) he who abandons desire, longing and ego attains to peace; this is firm standing in *Brahman*, *Brahmi Sthiti*. Having attained this state one is no longer bewildered, fixed in that state if he practices *Sankhya* self-discipline, attains extinction in *Brahman*, *Brahma-nirvana*.

This *buddhi Yoga* is extensively developed in integral Jnana Yoga. The three impurities of understanding, *buddhi*, which are to be purified first, are identified as

- (1) the intermixture of desire in the thinking functions,
- (2) the illusion of the senses and the intermixture of the sense-mind in the thinking functions,
- (3) improper action of the will to know.

The purification process continues by pacifying the mind and intellect and opening them towards knowledge, by training them to concentrate, contemplate and meditate on the One and by ‘perfect equality of mind, in the cultivation of entire intellectual rectitude and in the perfection of mental disinterestedness.’<sup>5</sup> The purified understanding is

- (1) free entirely from any desire and craving,
- (2) is not inclined to any **predilection or distaste for any particular idea or truth**,
- (3) is not attached to those ideas of truth which it is most certain or to lay on them **such an undue stress** as is likely to disturb the balance of integral truth,
- (4) and the purified intelligence will not depreciate the value of other new evolving elements of integral Knowledge.

(5) The purified *buddhi* always dwells in the master idea of surrender of intellect, emotion and volition and helps towards the realisation of total and sincere self-giving.

(6) The purified intellect has the capacity to discern the falsehood of the untransformed physical mind, vital mind, sense mind and emotional mind and can train itself to constantly reject them.

(7) It has also the capacity to discern the truth influence of the higher Mind, Illumined Mind and Intuitive Mind and train itself to receive constantly their Truth vibration.

(8) A *Sadhaka* of *buddhi Yoga* is an equal seeker of Truth, must accept everything, but not cling to anything, not repelled by anything, nor subject himself to the influence of intellect. Thus, through this equality of intelligence of *buddhi Yoga* the Consciousness is established in Spiritual plane and prepares the ground to ascend towards still higher Supermind or *Purushottama* Consciousness.

(9) 'It has been best formulated in the already expressed doctrine of the Gita by which a complete renouncement of desire for the fruits as the motive of action, a complete annulment of desire itself, the complete achievement of a perfect equality are put forward as the normal status of a spiritual being. A perfect spiritual equality is the one true and infallible sign of the cessation of desire, — to be equal-souled to all things, unmoved by joy and sorrow, the pleasant and the unpleasant, success or failure, to look with an equal eye on high and low, friend and enemy, the virtuous and the sinner, to see in all beings the manifold manifestation of the One and in all things the multitudinous play or the slow masked evolution of the embodied Spirit.'<sup>50</sup>

5: “**Arjuna said:** If thou holdest the intelligence to be greater than works, O *Janardana*, why then dost thou, O *Keshava*, appoint me to this terrible work? Thou bewilderest my intelligence with a mixed and tangled speech; tell me decisively the one thing by which I may attain to the supreme good.” The Gita-3.1, 2

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** Work is identified as affirmative energy of existence whose origin is the Divine Will which is the Creatrix Consciousness of this existence. The objective Divine action of *Karma Yoga* is initiated (through Divine direction, *adesh*), supported and subordinated by subjective Divine action of the Divine Knowledge and Divine Love. Ordinary action is greater than inaction. In Divine action, inaction is transformed into subjective action which appears to be inactive and passive. *The Gita* does not give importance to exclusive pursuance of any of the three *Yogas* rather their reconciliation. The *Buddhi Yoga* or self-liberating intelligent will is fulfilled by *Karma Yoga* or Yoga of desireless work. All works find their culmination in knowledge. Or by going beyond *gunas*, *nistraigunya*, and establishment of experience in *Samadhi* through *buddhi Yoga*, the influence of lower Nature in the

form of emotional desire and the desire to enjoy the fruit of action reduces; thus, to pursue the *Bhakti Yoga* and *Karma Yoga* become easy.

6: “**Arjuna said:** But what is this in us that drive a man to sin, as if by force, even against his own struggling will?” The Gita-3.36

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** The Blessed Lord said: It is desire and wrath born of *Rajas*. They are all-devouring and all-polluting. They are here Soul’s great enemy. Knowledge is enveloped by these eternal enemies as fire is covered by smoke, mirror by dust and embryo by amnion. Sense, mind and intellect are the seat of desire which bewilders the embodied Soul. So first control the sense to slay the desire who is the destroyer of knowledge and truth discernment.

7: “**Arjuna said:** Recent is Thy birth, far ancient was the birth of Sun God, how then I am to comprehend that Thou declaredst it to him in the beginning?” The Gita-4.4

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** The Blessed Lord said: From the beginning of the creation, many of My lives and also thine, O *Arjuna*, are past; All of them I know and I am conscious of all life and all Time through conscious Yoga; but thou knowest not your past (and future) births because your all life is an unconscious Yoga of Nature.

“Many are my lives that are past, and thine also, O *Arjuna*; all of them I know, but thou knowest not, O scourge of the foe. Though I am the unborn, though I am imperishable in my self-existence, though I am the Lord of all existences, yet I stand upon my own Nature and I come into birth by my self-Maya. For whensoever there is the fading of the *Dharma* and the uprising of unrighteousness, then I loose myself forth into birth. For the deliverance of the good, for the destruction of the evil-doers, for the enthroning of the Right I am born from age to age. He who knoweth thus in its right principles my divine birth and my divine work, when he abandons his body, comes not to rebirth, he comes to Me, O *Arjuna*. Delivered from liking and fear and wrath, full of me, taking refuge in me, many purified by austerity of knowledge have arrived at my nature of being (*madbhavam*, the divine nature of the *Purushottama*). As men approach me, so I accept them to my love (*bhajami*); men follow in every way my path, O son of *Pritha*.”<sup>10</sup> ‘Therefore, O Arjuna, at all time of all life be in Yoga.’<sup>16</sup>

8: “**Arjuna said:** Thou Declarest to me the renunciation of works (*Sankhya/Jnana Yoga*), O *Krishna*; and again, thou declare to me (*Karma*) *Yoga*; which one of these is better way, that tell me with clear decisiveness.” The Gita-5.1

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** The Blessed Lord said Yoga of Knowledge (Renunciation) and Yoga of Works both brings about Soul's salvation, but of the two, Yoga of Works is distinguished above the Yoga of Knowledge or the renunciation of works. *Sannyasa* is difficult for embodied beings who must do work as long as they are in the body. So, Yoga of works easily brings the Soul to *Brahman*.

9: "*Arjuna said:* This Yoga which has been declared by Thee of the nature of equality, O *Madhusudana*, I see no stable foundation for it owing to restlessness. Restless indeed is the mind, O *Krishna*; it is vehement, strong and difficult to bend; I deem it as hard to control as the wind." The Gita-6.33, 34

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** Mind can be controlled only by constant practice, *abhyasa*, and non-attachment, *vairagya*. If one will remain in *sattwa*, then there will be urge and interest to do purifying action of sacrifice, askesis and act of giving in a rightly regulated manner. Those who have no control over inertia of body, sense organ and mind for them this Yoga is difficult to attain.

'It is the Light or the Force which comes from beyond the mind that keeps the mind truly concentrated. Otherwise the mind is naturally restless, unfixed, constantly changing from one thing to another.'<sup>35</sup>

10: "*Arjuna said:* He who takes up Yoga with faith, but cannot control himself with the mind wandering away from Yoga, failing to attain perfection in Yoga, what is his end, O *Krishna*? Does he not, O Mighty-armed, lose both this life and the *Brahmic* consciousness to which he aspires and falling from both perish like a dissolving cloud? Please dispel the doubt of mine completely, O *Krishna*; for there is none other than Thyself who can destroy this doubt." The Gita-6.37, 38, 39

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** Those who practice Yoga but fails to pursue it till the last, neither in this life nor hereafter is there any destruction for them. If anyone practices affirmative Yoga, then he in no way suffers any woe or misfortune. Having attained to the worlds of the Heaven or higher planes of consciousness, after long stay there for immemorial years, he who has fallen Spiritually from Yoga, *yogabhrasta*,<sup>12</sup> is born again in the house of the pure and glorious. Or he gets the rare rebirth in the house of wise Yogi. There he recollects and restores the past accumulated Spiritual energy and with that he again endeavours for highest perfection, *siddhi*. By virtue of the practice of the past birth, in this birth in the early part of the life he is drawn towards the knowledge of *Shastra* and sooner or later goes beyond the written truth, *sabdabrahmatibartate*. Due to his assiduous endeavour and purification from sin continuing from past many births, he in this birth attains to the highest goal.

11: “**Seven Questions raised by Arjuna:** (1) What is *tad brahma*, (2) what is *adhyatma* and (3) what is *karma*, O *Purushottama*? (4) What is declared to be *adhibhuta*, (5) what is called *adhidaiva*? (6) What is *adhiyajna* in this body? O *Madhusudana*? (7) And how in the critical moment of departure from physical existence, art Thou to be known by the self-controlled?” The Gita-8.1, 2

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** The Blessed Lord said: The *Akshara* or the Immutable is the supreme *Brahman*; *svabhava* is called *adhyatma*, *Karma* is the name given to the creative movement, *visargah* which brings into existence all beings and their subjective and objective states. *Adhibhuta* is *ksharo bhavah* or mutable state, *adhidaiva* is *Purusha* or Soul within Nature; I myself am the lord of sacrifice, *adhiyajna* here in the body. Whoever leaves his body and departs remembering Me at the time of his death, comes to My status of being, *madbhava*; there is no doubt about that.

12: “**Arjuna said:** Thou shouldest tell me of Thy Divine Self-manifestations, all without exception, Thy *Vibhutis* by which Thou standest pervading these worlds. How shall I know Thee, O Yogin, by thinking of Thee everywhere at all moments and in what pre-eminent becomings should I think of Thee, O Blessed Lord? In detail tell me of Thy *Yoga* and *Vibhuti* O *Janardana*; tell me ever more of it; it is nectar of immortality to me, and however much of it I hear, I am not satiated.” The Gita-10.16, 17, 18

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** The full reply of this question is not possible as the manifestations of His *Vibhutis* are infinite. The Lord speaks of His *Vibhutis*. They are *Vishnu* among the *Adityas*, Sun among the lights and splendours, *Marichi* among the *Marutas*, Moon among the asterisms, *Sama Veda* among the *Vedas*, *Indra* among the Gods, mind among the senses, consciousness among the living beings, *Shiva* among the *Rudras*, *Kubera* among *Yakshas* and *Rakshasas*, *Agni* among *Vasus*, *Meru* among mountain peaks, *Brihaspati* among the Priests, *Skanda* among leader of armies, ocean among lakes, *Bhirgu* among great *Rishis*, Om among words, *Japa-Yajna* among *Yajnas*, *Himalaya* among the immovables, *Aswatha* among plants and trees, *Narada* among divine *Rishis*, *Chitraratha* among the *Gandharvas*, *Kapila* among the *Siddhas*, *Uchchaisravas* among the horses, *Airavata* among elephants, king among men, *Vraja* among weapons, *kamadhuk* among cows, *Kandarpa* among progenitors, *Vasuki* among serpents, *Ananta* among *Nagas*, *Varuna* among the peoples of the sea, *Aryaman* among fore-fathers, *Yama* among those who maintain rule and law, *Prahlad* among the Titans, Time among those who reckon and measure, lion among beasts, *Garuda* among birds, wind among purifiers, *Rama* among warriors, alligator among fishes, *the Ganges* among the rivers, I am glory, beauty, speech, memory, intelligence, steadfastness and forgiveness among feminine qualities, *Brihat-Sama* among the hymns of *Sama*, *Gayatri* among poetic metres, *Margasiesha* among



months, spring among seasons, I am *Krishna* among the *Vrishnis*, *Arjuna* among *Pandavas*, *Vyasa* among the sages, *Ushanas* among the seer poets, spectre of the rulers, wise policy those who seek to succeed and conquer, silence of the secret things and knowledge of the knower. Whatever is glorious, beautiful, mighty and forceful are born from a fragment of My splendour.

13: **“Arjuna said:** This word concerning the highest spiritual secret of existence which Thou hast spoken out of compassion for me; by this my delusion is dispelled. The birth and passing away of existences have been heard by me in detail from Thee, O Lotus-eyed, and also Thy imperishable greatness. As Thou hast declared Thyself to be, O Supreme Lord even so it is, (still) I desire to see Thy Divine form and body of *Purushottama*. If Thou thinkest that it can be seen by me, O Lord, show me then, O Master of Yoga, Thy imperishable Self.” The Gita-11.1, 2, 3, 4

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** The Blessed Lord said: (1) Behold, O *Partha* My hundreds and thousands of Divine forms, various in kind, various in shape and hue; (2) Behold *the Adityas, the Vasus, the Rudras*, the two *Aswins* and *the Maruts*; behold many wonders never seen before; (3) behold the whole world with all that is moving and unmoving, unified in My body and whatever else thou wilt see; (4) thou cannot see Me in these sense eyes, I give thee the eye Divine, the third eye, the subtle vision; (5) the Divine showed to *Arjuna* of many mouths and eyes, of many wonderful visions, with many divine ornaments, with many divine uplifted weapons; (6) wearing divine garlands and raiments, anointed with the divine perfumes, the infinite and all-wonderful Godhead with faces everywhere; (7) if the light of a thousand suns were to blaze forth all at once in the sky, that might resemble the splendour of that Great Soul; (8) he saw the universe with its manifold divisions, yet situated unified in the body of the God of gods; (9) *Arjuna* said: I see all the gods, all the *Rishis*, creator Lord *Brahma* seated in the Lotus, divine Serpents in Thy body; (10) I see Thee, infinite in forms on all sides, with numberless arms and bellies and eyes and faces; I see not Thy end nor Thy middle, nor thy beginning; (11) Thou art a luminous mass of energy on all sides of me, an encompassing blaze, a sun-bright fire-bright Immeasurable...

14: **“Arjuna said:** Those seekers of *Bhakti Yajna* who thus by a constant union seek after Thy personal Form and those seekers of *Jnana Yajna* who seek after Thy unmanifest Immutable impersonal Form, which of them are greater *Yajna*?” The Gita-12.1

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** “The Blessed Lord said those who are constantly most united, *nityayukta*, with Me and adore My manifest form, *Saguna Brahman*, emotional mind settled in Me and possessed of supreme faith of

*Bhakti Yoga*, I consider them to be **the greatest Yogi**. And those *Jnana Yogis*, who seek after the Immutable, the Infinite, the Unmanifest, *Nirguna Brahman*, the Omnipresent, the Unthinkable, the high-seated Self, the Immobile, the Permanent, all their senses under control, equal visioned everywhere, intent on welfare of all beings, they also attain to My *Purushottama* state.” The Gita-12.2, 3, 4

15: “**Six Questions raised by Arjuna:** (1) The Field, *Kshetra*, and (2) the Knower of the Field, *Kshetrajna*, (3) Knowledge, *Jnana*, and (4) the object of Knowledge, *Jneya*, (5) Nature, *Prakriti* and (6) Self, *Purusha*, these I would like to learn, O *Keshava*.” The Gita-13.1

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** (1) This body, Matter, is called the Field, O son of *Kunti*. The unmanifest Nature, the five great elements, the ten senses, the five objects of senses, mind, intelligence and ego, these twenty-four *tattvas* are the **Field, Kshetra**. The seven-fold deformations of the Field, *vikara*, are liking and disliking, pleasure and pain, collocation, consciousness and steadfastness.” The Gita-13.2, 4, 5

(2) “That which takes cognizance of the Field is called the Knower of the Field, *Kshetrajna*.” The Gita-13.2, “Know Me as the **Knower of all Fields, Kshetrajna**.” The Gita-13.3 “All manifestation, *sthabarajangamam*, takes place by union between Field, Matter, *Kshetra* and Knower of the Field, Spirit, *Kshetrajna*.” The Gita-13.27

(3) “**Knowledge** is knowledge of *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna*. (“It (Supramental change) will act not by the discovery of the unknown (*Kshetrajna*), but by the bringing out of the known (*Kshetra*); all will be the finding **“of the self by the self in the self.”** The Life Divine-1018) Absence of pride and arrogance, non-violence, forgiveness, straightforwardness, purity of mind, vital and body, steadfastness, self-control, veneration of the Teacher, detachment from the objects of the senses, absence of egoism, the awareness of the evil of birth, death, old age, disease and pain; absence of attachment and my-ness for son, wife, home, and a constant equal-mindedness in the midst of all desirable and undesirable happening, unswerving devotion for Me with exclusive union, resort to solitary places, absence of interest for crowds and assemblies of men, constancy in the spiritual knowledge, direct perception of the true sense of the real knowledge, this is declared to be **knowledge, jnana**, and all that is otherwise, ignorance.” The Gita-13.3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 Sri Aurobindo proposes that if there is no division between Knower, knowledge and known then that is Supramental Knowledge by identity. (Ref: The Synthesis of Yoga-832.)

(4) “I shall now describe that which is to be known, and by knowing which one gets immortality; the beginningless supreme *Brahman*, called neither Sat

(Existence) nor *Asat* (Non-existence). With His hands and feet everywhere, with eyes, heads and mouths on all sides, with ears everywhere, He dwells enveloping all in this world. Without any senses but reflected in all the senses and their qualities; unattached and yet all-supporting; beyond all *gunas* (qualities), and yet the enjoyer of the *gunas*. Inside all beings and outside, the moving and the unmoving, the far and the very near, all this He is at once; He is too subtle to be perceptible. He stands undivided in beings and yet as if divided. He is to be known as the Creator, Preserver and Devourer of beings. That, the Light of all lights, is said to be beyond darkness. That Knowledge of the Unknowable, the **object of knowledge, jneya, Parmatma**, is seated in the heart of all being.” The Gita-13.13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18

“Thus, the knowledge of the Field, Knowledge and object of Knowledge have been briefly told by Me. My devotee knowing this attains to My (Supramental) Divine Nature, *Madbhava*.” The Gita-13.19

(5 & 6) “Both *Purusha*, Soul and (*Para*) *Prakriti*, Nature are beginning-less, *anadi*, and eternal. The mutable *Apara Prakriti* has a beginning and an end and originates from *Para-prakriti*. The seven-fold deformations and three *Gunas* are born of (*Apara*) *Prakriti*. (*Para*) *Prakriti* is said to be the chain of cause and effect of *Apara Prakriti* and sense of doer ship of all action. *Purusha* is said to be cause or witness of the enjoyment of pleasure and pain of *Apara Prakriti*. The *Purusha* within the *Prakriti* enjoys the three *Gunas* born of (*Apara*) *Prakriti*. Attachment to three *Gunas* is the cause of the birth of good and evil wombs. The Supramentalised *Kshara Purusha* or Supramentalised Psychic Being is at once the Witness, *Sakhi*, Sanctioner, *Anumanta*, Sustainer, *Varta*, Enjoyer, *Vokta*, almighty Lord, *Maheswara*, supreme Self, *Purushottama*, seated in this body (heart), *Kshetra, Prakriti*. He who knows the irreconcilable (*Kshara, Akshara* and *Uttama*) *Purusha* and (*Para and Apara*) *Prakriti* with her three *gunas*, however he lives and acts, he shall not be born again or after realisation of *Purushottama* a *Yogi* has no unfinished task left and he concentrates on his escape to final resting place of *Param dham*. They who with the eye of knowledge perceive this difference between the irreconcilable Field and the Knower of the Field and the liberation of beings from *Prakriti*, they attain to the Supreme Abode.” The Gita-13.20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 35 An integral *Yogi* reconciles (*Kshara, Akshara* and *Uttama*) *Purusha* with *Para* and *Apara Prakriti* and hence this Divine unfinished task continues through many births till *Apara Prakriti* is completely Divinised.

16: “*Arjuna said*: By what signs is he marked, O Lord, who has risen above the three *Gunas*? How he acts and behaves and how does he go beyond the three *Gunas*?” The Gita-14.21 Or this question may be put in contemporary language as how can one break the golden chain of three *gunas*?

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** The man who has gone beyond the three modes of Nature, *Gunas*, is freed from birth, death, old age and suffering; he remains young and enjoys immortality of Self; (1) he does not abhor illumination nor impulsion to action, nor delusion when they occur, nor strives after them when they cease; (2) he stands apart, unwavering, unconcerned and unperturbed by the movement of three *gunas* by knowing that it is only *Gunas* that act; (3) he is established in the Self, imperturbable, equal in suffering and happiness, regards gold, mud and stone alike, equal before praise and blame, equal before honour and dishonour, and to whom faction of enemies and faction of friends are alike, and he has abandoned all initiation of work; (4) he loves and strives after the Divine by undeviating *Bhakti Yoga* and prepares himself to become the Divine, *Brahmabhuta*, which is the foundation of the *Brahman*, immortality, imperishable existence, eternal *Dharma* and utter Bliss of happiness.

*The Synthesis of Yoga* book proposes that not only we will go beyond the *Gunas* but also reconcile the higher nature of *Para-prakriti* with lower nature of three *gunas* of *Apara-prakriti* and higher nature can penetrate the lower Nature in order to transform the lower nature. “When we break out from ego and physical mind into the infinity of the spirit, we still see the world and others as the mind has accustomed us to see them, as names and forms; only in our new experience of the direct and superior reality of spirit, they lose that direct objective reality and that indirect subjective reality of their own which they had to the mind. They seem to be quite the opposite of the truer reality we now experience; our mentality, **stilled** and indifferent, no longer strives to know and make real to itself those intermediate terms which exist in them as in us and the knowledge of which has for its utility to bridge over the gulf between the spiritual self and the objective phenomena of the world.”<sup>18</sup> “But it is also possible to make this silence of the mind and ability to suspend the habits of the lower nature a **first step** towards the discovery of a superior formulation, a higher grade of the status and energy of our being and pass by an ascent and transformation into the supramental power of the spirit. And this may even, though with **more difficulty**, be done without resorting to the complete state of quietude of the normal mind by a persistent and progressive transformation of all the mental into their greater corresponding supramental powers and activities.”<sup>40</sup>

17: “**Arjuna said:** Those who offer sacrifice full of faith (*sraddha*) but abandoning the rule of the *Shastra*, what is that concentrated will of devotion, *nistha*, in them, O Krishna? Is it *Sattwa*, *Rajas* or *Tamas*?” The Gita-17.1 Or this question may be put in following language, “Lord, You have insisted of rising above the three *gunas*, while yet one remains in action of all type, *sarva karmani*, and You have not explained me sufficiently the diversities in which the *gunas* work, and unless I know that, it will be difficult for me to discern with sincerity and rise beyond them.” Or this question may be put in the language of *The Synthesis of Yoga*, ‘Lord, You have insisted to trace out ‘the full account’<sup>13</sup> of my imperfection

before striving to attend perfection. How can I know those imperfections fully in terms of triple divisible consciousness of *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattwa* that have strongly possessed this mind, life and body?’

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** Those seekers of truth, *jijnasu*, who have no comprehensive knowledge of *Shastra*, their austerities become violent and their all resolves of sacrificial action become (*tamasic* and *rajasic*) *asuric*. Comprehensive Knowledge of *Shastra* makes action, sacrifice, gift, askesis, food, consciousness, fruits of action, doer of action, renunciation, understanding, persistence of will or sincerity, happiness and faith *Sattwic* and rightly regulated.

*Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* are three *Gunas* born from the movement of *Prakriti* and they bind the Soul to the *Apara-prakriti*.

*Sattwa* is the giver of illumination, calmness, equality, order, accomplished harmony and well-being. ‘When into all the doors in the body there comes a flooding of light, a light of understanding, perception and knowledge, one should understand that there has been a great increase and uprising of the *sattwic* guna in the nature.’<sup>36</sup> It **binds the Soul** by attachment to limited happiness, limited knowledge and limited peace. When through all the doors of the body, light of knowledge shines forth, there is increase of *Sattwa* and it imposes on itself an impersonal ethical, social and religious law, *a Dharma*, *a Shastra*, right understanding and a disinterested search of truth. When in *Sattwa* **one leaves the body**, he attains the spotless worlds of the knowers of the Highest. In this state **fruit of the work** is rightly and naturally enjoyed. Those who dwell in *Sattwa*, their **consciousness** rises upward and knowledge is gained. *Sattwic* man **offers sacrifice**<sup>39</sup> to God or partial Godhead. This true sacrifice is extended according to the right principle, without desire for fruit, with a mind concentrated and fixed on the truth of things. The **food** that augments life, vitality, strength, health, joy and cheerfulness, which are succinct, soft, sustaining and agreeable, are dear to *sattwic* persons. **Askesis** done with faith and with no desire for fruit is said to be *sattwic*. Serenity of mind, gentleness, silence, self-control, purity of feeling, regular study of *Shastra*, translation into mother tongue, restatement and practice of *Shastra* through concentration, contemplation and meditation are called *sattwic askesis of mind*. The writing/oration which gives no offence, truthful, pleasant and beneficial are *sattwic askesis of the vital/speech*. The **true *sattwic askesis of the body*** is done through purity, straightforwardness, virginity, non-violence and the worship offered to Godhead, Teacher, Wise and the twice born Soul. When the **gift** is given for the sake of giving to one from whom no benefit in return is expected, and in the right place, at the right time and to the right person, that gift is said to be *sattwic*. When one Imperishable Being is seen in all Beings and one indivisible Being is realised among the multiplicities of divisions, know that **knowledge** as *sattwic*. An **action** which is rightly regulated by renouncing the

fruit of action, attachment and without liking and disliking, know that work as *sattwic* action. When one performs rightly regulated action by renouncing attachment of action and fruit of action, and renounces desire, ego, duality, three gunas and attachment, know that as *sattwic* **renunciation**. One who is free from attachment, egoless, endowed with steadfastness and zeal, unaffected by success and failure, is a *sattwic* **doer**. ‘The *sattwic* **doer** is free from all this attachment, this egoism, this violent strength or passionate weakness; his is a mind and will unrelaxed by success, undepressed by failure,<sup>37</sup> full of a fixed impersonal resolution, a calm rectitude of zeal or a high and pure and selfless enthusiasm in the work that has to be done.’<sup>1</sup> That which knows in essence action and withdrawal from action, what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation, clarity of mind, that **understanding** is *sattwic*. A *Sattwic* man **understands** the written truth within a limited boundary or to limit the Illimitable is his very nature, That unwavering **persistence** by which one controls the activities of mind, life and senses, know that persistence of mastering intelligence as *sattwic*. That **happiness** which seems like a poison initially but ends as nectar, that happiness is said to be *sattwic* born out of clear understanding. ‘The passage through sattwa is the ordinary idea of Yoga, it is the preparation and purification by the yama-niyama of Patanjali or by other means in other Yogas, e.g., saintliness in the bhakti schools, the eightfold path in Buddhism etc., etc. In our Yoga (Integral Yoga) the evolution through sattwa is replaced by the cultivation of equanimity, *samata*, and by the psychic transformation.’<sup>51</sup> “...for mind is a twilight preparing for light, an ignorance seeking after knowledge, a bondage to Nature groping after freedom and mastery over Nature. It is not on mind, on its self-modifying ignorance and bondage or even on its half-light, half-mastery, half-knowledge that the next step can base itself. It must base itself on soul consciousness, consciousness of the spirit and self for so only can there be the full light, the spontaneous mastery, the intimate and real knowledge.”<sup>52</sup>

*Rajas* springs from craving, lower ego motive, vital attachment, false knowledge and all devouring *asuric* mind. ‘Greed, seeking impulsions, initiative of actions, unrest, desire – all this mounts in us when rajas increases.’<sup>36</sup> It **binds the embodied Soul** to action. Greed, kinesis, despair, initiative to action, ambition, selfishness, lust, cruelty, beast wrath, hypocrisy, treachery, ingratitude, unrest, hatred, jealousy, fierce reaction to the pressure of the environment, struggle with the world in which one lives, conquer, create, accumulate, craving of desire come forth when there is increase of *Rajas*. When **one leaves the body** during the prevalence of *Rajas*, he is born among those who are **attached to action**. In this state the **fruit of work** brings grief. Those who dwell in *rajas*, their **consciousness** remain in the middle. *Rajasic* man **offers sacrifice** to *Yakshas* and *Rakshasas*. This sacrifice is **offered** with the intention of getting fruit and ostentation. The **foods** that are bitter, sour, too hot, pungent, rough and burning and which produce

pain, grief and disease are liked by *rajasic* persons. **Askesis** performed for ostentation, for the sake of gaining respect, honour and worship is *rajasic*. The **gift** which is given grudgingly for the sake of a return or with a view to fruit and reward is said to be *rajasic*. The **knowledge** which experiences the multiplicity of Beings in their separateness and variety of operation without the sense of one indivisible Being, know that knowledge as *rajasic*. ‘*Rajas* perverts **knowledge**, makes our reason the accomplice of falsehood and the abettor of every wrong movement, disturbs and twists our life-force and its impulses, oversets the balance and health of the body. *Rajas* captures all high-born ideas and high-seated movements and turns them to a false and egoistic use; even divine Truth and divine influences, when they descend into the earthly plane, cannot escape this misuse and seizure.’<sup>3</sup> **Action** done for the satisfaction of desire and ego and with an excess of laborious effort, aggressive push of work, know that action as *rajasic*. He who gives up work because they bring sorrow, fear and physical suffering, know that as *rajasic* **renunciation**. One, who is passionate, eagerly seeks the fruit of actions, greedy, violent, impure, and moved by joy and sorrow, such a **doer** is *rajasic*. ‘The *rajasic* **doer** of action on the contrary is one eagerly attached to the work, bent on its rapid completion, passionately desirous of fruit and reward and consequence, greedy of heart, impure of mind, often violent and cruel and brutal in the means he uses; he cares little whom he injures or how much he injures others so long as he gets what he wants, satisfies his passions and will, vindicates the claims of his ego. He is full of an incontinent joy in success and bitterly grieved and stricken by failure.’<sup>1</sup> That **understanding** by which one knows incorrectly the right law and the wrong law and also what ought to be done and what ought not be done, is *rajasic*. A *rajasic* man misuses the written truth. That **persistence** by which one becomes desirous of the fruit, one holds fast *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kama*, that is *rajasic*. That **happiness** born from the contact of the senses with their many coloured homes of pleasure, which is like nectar at the first but poison in the end, know that happiness as *rajasic*.

*Tamas* is born of Ignorance. ‘Absence of light, nescience, tendency to inertia, negligence and delusion – these are born when *tamas* predominates.’<sup>36</sup> It **binds the Soul** by indolence, inactivity, unwillingness to make an effort and sleep. Obscurity, inertia, delusion, fear, weakness, incapacity, cowardly recoil, submission to the pressure of environment, insensible to beauty, love and delight come forth when there is increase of *Tamas*. And if **dissolved** during the prevalence of *Tamas*, he is born in the inferior wombs of beings involved in nescience. In this state **fruit of the work** brings Ignorance. Those who dwell in *tamas*, their **consciousness** move downward towards Spiritual fall, decay and destruction. *Tamasic* man **offers sacrifice** to ghosts and elemental spirits. This **sacrifice** is performed without observance of the right rule, without giving of food, without the *Mantra*, without gifts to the noble Souls and empty of faith. ‘Note that a *tamasic* **surrender** refusing to fulfil the conditions and calling on God to do

everything and save one all the trouble and struggle is a deception and does not lead to freedom and perfection.’<sup>11</sup> That which is spoiled, tasteless, putrid, stale, left half-eaten by others and impure, is the **food** dear to *tamasic* persons. The **askesis** done with a deluded obstinacy, with self-torture or a view to hurt others is said to be *tamasic*. The **gift** which is given at an improper place and time and to an unworthy person, with desire and contempt, is said to be *tamasic*. The **knowledge** which is petty and clings to single idea as if it were the whole, without reason, without grasping the essential significance, know that knowledge as *tamasic*. ‘*Tamas* obscures and prevents the light of the divine **knowledge** from penetrating into the dark and dull corners of our nature. *Tamas* incapacitates and takes away the power to respond to divine impulse and the energy to change and the will to progress and make ourselves plastic to a greater *Shakti*.’<sup>3</sup> **Action** initiated under the delusion without regard to one’s capacity, consequences, loss or injury or harm done to others, that work is said to be *tamasic*. To renounce the rightly regulated action out of delusion and a weak rejection of lower nature is *tamasic* **renunciation**. One who is discordant, vulgar, obstinate, deceitful, malicious, despondent, lazy, shrinking from endeavour and delaying in action, that **doer** is *tamasic*. ‘The *tamasic* **doer** of action is one who does not put himself really into the work, but acts with a mechanical mind, or obeys the most vulgar thought of the herd, follows the common routine or is wedded to a blind error and prejudice. He is obstinate in stupidity, stubborn in error and takes a foolish pride in his ignorant doing; a narrow and evasive cunning replaces true intelligence; he has a stupid and insolent contempt for those with whom he has to deal, especially for wiser men and his betters. A dull laziness, slowness, procrastination, looseness, want of vigour or of sincerity mark his action. The *tamasic* man is ordinarily slow to act, dilatory in his steps, easily depressed, ready soon to give up his task if it taxes his strength, his diligence or his patience.’<sup>1</sup> That which is enveloped in darkness, conceives as right law what is wrong, follows a routine of dull customary intelligence and sees all things in a perverted way, that **understanding** is *tamasic*. A *tamasic* man misunderstands the written truth. That **persistence** by which one does not give up sleep, fear, worry, grief and also pride, know that as *tamasic*. That **happiness** by which the Soul is deluded in the beginning and also in the end and which arises from sleep, sloth and negligence; that is *tamasic*. The double principle of *tamasic* action is that ‘(1) it contradicts *rajas* by inertia, (2) it contradicts *sattwa* by narrowness, obscurity and ignorance and, if either is depressed, it pours in to occupy its place.’<sup>53</sup>

*The Gita* prescribes a new method of self-discipline through which the **golden chain**<sup>38</sup> of three *gunas* can be broken. “It is to stand back in oneself from the action and the modes and observe this unsteady flux as the Witness seated above the surge of the forces of Nature. He is one who watches but is impartial and indifferent, aloof from them on their own level and in his native posture high above them. As they rise and fall in their waves, the Witness looks, observes, but



neither accepts nor for the moment interferes with their course. First there **must be** the freedom of the impersonal Witness; afterwards there can be the control of the Master, the *Ishwara*.”<sup>4</sup>

*The Synthesis of Yoga* book proposes another method in addition to *the Gita's* method by which one can go beyond three *gunas*. “There is nothing to be done with this fickle, restless, violent and disturbing factor but to get rid of it (physical mind) whether (1) by detaching it and then reducing it to stillness or (2) by giving a concentration and singleness to the thought by which it will of itself reject this alien and confusing element.”<sup>19</sup> “*Tamas* in the spiritual being becomes a divine calm, which is not an inertia and incapacity of action, but a perfect power, *sakti*, holding in itself all its capacity and capable of controlling and subjecting to the law of calm even the most stupendous and enormous activity: *rajas* becomes a self-effecting initiating sheer Will of the spirit, which is not desire, endeavour, striving passion, but the same perfect power of being, *sakti*, capable of an infinite, imperturbable and blissful action. *Sattwa* becomes not the modified mental light, *prakasa*, but the self-existent light of the divine being, *jyotiḥ*, which is the soul of the perfect power of being and illumines in their unity the divine quietude and the divine will of action.”<sup>20</sup> “This process (of Spiritual transformation) may be rapid or tardy according to the amount of obscurity and resistance still left in the nature, but it goes on unflinchingly so long as it is not complete. As a final result the whole conscious being is made perfectly apt for spiritual experience of every kind, turned towards spiritual truth of thought, feeling, sense, action, tuned to the right responses, delivered from the darkness and stubbornness of the *tamasic* inertia, the turbidities and turbulences and impurities of the *rajasic* passion and restless unharmonised kinetism, the enlightened rigidities and *sattwic* limitations or poised balancements of constructed equilibrium which are the character of the Ignorance.”<sup>42</sup>

18: “*Arjuna said*: I desire to know, O Mighty-armed, the essence of asceticism, *Sannyasa* and renunciation, *Tyaga*, O *Hrishikesh*, and their difference, O *Keshinisudana*.” The Gita-18.1 Or this question may be put in following language, “How, while absorbed and continually forced outward by the engrossing call of its active nature, is it to get back to its real self and spiritual existence?”<sup>2</sup>

**Answer attempted in contemporary language:** A *Sannyasi* rejects attachment of life/home, *aniketa*, and gives up work as it is prompted by desire, *sarbarambha parityagi*. A *Tyagi* renounces fruits of action, desire, ego, attachment to action, duality, three *gunas* and doer of action. In integral Yoga both are synthesised; the latter is indispensable askesis and the former is dispensable part of its self-discipline.

“The ascetic renunciation and the way of *the Gita* are both agreed that it must first of all renounce this absorption, must cast from it the external solicitation of outward things and **separate silent self from active nature**; it must identify

itself with the immobile Spirit and live in the silence. It must arrive at an inner inactivity, *naiskarmya*. It is therefore this saving inner passivity that *the Gita* puts here as **the first object of its Yoga**, the first necessary perfection in it or *Siddhi*.”<sup>2</sup>

“As a matter of fact, when people talk of Tyaga, of renunciation, it is always the physical renunciation of the world which they understand by the word or at least on which they lay emphasis, while the Gita takes absolutely the opposite view that the real *Tyaga* has action and living in the world as its basis and not a flight to the monastery, the cave or the hill-top. The real *Tyaga* is action with a renunciation of desire and that too is the real *Sannyasa*.”<sup>47</sup>

Like *Arjuna*'s eighteen questions that will teach the lesson of uniting the Soul with supreme Soul, we find in *Savitri*, *Death*'s twenty-three questions (which are Soul slaying truth) and concentration on them will help reconciling perfect Spirit with imperfect Matter (which is a Soul saving truth.). In *Death*, the (escapist) theory of moderate Spirituality and later Vedantic ascetic Spirituality are mixed. The double escapist solution of human love of moderate Spirituality and exclusive love of God of ascetic Spirituality as projected by *Death* are not acceptable to *Savitri*'s comprehensive Divine Love.

### **Eighteen Questions raised by a *Sadhaka* of integral Yoga:**

“Its (*The Gita*'s) influence is not merely philosophic or academic but immediate and living, an influence both for thought and action, and its ideas are actually at work as a powerful shaping factor in the revival and **renewal of a nation and a culture**.”<sup>22</sup>

Sri Aurobindo

“Sometimes, for a second, I see the Secret; there is an opening, and again it closes. Then once again it is unveiled for a second and I come to know a little more. Yesterday the Secret was there completely clear, wide open. But it's not something that can be explained: words are silly, it must be experienced.

*Sri Aurobindo* speaks of this Secret almost everywhere, especially in his *Essays on the Gita*. He tells us that in *the Gita* itself one gets glimpses of this thing which is beyond the Impersonal, beyond even the Personal behind the Impersonal, beyond the Transcendent.

Well, I saw this Secret – I saw that the Supreme only becomes perfect in terrestrial matter, on earth.”<sup>21</sup>

**The Mother**

The Eighteen Questions raised by *Arjuna* is sufficient to begin integral Yoga but may not be sufficient to continue this Yoga. This paper concentrates and contemplates eighteen practical questions while retracing a path of integral Yoga.

1: Lord, Thou hast chosen *Arjuna* as fit instrument to receive Thy Supreme Knowledge as he was having no sceptical doubt, *samsaya*, towards Thy personal Divine manifestation and he was having no narrow carping, *asuya*, towards the brother souls, *Vibhutis*, who were ahead of him in Consciousness. So, for pursuing integral Yoga how these two imperfections are conquered with the help of triple faith, *sraddha*, as proposed in the Gita<sup>48</sup> ?

2: The Lord proposes *Arjuna* to begin Yoga with double sincerity, *dvidha nistha*,<sup>23</sup> that of pursuing *Karma* and *Jnana Yoga* simultaneously. Integral Yoga proposes that this stand will reduce the possibility of Spiritual fall<sup>24</sup> and further insists how can one develop triple and quadruple integral sincerity.

3: How *Karma*, *Jnana* and *Bhakti Yoga* can be entirely reconciled? Before reconciling the triple Yoga, both the doctrines propose to reconcile *Karma* and *Jnana*, *Jnana* and *Bhakti* and *Bhakti* and *Karma Yoga* by activation Divine Will, Knowledge and Love.

4: The Lord explains to *Arjuna* the Nature and limitations of three modes of nature, *gunas*. He proposes a new method<sup>25</sup> to liberate one from the bondage of three *gunas* from whose limiting influence even the *Vibhutis* are not free.<sup>26</sup> Integral Yoga recognises three *gunas* as three dwarves and triple golden chain<sup>38</sup> and to liberate an individual from their influence is even a difficult task<sup>27</sup> for Supramental man.

5: *The Gita* narrates adequately the 24 Nature and hierarchy of *Apara Prakriti*. Now how can we know adequately the nature and hierarchy of *Para Prakriti*?

6: *The Gita* hints of transformation of nature, *prakritijairmuktam*<sup>26</sup> but does not explain it elaborately. How and by what steps the most difficult transformation can be affected? The Mother confirms, ‘When Sri Aurobindo says “integral transformation”, naturally he is speaking of physical transformation. But the Gita does not speak of integral transformation, I don’t think so. Because for the Gita, the idea of physical transformation does not exist. As I was explaining to you the other day, the world is as it is and you have but to take it as it is, and not be affected by what it is. For you enter a higher consciousness, you are liberated from outer forms, but they remain as they are. Indeed, some slight mention is made of changing one’s character, but there is no question of changing the material world.’<sup>49</sup>

7: *The Gita* describes adequately the nature of undivine work of three *gunas*. How can we know adequately the nature and hierarchy of Divine Work?

8: How can the works of all lives become transaction between Soul and Nature or transaction between tenfold Selves and tenfold Sheaths, *Koshas*?

9: How the gulf between them can be bridged by movement of Consciousness? The most crucial gulf is identified as the border of Subconscient and Inconscient Sheath where *Savitri* lost *Satyavan* for a brief period while journeying along with *Death*. Due to this gulf, ‘Her eyes had lost their luminous *Satyavan*’<sup>28</sup> or ‘The soul of the beloved now seen no more.’<sup>29</sup>

10: The Lord has hinted about the immortality of the Soul. How can this immortality of Soul of this life be extended to the immortality of Nature in all life?

11: How can one know that *Bhakti*, which is identified as the greatest element of Yoga and how can it be offered to the external *Avatara*? The activation of *Purushottama* Consciousness through integral *Bhakti* is greater than mutable and immutable Self.

12: What is the last secret of Soul's perfection? How can we unite with Thee integrally, *samagram mam*,<sup>30</sup> in all life, *sarvesu kalesu yogayukto*?<sup>31</sup>

13: *The Gita* hints that all manifestation, *sthabarajangamam*,<sup>32</sup> is the outcome of the union between Spirit, *Kshetrajna*, and Matter, *Kshetra*. This theory of Divine manifestation is extended in integral Yoga as union between ten-fold Selves and ten-fold respective Sheaths, *Koshas*. How these ten-fold Selves dynamise or how Supramental energy can activate from these ten centres?

14: How can the Spirit possess the Matter? Or how the true relation between triple web of physical-vital, mental and Spiritual can be established?

15: *The Gita* identifies *Akshara Purusha*/Spiritual Being greater and more powerful than the *Kshara Purusha*/Psychic Being and *Uttama Purusha*/Supramental being as more powerful and more perfect than the *Akshara Purusha*/Spiritual Being and a traditional Seeker prefers to live in Supramental Centre by realising the other two Selves and nature as Illusion and prepares a passage for final extinction in *Param Dham*. Integral Yoga gives more importance to Psychic being<sup>43</sup> in the heart centre and concentrates to perfect it by its Spiritualisation<sup>44</sup> and Supramentalisation<sup>45</sup> and a Supramentalised Psychic being is accepted as the permanent centre of living for reconciliation of Spirit with Matter and world transformation. The first result of Supramentalised Psychic change is complete Divine union and 'the secure possession of the oneness of our mind and soul with the minds and souls of others and the mind and soul of universal Nature.'<sup>41</sup>

16,17,18: *The Gita* hints about the *Jivatma*'s relation with *Paramatma*,<sup>33</sup> *Jivatma*'s relation with *Para-prakriti*<sup>34</sup> and identifies heart centre as meeting ground of *Paramatma* and *Para-prakriti*. In integral Yoga how these three Divine unions are sufficiently developed and how complete union<sup>46</sup> of *Paramatma* and *Paraprakriti* is experienced in the Psychic heart centre by calling down the dual Godheads?

Thus, through raising the above eighteen issues, we at *Sri Matriniketan Ashram* offer our life at the Feet of *the Divine Mother* and *Lord Sri Aurobindo* and pray to glimpse Their far greater Divinity and receive Their priceless Divine Grace.

### **Recapitulation:**

“There are four very great events in history, the siege of Troy, the life and crucifixion of Christ, the exile of Krishna in Brindavun and the colloquy with Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra. The siege of Troy created Hellas, the exile in Brindavun created devotional religion, (for before there was only

meditation and worship,) Christ from his cross humanised Europe, the colloquy at Kurukshetra will yet liberate humanity. Yet it is said that none of these four events ever happened.”<sup>17</sup>

### Sri Aurobindo

*The Gita* utility in integral Yoga is that it assists a *Sadhak* to go beyond the three *Gunas*, which is identified as the starting point of integral Yoga. Then the task of extensive movement of consciousness between ten subtle planes become practicable. *The Gita* has the immediate responsibility to liberate humanity while integral Yoga has the responsibility of transformation of humanity and Divine Life in distant future. Till then few individuals can strive to retrace a path, universalise their Psychic and Spiritual Selves and do good of humanity by movement of universal Consciousness.

OM TAT SAT

### References:

- 1: CWSA/19/Essays on the Gita-502,
- 2: CWSA/19/Essays on the Gita-528-29,
- 3: CWSA/23/The Synthesis of Yoga-236-237,
- 4: CWSA/23/The Synthesis of Yoga-238,
- 5: CWSA/23/The Synthesis of Yoga-313-314-15,
- 6: The Gita-7.1,
- 7: CWSA/23/The Synthesis of Yoga-60,
- 8: CWSA/23/The Synthesis of Yoga-384,
- 9: CWSA/23/The Synthesis of Yoga-66,
- 10: CWSA/23/The Synthesis of Yoga-146-47,
- 11: CWSA/25/The Mother-8, “You are always expecting the Mother to do it [*remove vital dissatisfaction and revolt*] — and here again the laziness and tamas come in — it is the spirit of tamasic surrender. If the Mother puts you back into a good condition, your vital pulls you down again. How is that to stop so long as you say Yes to the vital and accept its discouragement and restlessness and anguish and the rest of it as your own? Detachment is absolutely necessary.” CWSA-29/Letters on Yoga-II-80, “Active surrender is when you associate your will with the Divine Will, reject what is not the Divine, assent to what is the Divine. Passive surrender is when everything is left entirely to the Divine that few can really do, because in practice it turns out that you surrender to the lower nature under pretext of surrendering to the Divine.” CWSA-29/Letters on Yoga-II-79,
- 12: The Gita-6.41,
- 13: “But whatever his aim, however exalted his aspiration, he has to **begin** from the law of his present imperfection, to take **full account** of it and see how it can be converted to the law of a possible **perfection**.” CWSA/24/The Synthesis of Yoga-631, “**Detect first what** is false (thousands of rajasic imperfection) or obscure (thousands of tamasic imperfection) in you and persistently reject it, then alone can you rightly call for the divine Power to transform you.” Sri Aurobindo/The Mother-p-4

- 14: CWSA/19/Essays on the Gita-13,  
 15: CWSA/19/Essays on the Gita-37,  
 16: The Gita-8.27,  
 17: CWSA-12/Essays Divine and Human-427,  
 18: CWSA-23/The Synthesis of Yoga-442,  
 19: CWSA/23/The Synthesis of Yoga-314,  
 20: CWSA-24/The Synthesis of Yoga-689,  
 21: The Mother's Agenda/ April 26, 1960,  
 22: CWSA/19/Essays on the Gita-562-63  
 23: The Gita-3.3,  
 24: "Happy the worlds that have not felt our (Spiritual) **fall**,  
 Where Will is one with Truth and Good with Power;" Savitri-281,  
 25: "It is to stand back in oneself from the action and the modes and observe this  
 unsteady flux as the Witness seated above the surge of the forces of Nature. He is  
 one who watches but is impartial and indifferent, aloof from them on their own  
 level and in his native posture high above them. As they rise and fall in their  
 waves, the Witness looks, observes, but neither accepts nor for the moment  
 interferes with their course. First there **must be** the freedom of the impersonal  
 Witness; afterwards there can be the control of the Master, the *Ishwara*." CWSA/23/The Synthesis of Yoga-238,  
 26: "There is not one entity, either on the earth or again in the heaven among the  
 Gods, that is not subject to the workings of these three *gunas*, born of nature." The  
 Gita-18.40,  
 27: "(1) Ordinarily the supramental knowledge will be organised **first and with  
 the most ease** in the processes of pure thought and knowledge, *jnana* , because  
 here the human mind has already the upward tendency and is the most free. (2)  
**Next and with less ease** it will be organised in the processes of applied thought  
 and knowledge because there the mind of man is at once most active and most  
 bound and wedded to its inferior methods. (3) The last and **most difficult  
 conquest**, because this is now to his mind a field of conjecture or a blank, will be  
 the knowledge of the three times, *trikaladristi*." CWSA/24/The Synthesis of Yoga-  
 839,  
 28: Savitri-584,  
 29: Savitri-585,  
 30: The Gita-7.1, "The Divine is infinite and a single experience or poise of  
 experience cannot exhaust all the truth of the Divine. The seers have  
 experienced each some aspect or aspects of the Divine Reality. Their mental  
 differences have been illustrated in the apologue of the blind men who all felt  
 the elephant and described it in different figures according to the part they felt.  
 One must go beyond mind altogether, even beyond the spiritualised mind, to  
 have the real complete experience. "Rare", says Sri Krishna, "are the few  
 among the seekers who know me in my totality in all the truth of my being." In  
 fact, it is only in the supramental light that all opposition disappears and the

aspects are indivisibly united in the Whole. One must go on enlarging knowledge, adding experience to experience till all the limitation disappears.” CWSA-28/Letters on Yoga-7, “Because through it [surrender to the Guru] you surrender not only to the impersonal but to the personal, not only to the Divine in yourself but to the Divine outside you; you get a chance for the surpassing of ego not only by retreat into the Self where ego does not exist, but in the personal nature where it is the ruler. It is the sign of the will to complete surrender to the total Divine, *samagram mam manusim tanumasritam*. Of course it must be a genuine spiritual surrender for all this to be true.” CWSA-29/Letters on Yoga-II/p-193,

31: The Gita-8.27,

32: “All manifestation, *sthabarajangamam*, takes place by union between Field, Matter, *Kshetra* and Knower of the Field, Spirit, *Kshetrajna*.” The Gita-13.27,

33: The Gita-15.7,

34: The Gita-7.5,

35: CWSA-31/Letters on Yoga-IV/p-20,

36: The Gita-14.11,12,13,

37: “There are two golden rules. (1) Never be depressed or upset by difficulties or stumbles. (2) Press always quietly forward, then however long it seems to take, always progress will be made and one day you will be surprised to find yourself near the goal. It is like the curves followed by the train in the ascent of the mountain — they circle round but always nearer and nearer to the goal.” CWSA-31/Letters on Yoga-IV-735,

38: “But how does sattwa, the power of knowledge and happiness, become a **chain**? It so becomes because it is a principle of mental nature, a principle of limited and limiting knowledge and of a happiness which depends upon right following or attainment of this or that object or else on particular states of the mentality, on a **light of mind** which can be only a more or less clear **twilight**. Its pleasure can only be a passing intensity or a qualified ease. Other is the infinite spiritual knowledge and the free self-existent delight of our spiritual being.” CWSA-19/Essays on the Gita-431, “But neither (of the three gunas) must the aspirant remain subject to the gilded or **golden chain** of a conventional or a habitual or a mentally ordered or even a high or clear sattwic virtue. That will be replaced by something profounder and more essential than the minor inadequate thing that men call virtue. The original sense of the word was manhood and this is a much larger and deeper thing than the moral mind and its structures. The culmination of Karmayoga is a yet higher and deeper state that may perhaps be called “soulhood”, — for the soul is greater than the man; a free soulhood spontaneously welling out in works of a supreme Truth and Love will replace human virtue.” CWSA-23/The Synthesis of Yoga-212, “Sattwa must be transcended as well as rajas and tamas; **the golden chain** must be broken no less than the leaden fetters and the bond-ornaments of a mixed alloy.” CWSA-23/The Synthesis of Yoga-238,

39: “The true sattwic sacrifice on the other hand is distinguished by **three signs** that are the quiet seal of its character. **First**, it is dictated by the effective truth, executed according to the *vidhi*, the right principle, the exact method and rule, the just rhythm and law of our works, their true functioning, their dharma; that means that the reason and enlightened will are the guides and determinants of their steps and their purpose. **Secondly**, it is executed with a mind concentrated and fixed on the idea of the thing to be done as a true sacrifice imposed on us by the divine law that governs our life and therefore performed out of a high inner obligation or imperative truth and without desire for the personal fruit, — the more impersonal the motive of the action and the temperament of the force put out in it, the more sattwic is its nature. And **finally** it is offered to the gods without any reservation; it is acceptable to the divine powers by whom — for they are his masks and personalities — the Master of existence governs the universe.” CWSA-19/Essays on the Gita-487,

40: CWSA-24/The Synthesis of Yoga-758-759,

41: CWSA-24/The Synthesis of Yoga-880,

42: CWSA-22/The Life Divine-941,

43: “If the inmost being, the psychic, takes charge, then indeed a deeper mutation, not mental, can make the descent of spiritual force more effective; for the totality of the conscious being will have undergone a preliminary soul change which emancipates mind, life, body from the snare of their own imperfections and impurities.” CWSA-22/The Life Divine-971-

44: “But when the spiritualisation begins and, as its greater results manifest themselves, — silence of the mind, the admission of our being into the cosmic consciousness, the Nirvana of the little ego in the sense of universal self, the contact with the Divine Reality, — the interventions of the higher dynamis and our openness to them can increase, they can assume a fuller, more direct, more characteristic power of their working, and this progression continues until some complete and mature action of them is possible.” CWSA-22/The Life Divine-971-972,

45: But a complete solution of its oppositions can be arrived at only on this basis that the lower consciousness of mind, life and body cannot arrive at its full meaning until it is taken up, restated, transformed by the light and power and joy of the higher spiritual consciousness, while the **higher too does not stand in its full right relation to the lower by mere rejection**, but by this assumption and domination, this taking up of its unfulfilled values, this restatement and transformation, — a spiritualising and supramentalising of the mental, vital and physical nature.” CWSA-22/The Life Divine-704,

46: “It is when a **complete union** of the two sides of the Duality is effected and rules his consciousness that he begins to open to a fuller power that will draw him altogether out of the confused clash of Ideas and Forces here into a higher Truth and enable the descent of that Truth to illumine and deliver and act sovereignly upon this world of Ignorance. He has begun to lay his hand on the integral secret



which in its fullness can be grasped only when he overpasses the double term that reigns here of Knowledge inextricably intertwined with an original Ignorance and crosses the border where spiritual mind disappears into supramental Gnosis. It is through this **third** and most dynamic dual aspect of the One that the seeker begins with the most integral completeness to enter into the deepest secret of the being of the Lord of the Sacrifice.” CWSA-23/The Synthesis of Yoga-126,

47: CWSA-19/Essays on the Gita-494,

48: “(1) The faith of each man takes the shape given to it by his stuff of being, O Bharata. (2) This Purusha, this soul in man, is, as it were, made of shraddha, a faith, a will to be a belief in itself and existence, and (3) whatever is that will, faith or constituting belief in him, he is that and that is he.” The Gita-17.3, “The answer of the Gita first states the principle that the faith in us is of a triple kind (1) like all things in Nature and varies according to the dominating quality of our nature. The faith of each man takes the shape, hue, quality given to it by his stuff of being, his constituting temperament, his innate power of existence, *sattvā nurū pā sarvasya śraddhā* . (2) And then there comes a remarkable line in which the Gita tells us that this Purusha, this soul in man, is, as it were, made of *śraddhā* , a faith, a will to be, a belief in itself and existence, and (3) whatever is that will, faith or constituting belief in him, he is that and that is he. *Śraddhā mayo 'yam puruṣo yo yac-chraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ* .” CWSA-19/Essays on the Gita-481-482,

49: TMCW-8/Questions and Answers-1956/83,

50: CWSA-23/The Synthesis of Yoga-177,

51: CWSA-28/Letters on Yoga-I-424,

52: CWSA-28/Letters on Yoga-I-427,

53: CWSA-23/The Synthesis of Yoga-327,

Sri Matriniketan Ashram,  
Managed by The Mother's International Centre Trust,  
Regd.No-146/24.11.97. Vill: Ramachandrapur, PO: Kukudakhandi-761100,  
Via: Brahmapur, Dist: Ganjam, State: Odisha, India  
[www.srimatriniketanashram.com](http://www.srimatriniketanashram.com)