

## Phalashruti

### Benefits gained by the study of Bhagavad Gita

- Sri Datta Vijayananda Teertha Swamiji

The children of Datta devotees address Sri Swamiji very lovingly and reverentially as 'Tataji'. Determined to make their Tataji happy, they memorized the entire Bhagavad Gita and recited it for him at the Karya Siddhi Hanuman Temple in Dallas. Deeply touched by their expression of love and devotion, Sri Swamiji decided to take them all to Kurukshetra, the birthplace of Bhagavad Gita. To bless them on this occasion with a special gift, he has prepared a simple translation of the Bhagavad Gita.

The reward for the study of the Bhagavad Gita is nothing less than Liberation. However, ordinary householders are more concerned with worldly benefits such as life of peace and justice, enough prosperity for comfortable living, and fulfillment of desires approved by the Sastras, our ancient scriptures.

I felt that it would be helpful to them if they are informed of the numerous benefits derived by the regular study, chanting, and worship of the Bhagavad Gita. There is a work which provides just that material. I suddenly found in my personal collection, this publication enumerating the benefits of Gita

Parayana, published by Parimala Publications. It contains 87 Sanskrit verses, some of which are also found in the Varaha Purana. If one knows the value of the study of Gita, one would give it more serious attention. Therefore, a translation of the verses is being given here.

Where several great sages were gathered, a rishi requested Sage Suta thus:

1. Please tell us of the greatness and glory of the Bhagavad Gita and the benefits derived by its earnest study. I have heard that the glory of the Gita was extolled earlier by Sage Vyasa of ancient times.

Sage Suta replied:

2. O great sages, you have asked for highly subtle and ancient knowledge. Who is there who is really qualified to do justice to the glory of the Gita?
3. Sri Krishna alone knows the full value and greatness of the Gita. Arjuna, the son of Kunti received a taste of it. Sage Vyasa, his son Suka, Sage Yajnavalkya, Janaka, the king of Mithila,
4. and a few other great ones, who have studied the Gita, are able to describe its greatness to a small measure. Even I can only give you a hint of how great the work is. I have learned this from Sage Vyasa.

5. All the Upanishads are cows. Sri Krishna Paramatma, the son of a cowherd, milks the cows. Arjuna is the calf. The nectar called Gita is the milk. He who enjoys drinking the milk, is a man endowed with good sense.
6. In the beginning, Sri Krishna, as a charioteer, granted this nectar called Gita. This elixir benefits all the three worlds. I offer my salutations to Sri Krishna Paramatma.
7. One who wishes to cross this fearful ocean of worldly life can easily do so, by sailing the boat called Gita.
8. The fool who wishes for Liberation without listening to the Gita, without obtaining the wisdom contained in it, and without studying it, is a target of ridicule of even children. (Gita has the power to change one's destiny.)
9. Those who are constantly immersed in the study of the Gita are not ordinary human beings. They are undoubtedly of a divine aspect.
10. By sharing with him the wisdom of the Gita, Sri Krishna gave enlightenment to Arjuna, and made him eligible for Liberation.
11. He who uses the 18 chapters of the Gita as 18 steps to cleanse himself physically and mentally, by worshiping God in both His aspects with form and formless, becomes purified and attains the highest state of Parabrahma. Bathing in water removes only the outer filth.

12- 13. A single dip in the waters of the Gita, removes dirt accumulated over innumerable lifetimes. Those who have absolutely no knowledge of the Gita, who have never heard it, have no interest in it, refuse to read it, or listen to it, are equivalent to beasts.

14. Those who are ignorant of the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita are low and wretched. Their life is worthless. They have no right to claim that they are of a decent birth.

15. Body, behavior, reputation, home, and status of those who refuse to learn the message of the Gita are all a worthless mockery.

16. There is none worse than the one who is ignorant of the Gita. His claim to greatness, fame, felicitation, and recognition are all false.

17. Knowledge, discipline, austerity, strictness, penance, and fame are all worthless, if an appreciation for the Gita Sastra is lacking. It makes all such achievements disdainful.

18. There is no worse fool than he who refuses to learn the meaning of the Gita. Knowledge that does not include the study of the Gita appeals only to an evil mind.

19. Veda and Vedanta denounce knowledge that lacks Dharma. Bhagavad Gita, which is permeated with Dharma, grants all other types of knowledge as well.

20. 21. Since all other sciences are inherent in the Gita, the Science of Gita is the highest science. Those who study the Gita with absorption night and day, whether asleep, awake, walking, sitting, or standing, attain eternal bliss. Those who study it in the presence of Saligramas, in a place of worship, in a Siva Temple, 22. in a place of pilgrimage, or on a river bank, will certainly go to Vaikuntha. Sri Krishna Paramatma is satisfied and pleased by one's study of the Gita.

23, 24. The happiness that Sri Krishna derives when devotees study the Gita, he does not get when they chant the Vedas, give charities, perform sacrificial rites, or go on pilgrimages. Those who acquire a thorough knowledge of the Gita with a heart filled with devotion become as learned as those who have mastered all the Vedas, Sastras, and Puranas. Where yogis reside, in a sacred seat of spiritual importance, in great assemblies, 25, 26. during Yajnas, or in the presence of a devotee of Vishnu, if the Gita is studied, one goes to higher worlds. He who reads or listens to the Bhagavad Gita every day earns the same merit as one who performs seasonally, great Yagas like the Aswamedha, with proper

procedure, giving proper gratuity to the deserving.

Listening to the Gita, grasping its meaning, and sharing it with others, bestow the fruits of a Yajna.

27. He who chants the Gita for others, reaches Brahma Pada, the ultimate position. Now I will tell you the merit earned by one who worships the Bhagavad Gita daily with utmost reverence.

28. He gets the merit of having performed all sacrificial rites, and giving away in charity the entire landmass of the earth.

29. Those who worship the Bhagavad Gita earn the merit of having visited all pilgrim centers. They earn the merit of having given all types of charity. Where the Bhagavad Gita is chanted, no evil spirits can ever enter.

30. By Gita Parayana (listening or reading), the misery caused by thieves and enemies is removed. Where the Bhagavad Gita book is revered, no evil forces can enter.

31. In a home where the Gita is worshiped, there will be no misfortunes or fear of ill health. Curses become ineffective if the Gita is read or worshiped. Sins get destroyed. Degradation does not occur.

32. 33. The above mentioned six causes for unhappiness do not trouble the person who studies the Gita. The study of the Gita grants unwavering devotion towards God. Even offering a salutation to the Gita book or to

the one who has taught the Gita (Sri Krishna) bestows the Yoga of Devotion.

34. 35. 36. While enduring the results of past Karma, if one studies the Gita, one gets liberated from troubles and lives comfortably. He does not get entangled in worldly affairs. One who studies the Gita is prevented from committing serious sins. He washes away past sins. He remains totally untouched by sin. He lives in the world like a lotus leaf in water.

37. Study of the Gita destroys all types of sins incurred by speaking wrong words, eating wrong foods, touching wrong things, and other wrongs committed knowingly or unknowingly.

38. Those who study the Gita also rid themselves of the sin of receiving charity or acquiring what is not rightfully theirs.

39. Even if one were to receive as charity the entire earth studded with precious gems, in an instant, one would become pure as crystal by the study of the Gita.

40. Those whose heart revels in the study of the Gita are equal to those who do daily fire rituals, and daily japa with strict austerity. They are the greatest scholars. They are the wealthiest. They are Yogis. They are Jnanis. They deserve to be visited and seen.

41. The one who understands the Gita is as great as the one who has performed all the Yajnas, and has learned the meaning of all the Vedas.

42. The place where the Gita is kept and studied regularly, is as sacred as Prayag and other pilgrim centers.

43. In the bodies of those who study the Gita reside all gods, sages, yogis, and Naga devatas.

44. Sri Krishna, the cowherd boy, Narada, Dhruva, and the servants of Vishnu reside in their subtle forms in the body of one who reads the Gita.

The study and contemplation of the Gita and its meaning remove difficulties quickly.

45. Sri Krishna said: O Arjuna! I reside where the Gita is kept. It is my sacred seat. There is no doubt in it. There is no greater place of residence for me than the Gita.

46. There is no greater science than the Gita that explains the secret about my Self. I will tell you another secret. Listen. Bhagavad Gita is my greatest Guru. I live in the Gita. It is my secret abode.

47. O Arjuna! Gita is my heart. My entire essence is in the Gita. My entire knowledge is the Gita. The Science of Gita is an inexhaustible treasure of Knowledge.

48. 49. Using the knowledge contained in the Gita, I rule the three worlds. Gita Sastra is Brahma Vidya (Science of

God). It reveals me. The utterance of even half a syllable of the Gita is invaluable. Its fruit cannot be described. That is why it is called 'ardhamaatraa', half syllable. I will now list the different names of Gita. These are highly secretive.

50. 51. 52. O Arjuna! If you chant these names of the Gita, all sins get destroyed. The names are: Ganga, Gayatri, Sita, Satya, Saraswati, (Pativrata), Brahmavali (Brahmavalli), Brahmavidya, Trisandhya, Muktigehini, Ardhamatra, Chidananda, Bhavaghni, Bhrantinasini (Bhayanasinini), Vedatrayi, Para, Ananta, and Tatvarthajnana manjari.

53. He who chants these names with a steady mind, gains enlightenment quickly, and once he gives up the body, attains Liberation.

54. Those who are unable to read the entire Gita, even if they read a half of it, gain the merit of giving away a cow.

55. By reading all the 18 chapters, which are divided into sections of three, the merit of performing the Soma Yaga is obtained. Those who read six chapters, get the merit of bathing in the Ganga.

56. One who regularly reads two chapters a day reaches Indra's abode and resides there for an entire Kalpa, without any doubt.

57. One who reads half a chapter daily, reaches the world of the Sun and lives there blissfully for one hundred Manvantaras.

58. 59. One who reads from the Gita, 10 verses, or seven, five, four, three, two, one, or even a half sloka reaches the land of the moon and lives there for ten thousand years.

60. One who contemplates on the meaning of either a chapter, a verse, or even one line of a sloka at the time of death, reaches the highest state of Parama Pada.

61. On festival days or on auspicious occasions, by reading the Gita or even remembering it, one gets freed from all sins and gets liberated.

62. One who breathes his last holding the Bhagavad Gita, reaches Vaikuntha and enjoys the company of Lord Vishnu. (In the past, everyone carried the Bhagavad Gita in their bags or briefcases.)

63. Those who die while reading the Gita, become immortal. It is mandatory for every human being to study the Bhagavad Gita. It leads one to the highest state of Liberation. Mortal man becomes immortal.

64. One who breathes his last saying, 'Gita', rises to a higher plane.

65. The fruits of good deeds mentioned in the scriptures, are attained by the study of the Gita. The

student of Gita is freed from his faults and attains fullness.

66. While performing ancestral rites, chanting the Gita in honor of the departed souls, makes them very happy and contented. They reach heaven.

67. If during offerings made to the departed souls the Gita is chanted, the forefathers shower blessings upon their progeny before returning to their abode.

68. 69. By donating a book of Gita along with a cow to a scholar, one attains fulfillment. One avoids rebirth by giving in charity a book of Gita along with gold to a learned brahmin. (Miseries caused by sensual desires vanish.)

70. Giving away one hundred copies of the Gita takes one to the world of Brahma, and delays rebirth indefinitely.

71. By the merit earned by giving away Gita books, one enjoys living in the world of Vishnu in divine company for seven Kalpas.

1. 72. God is pleased, and fulfills the wishes of those who thoroughly learn the message of the Gita, or give away a book of Gita.

73. A human being who has taken birth in any one of the four castes, by not reading the Gita, or not listening

to it, loses the chance of gaining immortality, and instead, takes hold of poison.

74. One should drink the nectar of Gita, get liberated and enjoy bliss.

75. Those who are crushed by the miseries of worldly life, enjoy nectarine bliss when they listen to the teachings of the Gita. They reach Vaikuntha, the abode of Hari.

76. Several great kings like Janaka attained Liberation, by getting rid of all their shortcomings with the help of Gita.

77. Jnana given by the Gita is the pinnacle of all knowledge. It is the form of God Himself.

78. If anyone feels jealous of the Gita, or criticizes it, they suffer in hell till the end of Creation.

79. Out of foolish obstinacy, if one neglects to grasp the message of the Gita, he goes to hell and remains there till the end of the Kalpa.

80. One, who does not sit close by and listen, while the meaning of the Gita is being explained, is reborn as a dog or a fox.

81. Even if by stealing a copy of the Bhagavad Gita one reads it, it still gives good merit. The effort is not wasted.

82. If one listens to the Gita, but derives no pleasure from it, then one does not benefit in any way. His efforts do not yield good results. Those who chant the Gita out loud for others to listen, must be given gifts of gold and taken out in a grand procession. God is pleased if they are offered good food.

83. Those who teach the Bhagavad Gita must be honored with gifts of money, gold, valuable objects, and vehicles of transportation. Lord Sri Hari is pleased by such gestures.

84. Sri Krishna has revealed this greatness of the Bhagavad Gita a long time ago.

85. If the Bhagavad Gita is fully read, followed by this Phalasruti, all the benefits mentioned here will be obtained.

86. If the Gita is read, but is not followed by this Gita Mahatmyam, the reading remains fruitless and a mere wasteful exercise.

87. If the Gita is chanted along with this benefit statement, such study gives results. Even those who listen to this attentively will attain a great position. By reading, or listening to the Gita, one earns great merit. Wishes get fulfilled.

This concludes Srimad Bhagavad Gita Mahatmyam.

I offer my most reverential prostrations at the divine  
lotus feet of Sadgurudeva Sri Sri Sri Ganapathy  
Sachchidananda Swamiji, who has made this Gita  
Mahatmyam available to me at the right time, and has  
granted me the capacity to translate it –

Jaya Guru Datta

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Sri Datta Narayana Smaranam

Sri Datta Vijayananda Teertha Swamiji

22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016, Mysuru