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VAIṢṆAVISM, ŚAIVISM
AND MINOR RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS

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V. Substance of the Bhagavadgītā.

§ 11. We will now pass under review the main contents of the Bhagavadgītā, as from all appearances it is the earliest exposition of the Bhakti system or the Ekāntika Dharma.

Chapter II. Arjuna is reluctant to fight because it involves the destruction of his near and revered relatives and of other men. Bhagavat endeavours to remove the reluctance by speaking of the eternity and indestructibility of the human soul. Here are two stanzas which occur, with a variation in one of the lines, in the Kāṭha-Upaniṣad. Then to fight is spoken of as the duty of a Kṣatriya for whom there is no other good than a just fight. This mode of thinking is characterised as being Sāṃkhya, and the Yoga mode then follows. The condition of mind in the Yoga mode is a determined will. Those who according to the precepts of the Veda perform rites for the fulfilment of various desires can not have a determined steadfast will. For attaining such a will one should think only of the deed to be done and not of the fruits to be derived from it. With a concentrated mind and without any attachment to other objects one should devote oneself to the deed alone. By such devotion to acts with a determined will man finally attains inflexibility of will (becomes sthitaprajña), and all his desires being uprooted, he attains complete serenity of soul or the Brāhmī condition. When he is in this condition at the time of death, he obtains quiescence in Brahman. This comes to the same doctrine as that stated in the Kāṭha and Brhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣads, that when all desires in the heart are uprooted, the mortal becomes immortal and attains to Brahman¹⁾. The discipline, however, prescribed for the attainment of this end is not simply moral, but religious also, since it is stated that after having controlled the senses which render the mind restless, a man should devote himself to Bhagavat.

§ 12. Chapter III. There are two paths, that of devotion to knowledge for the Sāṃkhyas and that of devotion to Karman or action for the Yogins. Every one is born for a life of activity, but the deeds done do not tie him down to the world, if he does them for worship (Yajña) and not for his private purposes. No Karman is necessary for one whose enjoyments consist in himself, who is satisfied with himself and contented in himself. But for other people action is necessary, and it must be done without any selfish desire. Janaka and others obtained perfection by devoting themselves to actions alone, i. e. by the pursuit of an active life. But the action should be dedicated to the Supreme, and one should not seek any fruit for himself. But such a frame of mind is not attainable by ordinary men, who are under the influence of their physical nature and sensual passions. Then a question is asked what it is that prompts man to sin. The reply is that it is desire and anger which are all-powerful and envelop a man's spiritual existence. Desire acts through the senses, but intelligence is

¹⁾ *Yadā sarve pramueyante kāmā yesya hṛdi śrītaḥ*, KU. VI, 14 and also BU. IV, 4, 7.

superior to the senses, and superior to this latter is the will (Buddhi), and the soul is superior to Buddhi. Knowing oneself to be higher than Buddhi, one should curb oneself by efforts and kill desire which acts through the series, viz. senses, intellect, will. Here the superiority of one faculty over another is an idea borrowed from the Kāṭha-Upaniṣad. In connection with the teaching that action should be done disinterestedly, Bhagavat makes the closest possible approach to the Sāṃkhya doctrine that the soul being deluded by egoism (Ahaṃkāra) regards himself as the agent of the actions done by the qualities of nature (Prakṛti), and that, misled by the qualities of nature, he forms an attachment to qualities and actions.

§ 13. Chapter IV. The chapter begins with Bhagavat's mention of his communication of this system to Vivasvat in the first instance, as alluded to above. Incidentally the question of his existence at the time of Vivasvat comes up, and he then explains his being born again and again and assuming incarnations for the destruction of the wicked by means of his Prakṛti. They who know the incarnations and the celestial deeds of Bhagavat, are released from the body and are not born again. By means of knowledge men, being purified and their passions destroyed and being devoted to him and resorting to him and resting on him, attained to the condition of Bhagavat. Bhagavat resorts to men in the manner in which they resort to him; men everywhere follow his path.

The idea of action without attachment is further developed. Then metaphorical Yajñas are mentioned, such as the sacrifice of the senses into the fire of restraint, of the objects of the senses into the senses, of the operation of the senses and of the vital breaths into the fire of Yoga, which is the control of the self. All these Yajñas cannot be accomplished without acts. Of these the Yajña of knowledge is the best; for by its means one sees all things in one self and in God (Supreme Spirit). This highest knowledge brings about freedom from all sin, and destroys the polluting effect of action. The realisation of the Yoga sets aside the significance of the actions. This highest knowledge puts an end to all doubt and one becomes a spirit — a spirit totally free. When acts are done in this condition, they do not defile a person. Here the tendency to rationalise Yajñas or sacrifices, which set in in the Upaniṣad period, is seen in a developed form, since the restraint of the senses, the attainment of knowledge, and such other practices are characterised as Yajñas or sacrifices.

Another point that deserves notice is the statement that Bhagavat deals with men in the manner in which they deal with him, that is, the spirit with which God is approached by men is reciprocated by God. This is followed by the affirmation that men everywhere, whatever the differences of their views, follow the path of Bhagavat. Here lies in germ the principle that all religions have a basis of truth in them.

§ 14. Chapter V. Sāṃkhya and Yoga are brought into connection with Saṃnyāsa and Karmayoga. They are not independent of each other. Following either thoroughly, one obtains the fruit of both. The place which is obtained by Sāṃkhyas is obtained also by Yogas. For Jñānayajña or sacrifice of knowledge enabling a man to see all things

in himself and in God, and this knowledge bringing about freedom from sin, the same condition is attained to which an active life or pursuit of actions (Karmayoga) brings about, when the actions are done disinterestedly or without aiming at the fruit, with an eye directed towards Brahman only, the true essence of things. Though this is so, still Saṁnyāsa is difficult to be realised without Yoga. With Yoga one attains to it soon. A Yogin does not think that he does something when he sees, hears, eats, sleeps, etc. This is so when these acts are done without any attachment, the aim being the realisation of Brahman. The Yogins perform deeds by their body, mind, will, or simply by their senses, without any attachment for the sake of spiritual purification. By means of Yoga, Jñāna is obtained, and in this condition man looks at all things alike. When a man looks at all things with the same regard, what he aims at is the Brahman and in it he rests. This leads to the consideration of the final peace in Brahman and the method of attaining it. This peace in Brahman resembles the condition of an Arhat in Buddhism, but the Bhagavadgītā does not end there and adds that in this condition of deliverance a person comes to know the Supreme Soul as one to whom all kinds of worship and austere practices are directed as the lord of all worlds and the friend of all beings; and it is this knowledge that leads to peace.

§15. Chapter VI. He who does not attach himself to the result of his actions and does what he ought to do, is Saṁnyāsin as well as Yogin. Karman or action is necessary to become a sage (Muni). When he has attained the dignity of a sage, the essence of it is peace. Then follows a description of the state of a man who has attained Yoga. Practice of Yoga, or contemplation, is then described. When a man goes through the Yoga practices, he attains serenity in Bhagavat, i. e. becomes absorbed in him in peace. All the functions of the mind are suspended in the condition of Yoga. Seeing himself by himself he rests in himself. Then follows an explanation of the process of abstraction and concentration. A Yogin sees himself in all things and all things in himself, looks at all things in the same light. The Supreme Spirit is not lost to him who sees him everywhere and sees everything in him, the Supreme Spirit. He who looks upon the Bhagavat as one, though he exists in all things, exists in him, though he moves about everywhere. He who regards all as himself (and looks upon them in the same light) in matters of happiness and misery is the best Yogin. Then Arjuna remarks on the difficulty of this Yoga. "The mind", he says, "is restless". But Bhagavat replies that it can be controlled by practice as well as by reflection on the vanity of things (Vairāgya). At the end Bhagavat teaches that he is the greatest Yogin, who, having faith in him, adores him with his whole soul centred in him.

The Yoga described in this chapter is found in some of the Upaniṣads, especially in the Śvetāśvatara. The affirmation "sees himself in himself and everywhere else" occurs in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka (IV, 4, 23). The author winds up the chapter with a verse which is in every sense theistic, as he does the fifth chapter, in order, it would appear, that the description of the mental discipline contained in

the last chapter and of Yoga in this might not lead to non-theistic conclusions. Care is taken to bring the whole into connection with the Supreme Soul.

§ 16. Chapter VII. In the last six chapters has been explained the whole process of Karmayoga from beginning to act regardless of the fruit, to the attainment of the condition of Yogin, who acting solely with a view to the acquisition of the Brahma condition, is free from passions, looks upon all things alike; and it is added at the end that he is the best of the Yogins, who adores Bhagavat with faith and with a devoted heart. This is added to show that the processes up to the attainment of the Yoga condition are difficult to be practised by men with such passions as we possess and the way to be free from them is to surrender oneself to God, and therefore in this chapter Bhagavat goes on to explain the nature of created beings and of his relation to them. He begins by saying that God's Prakṛti is eight-fold: the five elements, mind, will (Buddhi), and egoism. Jīva is another Prakṛti, which supports the world. From these are produced all objects or beings. Bhagavat is the source and the last resting place of the world. There is nothing further than him. All these things are strung together in him as gems in a string. That which is the characteristic excellence of a thing is Bhagavat himself. All the three qualities and the conditions resulting from them proceed from him. Bhagavat is not in them and they are not in him. Bhagavat is beyond all these three conditions. The world, deluded by the conditions resulting from the three qualities, does not know Bhagavat, the Supreme Spirit, who is beyond them all. This Māyā of Bhagavat consisting of these qualities is very difficult to be got over, and this Māyā they get rid of, who take refuge in him. Wicked men do not resort to Bhagavat, their understanding being clouded by Māyā and resorting to Āsura or demoniacal condition. The devotees of Bhagavat are of four kinds. Of these the Jñānin, or the enlightened, is the best. The Jñānin sticks to Bhagavat as his best refuge. The enlightened man surrenders himself to him, regarding Vāsudeva as everything. Other people are attached to other deities and undertake different vows. Their faith in their deities is generated by Bhagavat and strengthened by him. They worship those deities with that faith and attain fruit. That fruit is yielded by Bhagavat himself. But it is perishable. Not knowing Bhagavat's true nature, which is unchangeable and excellent, ignorant people regard him as something indiscrete at first and afterwards made discrete. He is not intelligible to all beings, being enveloped in Yogamāyā (mystic power). He knows the past, the present and the future, and nobody knows him. By likes and dislikes all beings are deluded and those only, who are released from the infatuation of likes and dislikes, with their sins being destroyed by the practice of virtue, adore the Supreme. Those who know Bhagavat to be Adhiyajña (presiding over worship) and Adhibhūta (presiding over beings), come to know him when they depart this life.

For the idea of all existing things being strung together in the Supreme we may compare MU. II, 2, 5 and BU. III, 8, 3—4; 6—7. Ordinary people are represented as resorting to other deities, led by seven

ral desires. The Bhagavat confirms their faith in their deities, and the fruits that they receive from those deities are also given by him. But the fruits that they get from them are perishable. Here appears the same idea as that noticed in chap. IV and to be noticed in chap. IX, viz. that the worshippers of other gods are really Bhagavat's worshippers, and that there is a principle of unity in all religions.

§ 17. Chapter VIII. Arjuna begins by putting questions about the three subjects mentioned in the last verse of the last chapter and about Brahman and Adhyātma. Bhagavat then explains these. About perceiving him at the time of death he says: "He who leaves his body while remembering me at the time of death, attains to the same condition as mine." Finally he states that he who departs this life while meditating on the all-knowing, eternal ruler, who is smaller than the smallest thing, who is the protector of all, whose form is unthinkable, whose brilliance is like that of the sun, and who is beyond all darkness, with devotion, his whole soul gathered between the brows with the power of concentration, reaches that Supreme Being, who is higher than the highest. He then mentions the attainment of the Unchangeable, with the mind concentrated, and the reaching of the final goal after leaving the body by means of a Yoga process and by the utterance of the syllable 'Om' and the remembrance of Bhagavat all the while. Bhagavat is easily attainable by one who meditates on him with a singleness of mind and is devoted to him. Every being is subject to transmigration, but is free from it when he reaches Bhagavat. During the night of Brahman all these things are resolved into the indiscrete (Avyakta), and, when the day dawns, they spring out again from it. There is another substance, different from that Avyakta and itself indiscrete (Avyakta), which is not destroyed when all others are destroyed. This substance which is indiscrete, is unchangeable and that is the highest resting place, which being attained to, there is no return. That is Bhagavat's highest abode. That supreme soul, in whom all these beings are and who has spread out all this, is to be attained by single-minded devotion. Then he proceeds to mention the two paths. Those who die while the sun is in his northern course (Uttarāyana), go to Brahman, and those who die while he is in his southern course (Dakṣiṇāyana) go to the orb of the moon, from which the soul returns.

It is worthy of observation that after mentioning that the man who meditates on the Supreme at the time of death reaches him, he mentions the attainment of the Akṣara, which is the highest goal, by resorting to a Yoga process. This seems to be like looking back on the Yoga practices for the attainment of the Akṣara (Brahman) mentioned in the Upaniṣads such as the Muṇḍaka (II, 2, 3) and the Śvetāśvatara (I, 14). In the first passage, the syllable 'Om' is compared to a bow, the soul to the arrow, and Brahman to the target which is to be hit. In the second a person is instructed to use his own body as the nether wooden piece and the Praṇava as the upper one and, practising meditations, which is like rubbing of the wooden pieces against each other, to discover the God hidden like Agni in the pieces of wood. Here the Akṣara Brahman of the Muṇḍaka is transformed into Deva

(God) in the Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad, and the Bhagavadgītā also prescribes the meditating on Bhagavat while the syllable 'Om' is being uttered. Here, therefore, we see the effort to invest the unchangeable and indiscrete Brahman with a strong distinct personality. Later on in the chapter another Avyakta is mentioned, besides that into which all things are resolved at the dissolution of the universe. This Avyakta is eternal and indestructible and is called Akṣara and the highest goal. Here, however, this Akṣara is at once rendered theistic by being spoken of as the highest abode or condition of Bhagavat.

§ 18. Chapter IX. In this chapter Bhagavat proceeds to explain the direct and indirect knowledge which constitute the royal lore and the royal secret. It is to be directly perceived. It is holy and easy to be practised. The Bhagavat spread out all this universe. All things are in him and he is not in them, and still the objects are not in him. Wonderful is his lordly power. He is the sustainer of all beings and is not in them. His self brings all things into existence. As the air which exists in the sky is everywhere, so all beings are in him. At the dissolution of the world all beings are dissolved into his Prakṛti, and at the beginning of a new Kalpa they are discharged forth again. All these acts do not contaminate him, as he does them without any desire. With himself as the director, the Prakṛti brings forth the moveable and immoveable things. Foolish men disregard him who has assumed a human form, not knowing his true nature, viz. that he is the lord and the great ruler of all; but great souls, assuming a godly nature, knowing him to be the origin of all beings, adore him with single-mindedness. Some people worship him by Jñānayajña, i. e. a rationalised sacrifice, taking him as one or several or as having his face in all directions. He is a subsidiary as well as the main sacrifice. He is Svadhā, herbs, Mantra, ghee. He is Agni and he is also oblation. He is father, mother, nourisher and grandfather of the world. He is Ṛc, Sāman, etc. He is the way, sustainer, lord, witness, shelter and friend, etc. The knowers of the three Vedas, the drinkers of Soma, worshipping him by means of sacrifice, desire habitation in heaven, where they enjoy many pleasures. After their merit has been exhausted, they come back to the mortal world again. Those who thus follow the ritual of the three Vedas come and go. He looks after the welfare of those who think of him and meditate on him with single-mindedness and adore him. Those who worship other deities must be considered as worshipping him, but they do so not according to prescribed rules. He is the receiver and lord of all kinds of Yajñas or worship, but those people do not know him as he really is, and therefore they fail. Those who worship other deities attain to them, and his worshippers attain to him. All the oblations thrown into the fire, all that is eaten and given and the austerities practised should be dedicated to him. In this way these actions do not serve as a bondage, and one becomes a real Saṁnyāsin and goes to him. He who adores Bhagavat with single-mindedness becomes holy, even if he be wicked. He becomes immediately holy and obtains peace. Even women, Vaiśyas and Śūdras, when they resort to him, attain to the highest place. The seeker of the good should direct his mind towards him, should be his devotee,

should worship him, should bow to him, and acting in this way and being thus fully devoted to him, he will reach him.

Here the performance of sacrificial rites is, in the manner which has become usual, mentioned as efficacious for the acquisition of a place in heaven. From this place persons return when their merit is exhausted, but there is no return when a man devotes himself to Bhagavat with all his heart. God is further personalised and brought home to man by being declared as his father, mother, nourisher, grandfather, friend, refuge, etc. The attitude to other gods is of toleration. The worship offered to them is really offered to Bhagavat, but the worshippers do not know Bhagavat as he truly is and therefore go wrong.

§ 19. Chapter X. The gods and Ṛṣis do not know the origin of Bhagavat. He was before them all. He who knows Bhagavat to be the unborn and unbeginning lord of all worlds, is free from all sins. All the mental conditions, knowledge, absence of ignorance, forgiveness, truth, self-control, serenity, pain and pleasure, etc. are from him. The seven ancient Maharṣis and four Manus sprang from him whose descendants are all these men. Good men adore Bhagavat with pure faith, knowing him to be the origin of all and that everything is set in motion by him. They, with their minds directed towards him, with their souls centred in him, enlighten each other, speak about him, and thus they are satisfied and are happy. Out of sympathy for them he dispels the darkness of ignorance by the light of knowledge, being himself in his true condition.

When they adore him thus constantly full of love, he grants them that condition of mind by means of which they reach him. Then questioned by Arjuna as to the Vibhūtis or excellent forms of each species or group which pervade the world, Bhagavat proceeds to mention them. He is the soul that dwells in the heart of men and is the origin, the middle and the end of all beings. He is Viṣṇu of the Ādityas, the sun of all shining things, Kapila of the Siddhas, Prahlāda of all Daityas, Rāma of wielders of weapons, philosophy (Adhyātma) of all lores, Dvandva of compounds, Kīrti (fame) of all females, Vāsu-deva of Vṛṣṇis, and Dhanamjaya of Pāṇḍavas. That object which has excellence and splendour should be known as arising from his lustre.

There is to be observed here one special characteristic of the Bhakti school, and that is that all the devotees meet together, enlighten each other as to the nature of God and contribute by discourses on him to each other's elevation and gratification. This is almost a characteristic mark of Bhaktas as distinguished from the Yogins, who have to go through their exercises singly and in solitude.

§ 20. Chapter XI. The Virāj form of God, i. e. all beings looked at simultaneously as constituting one whole, as also his destructive form, in which all enter into his mouth and are absorbed, is described in this chapter. Arjuna praises him that he does not see the end, the beginning, the middle of him, that he is the guardian of eternal righteousness and entreats him to give up this frightful form and assume the more usual and the more agreeable human form. In verse 30 Arjuna addresses him as Viṣṇu, saying that his dazzling brilliance makes everything hot and his lustre has filled the whole universe.

The idea of looking at the universe as a form of god is as old as the *Puruṣasūkta* (RV. X, 90). God's having eyes everywhere, face everywhere, arms everywhere and feet everywhere is expressed in RV. X, 81, 3. This verse is repeated in *Śvetāsvatara-Upaniṣad* III, 3.

§ 21. Chapter XII. This chapter starts with a question as to the difference between the contemplation on the original indiscrete cause which is unchangeable (*Akṣara*) and the worship of him (*Vāsu-deva*), and the reply is, they are the best devotees, who, fixing their minds upon him, meditate on him with a concentrated attention and faith. Those who, with their senses restrained, meditate on the indiscrete, unchangeable, undefinable, as existing everywhere and unthinkable, also reach him, but the trouble to them is greater. *Bhagavat* delivers from the ocean of death those who, dedicating all their actions to him and meditating on him, worship him; and he teaches *Arjuna* to fix his mind on him and concentrate his will on him and, if he can not fix his mind firmly upon him, then to endeavour to obtain him by continual remembrance of him. If this last is not feasible, he should perform deeds for his sake, and doing this he would obtain success. If, however, he is not able to do this with his mind fixed on him, he should abandon desire for the fruit of all his actions. Then follows an enumeration of the virtues of those who are devotees of God and are specially dear to him, such as not hating any being, being the friend of all, being humble, being indifferent to praise or censure, etc.

In this chapter the meditation on the *Akṣara* or unchangeable indiscrete cause is again mentioned as opposed to the worship of *Bhagavat* as a personal God. In similar passages in the previous chapters the personalisation is effected at once by inserting a clause applicable only to a personal God. But here the meditation on *Avyakta* is spoken of as successful, but is condemned as being very difficult to be practised, and the theistic aim of the work is kept in view.

§ 22. Chapter XIII. This body is the *Kṣetra*, and he who knows this body as his own, is *Kṣetrajña*. The *Bhagavat* is also *Kṣetrajña* in all the *Kṣetras*. This subject about the *Kṣetra* and *Kṣetrajña* has been variously treated by the *Ṛṣis* in verses of various metres and determined by the words of the *Brahmasūtra* unfolding reasons. *Kṣetra* consists of the twenty-four elements mentioned in the *Sāṃkhya* system and desire, hatred, pleasure and pain, and body, life and courage, which are *Ātmaguṇas* according to the *Vaiśeṣikas*. *Bhagavat* then proceeds to enumerate the virtues, such as humility, sincerity, etc., which constitute, it is said, *Jñāna* or knowledge, but which are to be taken as means to knowledge. Then are alluded to knowledge, or true philosophy, and its reverse. He then mentions the *Jñeya*, or thing to be known, and it is *Parabrahman*, which has no beginning nor end, which is neither existent nor non-existent, and which has hands and feet everywhere and which has eyes, head and face everywhere, which has ears everywhere, and which pervades all. And thus the description of god-head proceeds in the words of the *Upaniṣads*. *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are unbeginning. All changes and qualities are produced from *Prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* is the cause in bringing about effect, and *Puruṣa* is the cause

in the enjoyment and sufferance of happiness and misery. The Puruṣa, being connected with Prakṛti, enjoys or endures the properties or effects of the Prakṛti; and the cause is his being connected with the Guṇas or qualities. Besides all these various principles, there is in this body Puruṣa, the Supreme Soul, who is the witness of everything, who is the sustainer, enjoyer and the great lord. By meditation some see the self by self, others see it by Sāṃkhyayoga and Karmayoga. Any moving or unmoving thing that comes into existence is produced by the union of Kṣetra and Kṣetrajña. He, who sees the Supreme Lord equally in all things, who is not destroyed when other things are destroyed, sees truly. Seeing God equally in all things, a man does no injury to himself and attains to the highest goal. He truly sees, who sees all acts as done by Prakṛti and Puruṣa as not the actor. When he regards all separate beings as existing in one place and sees development proceeding thence, he becomes Brahman. The Supreme Spirit, though dwelling in the body, does not do anything and is not contaminated, because he is unbeginning and is devoid of qualities and unchangeable. The spirit is not contaminated, just as space or ether existing everywhere is not. Just as the sun illuminates the whole world, so does the Kṣetrajña illuminate the Kṣetra.

The Karmayoga leading up to the condition of a Yogin, who looks at all things with the same regard and makes no distinction between them and himself, has been described in the first six chapters. In the next six the Bhaktiyoga, or loving adoration of God, is the subject treated of; and the final effect of it is the formation of the fully righteous character which distinguishes a Bhakta who is dear to Bhagavat. With chapter XIII begins the consideration of subsidiary subjects. In this Bhagavat speaks of the Kṣetra and Kṣetrajña, or the soul and its dwelling place, and of another soul, that is, himself also dwelling in the Kṣetra. In connection with this subject he refers to the poetic works of the previous Ṛṣis and to the words of the Brahmasūtra. What these works are it is difficult to say; but what follows is, first, the mention of the twenty-four principles generally associated with the Sāṃkhya system, as well as seven others, all of which constitute the Kṣetra; secondly, the enumeration of the virtues that qualify one to the attainment of knowledge; thirdly, the statement about knowledge (Jñāna), or that which is true philosophy, and also Ajñāna, which is the reverse; and fourthly, the description of the Jñeya or the thing to be known, which is Parabrahman or the Supreme Soul. This last contains the attributes given in the Upaniṣads, and a verse and a half are verbally quoted from the ŚU. There are also other statements in the concluding verses which resemble KU. V, 11 and ŚU. V, 4. Then there is a statement about the nature of the Prakṛti and Puruṣa quite in keeping with the Sāṃkhya system; but the existence of the highest spirit in the body along with the animal soul is mentioned. Thus is the atheism of the Sāṃkhya system studiously avoided, whenever there is a reference to its doctrines. Then follow reflections on God and the seeing of the Supreme Soul everywhere. The works, therefore, upon which this chapter is based are some of the Upaniṣads and some treatises setting forth the

constitution of the world and the principles of morality. These treatises may have been the discourses first independent and afterwards included in the Śāntiparvan and other parts of the Mahābhārata, or they may have been others of which we have no trace; but there is no mention here of the Sāṃkhya system by name nor a special reference to it as elaborated in later times by Īśvarakṛṣṇa. The idea of the twenty-four principles is ancient and seems to have been appropriated afterwards by the founders of the philosophic systems, as it suited their purpose. But no chronological conclusions can be deduced from the mention of those twenty-four principles. The doctrine that all action proceeds from the Prakṛti and the soul is inactive and simply enjoys or suffers, which is a true Sāṃkhya doctrine, but is calculated to absolve a man from moral responsibility, is also mentioned; but it appears to come incidentally along with the twenty-four principles.

§ 23. Chapter XIV. The great Brahman is the womb (Yoni) for Bhagavat into which he throws seed. Of all the wombs that produce bodily forms, Brahman is the greatest. Bhagavat then proceeds to detail the nature of the three Guṇas, their products and their results in the future world. These Guṇas prove as bondage, and when they are got over, then the man is free from the bondage and becomes immortal. The distinguishing characteristic of one who is free from these three Guṇas is a quiet undisturbed serene mood, in which happiness and misery are alike, and gold, clod of earth and stone are alike, in which agreeable and disagreeable things are alike, and praise and censure are also alike, etc. He who invariably resorts to Bhagavat by Bhaktiyoga becomes free from these three Guṇas and attains to the condition of Brahman. Bhagavat is the support of the immortal and unchanging Brahman and of eternal righteousness (duty) and of unending happiness.

Here then is a distinct affirmation of the soul's attainment of freedom from passions by means of continuous devotion to Bhagavat or God. The word Brahmayoni occurs in MU. III, 1, 3 and is to be interpreted, in the light of the opening statement in the above, as one whose Yoni is Brahman.

§ 24. Chapter XV. Bhagavat proceeds to the comparison of Śaṃsāra, or the whole extent of things, to the pippal-tree. This tree is to be cut by the weapon of indifference or non-attachment; and then should be sought that place from which there is no return. One should surrender himself to the original Puruṣa. Those reach that unchanging position or place, who are free from pride, ignorance, desires, and the pair of happiness and misery. That is the highest abode of Bhagavat, which is not illuminated by the sun, the moon or the fire. When a soul departs from a body, it takes away the Indriyas, of which Manas is the sixth, and brings them in when it assumes another body. The soul itself is a part of Bhagavat and is eternal. This soul, placing itself in these six Indriyas, resorts to all objects of sense. The brilliance existing in the sun, which illumines the whole world, and which exists in the moon as well as in fire, is to be known as that of Bhagavat. By becoming Soma Bhagavat raises all herbs. By becoming fire he

contributes to digestion. He dwells in the heart of all. From him proceeds consciousness of one's condition, knowledge, and the rejection of what is not true. Bhagavat alone is to be known by means of all the Vedas and as the author of Vedāntas and the knower of the Veda. There are two souls in the world, one that changes, and the other that is unchangeable. Besides these, there is another who is the highest and is called Paramātman, and who as the unchangeable lord supports all the three worlds after entering into them. Bhagavat is known to be that Highest Soul in the ordinary world and also in the Vedas.

There is one new point brought out in this chapter. And that is that the animal soul goes out of the body along with the six senses and enters new ones in that condition. The comparison of the composite universe to the pippal-tree occurs in KU. (VI, 1), MaiU. (VI, 4), and the non-illumination of the highest abode of Bhagavat is mentioned in a verse in KU. (V, 15), MU. (II, 2, 10) and SU. (VI, 14). The doctrine of the existence of the third highest Puruṣa should also be noted as a characteristic of this theistic work. The triad, Kṣara, Akṣara or Ātman (individual soul), and the ruling one God, is mentioned in ŚU. (I, 10), which work is a precursor of the Bhagavadgītā.

§ 25. Chapter XVI. Bhagavat now proceeds to enumerate the virtues which constitute the divine endowments (Daivī Saṃpad), and the vices that constitute demoniacal possessions. From divine endowments results final deliverance, and from the demoniacal possessions follows destruction. There are two classes of created beings: one is divine and the other demoniacal. In persons of the latter class there is no purity nor correct conduct nor truth. They regard the world as unreal, without substratum or support, without God, disconnected and, what more, springing from lust. Holding this view these wicked and dull persons with their ferocious deeds bring about the destruction of the world. Full of insatiable lust and possessed of vanity, pride, and arrogance, they act in an unholy manner, sticking to their own false conceits. They accumulate wealth by foul means for enjoyment, and boasting of their possessions, their power, their parentage, they treat others with contempt and eventually go to the infernal regions. If they worship at all, they simply utter the name and assume a false garb. They are full of egotism and hate Bhagavat, as abiding in their own bodies and those of others. These wicked men he consigns to the race of the demons. Desire, anger and covetousness are the three doors to hell. These three, therefore, should be abandoned. He who avoids these three doors, reaches the highest goal. He who abandons sacred precepts and acts according to his own will, does not obtain success, happiness or the highest goal. The sacred precepts must, therefore, be followed whenever a man has to do anything or avoid anything.

Here two classes of men, good and bad, are mentioned. Among the latter are included not only worldly men who do not care for God or morality, but the followers of philosophical or religious systems different from that of Bhagavat seem also to be included. They set aside the sacred Śāstra or precepts, denied God, as Buddhists and Jainas did, and regarded the world as unsubstantial or unreal, as the former did.

§ 26. Chapter XVII. Arjuna asks: "What is the frame of mind of those who set aside the sacred precepts and still worship with faith? Is it characterised by the quality of goodness, activity or ignorance?" Bhagavat answers: "Faith is of three kinds, characterised by goodness, activity, and darkness or ignorance. The faith of a man depends upon the quality of his heart. A man is what faith makes of him. As is his faith, so is the man". The good worship gods, the active, Yakṣas, and Rakṣases or evil spirits, and the ignorant, ghosts and spectres. Men of a demoniacal frame of mind perform terrible austerities full of ostentation and egotism, and cause attenuation of the elements composing the body and of the Bhagavat who dwells in it. He then mentions three kinds of food, modes of worship, austerities and gifts, in keeping with the three qualities. For instance, in the case of worship or sacrifice, that is in keeping with the quality of goodness, which is performed without any regard for the fruit and in accordance with the sacred ritual. That springs from the quality of activity, which is done for the attainment of fruit and out of ostentation; and that which is done without regard for the sacred precepts and without Dakṣiṇā or rewards to the priest and without any faith, proceeds from the quality of ignorance. As to charitable gifts, those spring from the quality of goodness, which are made because it is a duty to give to one from whom no return is expected; while that which is made with an interested motive and with a desire for return, springs from the quality of activity. And in this manner all the four subjects are treated. At the end the doing of good acts by the repetition of the syllables "Om, tat, sat" is mentioned. In this chapter the truth that man's religious faith and the character of the God that he worships, depend upon his own character, whether good or bad, is clearly recognised.

Not only the nature of the God worshipped, but also the diet, the mode of worship, charity or gifts, and the practice of austerity differ according as a man's nature is influenced by one or other of the three qualities, goodness, activity and ignorance.

§ 27. Chapter XVIII. This chapter begins with a question by Arjuna as to the principles of renunciation and abandonment. Bhagavat replies that renunciation is the giving up of works springing from desires, and abandonment is the abandonment of fruits of actions. Some say that all Karman should be abandoned; others say that worship, charity and austerity should not be given up. The decision is that these last should not be abandoned, as they bring about purity of the soul. The actions should be done without being attached to them or desiring for the fruits. That duty that must be done, should not be abandoned. Giving up that duty is an ignorant deed. When action is avoided because it is wearisome, its abandonment springs from the quality of passion. When the essential action is done because it should be done without any desire for fruit or attachment, that abandonment springs from goodness. It is not possible for a living being to abandon all actions. He who abandons only the fruit, is really one who has abandoned actions. According to the Sāṃkhya doctrine, there are five different causes: the resting place, agent, instrument, varied movements and fate. In this manner it goes on. Some

acts or states of mind are represented to vary according to the three qualities, such as knowledge, the deed done and the doer, Buddhi or will, firmness and happiness, and the duties of the different castes.

The man who worships him from whom all beings have sprung and who has spread out all this by doing the duties assigned to him, for which the three qualities have fitted him, attains final success. He then proceeds to mention all those virtues and other states of mind, such as self-control, freedom from passions, which conduce to the realisation of the Brahma-condition. When this condition is realised, a man is free from sorrow and desire and, being equally disposed towards all beings, he develops in himself the highest love for Bhagavat, and knowing Bhagavat fully and truly, enters into the Bhagavat. One should do all acts, intent only upon God, and then one obtains the eternal place by the favour of God. A man should fix his mind upon Bhagavat alone, dedicating all his actions to him, and then he gets over all evils by the grace of Bhagavat. Then Bhagavat winds up the whole by teaching Arjuna to surrender himself with all his heart to God (the Ruler), who abides in the hearts of all things and moves them, as if forming parts of a wheel; and then he says, by his favour Arjuna would obtain perfect peace and an eternal resting-place. He is further instructed to dedicate his whole mind to Bhagavat, to become his devotee, to worship him, to bow to him, and in this way he (Arjuna) would reach him. This is styled the deepest secret. Then Arjuna is told to set aside all other methods of salvation and surrender himself to Bhagavat alone, and Bhagavat would then free him from all his sins. And thus the chapter ends.

This is the Ekāntika Dharma or monotheistic religion which, as the Nārāyaṇīya tells us, was communicated to Arjuna. The method of salvation here revealed is to lead a life of action, but the fruit of the action one should not be intent on. The action should be done disinterestedly, that is, a man should be selfless in doing it. The action should be dedicated to Brahman, that is, it should be done because the universal order requires it to be done. This is tantamount to saying that one should do one's duty because it is a duty. When a more personal interpretation is given to it, the doctrine comes to this, that one should act with the sole object of carrying out God's will. The frame of mind that is generated by consistently acting in this manner, is freedom from passion, a sense of the omnipresence of God and an equal regard for all things. This leads to the realisation of the highest love of God and, knowing Bhagavat thoroughly, by this means a man is absorbed in him.

But to do one's duty consistently and selflessly is a matter difficult, since all beings are subject to the influence of the three qualities or, in our modern phraseology, of passions and appetencies. These can be got over by surrendering oneself to God.