

**STUDIES IN THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ. THE
YOGA OF
DISCRIMINATION, PP. 1-111**

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Studies in the Bhagavad Gītā. The Yoga of Discrimination, pp. 1-111 by Bhagavan Das

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BHAGAVAN DAS

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Dās, Bhagavān

STUDIES
IN
THE BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ

BY
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STUDIES IN THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ.

FOREWORD.

THE immortal poem, the Bhagavad Gîtâ—the Lord's Song,—forms an integral part of the great national epic, the *Mahâbhârata*, and is a book by itself at the same time, and, as such, can be studied by itself in many and various ways. It can be approached with a poet's spirit, and its grand imagery and far-reaching vistas of thought, its felicities of expression, coupled with pithiness and the other beauties of language and diction with which it is replete, will well repay such a perusal. To the historian its value as an epoch-making synthesis of the various schools of thought, throwing a flood of light on the moot philosophical questions of the day, is immense, showing, as it does, how the thoughts of subsequent eras of history came to be modified and coloured by it. To the metaphysician it represents the extreme high-water mark of human aspiration to unravel the mysteries of being; and every school of metaphysics, saving the *Charvâka*—the Indian Materialistic School—acknowledges its place amongst the hoary *Upanishads* of antiquity. To the individual also, it is always an invaluable scripture :—thus it is useful to the Brahmacharin * as containing precepts

* Chaste Student.

for conduct ; to the householder it is necessary, furnishing him, as it does, with a loftier view of life and character. So again to the *Bhikshu* * the *Gnānin* † and the *Bhakta* ‡ alike ; for all it contains an inexhaustible fount of wisdom, of guidance and of consolation. The object of the present papers must therefore necessarily be defined, and some pains taken in this direction will not be entirely out of place and useless.

To the writer, and from his standpoint of life, the Gītā is eminently a book of advice and guidance, necessary to help a student to tread the path of NIVRITTI—non-attachment. To him it is the finger-post which indicates the path leading to service. It is the Song of Life, the eternal song of harmony, which comes to the aspirant after Brotherhood and Service—the Song which heard, makes life a harmony and therefore worth living. It is the physical embodiment of the help which is given to every toiler who strives to follow in the path of Love and Sacrifice, the footsteps of Those Mighty Beings called, very appropriately, the Lords of Compassion—of Those Who have renounced the Bliss of Nirvana, and sacrificed, like unto the Logos, the repose of perfect bliss and felicity in order that They may be the beacon lights to conduct the stragglers safely home, and that They may help in the realization of the Oneness of Life, which is at the basis of a true Brotherhood of Humanity. To the writer, therefore, the Gītā is, apart from its deep philosophical merits, a book of conduct, of solace and comfort. This need not disturb any one in his own ideal for the paths are as multifarious as the individuals themselves ; and though we may travel along the one particularly suited to us by karma and heredity, yet we may rest assured that, as Kalidas puts it, we shall all reach the goal alike, for :—

“Though the paths are various according to the various

* Ascetic.

† Seeker after Supreme Knowledge.

‡ Devotee.

Shastras, all of these lead unto Thee, like rivers flowing into the one ocean."

Though, as a matter of fact, the whole of the Lord's Song is heard only at the final struggle, when the wise soul looks for the Warrior within—at the great battle where the human soul has to conquer the *human* in it and cross over to the other side of immortality and service—yet snatches of the supreme harmony come to a pupil while struggling earnestly even on the lower planes. But it comes only when there is disharmony in his nature, when a critical state of consciousness is to be passed. And when it is once heard, the soul can never entirely forget it, though temporary glammers may come and shut out the Light from his eyes.

These thoughts are therefore put down that they may perchance reach a fellow-struggler, and help him (however insignificant and trivial that help may, in reality, be) to fight on, and cheer him with the soothing idea of not being quite alone on the Path, and of having a brother struggling like himself. For him principally are these broken and disjointed thoughts intended, and to him, as to the writer, the *Gîtâ* will be *The Light on the Path*.