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## ON “DEVOTION IN THE BHAGAVAD GITA”

### Source

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(1) God Talks With Arjuna: The Bhagavad Gita - A New Translation and Commentary. Paramahansa Yogananda. Published by Self-Realization Fellowship, 1995

### Contents

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“Kriya Yoga plus devotion — it works like mathematics: it cannot fail.”

The foregoing statement by Paramahansa Yogananda clarifies the power of Kriya Yoga to bring complete spiritual liberation (in a dialogue with Brother Anandamoy in 1950).

Devotion (shraddha) is “the natural inclination of the heart quality to turn toward its Source in faith and surrender.” Besides: “Creation is a result of repulsion, a going away from God - an externalization of Spirit. But inherent in matter is the force of attraction. This is the love of God, a magnet that ultimately pulls creation back to Him. The more the devotee is attuned to it, the stronger the pull becomes, and the sweeter the purifying effects of the yogi’s divine devotion.” Source, page 123

“As its own seeds reach back the ankola tree, as a needle is drawn to a magnet, as a chaste wife remains with her spouse, as a creeper clings to a tree, and as the river merges in the ocean — if thought thus reaches the lotus feet of the Lord and remains there for all time, that is said to be devotion.” Source, page 672 quoting Swami Shankara, Sivananda Lahari 9:59–61

“Shraddha is the natural inclination within every being that is attracted to its Source, Spirit. This inherence of attraction, as will be seen in the succeeding verses, is dull and inert in the tamasic individual; active but with self-interest in the rajasic person; and fully expressive as devotion and faith in the persevering sattvic yogi. He who is imbued with shraddha is consistent in the highest form of spiritual endeavor because he is motivated by an intense spiritual longing that has its basis in the intuitive conviction of faith.” Source, page 1087

Devotion in the stanzas of the Bhagavad Gita (related chapter and stanza):

III.31 - Men, devotion-filled, who ceaselessly practice My precepts, without fault-finding, they too become free from all karma.

IV.39 - The man of devotion who is engrossed in the Infinite, who has controlled the senses, achieves wisdom. Having obtained wisdom, he immediately attains supreme peace.

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IV.40 - The ignorant, the man lacking in devotion, the doubt-filled man, ultimately perishes. The unsettled individual has neither this world (earthly happiness), nor the next (astral happiness), nor the supreme happiness of God.

V.17 - Their thoughts immersed in That (Spirit), their souls one with Spirit, their sole allegiance and devotion given to Spirit, their beings purified from poisonous delusion by the antidote of wisdom — such men reach the state of nonreturn.

VI.47 - He who with devotion absorbs himself in Me, with his soul immersed in Me, him I regard, among all classes of yogis, as the most equilibrated.

VII.17 - Chief among them is the sage, ever constant and one-pointed in devotion. For I am exceedingly dear to the sage, and he is exceedingly dear to Me.

VII.21 - Whatever embodiment (a God-incarnate, a saint, or a deity) a devotee strives faithfully to worship, it is I who make his devotion unflinching.

VII.22 - Absorbed in that devotion, intent on the worship of that embodiment, the devotee thus gains the fruits of his longings. Yet those fulfillments are verily granted by Me alone.

VIII.22 - By singlehearted devotion, O son of Pritha (Arjuna), that Supreme Unmanifested is reached. He alone, the Omnipresent, is the Abode of all creatures.

IX.3 - Men without faith in this dharma (without devotion to the practices that bestow realization) attain Me not, O Scorcher of Foes (Arjuna)! Again and again they tread the death-darkened path of samsara (the rounds of rebirth).

IX.26 - The reverent presentation to Me of a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, given with pure intention, is a devotional offering acceptable in My sight.

XI.53-54 - But it is not unveiled through one's penance or scriptural lore or gift-giving or formal worship. O Scorcher of the Sense-Foes (Arjuna)! only by undivided devotion (commingling by yoga all thoughts in One Divine Perception) may I be seen as thou hast beheld Me in My Cosmic Form and recognized in reality and finally embraced in Oneness!

XII.2 - The Blessed Lord said: Those who, fixing their minds on Me, adore Me, ever united to Me with supreme devotion, are in My eyes the perfect knowers of yoga.

XII.18-19 - He who is tranquil before friend and foe alike, and in encountering adoration and insult, and during the experiences of warmth and chill and of pleasure and suffering; who has relinquished attachment, regarding blame and praise in the same light; who is quiet and easily contented, not attached to domesticity, and of calm disposition and devotional—that person is dear to Me.

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XII.20 - But those who adoringly pursue this undying religion (dharma) as heretofore declared, saturated with devotion, supremely engrossed in Me—such devotees are extremely dear to Me.

XIII.10 - (The sage is marked by) [...] Unswerving devotion to Me by the yoga of nonseparativeness, resort to solitary places, avoidance of the company of worldly men; [...].

XIV.26 - He who serves Me with undeviating devotion transcends the gunas and is qualified to become Brahman.

XVII.1 - Arjuna said: Those who set aside the scriptural rules but who perform sacrifices with devotion—what is their status, O Krishna? Are they of sattvic, rajasic, or tamasic nature?

XVII.3 - The devotion of each man is in agreement with his inborn nature. His inclination is the pattern of his being; whatever his faith is, that verily is he.

XVII.13 - That yajna is condemned as tamasic which is without regard for the scriptural injunctions, without offerings of food and gifts of appreciation, without sacred prayers or chants, and without devotion (to God).

XVII.17 - This threefold penance [of body, speech and mind], sattvic in its nature, is practiced by persevering men possessing great devotion who desire no fruit of actions.

XVII.27 - The state of stability in the higher rites of sacrifice, selfdiscipline, and devotional offering is spoken of as “Sat” (communion with God as transcendent Cosmic Consciousness). Indeed, the same spiritual action connected with “Tat” (realization of God as immanent in creation) is also called “Sat.”

XVII.28 - O Partha (Arjuna)! Whatever sacrifice is offered, gift bestowed, or austerity performed without faith (devotion) is called “asat.” It is worthless here and in the hereafter.

XVIII.54 - By becoming engrossed in Brahman—calm-souled, neither lamenting nor craving; beholding equality in all beings—he gains supreme devotion toward Me.

XVIII.55 - By that supreme devotion he realizes Me and My nature—what and who I am; after knowing these truths, he quickly makes his entry into Me.

XVIII.67 - Never voice these truths to one who is without self-control or devotion, nor to one who performs no service or does not care to hear, nor to one who speaks ill of Me.

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XVIII.68-69 - Whosoever shall impart to My devotees the supreme secret knowledge, with utmost devotion to Me, shall without doubt come unto Me. Not any among men performs more priceless service to Me than he; in all the world there shall be none dearer to Me.

XIII.71 - Even that individual—full of devotion and devoid of scorn—who merely listens to and heeds this sacred dialogue, being freed from earthly karma, shall dwell in the blessed worlds of the virtuous.