

Bhagavad Gita Chapter 8: Imperishable Brahman

This chapter of the Bhagavad Gita addresses the concept of the Brahman. This is a principle that is introduced in the Gita in the second step of the universal journey. It is a stage where many souls stop. They meet the universal and cease to go forward. They wake up to the essential reality of who they are without mind, without body, without identity, and they live in that effulgence. There is no motive or drive for anything else. In historical traditions this is nirvikalpa samadhi, which often leads to the dropping of the body. So the Gita was written at a time when the world consciousness could not hold the experience of the absolute in the body except for short periods of time before the body would collapse.

(1:36) You will notice in this chapter, The Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman, the concept of death is addressed. This was the realization that was available to the world back then in the Indian traditions, and also in Buddhism. The focus was on leaving the dimension of suffering and going beyond it to become absorbed in the Absolute. There was not the emphasis on devotion or manifestation. This chapter is the first one to address the universal concepts.

This expression of the universal has two aspects: unmanifest and manifest. There is the Absolute I call the Sat, and there is God, the divine, the manifesting principle. In the Absolute there is no such thing as this dimension. It all ceases to exist. But in the divine there are many levels of manifestation. There are many planes of consciousness and beings and forces of which we are all an expression. We experience ourselves, our world, and our identity in this principle of manifest creation. But in this chapter we are going to talk about the Absolute, that which exists prior to and inherent in the existence.

Chapter eight, The Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman

Arjuna said:

311. O Supreme Being, please explain to me the concepts of the Absolute, Spirit and Action and also that which is called Matter and Divine Intelligence.

312. O Krishna, who is the Lord of sacrifices in this body and how do yogis know You at the time of leaving the body?

This is Arjuna's question that came out of the seventh chapter. Arjuna is curious and open to going further. He has aspiration and motivation to go beyond the peace and balance and harmony of the individual self and is now ready to proceed and explore the nature of the universal. So he is asking these questions very succinctly and Krishna is responding in kind. Perhaps the greatest clarity about the origin and aspects of consciousness comes in this chapter of the Gita.

(5:15) This takes us beyond our assumed realities. We don't question that our eyes can see or our lungs can breathe. But there is this vast process that had to occur for us to see beyond. The fact that we have self-awareness is such an extraordinary accomplishment in the evolution of manifestation. But we don't have the frame of reference for the Absolute. The nearest thing that

the human being can think of is death. For the human who is identified with their body and mind, death is a blank wall unless you believe or have hope in something beyond. To begin to understand what exists beyond the domain of our human design is really about stepping outside of the box, stepping outside of thinking and feeling and sensations and our stories and our history—our puny 3,000 years of historical records. We are in a tiny sliver of the reality of even the manifest creation.

We have no sense of the eternity, the infinity of the absolute. This chapter is a departure from the Gita; it is an interlude. It is talking about fundamental principles that can only be known through direct experience. Prior to that you only had the word of the Bhagavad Gita or others who have traversed these domains. It is so remarkable to experience these domains. The concepts are the Absolute, spirit, and action, and also that which is called matter, divine intelligence, and the Lord of sacrifices in the body and how yogis know You at the time of leaving the body. These are the six questions that this chapter addresses.

The Blessed Lord said:

313. The imperishable Absolute is called the Spirit or Brahman. The essence of the Brahman is called Adhyatma. The process through which it manifests in the relative plane of matter is called Action.

314. Perishable entities are called Matter and the cosmic Being is itself the Divine Intelligence. I am the Lord of sacrifices in this body.

(8:35) Let's look at this cosmology. "The imperishable Absolute is called the Spirit or Brahman." In fact the Absolute is beyond the domain of anything that can be experienced or known or felt in the manifest creation. It is not separate. It permeates and is inherent in everything manifest but it wears the manifest as clothing. It is possible to move into a state of absorption when you are in the Absolute. When you are in a state of absorption there is no world. There is no existence. I am all gone. It is timelessness. This is samadhi. I know this experience and somehow in the process of that experience one still is there. And that is the miracle. But it is not like a you is there that can think, because in the time of absorption there is nothing to reference other than that.

It is only when you come out of it that you know what has happened. Or as you enter into it, there is a sense of what is happening. But when the actual absorption occurs there is no difference. There is nothing. There is just that. But it is not emptiness. It is utterly absorbing. For me it was days of absorption. Many, many hours when nothing was happening but absorption, timelessness. For me, that is the experience of the Absolute. There is no world there. There is no me there. There is no context or content. There is nothing else. For some, I understand, it is like a black hole, an absolute void. It can be terrifying. But I feel that is for those who are still hanging onto something of their human consciousness. When they come to this state they can't allow it to happen.

(11:05) For me, it didn't happen until after six years of all the other kinds of experiences. So I feel now it is possible to have an experience of the Absolute and still live in the body. The Absolute is the source, the origin of everything that exists, including ourselves. The key to the Absolute is that it exists in everything. I show a diagram here of the Absolute radiating into creation. When that which I call Sat, the original Absolute, manifests itself into the creation it animates itself as

consciousness, as the chit. There is no way to language that the absolute radiates anything; rather it permeates everything. This consciousness is a force. This radiating force of consciousness is called chit in Sanskrit. It is the animating force of creation. It is what takes the Absolute and throws it into action.

In this chapter it is calling the chit consciousness spirit. Spirit is the manifesting principle. Sat is the absolute principle. The chit, when it is expressing itself as force, is action, movement, because in the Absolute nothing is happening. It is absolutely still and silent. It is only in the creation that anything moves or has energy or action. Spirit is what we might call the Supreme Being. It is the expression of the Absolute in its highest form as consciousness taking that absolute principle and expressing it into creation. This is not absolutely precise, but when one moves into relationship with the Absolute, you go through a zone and this zone is an overwhelming experience. This is talked about in chapter eleven where you see the Supreme Being. What is behind the Supreme Being is the Absolute.

(14:18) I want to give the reference point. The thing that is so curious is that there is no part of creation that isn't a hologram of the whole creation. Every one of us is a hologram of this whole principle. Within each of us there is a principle of the Absolute and a principle of a being. The only difference is this is the universal expression and each of us has the individual expression. So within each of us is an Absolute—an absolute Sat, truth, reality. We could say this is the seed around which the being grows or emanates. This quality we can call the soul—the nearest approximation of the quality of the Absolute as it is expressing itself in the individual.

The soul in itself is not in action, but is acting through the being. The soul and the Supreme Being are approximately the same. You might say the soul is an opening; it is a hole in the being in which the Absolute expresses itself. So in each of us it is possible individually by meeting our soul to experience the Absolute, to experience something within us that is beyond everything that we would call us. These principles are tricky. It took me years to understand them and it is only because of the time I had experiencing these things that I have come up with a language.

315. At the time of leaving the body if anyone thinks of Me, definitely he attains Me.

316. Thought at the time of death determines the state of attainment. Whatever one thinks at the time of death, he attains that state.

"Perishable entities are called Matter and the cosmic Being is itself the Divine Intelligence." Everything that perishes is the manifest creation. That which does not perish is the Absolute, the Brahman. So that distinction is the simplest distinction that can be made, even if the thing takes a billion years to perish, or a thousand yugas, it is still not the Absolute. Everything that is called matter is everything you can imagine in this existence. Our little millisecond of time that we are in existence is an insignificant fraction.

(18:00) The cosmic being is itself the divine intelligence. The nature of our self-awareness is intelligence. It is like a radiant light, an illumination. The nature of our intelligence is that which looks, that which experiences, that which can know and understand and learn. That radiating intelligence isn't our mind. It exists superior to our mind. It exists prior to our mind. It is out of

that intelligence that mind in matter began to take shape. The intelligence, in its interface with matter, became mind. And mind is that which records what happens and what doesn't happen, what it learned, what it lost. It is that which gets information.

When the intelligence enters into matter it becomes mind and mind becomes the structure in which the rest of the creation evolves. With consciousness, with chit, is an inherent intelligence. When the Sat, the Absolute, steps into the Tat, the creation, that activity carries with it the capacity for action and this quality of intelligence. For each of us self-aware human beings it is expressed as this ability to choose or create and act. It is the ability to know and the will to take independent action. In the human form this intelligence is at its highest expression. In the rest of nature it doesn't have the same freedom. We are very bound relative to the Absolute but nature is much more bound.

(20:13) Nature is run by its programming, by its instinct. Deer peacefully grazing in the fields are unaware of their apparent happiness. They are simply existing without self-awareness, without an idea of a future or a past. Everything about them is shaped by their instinctive drives. It is only human beings that would get bored sitting in the fields. We would want to go for coffee or a movie or have a fight. Our nature is restlessness. With intelligence comes greater restlessness. Humans are endlessly restless. It is the nature of the human condition. What is the nature of truth? Endless stillness, unchanging, immovable. You can't even say it is.

This is why it is so difficult to grasp these concepts of Absolute and soul, and matter and body. Even in the Christian tradition, there is God in heaven, the Holy Ghost, and Jesus Christ, the son. The son was the manifestation of God in heaven into material existence, the channel into which the force of the Father, the Holy Ghost, could be expressed. This is the nature of the formulation of this cosmos that we find ourselves born into. This information is the beginning of understanding the universal dimension. Experience will make it real for you, but until that happens all you have is understanding and that is what this chapter is giving.

(22:56) Then there is the concept of the Lord of sacrifices. The Lord of sacrifices is that to which we offer our action, knowingly or unknowingly. It might be to make more money, to make the effort to climb a mountain. We are making an action and a sacrifice for something that isn't currently available to us. On the spiritual path it is when we have a feeling of a connection to something greater. Then the effort we take on the path of the yoga of knowledge is making a sacrifice to something greater. What we are sacrificing to is not out there, it is in here. But it seems like it is out there. There is a sense that we are doing all this for God, or to obtain something, but that which we are yearning for is actually the source of that which is striving.

To be the Lord of the sacrifice, to find the Lord of sacrifice, is to find that place within yourself that is the same as you are seeking. Once that which you are seeking is found, it is yours. So there is no longer anything outside of you. So the Lord of the sacrifice is the same thing as the Absolute, the same thing as the Supreme Being. "At the time of leaving the body if anyone thinks of Me, definitely he attains Me." Now Krishna is bringing the conversation back to the personal. This chapter reaches out to the conceptual, the universal, and then brings it right down to the personal. It is saying "at the time of leaving your body" which is like saying "where the tire meets the road." All your theories and ideas and experiences have happened while on this side of the division. Do

you know for certain what you have experienced on this side, even visions and subtle planes, because it is all occurring while still in a body.

(25:54) What is on the other side? The state of consciousness you are in at that transition determines what happens to you. You can take that on faith. I haven't died yet so I can't give you any assurances that what is on the other side of this veil is the same as the Absolute I have experienced on this side of the veil. It would be a leap of faith to say that the consciousness I am in matters at death. How can you hold onto your highest possibility at that moment when everything is falling apart? I am having so much trouble in my digestive system now. I have been able to digest food effortlessly all my life but now I am having trouble. The body starts dominating and demanding attention and requiring things that it did not before. When things start breaking down is when you notice it. How can you hold onto the highest possibility in you?

This is the struggle. When I am in pain or when there is a lot going on or when I am put under anesthesia, who is there? What is there? Can it see accurately what is there? What is the state of consciousness? Is truth still there? Is God as the highest possibility that you know of yourself to be still there? How can you hang onto that when your time of death comes? If you are not drugged out for the easy exit that we get in the West, where you are not even there to know you are dying, how can you stay present enough to know you are at that critical point? What would allow that sufficient force of consciousness in you to be present enough at that moment of death? That is what the next verse addresses.

317. Therefore, think of Me always and fight, surrendering your mind and intellect to Me alone. Thus you will attain Me, there is no doubt about this.

318. Through the practice of constant contemplation, if one is linked with the Supreme Being and his mind does not go anywhere else, he attains Him.

319. When one constantly contemplates on the all-wise timeless Being, the sovereign master of all, the subtlest universal sustainer, the form beyond human imagination, effulgent like the sun and far beyond the darkness of ignorance,

320. And meditates on the ancient Being with devotion, fixing the vital breath between the two eyebrows, he reaches the supreme divine state.

(29:31) Here Krishna is revealing how to make this transition, what it takes. It goes beyond commitment. You have to have experience. You have to have something you can hang onto in your awareness or in your experience that lets you know of your innate nature, or the truest part of yourself. You have to have some relationship to it. And that relationship needs to be strong. There is no greater undertaking for any individualized expression of the Supreme Being than to know this experience. It is the completion experience, the end of the game. The universe ends in the attainment of an individual who becomes the Absolute. And this is the principle of nirvikalpa samadhi, the nirvana, the absorption in the reality of who you are.

Moving into a dynamic relationship with that principle is the whole journey. All the spiritual experiences that occur are strengthening that connection with that divinity that lives within you,

even if you think it is outside of you. It is you who are experiencing the connection. That I Am-ness, that principle of existence, of intelligence that you are, is what you are seeking. "Therefore, think of Me always and fight," surrendering everything else you have made important, every other consideration that you have put in your way, every doubt and resistance and rebellion and struggle. If you are an Arjuna, if you are able to fight this battle, the assurance in these verses is that you will attain this state.

(32:01) The practice of constant contemplation is the link. You either have the awareness or you have the experience. Either are expressions of that sense of moving towards the universal. It is the individual moving into relationship with something larger than itself. The individual self-aware being of the sixth chapter is now beginning to move into relationship in this chapter with the Absolute. In the other chapters it will be with the Supreme Being. That experience is the contemplation. Holding onto that experience, through various forms of effort and sacrifice, be it meditation, contemplation, self-inquiry, discernment, cleaning out your system, becomes more natural at this stage. The experience itself is absorbing and pulls you to that which you are experiencing. It closes the difference between you as the knower and that which you are seeking to know. They become more and more similar.

In the process, the frequency of consciousness of individuality begins to increase and increase, becoming more and more intense and absorbing. This absorption, this devotion, this aspiration is what moves you into a state where your frequency can match the frequency of the Supreme Being or the Absolute. Then the Absolute has found itself in you. The universe has wakened up as you. The universe has become you, just as you have become it. That is why it is called devotion because it is the ultimate love affair. When "one is linked with the Supreme Being and his mind does not go anywhere else," means that being linked with this experience of the Supreme is what meditation is, and what samadhi is. Samadhi is meditation on steroids, amped up. It is meditation that is so absorbing that your ability to hang onto your identity falls away so you have to reclaim it after awhile. You have to rebuild it because it gets so stripped away. This can be very disturbing for an unprepared soul.

(35:02) You lose your sense of identity. What you are looking at looks like a black hole; it looks like the end of you. For some beings whose systems are not prepared, it is not anything they would want. But it is actually the truth manifesting. So it often happens in the course of our lives, our worst nightmares are actually when our frequency is at the highest. It is when we are closer to the nature of the truth of things than we can imagine in our little minds. So when we are linked with the Supreme and the mind does not go anywhere else, then in that relationship something of the Supreme stays with you when that experience fades away. These are still experiences that come and go. You are still in the domain of a body and your body has to be trained and expanded to be able to hold these universal forces. They come and go.

Some are wonderful and some are horrific. What we call horrific is the downward expression of the Absolute, and what we call wonderful is the upward expression of the Absolute. Both lead to the same place. There is an ascending action and a descending action. Both lead to the same truth. To be able to stay conscious in the descending action you have to have completed the ascending action; then you can begin to complete the descending action. But in the journey there is the path of light and the path of dark. Everybody likes the path of light and nobody likes the path of dark. I

love verse 319 so I am going to read it again. "When one constantly contemplates on the all-wise timeless Being, the sovereign master of all, the subtlest universal sustainer, the form beyond human imagination, effulgent like the sun and far beyond the darkness of ignorance." This is not describing the Absolute. This is describing the Supreme Being.

(37:39) Only the Supreme Being can have qualities. The Absolute has no qualities. But this is what it feels like—effulgent, timeless. Time disappears when you are in the effulgent. Timelessness has no form or content. The density disappears. Your frequency comes so the density of existence fades away and there is just the subtlest energy field, but it is not settled in your experience if you are able to experience it fully. It is a radiant reality beyond human imagination, "effulgent like the sun and far beyond the darkness of ignorance." When you come back from such an experience into your ordinary human consciousness it automatically illuminates and lifts the frequency of your consciousness. A minute of this can be weeks in the human life of uplifted consciousness. A second of this can change your reality because the frequency is so different from the normal human experience that it creates an irrevocable shift.

This is the difference between what is available to us as individuals in terms of what we can feel within our bodies, what we can experience in our expanded awareness and the forces that are engaged in the universal. Beyond imagination, I am certain that my body can only hold so much, and I have been able to only go as far as this body is allowing me to go and then it starts breaking down because the body wasn't designed this way. So you only need to go so far. After that point, you don't need a body. The body would just be an instrument of your manifestation until you are done. These things I am describing are very radical, very extreme. It is not about having your cake and eating it too. It is not about hanging onto some good things in this life and also having God and truth.

(40:22) It is no longer possible when you move into the universal. Everything starts getting stripped away from you, either through your collaboration or the universe comes in and takes it away. You have to be stripped down to nothing to go through the eye of the needle, through this threshold of the reality of who you are. Compromises are no longer possible. It is no longer possible to make deals with the universe. It is not even about a commitment. When you step off a cliff you can't say I don't want to fall. There is a certain gravity, an inevitability, when one has stepped into the universal. The universal takes over and starts a process in which the only effort you take is to surrender and keep surrendering and letting go. You can no longer cling to old notions of happiness and safety. I lose a lot of people in this chapter.

In the verses we have just read, Krishna is talking about the Absolute, then in verse 320 He pops right back down to the individual and He gives you a technique. He expands on this later in this verse as He says "when one meditates on the ancient being with devotion"—meaning, you are feeling the connection with God or the Absolute—"fixing the vital breath,"—meaning your breath is the vital—and you imagine you are breathing from this place between your eyebrows. Which means your breath is very, very short and tiny, and it is right there, or right in the middle of the head. This happens naturally when you move towards samadhi. This is a clue that samadhi is coming in for me. My breath gets very short and shallow, almost imperceptible, and there is an energy vortex occurring between the center of my head and my heart, and it starts running. And I

know I am doomed, I will not be able to get anything done or go anywhere. I just have to surrender.

(43:17) Moving your attention to that experience, should it come, is one of the ways you can strengthen that experience. When the vital breath is fixed between the two eyebrows, then the sixth chakra can tolerate the universal frequencies better than the lower chakras. It can handle the bigger energies more quickly than the other chakras, even if the heart feels better or the third chakra feels more pleasurable and so on. It is the sixth chakra that has the most rapport to take us from the individual to the universal. We make that transition through the seventh chakra but it is the sixth that pushes our frequency so we can break out of the seventh. This is the movement out of the individual, the principle of the Absolute and the chit that exists within our bodies meeting the universal. It is at this point, the top of the head, and we step out of our individual soul and we move into the universal absolute and the universal forces.

321. I will tell you briefly about the supreme goal that the knowers of the Vedas say is imperishable and to which the striving recluses enter after becoming free from passion. It is the same state to which the celibates also aspire.

322. Controlling all the gates to the body and confining the mind and the heart, placing the vital breath in the head, established in the yoga of meditation,

323. And uttering the single syllable "Om" while meditating on Me, if one leaves the body he attains the supreme state.

Here Krishna has elaborated on what I was just speaking to. In this case He is telling you some of the criteria for this to work. Unless you have broken free of your addiction to passion and pleasure and pain and sorrow and your individual identity and reached the state of maturity in an integral way you have to be ready to let go of all of it. This is where coming to a place of alignment with what is happening to you will allow this technique to work. If the technique starts working you don't have to worry about your passion because it will take your passion away. You don't have to worry about your addiction to your human personality because it will strip away your human personality. You don't have to worry about your ability to focus because it won't allow you to turn your attention away from it.

(46:46) It will absolutely absorb you. But in order for you to be able to bring it in more deeply you will need to be able to control all the gates. You need to withdraw from the world of distractions and close off any sensory input. You move into a place where this alone can occur. You take your intelligence and you place it in your heart. You imagine that your attention is in your heart and then you breathe this short breath between the eyebrows and you hold both of those experiences at the same time and think the principle "Aum." It could be "Ahh" or "Eee" or whatever connects you to that. But the Aum in the Sanskrit tradition is the sound of the creation as it is first emanating out of its origin. Aa-uu-mm represents the origin of the three gunas. It is made up of three sounds that combine into the sound of Aum. This sound is blended together. You move into the frequency of the Aum while you are holding your attention. Your intelligence is in the heart and your breath is in the head. Stay there as long as possible and then you repeat. And then you repeat and you keep doing it.

The rest of your life has to be aligned. You can't just go to Starbucks and go out to the movies and visit your friends and get on the internet. At this point these techniques don't have much force frequency to stay high. We are basically always draining our energy with these distractions so that these techniques can't work. Unless you are living the life of a disciplined renunciate you are not going to be able to make this technique work until you reach that threshold in your relationship with the universal where it comes in and assists you in the process. At that point you are no longer interested in those other things. It takes it away and this becomes your absorption.

(50:03) Remember this is the eighth chapter of the Gita. It is talking about severe renunciation. It is talking about cutting off your individual existence and dedicating it fully to the universe. So this is what the sannyasins did. In this chapter the focus is on this aspect of the path which is only one half of the path. I want to speak to this in the same relative terms that this chapter is revealing because you are beginning to see the nature of the universal and it is absolute—black and white. You are free or you are bound. You are in ignorance or you are enlightened. It is a place of extremes. People who travel this path, this is the journey they travel. No bullshit. If you want to become something other than a human being than you are going to have to cut out the human being in you. You have to be willing to become something other than that. For most of us, this is unimaginable.

324. Whoever thinks of Me always, to him I am available easily.

325. Those who have attained Me have no more births and they do not come to this world of misery and transitory existence.

326. All the worlds from Brahma's realm are subject to recurrence but after attaining Me there is no rebirth.

This idea of attainment, of being able to reach the critical relationship with the universal, very few souls succeed in doing this. Those who do, should they come back, there is nothing for the karmic world to bind to. Whatever actions they may take through their body, mind, and vital is always just an expression of this absolute state of the occupied consciousness. It is just a show with no substance. It is only if the purpose of the soul is to manifest then there is something more of the personality that comes back. One good example was Ramana Maharishi. He came to the realization at the age of sixteen and lived in holes in the ground with no concern for his body starving or being eaten by insects. He was utterly absorbed. Somehow his body survived. Others started to notice that he had this incredible radiance and they started to care for him. And he really manifested because others came forward and kept his body alive. His main teaching was just to sit and be what he was, the absolute. And through him was an opening of the universe. Just by sitting in his radiance people drew benefit.

(53:37) Those who come from this tradition, the path of knowledge, the path of jnana, this has been up to now the highest expression that was available for mankind on the planet. Otherwise it occurred after death. So they "have no more births and they do not come to this world of misery and transitory existence." That means they don't go anywhere. They stop moving. They stop everything. End. Finish. There is nobody there to know anything. There is nobody there to

experience anything. There is nothing more to attain or to lose. There is no individual existence. There is no absolute. It is all gone. But there is this quality of being absorbed which is infinitely and eternally fulfilling.

327. Those who have the knowledge of Brahma's day that lasts for a thousand yugas and also know about Brahma's night that lasts for a thousand yugas, are the real knowers of time.

328. All the beings are born at the beginning of the day from the unmanifest and dissolve in the unmanifest at the approach of night.

329. Arjuna, the multitude of beings comes again and again and is dissolved helplessly at the advent of night and rises again at the beginning of day.

There is some kind of fruit fly that shows up in Washoe Valley in the late Spring. Suddenly they are there. There are clouds of them and for about three days you can't go on a hike without protecting yourself from them going into every orifice. Then they are gone, completely gone. How short in our life span that seems. So how impossibly short is our eighty or ninety years of life to our higher realities. The whole principle of time lies in the domain of the universal mind. Absolute is beyond the universal mind. The sense of something happening, process, duality, cause and effect, space and time—all of this exists in the manifest creation.

(56:41) In that broad universal spectrum the concept of time is so far beyond what we even call archeological time, the different eras of the creation of the planet and the formation of early life. Our sense of time is so tiny. The Hindus have a language, they call it yugas. There are four primary yugas. The satya yuga is when the creation was most aligned with the Absolute. The treta yuga is where the creation is somewhat less aligned but there are great powers, forces, and gods that exist for millions of years. Then there is the dwapara yuga when mankind first came and people lived for hundreds of years and stood twenty feet tall. This is an age that is further away from the truth of reality and closer to matter, but they also lived hundreds of years like some of the characters in the Gita.

And then you come into the kali yuga, this yuga that we are in, that is furthest from truth. Here the matter is so perishable, transitory, and unstable that truth can't rest. It is in this age that we have our sense of time. This is the age we are living in. Human history has occurred in the kali yuga. These four yugas together takes 4.2 billion years to occur, each group of four. And they cycle like the gunas cycle. We are born in a period of kali yuga and we think 3,000 years is a long time. But this creation comes into existence for a thousand of these yugas. Scientist say that the creation that we know has been around for 13.7 billion years—a tiny drop in the bucket of one cycle of Brahma. The Hindus like to say that a cycle of the yugas would be comparable to a bird once a year flying across the highest Himalayan mountain with a silk scarf. By the time that mountain is flattened will be one yuga.

(1:00:35) It is an unspeakable period of time, an unimagineable period of time. We, in our tiny little segment, a fraction of a fraction of a fraction of a yuga, think we are so important, so significant, that we so matter and are so in control. We are helplessly thrown into this. This creation is untold multitudes, unfolding endlessly, all expressions of the absolute. They all have

the same fundamental reality that we have. All that we have created and imagined and could imagine has come and gone so many times. You do not exist as an individuality. Your eternal nature is not this particular portion of the creation that you think you are at this moment in time. You are the whole thing. You are the endlessness of time and that which is beyond that. When you get this kind of a perspective you can begin to see how small and ignorant we are. It gives us some humility. When the universe begins to come, humility is the experience. "Oh my God, I had no idea that it could be so vast."

330. Beyond this unmanifest there is another unmanifest existence of the Divine Being that does not perish even when all other creatures perish.

331. That unmanifest Imperishable is the ultimate goal and that is My supreme abode, from where there is no return.

We are talking about an unmanifest that is beyond the unmanifest. In terms of our chart the unmanifest is the Supreme Being. It is not in the creation yet. It has force and power and capacity. You might say that there are two Brahman, the Brahman that is the Absolute and the Brahman that is the potentiality for the manifestation of the Absolute into creation. The Brahman that is typically used in Sanskrit is the one that holds the potentiality for the creation and is called the Supreme Being. This is the only one we can relate to and begin to merge with and become one with because beyond that point there is nothing.

(1:04:11) That which is the unmanifest beyond the manifest, there is another unmanifest, "that is My supreme abode." That is the Absolute. That is the Sat. That is where the Supreme Being rests. This is where it goes between the yugas. When the manifestation is done, the Supreme Being retreats to its original nature, the absolute unmanifest. From that point there is no return.

332. Arjuna, that Supreme Being by whom all this is pervaded and in whom all these beings reside is attainable only by one-pointed devotion.

333. I shall now tell you that time, departing, when yogis do not return to the earth, and also that time, departing, when they return again.

334. Fire, light, the day, the bright half of the month and six months of the northern course of the sun is considered to be the path of the Brahman and departing in this, leaving the body at this time, the knowers of Brahman attain Brahman.

335. Smoke, night, the dark fortnight and six months of the southern course of the sun is considered the dark path and those who leave the body during this time are born again.

This is allegorical. It is pointing to something that the Hindus have tied into their astrology. The sun starts moving north between December and June. That is called the period of the light path. That in the Hindu tradition is the favorable time to die. The favorable time to die is from December 21st to June 21st. During that period you are likely to become free, to reach the path of the Brahman. After that point it is less likely. You are more likely to not be able to hold. You will be forced back into the creation. But it is actually not tied into that astrology.

(1:06:42) It is actually speaking of two separate principles, Nivritti and Pravritti. Nivritti is the movement towards truth. Pravritti is the movement towards matter. When we are living our lives moving toward greater truth and light and illumination then when we die that momentum casts us into the path of no return, we merge with the Absolute. At this point on the journey a soul is fairly developed. It is able to choose to ascend or to descend. Prior to this point all we could do was hope to ascend. You can take your realization of the individual self and live your life as a human being in the world enjoying it from this new perspective, able to get all the wonder that occurs because you are no longer identified with it. You are able to live the human life from a whole different paradigm, witnessing and enjoying it.

You are still focusing on your past. You are still focusing on what you were. Therefore your attention is giving focus to that and should you die while you are engaged in this inbetween place, then you will take another birth. It is only if your attention has been to that which is other than this, to that which is the source of you, that when you die there is a point of no return. Those are the two paths. Nivritti takes you to light and truth. Pravritti is a mixed bag. There is some truth and there is some untruth. That takes you back into the world of rebirth, another life.

(1:09:05) Very few make this final transition. No ego would choose this. No person would choose its obliteration. It has to be the universal that animates the person that comes forward and chooses to return to its source. That is the only part of you that can choose. That is actually what takes over the process when the spiritual path moves from the individual into the universal. We can't say, "this is what I want to do" or "do I really want to do that? Maybe I'll enjoy this for a few more incarnations, reveling in what it was to be human." It is a crapshoot. Every time you take a birth you can be real miserable. That is the danger of allowing a new birth—more suffering. You might find yourself in a mental ward. This is the nature of the crapshoot. But you would come out of it.

336. These are the two paths, light and dark, considered to be the eternal paths of the universe. Departing by one, rebirth is not attained but departing by the other, rebirth is a must.

337. Knowing these two paths the yogi is not confused at all. Therefore, Arjuna, always be steadfast in yoga.

338. The yogi who knows the above goes beyond the fruits of all action that come from the study of the Vedas, sacrifices, austerities and charities and attains the supreme abode.

Om Tat Sat. This is how Gita was revealed by Lord Krishna to Arjuna in the eight chapter of Gita entitled The Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman

Basically what it says is that when you come to the Self in the sixth chapter and you choose to move toward the universal in the seventh chapter in order to proceed in this journey you do need to keep up acts of sacrifice, charity, and austerity. You can't just kick back. Even though the true realization has come and you know yourself as that which lives beyond this body, it doesn't have enough strength not to be absorbed back into the human identification. It is only through

continuous practice and effort beyond that first realization can the possibility that this part of the Gita is pointing to be realized.

(1:12:30) Sorry, but that is how it works. That was the eight chapter of the Gita. This chapter was still operating in the domain of the mental. It was communicating information. Now in the next group of chapters we are going to move into the category of experiences. These are revelations. The nature of what I have spoken of in this chapter today and the subsequent chapters until the twelfth chapter, where it becomes rational again, is something you have to feel into. It is something you have to open yourself to. Continuous reading of the Bhagavad Gita will prepare you for being able to receive the essence of these revelations over time. They can sink in and be felt and they become tangible in your own experience.