

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 11: Viśvarūpa-Darśana-Yoga

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YouTube Link: [https://youtu.be/pvjZ\\_CF0dsk](https://youtu.be/pvjZ_CF0dsk)

## Arjuna is perplexed by seeing the terrifying Cosmic form

The Eleventh Chapter of the Bhagavadgītā is **Viśvarūpa Darśana Yoga - The Yoga of the Vision of the Cosmic Form.**

The session started with the traditional lighting of the lamp followed by prayers to the Almighty.

This chapter is special in that Bhagavān shows His divine cosmic form to Arjuna. From the 15th Sloka discussed in previous session, Arjuna describes the magnificent cosmic form he was seeing. He continues to vocally express his astonishment.

11.16

**anekabāhūdaraVāktranetraṁ(m),  
paśyāmi tvāṁ(m) sarvato'nantarūpam,  
nāntaṁ(n) na madhyaṁ(n) na punastavādiṁ(m),  
paśyāmi viśveśvara viśvarūpa. 11.16**

O Lord of all universe, I behold You, endless to forms on all sides, with numerous arms, bellies, faces, and eyes. O Universal Form (Viswarūpa), I see, neither Your beginning nor middle nor end.

- **Aneka-** many
- **bāhū-** arms
- **udara-** belly
- **Vāktra-** mouth
- **netraṁ-** eyes
- **Paśyāmi-** to see
- **tvāṁ-** you
- **sarvata -** all sides

- **anantarūpam**- unlimited form
- **Nāntaṃ**- no end
- **na madhyaṃ**- no middle
- **na punastavādiṃ**- no beginning
- **paśyāmi viśva eśvara**- lord of universe
- **viśvarūpa**- in the form of universe

Arjuna describes that he sees the infinite form in every direction and with countless arms, bellies and countless faces and countless eyes. The form of the Bhagavān is the universe itself and has neither a beginning, middle or an end.

One of the names of Bhagavān is '**Vishnu**' which means 'the one who is everywhere and all pervading'. HE has one thousand names as given in '**Vishnu Sahasranama**' and every name reminds us of the all pervading presence of Bhagavān.

When the sufferings of mother earth reached unbearable levels she came to Bhagavān Vishnu and begged HIM to incarnate HIMSELF and manifest in human form on the earth to lead humanity towards the unity of love. This formed the background behind the birth of Bhagavān Sri Krishna. When HE was fostered by Yashoda and Nanda, they invited the great sage Garga as per tradition to give the child a name. No one in the village knew the real essence and nature of the infant, but as soon as he saw the baby, sage Garga realised that it was Bhagavān HIMSELF. He prostrated in front of the infant and conversed with Yashoda and Nanda in a choked voice filled with emotions of devotion and gratitude for having been invited to name Bhagavān Himself. He knew that it was Bhagavān Vishnu incarnate who already had 1000 names. It is a good way to remind us that Bhagavān is in everyone of us and all our names are derived from HIS names. It is not just names but a poetic way of saying 1000 names and HE is in the heart of everyone as we chant the Vishnu Sahasranama everyday. Geeta Pariwar conducts '**Vishnu Sahasranama**' classes in 6 languages and sadhaks can get the benefit of learning the same from these classes.

It so happens that we do not recognise the Bhagavān within us and suppress the sentiment in our heart because of our material actions. In 13th Chapter Bhagavān explained this:

उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः । परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥ 23॥

***Within the body also resides the Supreme Lord. He is said to be the Witness, the Permitter, the Supporter, Transcendental Enjoyer, the ultimate Controller, and the Paramātmā (Supreme Soul).***

When we reach this state of being one with Paramātmā, would we act like HIM?

**The army Major and the Old man in Hospital:** Once in a hospital an old man who was on his death bed was approached by the on duty nurse. She had brought him a visitor, who was a young Army Major. The old man on the bed recognised him as his son and gestured to him. The young man extended his hands to convey his affection to the old man and bent down to hug him. After this moment the Major held the old man's hands in his young hands and assured them by his touch not to worry as he was near him. The Major stayed by the old man's side all through the night, giving the old man confidence and strength and holding his hand. Despite the nurse asking him to take rest he refused to rest, and sat all night holding the old man's hands. None of the noise around in the hospital perturbed him and he kept whispering to the old man in a soft voice.

At dawn the old man passed away with his hand still in the Major's hands. The Major informed the nurse about the death. Before the nurse could express sympathy to the Major he clarifies that the old man was not his father and he had never seen him before in life. The nurse was surprised and asked why he did not tell her when she took him there. The Major replied that when she took him to the old

man he realised that he was waiting for the son on his last day as he was near death. He had come to hospital to meet Vikram Salaria whose son was killed in action and he had come to give this information. The nurse tells him that the man whose hand he held all night was in fact Vikram salaria himself, which the Major was not aware of. Both realised that this was most reassuring that he was holding the hand of the dying man.

The lesson is that when someone be it a stranger is present for them they are like the Bhagavān Himself for them. The feeling of the other person that we are there with them is enough for them. The assurance for those who need empathy should be a natural action by understanding the feelings. Unless we are stable and patient and calm from inside one may not be able to help others or even fulfil our own goal in life.

When we see anyone, **one should not just observe the gross body externally but the reality present in the body. This is the truth that liberates us and makes us realise the oneness in all existence.** This does not merely apply while being in temples or holy places, but anywhere else also when we should be conscious of and feel the divine presence around us when HE will make us realise our Karma, like the Major who became Bhagavān for the old man.

In this sloka Arjuna uses 2 adjectives:

- **‘viśva eśvara’**: the controller of the universe and
- **‘viśvarūpa’**: the universal form.

Arjuna realises that the universe is nothing but HIS manifestation and HE is not only the creator but the Universe itself. Like the gold and the ornaments wherein both have gold in it. Further Arjuna explains the vastness of the cosmic form as he cannot find the beginning, the middle or the end of the form. Bhagavān is omnipresent.

## 11.17

**kiriṭinaṃ(ñ) gadināṃ(ñ) cakriṇāṃ(ñ) ca,  
tejorāśiṃ(m) sarvato dīptimantam,  
paśyāmi tvāṃ(n) durnirīkṣyaṃ(m) śamantād-  
dīptānalārkadyutimaprameyam. 11.17**

I see You, wearing a diadem, holding a mace and discus, a mass of effulgence, shining around having a brilliance like the blazing fire and sun, dazzling and boundless on all sides.

- **kiriṭinaṃ**- Crown
- **gadināṃ**- Mace
- **cakriṇāṃ**- disc
- **Tejorāśiṃ**- brilliance
- **sarvato**- all sides
- **dīptimantam**- glowing
- **Paśyāmi**- as seen
- **tvāṃ**- you
- **durnirīkṣyaṃ**- difficult to view
- **śamantād**- everywhere
- **dīptānalā**- blazing fire
- **arka**- sun
- **dyuti**- of the sunshine

- **aprameyam**- immeasurable

Arjuna explains that he sees the cosmic form wearing a crown holding a mace in one hand and the 'chakra' the disc in another hand. The blinding radiance is extreme and immeasurable. He feels like it is like the dazzling light from the fiery blazing Sun which encompasses all around.

In 12th sloka of this chapter, Sanjaya similarly explained the radiance:

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपदुत्थिता ।

यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद्भासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥ 12॥

***If a thousand suns were to blaze forth together in the sky, they would not match the splendor of that great form.***

The normal physical eyes get blinded when viewing any blazing light. If one sees the welding light it gives a headache. The universal form was simply stunning and Arjuna could behold this vision only because of the divine eyes given to him by Bhagavān. He could see the four armed '**Vishnu rupa**' with mace, conch, disc and the Lotus flower.

Hindus worship the Sun as God. We see God every day in the Sun and worship. The day starts by seeing the Sun, which is also called as '**Diwakara**' meaning the day maker. The Sun has been bringing days for billions of years. We draw light and heat from Sun and he is the one who facilitates growth for us to get food. All lives depend upon the continuous miracle of Sun.

The Conch and the Lotus are the other famous symbols depicting Vishnu. Arjuna was seeing Vishnu and not Sri Krishna whom he knew was now incomprehensible to him.

There are three processes of knowing:

- **jñeya**: the one to be known
- **jñāta**: the knower
- **jñāna**: the knowledge

**Our senses are the medium of knowing and the material world is the object of knowing. Bhagavān can never become the object.** HE is none of the senses of neither smell, color, sound nor of taste and these senses cannot transmit HIM as an object. Hence HE as the **Parabrahma cannot be a part of our mental perception and is considered incomprehensible, inconceivable and imperceptible.**

Cosmic form is a mass of splendour with unlimited radiance which dazzled the eyes. None other can stand in comparison to the splendor of the cosmic form.

**11.18**

**tvamakṣaraṃ(m) paRāmaṃ(m) veditavyaṃ(n),  
tvamasya viśvasya paraṃ(n) nidhānam,  
tvamavyayaḥ(ś) śāśvatadharmagoptā,  
sanātanastvaṃ(m) puruṣo mato me. 11.18**

You are I recognise, the Imperishable, the Supreme Being (Akṣara) to be realized; You are the ultimate refuge of this universe; the protector of eternal Dharma (duty and righteousness) and You are the eternally imperishable Being.

- **tvam-** you
- **akṣaram-** imperishable
- **parāmaṁ-** supreme
- **veditavyaṁ-** to be known
- **tvam asya-** obvious
- **viśvasya-** of the universe
- **paraṁ nidhānam-** the refuge
- **tvamavyayaḥ-** inexhaustible
- **śāśvatadharmagoptā-** eternal protector and maintainer of dharma,
- **sanātanastvaṁ-** eternal
- **puruṣo-**supreme
- **mato me-** my opinion

Arjuna avers that Bhagavān in HIS cosmic form is the Supreme ParaBrahmā, the ultimate creator, the stratum, and the one and only supporter of the universe who is imperishable and eternal. Arjuna could recognise the sovereignty of the supreme who is to be known by all through the scriptures.

Kathopanishad says "**sarve vedā yat padam āmananti** " (all Vedic knowledge is searching after the Supreme Personality). All the vedic mantras leads in the direction towards Bhagavān.

Bhagavata says '**vāsudeva-parā vedā vāsudeva-parā makhāḥ**' (The personality of Bhagavan and the ultimate goal is in the scriptures for worshipping and sacrifices). The goal of cultivating vedic knowledge is to reach HIM and all the sacrifices and yajna's are meant for HIM.

Here Arjuna also expressed that the personal form of Bhagavān revealed to him was the absolute truth and the conglomeration of all contents studied in all vedic knowledge. This is the core conceptual truth of the imperishable, eternal creator and the foundation of the entire universe. Here the word **puruṣa** does not denote a man as a male, '**pura**' means a town or a residing place. As learnt in chapter 5 the human body is a palace with 9 gates. Everyone with the body is a **puruṣa**. This is the context to be understood and should not be misinterpreted to suppress the female. The mistaken interpretation that Gītā endorses the **puruṣa** as a man and is to be treated as a higher being to be worshipped and followed with their instructions and orders is totally wrong. All or equal as represented by Bhagavān.

In essence, HE is

- **tvamakṣaram parāmaṁ veditavyaṁ** - He who is attributeless, formless and is described in scriptures as the absolute ParaBrahmā, is realised by the liberated souls to attain moksha.
- **tvamasya viśvasya paraṁ nidhānam** - Bhagavan is the ultimate support of the entire universe and the final dissolution of the entire universe as it merges with HIM and in creation emanates from HIM.
- **tvamavyayaḥ śāśvata dharmagoptā** - When the righteous dharma declines and the unrighteous adharma rises, Bhagavan manifests and destroys the evil and protects the sanatana dharma.
- **sanātanastvaṁ puruṣo mato me** - Arjuna opines that Bhagavan is an eternal imperishable being an almighty who remains imperishable even when the entire universe perishes.

Arjuna is overwhelmed by seeing the cosmic form and he is uttering all these as an impromptu response to his experience in seeing the cosmic form.

'dharmagoptā' is one of the names of Bhagavān Vishnu, and appears in Vishnu sahasranama.

In the 4th Chapter, Bhagavān asserted that HE will manifest himself to preserve dharma:

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥ 4.7॥

*Whenever there is a decline in righteousness and an increase in unrighteousness, O Arjun, at that time I manifest Myself on earth.*

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥ 4.8॥

*To protect the righteous, to annihilate the wicked, and to reestablish the principles of dharma I appear on this earth, age after age.*

11.19

**Anādimadhyāntamanantavīryam,  
anantabāhum(m) śaśisūryanetram,  
paśyāmi tvāṃ(n) dīptahutāśaVāktram,  
svatejasā viśvamidaṃ(n) tapantam. 11.19**

I see You, without beginning, middle or end, infinite in power, of infinite arms, the sun and the moon being Your eyes, the blazing fire Your mouth; warming the universe, with Your radiance.

- **anādi-** without beginning
- **madhyā-** middle
- **anta-** end
- **ananta-** unlimited
- **Vīryam-** valour
- **anantabāhum** - arms
- **śaśi** - moon
- **sūrya-** sun
- **netram-** eyes
- **Paśyāmi-** see
- **dīpta-** blazing
- **hutāśaVāktram-** fire emanating from mouth,
- **Svatejasā-** your own radiation
- **viśvam-** universe
- **idaṃ-** this
- **tapantam-** heating

In the cosmic form, Bhagavān is seen without beginning, middle or end, in infinite power and limitless arms with the Sun and Moon as the lustrous eyes, and the mouth spewing fire and heating the entire universe with the lustrous radiance. In sloka 16, Arjuna had already explained this and is repeating it as his excitement was unbound and he was totally amazed with the wonder. In a state of excitement it is not considered a flaw. If someone sees a snake one shouts 'snake snake snake' repeatedly or if seeing a thief 'chor chor chor', or if in distress 'help help help'. Similar is Arjuna's situation and he repeats whatever he had said earlier.

Bhagavān is beyond time and space and seen in cosmic form, and hence limitless. The Sun and Moon too receive the energy from HIM and the heat hence produced is also from HIM. Arjuna was conveying the infiniteness of space and time through the cosmic body in this manner. The 18th sloka was about space, and this sloka is about time; both are limitless and can not be measured. The blazing fire from HIS mouth represents the fire in a yajna which consumes all that is offered, and the heat that was

emanating was increasing the heat of the universe with the blazing radiance and the energy which was also from HIMSELF and not originating from anywhere else.

The soul has to be enlightened in every moment of life and has the power to create another life. We also have the same capability which one must recognise.

## 11.20

**dyāvāpṛthivyoridamantaram(m) hi,  
vyāptam(n) tvayaikena diśaśca sarvāḥ,  
dṛṣṭvādbhutam(m) rūpamugram(n) tavedam(m),  
lokatrayam(m) pravyathitam(m) mahātman. 11.20**

The space between the heaven and earth and all the spheres is pervaded by you, alone. Seeing this marvellous and frightening form of Yours, O Great-Soul, the three worlds feel greatly alarmed.

- **dyāvāpṛthivyoridamantaram-** space occupied between heaven and earth
- **Vyāptam-** occupied or pervaded
- **tvaya-** by you
- **aikena-** alone
- **diśaśca sarvāḥ-** all directions
- **dṛṣṭvā-** by seeing
- **dbhutam-** wondrous
- **rūpa-** form
- **mugram-** terrible
- **tav edam-** this
- **lokatrayam-** three lokas
- **pravyathitam-** perturbed
- **maha ātman-** great soul of the cosmic form

The space between heaven and earth and all the spheres of the three worlds is pervaded in all ten directions (The North, South, East, West, North west, North east, South west, South east, above and below) by HIM alone and the living beings in the three worlds are trembling with fear. Reason for all the beings shuddering is as Arjuna implies that all are functioning under the commandments of regulations prescribed by HIM and hence all are obliged to submit to HIM.

In Ramayana it is said that whatever we do we are subjected to the dominion of HIS laws and we reap the results of our Karma. The ones in all the three worlds who could not see the cosmic form felt the intense heat in space due to the cosmic form.

When all living beings including birds and trees feel uneasy during full solar eclipse when there is total darkness in mid day the disturbance can be sensed. Similarly when HE revealed the cosmic form, others could feel the effect. Seeing is experiencing and not just by being physically present but by the effects around the environment also. None other than Arjuna and Sanjaya could see as they did not have the divine vision. However, the effect could be felt to experience and this itself was overwhelming to all beings around including Arjuna who was experiencing fear. Fear manifested on account of the attachment to the body.

In order to experience the limitless, one has to withdraw from the limited view of the body by detaching. Unless this is done one cannot see the infiniteness and limitlessness of ParaBrahma. The limits created by the body limits the experience also. If one sits in deep meditation and experiences



the separation from the body, the fear of being unable to come back to the body and to this world becomes a limiting point to go deeper by forgetting the body. This feeling during meditation of coming out of the body makes one feel uneasy and this fear results in coming out of the meditated state. The yogis and sages practice meditation with the sole purpose of separating out of the body. To lose one's sense of existence linked to the physical body may not be a pleasant experience and is certainly difficult to practice. One has to make the deliberate choice to come out of the 'I' ness of the body and intellect. As long as this is not achieved the infinite existence cannot be felt.

## 11.21

**amī hi tvām(m) surasaṅghā viśanti,  
kecidbhītāḥ(ph) prāñjalayo gṛṇanti,  
svastīyuktvā maharṣisiddhasaṅghāḥ(s),  
stuvanti tvām(m) stutibhiḥ(ph) puṣkalābhiḥ. 11.21**

Those multitudes of gods merge in You; some in awe with folded hands are chanting Your names and glories; bands of great sages and Siddhas (emancipated souls) cry "Hail Highest Majesty", and shower praises on You with excellent hymns.

- **amī** - all this
- **hi-** certainly
- **tvām-** you
- **surasaṅghā-** group of demi gods
- **viśanti-** to enter
- **Kecidbhītāḥ-** out of fear
- **prāñjalayo-** folded hands
- **gṛṇanti-** offering prayer
- **Svastī-** peace
- **tyuktvā-** speaking
- **maharṣi-** great sages
- **siddhasaṅghāḥ-** group of perfect beings
- **Stuvanti-** chanting vedas
- **stutibhiḥ-** with prayers
- **puṣkalābhiḥ-** vedic mantras

Arjuna observes that scores of demigods are entering HIM and are singing glories and praises in fear and feeling that all be well and great sages the accomplished beings are praising by chanting various vedic chants.

Arjuna was observing Bhagavān's '**kālarupa**', the form of all devouring time. The marching of time consumes even the greatest personalities however big they are, which includes the celestial demigods, entering with folded hands and submissiveness, and surrendering to the time form of Bhagavān.

The cosmic form may be frightening with the host of siddhas and munis. But the legendary sages Kapila muni, Narada muni, Atri, and other highly advanced luminaries understood the occasion and peacefully and were devotedly appealing to the divine form of Bhagavān. People who have reached the level of advaita realise that they and supreme soul are same, and hence will not be scared. The ones who have the dvaita bhava will feel scared as they continue to believe the soul is different from Paramātmā.



**rudrādityā vasavo ye ca sādhyā,  
viśveśvinau marutaścoṣmapāśca,  
gandharvayakṣāsurasiddhasaṅghā,  
vikṣante tvām(m) vismitāścaiva sarve. 11.22**

The (eleven) Rudras, (twelve) Adityas, (eight) Vasus, (twelve) Sādhyas, (ten) Viśvedevas, (two) Aśvinīkumāras, (forty-nine) Maruts, manes, hosts of Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Asuras and Siddhas-they all, gaze at You, in amazement.

- **Rudrā-** manifestation of shiva
- **adityā-** sons of aditi
- **vasav-** demigods
- **ye-** all these
- **Viśve-** viswa god
- **aśvinau-** ashwini kumars
- **maruta-** wind god
- **oṣmapā-** forefathers
- **Gandharva yakṣā-** celestial beings and demigods
- **asura -** demons
- **siddha-** perfected sages
- **saṅghā-** with them
- **Vikṣante-** seeing
- **vismitā-** in wonder
- **caiva sarve-** all

Arjuna listed out all those he was seeing within the cosmic form:

- 11 **Rudras** : Kapali, Pingala, Bhima, Virupaksa, Vilohita, Ajesha, Shasana, Shasta, Shambhu, Chanda, and Dhruva
- 12 **Adityas** : Vivasvan (Surya), Aryaman, Tvashtṛ, Savitr, Bhaga, Dhatṛ, Mitra, Varuna, Amsha, Pushan, Indra and Vishnu
- 8 **Vasus**: Jala (Water) Dhruv, also called as pole of all Nakshatras, Soma (moon), Dhara also known as Prithvi (Earth), Anala also known as Agni (Fire), Anila also known as Vayu (Air), Pratyush also known as Surya
- 12 **Sadhyas**: Manas, Mantā, Prāṇa, Nara, Apāna, Vīrayān, Vibhu, Haya, Naya, Haṁsa, Nārāyaṇa, Prabhu
- 10 **Viswa devas**: Kratu, Daksha, Vasu, Satya, Kala, Kama, Dhṛti, Kuru, Shankumatra, Vamana
- 2 **Ashwinikumars**: Nastaya and Dasra
- 49 **Maruts**: The 7 main types of Maruts, further classified into 7 types each. The main types are Avaha, Prabaha, Bebaha, Parabaha, Uddha, Sambaha, Paribaha (marichi)
- **Gandharvas**: born of 3 wives of Sage Kashyapa, are experts in melodies and music and are the musicians of heaven.
- **yakṣā**: are attributed to have been born to Sage Kashyapa's wife Kasa.
- **The asuras**: are the sworn enemies of Gods.
- **Perfect sages** like Sage Kapila.

All were gazing at the Form in amazement.

## 11.23

**rūpaṃ(m) mahatte bahuVāktranetraṃ(m),  
mahābāho bahubāhūrupādam,  
bahūdaraṃ(m) bahudaṃṣṭrākārālaṃ(n),  
dṛṣṭvā lokāḥ(ph) pravyathitāstathāham. 11.23**

O mighty-armed, seeing Your immeasurable and frightening form with numerous mouths, eyes, arms, thighs, feet, bellies and fearful teeth, the worlds are terror-stricken, and so am I.

- **rūpaṃ**- form
- **mahatte**- great
- **bahu**- many
- **vāktra**- spaces
- **netraṃ**- eyes
- **mahābāho**- mighty armed
- **bahu**- many
- **bāhūru**- many thighs
- **pādam**- many legs
- **bahūdaraṃ**- many bellies
- **bahudaṃṣṭrā**- many gruesome teeth
- **kārālaṃ**- very scary
- **dṛṣṭvā**- to see
- **lokāḥ**- all lokas
- **pravyathitā**- disturbed
- **stathāham**- also

Arjuna explains the effect on the universe and admitted that he too is perturbed.

Slokas 15 to 18 describe the cosmic manifestations of the divine form; Slokas 19 to 21, the terrifying form; and Slokas 23 to 30 the most dreadful form.

Here the various shapes and moods with many arms, thighs and legs of different shapes, sizes and colors and the movement being unusual are depicted. Everyone was terror struck on beholding the sight of the terrible teeth, and Arjuna too was in a scared state. Arjuna was observing the specialty in each and every aspect, and was both in awe and terrified at the same time, exhibiting mixed expressions. He is confused and alarmed looking at the dreadful form. He kept repeating words out of surprise, joy and fear, a mix of all emotions. The supreme entity has thousands of eyes, feet and arms.

Paramātmā resides in all humans in everyone's heart, at a distance of 10 fingers above the navel, says the Upanishads. Kathopanishad says that out of the fear of Paramātmā the fire burns, the sun shines and the wind blows and Indra causes rain to fall. Even Yamaraj is said to tremble in front of Paramātmā. Those who are beholding and are beholden and those who are terrified and those who are terrifying all are within the cosmic form.

## 11.24

**nabhaḥsprśaṃ(n) dīptamanekavarṇaṃ(m),  
vyāttānaṃ(n) dīptaviśālanetram,  
dṛṣṭvā hi tvāṃ(m) pravyathitāntarātmā,  
dhr̥tiṃ(n) na vindāmi śamaṃ(ñ) ca viṣṇo. 11.24**

When I see Your form, touching the sky, effulgent in many colours, with mouths wide open, with large shining eyes, my heart trembles with fear, I lose courage and find no peace, O Viṣṇu.

- **nabhaḥsprśaṃ**- touching the sky
- **dīpta**- doing
- **aneka**- many
- **varṇaṃ**- colors
- **vyāttā**- open
- **ananaṃ**- mouths
- **dīptaviśāla**- big
- **netram**- eyes
- **dṛṣṭvā**- to see
- **pravyathita**- perturbed
- **ānta**- within
- **ātmā**- soul
- **dhr̥tiṃ**- steadfastness
- **vindāmi**- have
- **śamaṃ**- mental peace tranquility

Upon seeing the multicoloured form with its wide open mouth and large shining eyes touching the sky, Arjuna's heart trembles with fear, he loses courage, and does not find peace. At this juncture, he started addressing Bhagavān as 'Viṣṇu' instead of 'Kṛṣṇa', as he realises the true form as 'Viṣṇu'.

Earlier he looked upon Bhagavān Sri Kṛṣṇa as a friend but now he was seeing the full form of Bhagavān Viṣṇu and forgets the relationship he had in the past as he could never earlier imagine HIM as Paramātmā, the supreme soul. He did not want to lose his friend Sri Kṛṣṇa whom he loved dearly. Even if formality is retained, the love remains. If a husband holds a very high position like Governor or President, the wife will still have the same closeness with him and does not have the official type of response and relationship, as this role gets submerged in the role of a husband-wife relationship. Bhagavān Sri Kṛṣṇa was a bosom friend and Arjuna wants to maintain that relationship.

### **Bhagavān Sri Kṛṣṇa and the Cowherds:**

In His childhood, the cowherds were bosom friends of Sri Kṛṣṇa, and the interaction was that of friendship. If he lost a game he would become the horse as penalty for losing, and the friends would ride on HIM. If they knew HE was Bhagavān they would never have behaved that way. At that point HE was just a friend. When HE lifted the Govardhan hill on His little finger to protect the village from the torrential rain caused by Indra, the cowherds were not impressed as they also held sticks to support thinking that they were helping Kṛṣṇa in lifting the hill. When they saw Indra come and offer obeisance to Bhagavān Sri Kṛṣṇa, they realised that HE was someone great and the relationship changed. However Bhagavān Sri Kṛṣṇa used HIS divine powers to make them forget the experience, and remain as HIS young friends.

### **Bhagavān Sri Kṛṣṇa as Arjuna's charioteer:**

When Arjuna requested Sri Kṛṣṇa to become his charioteer, he accepted as he was a friend. If the devotion was motivated by the relationship as a supreme of all creations, even Arjuna would not have asked him.

Now, he comes to know that his friend and charioteer Krishna is none other than Bhagavān Vishnu, who he was seeing as comprising of different colors touching the sky and with the wide mouth devouring the entire universe and with large and fiery eyes. With this unexpected experience, Arjuna felt fear and perturbed with his mind shaken. Arjuna was not prepared for such a sight, although he had initially asked to see the cosmic form. He also started calling Bhagavān Sri Krishna as Vishnu.

## 11.25

**daṁṣṭrākārālāni ca te mukhāni,  
dṛṣṭvaiva kālānalasannibhāni,  
diśo na jāne na labhe ca śarma  
prasīda deveśa jagannivāsa. 11.25**

Seeing Your mouths, with fearful teeth, resembling the raging fires at the time of universal destruction, I know not, the cardinal directions, nor do I find peace. Therefore, be kind to me, O Lord of the gods and the shelter, of the universe.

- **daṁṣṭrā-** teeth
- **kārālāni-** scary
- **mukhāni-** faces
- **dṛṣṭva-** seeing
- **kālānala-** fire of death
- **sannibhāni-** as if
- **diśo-** direction
- **na jāne-** not knowing
- **na labhe-** not attaining
- **śarma-** peace
- **prasīda-** be merciful
- **deveśa-** supreme of Gods
- **jagannivāsa-** refuge of the entire world

Arjuna said that seeing the mouth with fearful scary teeth and spewing fire like causing destruction by fire, he could not comprehend the situation and the direction in which it was going. He sought mercy, peace and calmness. Bhagavān is the totality of creation, preservation and destruction. Seeing the frightful sight of the cosmic form, Arjuna was terror struck and could not differentiate the time and space quarters of the world; he was not able to know either the sun rise or the sun set as he felt the blazing radiance like thousands of Suns.

Arjuna felt he lost his peace of mind and sought mercy as he thought Bhagavan was showing the scary sight like HE was a destroyer. The end comes for all. It may be a few hours for some creatures like the rain moth, may be 100 years for humans, and billion years for stars. Every millionth of a second is precious for creatures with shorter lifespan. They can never grasp what we are understanding due to the relatively very short and limited lifespan. On the other end the Sun itself was born 6 billion years ago, and will be there for another 4 billion years. If compared to galaxies even this could be a shorter life. It is like the day of Brahma deva and we cannot grasp the life of the universe which is expected to be 40 billion years.

The supreme Paramātmā will be the reason for the end of the universe. **We can break this cycle of destruction with the help of Bhagavad Gita.** Just as the robber does not attack or kill those who do not have any precious gold or riches, likewise death cannot destroy those who do not possess selfish desires, and are free from material cravings and possessions.

**Gita teaches us this reality of life, and to break free from selfish desires and cut through the obsessive identification with the body which will come to an end some day.** When this state is reached, only the awareness of real self unaffected by the challenge of death will remain. Surrendering to Paramātmā is the ultimate path to be practiced.

**11.26, 11.27**

**amī ca tvām(n) dhṛtarāṣṭrasya putrāḥ(s),  
sarve sahaivāvanipālasaṅghaiḥ,  
bhīṣmo droṇaḥ(s) sūtaputrastathāsau,  
sahāsmadiyairapi yodhamukhyaiḥ. 11.26  
Vāktrāṇi te tvaramāṇā viśanti,  
daṁṣṭrākarālāni bhayānakāni,  
kecidvilagnā daśanāntareṣu,  
sandṛśyante cūrṇitairuttamāṅgaiḥ. 11.27**

All the sons of Dhytarashtra, with hosts of kings of the earth, Bhīṣma, Drona, Karna, with the chief warriors on our side as well,

-- are rushing headlong into Your mouths with terrible teeth and fearful to look at. Some of these are seen sticking in the gaps between the teeth, with their heads crushed.

- **amī** - this
- **dhṛtarāṣṭrasya putrāḥ**- sons of dhritarashtra
- **sarve**- all
- **sahaiv āvanipāla**- warrior kings
- **saṅghaiḥ**- the group
- **sah**- together
- **āsmadiyairapi** - also our
- **yodhamukhyaiḥ** - chief of warriors
- **Vāktrāṇi** - mouths
- **te** - Your
- **tvaramāṇā** - fearful
- **viśanti** - entering
- **daṁṣṭrākarālāni** - terrible teeth
- **bhayānakāni** - fearful
- **kecid** - some of them
- **vilagnā** - attacked
- **daśanāntareṣu** - between the teeth
- **sandṛśyante** - observed
- **cūrṇitairuttamāṅgaiḥ** - crushed with their heads

Arjuna watches the cosmic form and observes that all the warrior kings including Dhritarashtra's sons, Bhīṣma pitāmaha, Dronacharya, and warrior chiefs of his own army are all rushing into the fire wielding mouth. Their heads are getting crushed by the tusk like teeth which was grinding everyone to death.

An English poem states “**Though the mills of God grind slowly; Yet they grind exceeding small.**” Though with patience He stands waiting, With exactness grinds he all” Meaning to be a reference to divine retribution.

The warriors were physically present on the battlefield at that moment, but Arjuna could still see them entering the mouth of Paramātmā. Bhagavān had ab initio said that Arjuna can see the past, present and future in the cosmic form. Arjuna was seeing the future at that moment that his great opponents will be killed in the battle. Bhagavān is beyond the limits of time and hence could show the past, present, and future.

Bhīṣma Pitāmaha, the son of King Shantanu and Ganga, renounced the throne and took the vow of celibacy to facilitate his fathers remarriage. He continued to support Duryodhana despite knowing his evil nature and that he was usurping the rights of Pāṇḍavas only because he was committed to protecting the throne of Hastinapura as vowed by him. Hence he had to lay down his life in the battle of evil versus goodness. Srimad Bhagavath describes the end of his life as he lies on the bed of arrows when he expresses that he wants to meditate in the thoughts of Bhagavān Sri Krishna who charioted Arjuna and shortened the life of all the Generals of Kauravas just by looking at the opponents. Bhīṣma pitāmaha knew the consequences of fighting the war, with Bhagavān Sri Krishna supporting the Pāṇḍavas and as a charioteer of Arjuna. As a Bhagavān he can become ruthless as HE is a destroyer of adharma too.

The more we indulge in desires, selfishness and pursuing pleasures, the more we live like the monsoon moth flies, and we become blind and deaf. We even forget that we are running out of life as rapidly as the river flows towards the sea. When we look at our past we observe how swiftly life has passed. One should pursue the spiritual life every day as we move towards our last moments without wasting time. The mind needs conditioning to keep it focussed towards spirituality. The personification of death to those who follow the path of personal pleasure and profits at the expense of family, friends, communities and country the death often comes in the form of violence.

## 11.28

**yathā nadīnām(m) bahavo'mbuvegāḥ(s),  
samudramevābhimukhā dravanti,  
tathā tavāmī naralokavīrā,  
viśanti Vāktrāṇyabhivijvalanti. 11.28**

As diverse torrents of rivers rush towards an ocean, so do these warriors of the mortal world, enter into Your blazing mouths,

- **yathā-** as
- **nadīnām-** rivers
- **bahava-** many
- **ambuvegāḥ-** waves of water
- **samudra-** ocean
- **ābhimukhā-** towards
- **dravanti-** to flow
- **tathā tavāmī-** all these
- **naralokavīrā-** warriors of human society
- **viśanti-** entirely
- **vāktrāṇi-** mouth
- **abhivijvalanti-** blazing

Arjuna describes those notable warriors who were striving for realisation and took up arms as their sense of duty, and compared them to the rivers joining the ocean. Like the different tributaries rush towards the ocean, they enter the blazing mouth. Arjuna is visualising life like images in the cosmic

form. The water from the ocean evaporates and falls into the river as rain, and the river joins the ocean. Once united with the ocean the rivers lose their identity. Just like the rivers, all the creatures rush into Bhagavān, and attain the ultimate eternal bliss. Some of them by identifying themselves with the perishable unreal body engage in worldly pleasure and prosperity and accept their existence. Those devotees who do not heed to these diversions march towards Bhagavān like Bhīṣma Pitāmaha and Drona, who entered the mouth with the fiery knowledge and became one with HIM.

**11.29**

**yathā pradīptaṃ(ñ) jvalanaṃ(m) pataṅgā,  
viśanti nāśāya samṛddhavegāḥ,  
tathaiva nāśāya viśanti lokāḥ(s),  
tavāpi Vāktrāṇi samṛddhavegāḥ. 11.29**

As moths out of their folly rush headlong into the burning fire for destruction, even so, do these people, hurriedly speed into Your mouths for their annihilation.

- **yathā** - as
- **pradīptaṃ** - blazing
- **jvalanaṃ** - fire
- **pataṅgā** - moths
- **viśanti** - entering
- **nāśāya** - for destruction
- **samṛddhavegāḥ** - full speed
- **tathaiva** - similarly
- **lokāḥ** - all people
- **tavāpi** - to You also
- **vāktrāṇi** - in the mouths
- **samṛddhavegāḥ** - with full speed

Here Arjuna described those warriors who were being engaged in worldly pleasures and prosperity and joined the war to gain kingdom or fame. They are compared to the fireflies who rush into the fire and get destroyed. In the dark nights the fire flies get attracted by the light coming out of the fire and enter the fire. Their foolish mind thinks that the fire gives light, and their desire for it leads to their self destruction. People who are attracted to desires rush towards achieving them, without realising that it is taking them towards self destruction. Those who are not willing to renounce their desires and attachment to material pleasures, are entering the mouth of the Supreme for destruction.

**11.30**

**lelihyase grasamānaḥ(s) śamantāl,  
lokāṇśamagrānvadanairjvaladbhiḥ,  
tejobhirāpūrya jagatśamagraṃ(m),  
bhāsastavogrāḥ(ph) pratapanti viṣṇo. 11.30**

Devouring all the worlds through Your flaming mouths, and licking them on all sides. Your fiery rays, fill the whole world with radiance, and heat it. O Viṣṇu.



- **lelihyase** - licking
- **grasamānaḥ** - devouring
- **ṣamantāl** - from all directions
- **lokān** - people
- **ṣamagrān** - completely
- **vadanairjvaladbhiḥ** - by the blazing mouth
- **tejobhir** - effulgence
- **āpūrya jagatṣamagraṃ** - covering the entire universe
- **bhāsaṣṭava** - Your illuminating
- **ugrāḥ** - terrible
- **pratapanti** - scorching
- **viṣṇo** - Vishnu

Having described their entry into the Cosmic form, Arjuna further describes the terrible process of destruction of these warriors. He sees the flaming mouth devouring the warriors who are entering from all sides, licking and chewing them.

Bhagavān controls the world with creation, preservation and destruction. Arjuna was viewing the destruction mode and was witnessing the future events in the cosmic form wherein his enemies were getting wiped out and many of his allies also into the grip of death. However, he does not see the death of Abhimanyu, Arjuna's son. If Arjuna had seen his death, he would have run away without fighting. Hence, Bhagavān did not show it intentionally. Everything is as per the will of the supreme Paramātmā.

## Questions and Answers

### Manne Srimannarayana ji

**Q:** , how could Arjuna see so many characters in the face of Bhagavān, in detail, when Bhagavān was in the expansive form of infinity?

**A:** He could see it due to the divine vision gifted by Bhagavān. Initially Bhagavān kept asking Arjuna to see but he could not. Only after he gets the divine sight he could see. Sanjaya could see because of the divine sight from Maharshi Ved Vyas.

### Sandeep ji

**Q:** It is said 'I' is the root cause of dvait and advait and it is the desire which makes us do a lot many things. Can we remove desire as all the sensory organs we hear, see and so on. We learnt that the ultimate destinations of nirguna and saguna worship are the same. It also said if all desires are given up Bhagavan will take care. Is it possible to remove all these desires in this life? Who exactly am I ?

**A:** This 'I' is the attachment to our body. Once we realise that it is not the body or the intellect one can understand that it is only the soul. The knowledge of atma is to realise god in ourselves. It is no doubt difficult. When one tries to meditate it is scary to come out of the body and a person may come out of meditation itself as they feel dead. The yogis come out of the body without any attachment to the body. They have the knowledge of atma, and they become desire less as it is realisation of Paramātmā. It takes years of practice to reach this state. One has to sit and start first by observing and focusing on the breath in and out; when it gets balanced further practice can be tried to control the mind from getting distracted by the material world. At some point of time with practice, the mind gets restful and thoughtless, and at a moment for a fraction of a second, one can see Paramātmā. With a lot of practice, the length of time the mind can be stilled and the Paramātmā realised will increase.



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**Jai Shri Krishna!**

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