



ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 11: Viśvarūpa-Darśana-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/pUwdY60qxWY>

The Divine Cosmic Form is the treasure trove of the universe painted in front of our eyes, one that is limitless, boundless and beyond imagination of ordinary intellect.

The 11th chapter of the Bhagavad-Gītā is known as the **Viśhwarūpa Darśhana Yoga** - Yoga of the Vision of the Universal Form.

The second interpretation session of the 11th chapter of Śrīmadbhagavadgītā started with prayers to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa followed by the lighting of the auspicious lamp so that we are guided towards the path of Dharma, with the blessings of the Paramātmā, our Guru and the light of knowledge.

**Gurur Brahmā Gurur Vishnu, Gurur Devo Maheshwarah
Guru Saakshaata Parabrahma, Tasmai Śrī Guruve Namah**

Guru Brahmā, the Creator, Guru Vishnu, the Preserver, Guru Devo Maheshwarah, he Destroyer), are the Guru Sakshat ParaBrahmā, the Supreme Being or Almighty. Guru is the embodiment of Para Brahmā and to HIM I bow.

**kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya haraye paramātmāne
praṇataḥ kleśanāśāya govindāya namo namaḥ**

Salutations again and again to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa — Vāsudeva, Hari, the Supreme Self, Govinda — who destroys the suffering of those who surrender unto Him.

This was followed by prayers to the Gītā Mata:

**pārthāya pratibodhitām bhagavatā nārāyaṇena svayaṁ
vyāsenā grathitām purāṇa-muninā madhye mahābhārate
advaitāmṛta-varṣiṇīm bhagavatīm aṣṭādaśādhyāyiniṁ
amba tvām anusandadhāmi bhagavad-gīte bhava-dveṣiṇīm**

O Bhagavad-Gītā, you have been told to Arjuna, the son of Prtha by Bhagavān Narayana Himself and afterwards you were included within the Mahabharata by the ancient sage Vyasa. Your eighteen divine chapters are like a shower of the immortal nectar of wisdom of the Absolute. O mother, destroyer of man's rebirth into the darkness of this mortal world, upon you I meditate.

In the previous session, we were all fortunate to discuss the Viśvarūpa darshan manifested by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, at the behest of Arjuna. We should be thankful to the Guru of Gurus, Maharṣi Vedavyāsa ji for giving us this divine experience. Among all other scriptures that he wrote, the Gītā in general and this chapter in particular has a distinct identity. Gītā is the only scripture where we get such a detailed description of the **Viśvarūpa Darśana - The Cosmic Form**. This **Viśvarūpa** is something that nobody has ever seen before and with our limited intellect, it is beyond comprehension.

Maharṣi Vedavyāsa ji has described the different incarnations of Bhagavān Viṣṇu, in many scriptures. Jñāneśvara Maharaj ji had said that whatever has been written about and whatever we understand about the Universe is extraordinarily little and miniscule just like the bubbles in the vast ocean. Each of the incarnations can be compared to the waves in the divine ocean or **Chetana sāgara** as Swamiji puts it, bringing with them the energy of divinity from the **Brahmā tattva**. This chapter gives us the vision of the divine vast ocean, **Viśvarūpa**.

The vast and divine ocean of Viśvarūpa is incomprehensible to our intellect in terms of its vastness and the depth. Every direction that we see, we can only perceive the endless expanse. Terming the Divine **Viśvarūpa** as an ocean is in itself a limitation of our imagination, but our limited intellect can immediately relate to an ocean when 'vastness' is referred. In the discussion during the previous session, we have learnt Arjuna his natural eyes were not able to see Śrī Kṛṣṇa's divine form. When we as sādhs are reading this chapter, we have to understand that with our natural intellect, it is exceedingly difficult for us to understand the **Viśvarūpa**. Only **Parama-Pitā Paramātmā** can shower his infinite grace on us and help us understand his teachings and his divine Cosmic Form. He is the only one who can give us that ability to visualize, through our natural vision and our intellect. So, at this moment let us gather all the emotions that we can muster and pray fervently to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhagavān to shower his grace upon us.

In Marathi there is a beautiful saying that says '**Jithe Bhav Tithe Dev,**' wherever there is an emotion, God will appear there. We have read about this in **Narasimhāvatāra**, where Bhagavān appeared out of the pillar, from nowhere, when **Bhaktaprahāda** beseeched him to come. We have also read about it in **Gajendra Mokṣa**, after **Gajendra** (the Elephant King) was deserted by his family, a helpless **Gajendra** offered a lotus to **Bhagavān Viṣṇu** and prayed for salvation. **Bhagavān Viṣṇu** appeared on **Garuḍa** and killed the crocodile with the **Sudarśana Chakra**, granting both **Gajendra** and the crocodile (a cursed Gandharva) liberation. One's understanding of Paramātmā depends on his strength of devotion. The more devoted one is, the more emotional will be his experience and understanding. Arjuna's description of the divinity may be beyond our mental and intellectual abilities. We need to be as devoted as Arjuna If we wish to experience the same vision that he saw.

During the discussion in the last session, we have seen that Bhagavān himself describes the **Viśvarūpa** and later Sañjaya describes the divine form. If we take the analogy of a cricket match, if one is watching it on the television, one can only see what the cameraman is focussed upon, however if one were to be sitting right inside the stadium, one just does not see the match, one experiences it. Both Sañjaya and Arjuna had divine visions. However, they are not the same. Sañjaya was seated in Hastināpura and had a limited field of vision. Arjuna was not only seeing the Cosmic Form, but he was also experiencing it. He was right in the midst of the **Viśvarūpa**, we through the discussion are also experiencing it, through Arjuna's own narration. Let us summon our devotion and pray to Parama-Pitā Paramātmā and seek his blessings to understand, comprehend, and visualize Arjuna's narration of his

experience. Let us all also express gratitude to the divinity who has given us Bhāgavad Gītā through Maharṣi Vedavyāsa ji and our gratitude to Parama Pujya Guru Dev for bringing all of this to us seekers.

11.15

**arjuna uvāca
paśyāmi devāṃstava deva dehe,
sarvāṃstathā bhūtaviśeṣasaṅghān,
brahmāṇamīśaṃ(ñ) kamalāsanastham,
ṛṣīṃśca sarvānuragāṃśca divyān. 11.15**

Arjuna said: O Lord, I see within Your body all the gods and multitude of different beings; observe Brahmā seated on His lotus-seat, Siva and all the sages and celestial serpents.

In this Śloka, Arjuna describes the infinite Cosmic Form of the almighty that he is able to see with his divine vision. Arjuna says he is able to see all the Celestial Gods within the Cosmic Form.

'brahmāṇam īśhaṃ kamalāsana-stham,' - Arjuna was able to see **Bhagavān Viṣṇu** in **Vaikuṅṭha**, **Bhagavān Śaṅkara** in **Kailāsa** and **Brahmā ji** seated on a lotus (**kamalāsanastham**). He was seeing the divine forms in their respective abodes.

'sarvāṃstathā bhūtaviśeṣasaṅghān,' - Arjuna sees hosts of different beings. There are different classes of beings that he is unable to discern.

'ṛṣīṅś cha sarvān,' - Arjuna sees many rishis. In the Vibhūti-yoga we have heard of Rishi Kapila and then there is Maharshi Vasiṣṭha and the other Saptarṣis.

'uragānś cha divyān,' - Arjuna describes that he able to see Divine Serpents and other beings.

He sees all of the divine beings in one form - **Brahmā ji, Bhagavān Viṣṇu, Bhagavān Śaṅkara**, and other divine celestial beings, Divine Serpents, beings from the Netherworld and other beings that he is not able to recognize. Arjuna is falling short of logic because whatever he is seeing in the magnificent Cosmic Form is overwhelming him. Whatever is termed as **Svargaḥ**, the Earth and the **Pātāla** is all seemingly in one form and one place. Wherever he sees, he sees this gigantic form filled with faces of Bhagavān.

11.16

**anekabāhūdaravāktranetraṃ(m),
paśyāmi tvāṃ(m) sarvato'nantarūpam,
nāntaṃ(n) na madhyaṃ(n) na punastavādiṃ(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.

In this shloka, Arjuna continues to describe the Cosmic Form visible to him. He says, ' O master of the Universe (**viśhwa-īśhwara**), I see the countless mouths you have, I cannot ascertain the number of hands (**bāhu**) that are there and I cannot determine the number of stomachs (**udara**). I cannot determine the number of faces (**vaktra**) around me and neither can I count the number of eyes

(**netraṁ**) that are watching me.'

Further Arjun says '**paśhyāmi tvāṁ sarvato 'nanta-rūpam,**' - 'Among these countless eyes, faces and hands that I see, I only see you.' Arjuna expresses the vastness of the form he is experiencing, by saying that from whichever angle he looks, Arjuna cannot discern any end to Bhagavān 's manifestations. Arjuna described the Cosmic Form as

- **Sarvata-** everywhere in all directions
- **anantarūpam-** boundless and limitless form with no end and no fixed dimension.

'**nāntaṁ na madhyaṁ na punas tavādim,**' - Arjun says that when he searches for the beginning (**ādim**), he is unable to find it. When he tries to see its middle (**madhyaṁ**), he again gets no success, and when he searches for the end (antaḥ), he can find no limit to the magnificent manifestation before him.

'**paśhyāmi viśhveśhvara viśhva-rūpa,**' - Arjuna says everywhere he sees, he can only see the boundless Cosmic Divine Form. Arjuna refers to Śrī Kṛṣṇa as '**Viśveśvara**' and '**Viśvarūpa,**' as he realises that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the creator, destroyer, and the ruler of the entire universe. When Arjuna used the term '**Viśva,**' - it is the highest order adjective that he could use due to limitation of vocabulary and intellect. Every particle around Arjuna was engulfed by the Cosmic Form.

The Analogy of a Cricket Stadium

If one is seated in a stadium watching a cricket match. One can only see the stadium and it is bounds. The sea of people around and beyond it nothing. For someone seated far away, Drone visuals and roving camera visuals can show what is outside and the events unfolding, but for someone inside the stadium, all one can experience is the events as far as eyes can see.

Similarly, Arjuna was in the midst of the Cosmic Divine Form. He is seeing the magnificent form with all the divine beings, celestial abodes, the Rishis and the lokas. But he is not able to fathom the manifestation. It appeared as if the manifestation completely occupied the space. Wherever seen the visual expands and there is no beginning or end within the form. Arjuna could not focus on any single face and wondered where his friend Śrī Kṛṣṇa was.

11.17

**kirīṭinaṁ(ṅ) gadināṁ(ṅ) cakriṇāṁ(ṅ) ca,
tejorāśiṁ(m) sarvato dīptimantam,
paśyāmi tvāṁ(n) durnirīkṣyaṁ(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.

'**kirīṭinaṁ(ṅ) gadināṁ(ṅ) cakriṇāṁ(ṅ) ca,**' - Looking desperately for his friend, Arjuna's sight falls on the Bhagavān's crown, the mace, the 'chakra' or the discus with which he had slayed demons. Although he identified these, he was not able to focus properly because of the radiance in every direction.

'**Tejo-rāśiṁ sarvato dīptimantam,**' - There was brilliance everywhere and it baffled Arjuna and he was unable to focus and see clearly. This radiance was also seen and expressed by Sanjaya when he said:

**divi sūrya-sahasrasya bhaved yugapad utthitā
yadi bhāḥ sadṛśīhī sā syād bhāsas tasya mahātmanah||11.12||**

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

Sañjaya was able to describe this sitting far away in Hastināpura with the Dūrdarśana bestowed upon him. However, Arjuna was right in the midst of the Divine Cosmic Form and was actually experiencing the brilliance or radiance of those thousands of suns. If one were to step outside in the sun and look upwards, the experience of the brilliance of the sun sets in, eyes water, one cannot see clearly and it is a dazed feeling. An experience that is a thousand times more is difficult to fathom and Arjuna is in the midst of all that radiance. Radiance of a thousand suns from all directions, North, East, South and West, upwards, and downwards.

‘paśhyāmi tvāṁ durnirīkṣhyaṁ samantād,’ – Arjuna says to Bhagavān that ‘The radiance is from all directions (**samantād**) and it is very difficult for me to look (**durnirīkṣhyaṁ**) at you.’

‘dīptānalārka-dyutim aprameyam,’ – Arjuna says, ‘It hard to look upon You in the blazing fire (**dīpta-anala**) of YOUR immeasurable (**aprameyam**) effulgence (**dyutim**), which is radiating like the sun (**Arka**) in all directions.’ Arjuna says that this effulgence (radiance) is incomprehensible to the Sun himself (**Arka**). When the radiance is described as equivalent to a thousand Suns, it can be construed as limitation of vocabulary. This is a test to the extent of our imagination when Arjuna says even the Sun itself cannot bear to look at the Cosmic Form and it will look like a small firefly.

Arjuna at this stage is completely baffled, confused, and goes through a range of emotions. He summons profound devotion for the Bhagavān he sees. He saw the various forms in the Divine Cosmic manifestation, he tried to discern what he could, but then he quickly realizes that it is beyond his imagination and comprehension.

11.18

**tvamakṣaram(m) paRāmaṁ(m) veditavyam(n),
tvamasya viśvasya param(n) nidhānam,
tvamavyayaḥ(ś) śāśvatadharmagoptā,
sanātanastvam(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.

Overwhelmed by the blazing effulgence of HIS Swarupa, Arjuna was astonished and started describing the imperishable entity. He was submerged with emotions. His emotions were that of gratitude, admiration, and profound devotion.

‘Tvam akṣharam paramam veditavyam,’ – Śrī Kṛṣṇa in his teachings thus far describes Paramātmān as **‘Anādi’** (Eternal, without a beginning) and **‘akṣharam’** (Imperishable). Arjuna realises the imperishable form in the **Viśvarūpa**. Arjuna says, ‘I recognize You as the supreme imperishable (**akṣharam**) being, the Ultimate (**paramam**) Truth to be known.’ In our day-to-day life, if we come across anything worthy of doing (Kriya) we term it as **‘Kartavyam,’** likewise, anything that is worthy of being known or studied is termed as **‘Veditavyam.’**

When Arjuna says Śrī Kṛṣṇa is '**Veditavyam,**' within our consciousness we should have this one desire to see and comprehend the Divine Cosmic Form of Paramātmā. We can have as many desires as we want but this one desire should be above all. A desire when granted will be the most prized possession, a treasure worth cherishing. The Divine Cosmic Form is the treasure trove of the universe painted in front of our eyes, one that is limitless, boundless and beyond imagination of ordinary intellect.

'**Tvam asya viśvasya param nidhānam,**' – Arjuna praises Śrī Kṛṣṇa and says that 'You are the refuge of this entire Universe,'

'**Tvam avyayaḥ śhāśhvata-dharma-goptā,**' – Here the adjectives used by Arjuna are important. He says Śrī Kṛṣṇa is '**śhāśhvata-dharma-goptā**' – protector of eternal religion. '**avyayaḥ**' means eternal. We as seekers are learning Bhagavān's teachings from Bhāgavad Gītā, coming to know and understand the '**Viśvarūpa**' due to some good past deeds (good karmas) that we have done. Who keeps this account? Who blesses us with the ability to perform Karmas? It is the Paramātmā who is '**Avyākaraṇāmūrṭiḥ.**' It is the Supreme Soul that witnesses all actions, notes our karma, and bestows results at the proper time. Therefore, Bhagavān is '**avyayaḥ śhāśhvata-dharma-goptā**' (eternal protector of the religion). Bhagavān ensures that we are firmly on the path of Dharma through his blessings. We human beings sometimes have the ego that it because of our charitable deeds that we are in this position. However, the ever kind Bhagavān, ensures that we understand it is all due to his blessings. He has ensured that we are devoted to him and therefore we are recipient of the prized teachings from Bhāgavad Gītā and we stay true to the path.

'**sanātanas tvam puruṣho mato me,**' – Arjuna says that Bhagavān is everlasting (**sanātanah**) Supreme Divine Personality (**puruṣhaḥ**). Bhagavān is the protector of this Dharma and his responsibility is not towards the **Prthvīloka** alone, but the entire creation of his. All across Dharma has to be protected and sustained and for this the beings have to be blessed with knowledge (**jñāna**). Knowledge is obtained from Vedas and Scriptures and all of these originate from the Supreme Paramātmān. Bhagavān is thus glorified with adjectives such as '**Avyayaḥ,**' '**Sanātanah,**' and '**Puruṣhaḥ.**'

There is no time when Bhagavān was not present, there is no place where one cannot find HIM, there never was a beginning for HIM and never was there an end and that is why he is '**Sanātanah Puruṣhaḥ.**'

11.19

**Anādimadhyāntamanantavīryam,
anantabāhuṃ(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.

'**Anādimadhyāntamanantavīryam,**' - Arjuna describes Bhagavān as one without a beginning, middle, or end. HE is the infinite power. Arjuna was overwhelmed on viewing this infiniteness. He was so mesmerised by seeing Bhagavān's **Swarupa** that he repeated the same descriptions again and again. Arjuna also says Bhagavān is '**ananta-vīryam,**' – meaning that HIS power has no limits. It is '**Vīrya**' (manliness) and '**Shaurya**' (fearlessness) combined as power in the Cosmic Form of **Parama-Pitā Paramātmā.**

There are instances in history and in present where human beings boast of having invented the atomic bomb or nuclear weapons and thereby the power one has. These people do not realise the limitless power of **Parama-Pitā Paramātmā**. HIS power is so manifold the power of either of these weapons. This adhyāya is very humbling at times and takes away the ego (**Ahaṅkāra**) of all humanity. In many ways **Viśvarūpa Darśana** is universe centric. The feelings and emotions of power one wields is all dispelled once realization sets in that all the power that is being wielded is derived from the **Viśvarūpa**. Bhagavān 's energy and power are limitless and beyond our imagination.

'Ananta-bāhuṃ śhaśhi-sūrya-netram,' - Arjuna describes the Divine form as having Infinite arm and eyes of are like moon (**Śaśi**) and sun (**Sūrya**). **Śaśi** and **Sūrya** are contradictory in name. **Śaśi** exudes calm whereas **Sūrya** is bright. It is not possible for one to directly look at sun unless it is early sunrise or late sunset. Arjuna says that 'Your one eye is burning me down whereas the other is pacifying me. A few hands are cuddling me whereas the others appear ferocious. A part of you is there making me feel loved'.

'paśhyāmi tvāṃ dīpta-hutāśha-vaktram,' - Arjuna sees blazing fire emanating from Bhagavān 's mouth. Arjuna is describing HIS radiance equivalent to thousand blazing suns coming out of HIS mouth. One can perceive the magnitude of radiance that he was experiencing when we compare it with our experience with yajña. When we are performing a yajña / fire sacrifice, we are not able to tolerate the heat after some time. Our eyes start burning, and we try to move away. The fire emanating from Bhagavān 's mouth is that intense and blazing.

Arjuna's state of mind starts with initial confusion and then as he is trying to focus, he feels that there are different shades in this **Viśvarūpa**. There are shades of love, there are shades of fearfulness, and there are shades of fierceness in this one **Viśvarūpa**. Whereas one eye is pacifying, the other is burning down with this anger and the mouth it is like a yajña kund, emanating fire and is fierce.

'Sva-tejasā viśhvam idam tapantam ,' - Arjuna says to Bhagavān, 'The entire universe is being illuminated by you.' It is not one Sun in the universe; it is many Suns across the creations and all of them are illuminated by Bhagavān. The **'Tejomay'** in the **Viśvarūpa** is the source of all illumination. The **Viśvarūpa** is very divine to look at and at the same time, it instils fear inside Arjuna and that is why he is trying to look at all the faces, all the eyes in multiple directions. The mouth is emanating fierce fire, and is reflecting anger and because of the emotion, the bewildered Arjuna is looking in all directions. Arjun also notices that there is no distance left between the sun, the sky, and the earth.

11.20

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

'dyāv ā-pṛthivyor idam antaram hi,' - Being a human being, Arjuna can stretch his imagination only to a certain point. Sky is the limit for him to describe infinity. Therefore, he says there is no space (**antaram**) between sky and the earth (**dyau-ā-pṛthivyoḥ**) when he is looking at the Viśvarūpa.

'vyāptam(n) tvayaikena diśaśca sarvāḥ,' - Everything space is covered by Bhagavān. Arjuna sees only HIM in all directions. When he looks around, he can see only the Paramātmā. Arjuna says that the

'Omnipresent' Bhagavān is pervading in all directions, the whole earth, the sky above, and the space in-between.

'**drīṣṭvādbhutaṁ rūpam ugraṁ tavedaṁ,**' – Arjuna says that looking at the wonderous form of Bhagavān, he sees the terrible side and it is looking at this terrible form that '**loka-trayaṁ pravayathitaṁ mahātman,**' – all living beings in the three worlds are shuddering in fear.

Thus far Arjuna was completely awed by the **Viśvarūpa**. This Cosmic Form was nothing new. As we know Bhagavān is ever existent but Arjuna was viewing this **Viśvarūpa** of Bhagavān for the first time. He never imagined this rūpam before. He further mentions that not only himself, but all the three worlds were trembling in fear of the ferocious form of Bhagavān. Arjuna was not an ordinary man. He was a very evolved being and had seen many worlds, including the **Svarga Lok, Pātāl Lok** and **Mṛityu Lok**. Yet, he started trembling.

He had never imagined that the beautiful Krishna whom he has seen from the childhood could be so ferocious, so boundless, so brilliant and '**Tejomaya**'. All of this was totally beyond the imagination of Arjuna. This form that he is experiencing appears very deadly to him. Wherever he sees, he is not just seeing that loving Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he is seeing all the different shades including the fearful element too.

Why this element of fear? Again, it is due to the limitations of the human form (**manuṣya rūpam**). Our eyes and our intellect are limited by what we can see and what we can perceive. As ordinary beings, we cannot imagine the sun and its brilliance. Arjuna with his '**Divya Cakṣu**' has experienced this brilliance all around him but, he is also of the human form.

In this one large and magnificent country of ours, we come across many kinds of people. There are devotees, there are indifferent people and there are also critics of Bhagavān. There are also different emotions from people – Some who love, some who criticize and are indifferent and some who hate and have negative vibes. Arjuna is seeing all of these kinds of people and beings good and evil in one form and in one place. That is causing '**pravayathitaṁ mahātman,**' – a scary, very perturbed and troubled feeling in him.

11.21

**amī hi tvāṁ(m) surasaṅghā viśanti,
kecidbhītāḥ(ph) prāñjalayo gṛṇanti,
svastīyuktvā maharṣisiddhasaṅghāḥ(s),
stuvanti tvāṁ(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.

Arjuna sees and describes a group of celestial deities entering the Cosmic Form of the divine. One must understand that even the celestial Devatas, including Brahmā Deva, have a defined lifespan (as per Vedic calculations, which is beyond the human time period definitions). Arjuna sees all the celestial deities entering the Cosmic Form and seeking HIS refuge in fear. He also mentions that some of these celestial beings are praising HIM with folded hands.

He also says that he is able to view the great sages are admiring HIM with auspicious hymns and profuse prayers. The great sages had a superhuman tranquility that arise from their spiritual wisdom. Their spiritual knowledge makes them sail through the ocean of miseries and the elevated inner state

makes these sages as well-wishers to all.

Even when one reads about the life experiences of great saints like Jñāneśvara Maharaj, who was subjected to profound, lifelong hardships and persecution. Despite these trials, he remained a testament to deep devotion and inner peace. Jñāneśvara Maharaj used his suffering to foster compassion and create works like the Dnyaneshwari (a commentary on the Bhāgavad Gītā) at the early age of 13-16, ensuring that spiritual knowledge was accessible to common people. Sant Mirabai has contributed many Bhajans and taught a new definition of Bhakti or Devotion during the Bhakti movement.

The saints always functioned from an elevated state of consciousness which was absorbed in true devotion and hence they were compassionate to everyone. As they say - **Sabka Kalyan** (seeking good for one and all), this was a natural state, an inborn nature of the evolved perfected beings which is described with the term **svastityuktvā** in this shloka.

The verse '**stuvanti tvām stutibhiḥ(ph) puṣkalābhiḥ**' implies to saying prayers (**stutibhiḥ**) singing the hymns (**puṣkalābhiḥ**), praising (**stuvanti**) the glories of the Paramātmān. The great sages could do this as they had the knowledge about the supreme being.

11.22

**rudrādityā vasavo ye ca sādhyā,
viśveśvinau marutaśchoṣmapāśca,
gandharvayakṣāsurasiddhasaṅghā,
vīkṣante 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.

'**rudrādityā vasavo ye cha sādhyā, viśhve 'śhvinau marutaśh choṣmapāśh cha,**' - In this verse, Arjuna continues to describe that he is seeing **eight Vasus**, the **eleven Rudras**, **twelve Ādityas**, **Indra and Prajāpati**, 2 (twin) **Aswini Kumars (aśhvinau)**, (forty-nine) **Maruts (marutaḥ)**, and the ancestors (**uṣhma-pāḥ**) all in one form. He was seeing the thirty-three koti Devatas. As detailed earlier, koti means the apex (prime) demigods that can be seen in the Cosmic form of the Paramātmā.

'**Gandharva-yakṣhāsura-siddha-saṅghā,**' - Arjuna continues the description by saying he is seeing **Gandharvāḥ**, **Yakṣas**, Rishi Munis, and the **siddhapuruṣa** 's. **Yakṣas** are considered demigods or nature spirits, sometimes associated with wealth (under **Kubera**).

Siddhapuruṣa refers to a spiritually perfect soul who has achieved elevated levels of realization and devotion. This term signifies perfected beings with deep understanding of the self and harmonious living, as described in the Puranas. They embody auspicious qualities and serve humanity selflessly, illustrating spiritual mastery.

'**vīkṣhante tvām vismitāśh chaiva sarve,**' - Arjuna says that the entire assembly that he just described are beholding (**vīkṣhante**) the Cosmic Form of Bhagavān with wonder (**vismitāśh**).

Arjuna's description here needs a mention - Arjuna himself was viewing the Cosmic Form of Bhagavān with astonishment and awe. He was also very scared viewing the power and radiance in front of him.

This feeling of his is being 'reflected' on everything that he is seeing, therefore when he is astonished and wonder struck, he feels that the gods, demigods, and others are also astonished and wonderstruck at the power and magnificence of the Cosmic Form and as he is bowing in front of the Cosmic Form, they are bowing too.

11.23

**rūpaṃ(m) mahatte bahuVāktranetraṃ(m),
mahābāho bahubāhūrupādam,
bahūdaraṃ(m) bahudaṃṣṭrākarālaṃ(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.

Arjuna continues to describe the magnificent Divine Cosmic Form (**rūpaṃ mahat te**). '**Bahu-vaktra-netraṃ mahā-bāho bahu-bāhūru-pādam,**' - The form has immeasurable number of heads, hands, legs, and stomach. The form is so profound that Arjuna is able to see the physical features all over and all pervading. HE envelopes the universe but is transcendental to it. Arjuna describes the cosmic form as mighty-armed (**mahā-bāho**).

Next Arjuna says '**bahu-danṣṭrā-karālaṃ,**' - he is able to see rows of terrifying teeth. '**Danṣṭrā**' refers to large teeth or fangs and '**karālaṃ**' refers to terrible or dreadful. Arjuna says, '**dṛṣṭvā lokāḥ pravyathitās tathāham,**' - I am seeing this dreadful sight, but it is not only me. All the beings from the three worlds are seeing this sight . He says all the worlds are terror-stricken, and so am I. He finally agrees and accepts that he is very afraid.

Arjuna uses the word '**pravyathitā,**' '**Vyathitā**' means distressed or scared. However, '**pravyathitā**' means terror-stricken and extreme panic. The word signifies the intensity of distress and his state of mind.

Sṛṣṭi refers to the creation of the universe, including time, space, and all material elements, in short, the entire cosmic creation. **Sṛṣṭi** is the handiwork of the Paramātmā himself. When we look at the good aspects and some of the dreadful aspects, our emotions range from like to dislike. However, we have to understand that those who are beholding and those who are being beheld, the terrified and the terrifying, are all within the universal form of the Paramātmā himself (As stated in **Śhwetāśhvatar Upaniṣhad**).

When at the **Sṛṣṭi** (time of creation) we see the beautiful things around us, we feel that all the beauty is around us. While beauty is also his handiwork, at the time of **pralaya** or dissolution when everything is destroyed, it gets dissolved in the Cosmic Form itself. It is akin to the waves of the ocean; they are created in the ocean and again they are dissolved in that same ocean. Therefore, the destruction is also a part of the **Viśvarūpa**.

Arjun is witnessing not just the beautiful and magnificent form of **Parama-Pitā Paramātmā**, but he is also witnessing the destructive form. A deadly destructive form personified in the **Viśvarūpa**. He says that the form is humungous and all-pervading and is very scary to behold.

11.24

**nabhaḥsprīśaṃ(n) dīptamanekavarṇaṃ(m),
vyāttānanaṃ(n) dīptaviśālanetraṃ,
dṛṣṭvā hi tvāṃ(m) pravyathitāntarātmā,
dhṛtiṃ(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.

'**nabhaḥ-sprīśaṃ dīptam aneka-varṇaṃ,**' - Arjuna could see that Paramātmā's glorious form was touching the sky (**nabhaḥ-sprīśaṃ**), beaming in many colours. Arjuna used the word sky metaphorically as for him sky is the ultimate vastness that he could imagine. The expanse of sky increases as the horizon increases.

'**vyāttānanaṃ dīpta-viśāla-netraṃ,**' - Arjun sees the mouths (**ānanaṃ**) wide open (**vyātta**), and enormous (**viśāla**) blazing (**dīpta**) eyes (**netraṃ**). Earlier Arjun had referred to the eyes as '**Śaśi,**' now he is referring to those very same eyes as fiery and deadly.

'**dṛṣṭvā hi tvāṃ, pravyathitāntar-ātmā,**' - Arjuna says, 'Seeing you in this form makes my heart tremble with fear.'

'**dhṛitiṃ na vindāmi śamaṃ cha viṣṇo,**' - Arjuna says that his '**antarātmā**' is very scared and he is losing his firmness and control. Arjuna was called as '**Guḍākeśa,**' one who had absolute control over his senses and sleep. When such a great personality says that he is losing control over his '**dhṛitiḥ**' (firmness), it speaks to his fear-stricken state of mind. Arjun further says that 'O Viṣṇu, I have lost all courage and peace of mind.'

Arjuna is going through waves of emotions, first happiness, then astonishment and awe and then a wave of fear. Further description of his fear and what he sees will be taken up in subsequent sessions.

Question and Answer

Krishnamurthy Bhaskara ji

Q: In the beginning of the chapter, it was discussed that Arjuna required Divya Dhṛṣṭi to see the Viśvarūpa. However, in the shlokas discussed today Arjuna says everybody is seeing the deadly Cosmic form of Bhagavān. I am confused with this.

A: This adhyāya challenges us to open our imaginative skills and visualize the Cosmic Form. It is absolutely correct that Arjun required **Divya Dhṛṣṭi** to see the **Viśvarūpa**. However, one needs to be able to visualize what Arjun was seeing too. He was seeing the entire universe with all beings within and actively performing actions. Those who are engaged in constant worship of the lord, will anyways appear in that universe that Arjun sees. Whether they are seeing the **Viśvarūpa** is something else. Arjun sees them with folded hands, singing hymns and worshipping. However, they could be worshipping any form and not necessarily seeing the **Viśvarūpa**.

Let us take the analogy of someone engaged in deep worship of **Bhagavān Śaṅkara**. What Arjuna sees in the **Viśvarūpa** is a devotee worshipping and singing hymns and chanting. However, that devotee is not seeing the **Viśvarūpa** and chanting.

Q: As a follow up question, how was Arjuna able to recognize the 33 Koti devatas and the Gandharvas and the Yakṣas? Was this somehow part of his Imagination?

A: One should not take Arjuna to be an ordinary human being. Arjuna visited multiple, different lokas (realms or worlds) during his lifetime, particularly during his 12-year exile and his journey to obtain divine weapons. Arjuna was invited by his father, Indra, to the heavenly realms. He resided in Amaravati, Indra's capital, for five years to learn celestial weapons and arts from Chitrasena, the Gandharva. During his exile, Arjuna was taken to the subterranean kingdom of the Nagas (serpents) by Ulupi, the daughter of a Naga king, whom he subsequently married. Arjuna spent considerable time in the high Himalayan regions meditating and performing penance.

Arjuna also was someone who had the darshan of Bhagavān Śaṅkara. During the Pandavas' exile, Arjuna performed intense penance on Mount Himavat to obtain divine weapons. Bhagavān Śaṅkara, testing him, appeared as a hunter (Kirata) and engaged Arjuna in a fierce battle. After Arjuna realized the hunter's divine nature, Bhagavān Śaṅkara and Mata Pārvatī granted him darshan and bestowed the powerful Pashupatastra.

Therefore, Arjuna did not imagine anything. He saw the Viśvarūpa and was able to recognize many of the Celestial Divine beings.

Aadarsh ji

Q: What are the key learnings from 11th adhyāya?

A: There are several learnings from the 11th adhyāya,

- **Bhagavān is All-Pervading:** Arjun witnesses that Śrī Kṛṣṇa encompasses all existences—past, present, future, and all moving/non-moving beings.
- **Surrender and Humility:** The cosmic vision evokes awe, humbling the ego and emphasizing that surrender to the divine brings peace. The brilliance, radiance, and power that **Viśvarūpa** encompassed made everything around seem trivial. As human beings we take pride in claiming credit for inventing Nuclear Fusion or Powerful Energy, but these seem so insignificant once we hear Arjuna's description of the Cosmic Form.
- **Time as the Ultimate Destroyer:** Śrī Kṛṣṇa reveals himself as "Time," the destroyer of worlds, to whom all beings are already surrendered. Cosmic creation and dissolution formed part of the **Viśvarūpa**.
- **Divine Vision is a Gift:** True perception of the divine (**Divya Cakṣu**) cannot be attained by intellectual effort alone but is a gift of divine grace.
- **Unity in Diversity:** The vision shows that all forms are simply manifestations of one ultimate, divine reality.
- **Devotion is Supreme:** Undivided love and devotion are the direct paths to understanding and witnessing the divine, surpassing intellectual understanding

Uma Rao ji

Q: Can we say that the Supreme Paramātmān projected his **Viśvarūpa** through Śrī Kṛṣṇa? Is this how we should visualize the **Viśvarūpa**?

A: No. We all must understand that **Viśvarūpa** is not a different form of the Supreme that was projected. **Viśvarūpa** is always there, it is just that Śrī Kṛṣṇa granted **Divya Dhṛṣṭi** to Arjuna through **Yog Maya** to see the Cosmic Form. Arjuna's description of the Cosmic Form in terms of thousands of faces, eyes, mouths, hands, and feet is all around us. We as ordinary human beings cannot see or visualize it.

The analogy of a dark room

If one were to be sitting in a dark room, nothing is visible to the naked eye. If in that dark room, one was to place a small lamp, then a few objects in the room become partially visible. In the very same room, if one were to place a very bright lamp, then even the tiny speck of dust becomes visible. This

is also experienced when a bright ray of sunshine floods through the window; one can see specks of dust floating in the sunlight. Likewise, Arjuna was helped with **Divya Dhr̥ṣṭi** to see the Cosmic Form.



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