



A Study of the Means of Attaining Direct Knowledge of the Supreme Brahman in the Bhagavadgītā

Satish Barman

Research Scholar, Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal

Email: satish.nbu@gmail.com

Abstract

The central problem of this article is to explore how the Supreme Brahman or Paramātmā can be realised or known. The concept of *pramāṇa* is one of the central issues in Indian philosophy. Systems like Nyāya and Vedānta classify perception, inference and verbal testimony as the chief forms of *pramāṇa*. However, in the *Bhagavadgītā*, we do not find a systematic discussion of the concept of *pramāṇa*. But some of the hints on the same are there in the *Bhagavadgītā*. This article examines how the *Bhagavadgītā* implicitly addresses knowledge (*jñāna*), the object of knowledge (*jñeya*) and the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*). The *Bhagavadgītā* defines actual knowledge as *ādhyātmika*, which is the realisation of the Self (*Ātman*) and the Supreme Brahman. Brahman, the eternal and all-pervading reality, is identified as the object of knowledge. The study argues that conventional *pramāṇas*, such as perception and inference, are inadequate for knowing this ultimate truth, as the Self is subtle, unchanging, and beyond sensory or logical grasp. While verbal testimony (*śabda*), especially the divine teaching of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, provides an authoritative means of knowledge, the *Bhagavadgītā* emphasises that *śabda* or verbal testimony must be supported by *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. Ultimately, the *Bhagavadgītā* shows that the Supreme Reality or Brahman is realised only through direct, intuitive experience (*aparokṣa-anubhūti*). Thus, in the view of the *Bhagavadgītā*, intuition or inner realisation is not perception, inference, or scripture, but it constitutes the actual and direct means of knowing the ultimate reality, the Self and the Supreme Brahman.

Original Article

Open Access



Received: 01.06.2026

Reviewed: 14.07.2026

Accepted: 15.07.2026

Publication Date: July-September 2026

Volume: 2

Issue: 3

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.65842/nbpa.v2.i3.003>



CC BY-NC-ND

Published by: North Bengal

Philosophers Association

Website: <https://nbpajournal.com>

Keywords: *Pramāṇa, Jñāna, Jñeya, Ātman, Param Brahman, Ādhyātmika Jñāna, Intuition, Aparokṣa-anubhūti, Self-realisation, Paramātmā.*

1. Introduction

The *Bhagavadgītā* occupies a unique and central position in Indian philosophy as a practical and spiritual guide to the attainment of life's highest truth. The central concern of the *Bhagavadgītā* is to remove ignorance (*avidyā*) and lead the individual towards direct knowledge of the Supreme *Brahman* or *Paramātmān*, which alone brings liberation (*mokṣa*). In the *Bhagavadgītā*, Supreme *Brahman* and *Paramātmān* are not presented as separate realities. Kṛṣṇa is described as the Supreme *Brahman* (*Param Brahman*) in chapter 10, verse 12,¹ and as the *Paramātmān* or Supreme Self in chapter 13, verses 22–23.² The Supreme *Brahman* or *Paramātmān* in the philosophy of the *Bhagavadgītā* is the highest truth. Supreme *Brahman* is regarded as the object of knowledge, and the nature of this object of knowledge is *ādhyātmika*. The main issue of this article is to examine how the Supreme *Brahman* can be realised or known. Every human being seeks to know the truth about the world, self, and ultimate reality. But to know anything rightly, we must have a proper way or method of knowing. In Indian philosophy, this method of knowing is known as *pramāṇa*, the means of valid knowledge. The study of *pramāṇa* is significant because it helps us to understand how knowledge arises, how it becomes valid, and how we can distinguish actual knowledge from illusion or error. Different schools of Indian philosophy have accepted different numbers and kinds of *pramāṇas*. For example, Nyāya accepts four (perception, inference, comparison and testimony), while Vedānta mainly accepts three (perception, inference and scripture). These means of knowledge are important not only for intellectual understanding but also for practical life and spiritual realisation. However, in the *Bhagavadgītā*, we do not find such a discussion of *pramāṇas* or means of knowledge. But the *Bhagavadgītā* repeatedly teaches that attaining knowledge of the Soul, or Brahman, is a necessary precondition for being a *yogi*. Therefore, an important question arises: what are the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) through which the Soul or *Brahman* can be known in the *Bhagavadgītā*? In the *Bhagavadgītā*, the means of knowledge (*pramāṇas*) are not discussed in a systematic or technical way as in Indian epistemological systems such as Nyāya, Vedānta, or other philosophical systems. However, throughout the *Bhagavadgītā*, we come across implicit or explicit hints of the same.

¹ *param brahma param dhāma pavitraṁ paramaṁ bhavan puruṣaṁ śāśhvataṁ divyaṁ ādi-devaṁ ajaṁ vibhum.*

² *upadraṣṭānumantā ca bhartā bhoktā maheshvaraḥ paramātmēti chāpy ukto dehe 'smin puruṣaḥ paraḥ.*

2. A Brief Sketch of the Concept of Knowledge

Before discussing the means of knowledge through which we can know the Supreme *Brahman*, it is essential to understand first what knowledge is and what the object of knowledge is, as explained in the *Bhagavadgītā*. Without a proper understanding of *knowledge (jñāna)*, it is not possible to determine its *object (jñeya)*. Similarly, without knowing the object of knowledge, we cannot properly comprehend the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*). Therefore, a clear conception of knowledge and its object is the necessary foundation for understanding the means through which actual knowledge is attained according to the *Bhagavadgītā*. In the 1st verse of the 13th chapter, Arjuna asks some questions to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. These are: What is *Puruṣa*? What is *prakṛti*? What is *Kṣetra*? What is *Kṣetrājña*? What is *Jñāna* (knowledge)? And what is *Jñeya* (object of knowledge)?³

For our discussion, it is necessary to understand both what knowledge (*jñāna*) is and what the object of knowledge (*jñeya*) is. The *Bhagavadgītā* explains the nature of true knowledge in verse 11 of chapter 13, where it declares that real knowledge is *ādhyātmika* i.e., spiritual in nature.⁴ It is concerned with the realisation of the Self (*Ātman*) rather than any external or material understanding. Moreover, this knowledge is considered *nitya*, or eternal. It is also called *tattva-jñāna*, the knowledge of ultimate reality or truth. Here, knowledge does not mean material knowledge. All forms of knowledge other than this spiritual understanding are not actual knowledge but ignorance (*ajñāna*) according to the *Gītā*.

In the next verse of the same chapter, *Bhagavadgītā* describes the object of knowledge (*jñeya*). Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, 'I shall declare that which ought to be known; by knowing which one attains immortality.'⁵ So, the object of knowledge is that truth or reality which leads the knower to liberation (*mokṣa*). Kṛṣṇa defines this reality as '*anādi mat-param brahma na sat nāsad ucyate*', i.e., the beginningless Supreme *Brahman*, which is beyond both being (*sat*) and non-being (*asat*). This means that *Brahman*, the ultimate reality, transcends all dualities and categories of worldly existence. It is eternal, infinite and spiritual—the highest object of realisation. Hence, according to the *Bhagavadgītā*, the object of true knowledge is the Supreme *Brahman* or *Paramātmā*.

³ *prakṛtiṁ puruṣaṁ chaiva kṣetraṁ kṣetra-jñāna eva ca etad veditum ichchhāmi jñānaṁ jñeyaṁ cha keśava.*

⁴ *ādhyātma-jñāna-nityatvaṁ tattva-jñānārtha-darśhanam etaj jñānam iti proktam ajñānaṁ yad ato 'nyathā.*

⁵ *jñeyaṁ yat tat pravakṣhyāmi yaj jñātvāmṛitam aśnute anādi mat-param brahma na sat nāsad ucyate.*

In the next verse, it also says that this Supreme Reality has hands and feet everywhere, eyes, heads and faces everywhere and ears everywhere.⁶ It means that *Brahman* pervades the entire universe. It acts through all beings and is present in all forms of life. Every action performed by any creature is possible only because of the presence of this all-pervading divine power. Similarly, it sees through all eyes, hears through all ears and thinks through all minds. Yet, even as it pervades everything, *Brahman* remains independent and untouched. In verse 14, Śrī Kṛṣṇa further explains the nature of the Supreme *Brahman*, saying that the *Brahman* appears to function through all the organs (*sarvendriya-guṇābhāsam*), yet in reality, it is devoid of all organs (*sarvendriya-vivarjitam*). It is detached from all, yet it supports everything (*asaktam sarva-bhṛt caiva*). It is beyond all qualities (*nirguṇa*), yet it enjoys or sustains the functions of qualities (*guṇabhoktr*).⁷

In the beginning of the 14th chapter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa again declares that He will expound the supreme knowledge (*param jñānam*), the best among all forms of knowledge. Then, in verses 3 and 4, Kṛṣṇa reveals the cosmic process of creation, stating that the total material substance (*mahad-brahma*), or *prakṛti*, serves as the womb. He impregnates it with the living entities (*jīva*) and thus all beings are born. He further clarifies that material nature (*prakṛti*) is the womb of all forms of life, while He Himself is the seed-giving Father (*bīja-pradaḥ pitā*).⁸ Through these verses, Kṛṣṇa establishes that both *Puruṣa* (the conscious principle) and *Prakṛti* (the material principle) originate from the Supreme *Brahman*. In other words, the *parā-prakṛti* (the higher spiritual energy, representing consciousness or *Ātman*) and the *aparā-prakṛti* (the lower material energy) are two aspects of the same Supreme Reality. In the *Bhagavadgītā* chapter 7, verses 4–5, Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains His twofold divine energy, namely *parā* and *aparā prakṛti*.⁹ He says that earth (*bhūmi*), water (*āpaḥ*), fire (*anala*), air (*vāyuḥ*), ether (*khaṁ*), mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*) and ego (*ahankāra*) — these eight elements together form His lower or external energy (*aparā-prakṛti*). This *aparā-prakṛti* represents the material nature, the foundation of the physical and psychological world. It includes both the gross elements (earth, water, fire, air, ether) and the subtle elements (mind, intellect, ego). Then, Kṛṣṇa declares that

⁶ *sarvataḥ pāṇi-pādāṁ tat sarvato 'kṣi-śiro-mukham sarvataḥ śrutimal loke sarvam āvṛitya tiṣṭati.*

⁷ *sarvendriya-guṇābhāsam sarvendriya-vivarjitam asaktam sarva-bhṛt caiva nirguṇam guṇa-bhoktr ca.*

⁸ *mama yonir mahad brahma tasmin garbham dadhāmy aham sambhavaḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ tato bhavati bhārata. sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya mūrtayaḥ sambhavanti yāḥ tāsāṁ brahma mahad yonir aham bīja-pradaḥ pitā.*

⁹ *bhūmir-āpo 'nalo vāyuḥ khaṁ mano buddhir eva ca ahankāra itīyaṁ me bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā. apareyam itas tvanyāṁ prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parāṁ jīva-bhūtāṁ mahā-bāho yayedam dhāryate jagat.*

beyond this lower nature there is a higher nature (*parā-prakṛti*) — the living energy, the conscious principle (*jīva-bhūta*), which sustains and governs the entire world.

3. The Means and the Knowledge of *Param Brahman*

So far as the definition of knowledge (*jñāna*) and the nature of the object of knowledge (*jñeya*) are concerned, we come to the conclusion that the *jñāna* or *knowledge* of the *Bhagavadgītā* is essentially *ādhyātmika*, that is, spiritual in nature. It does not refer to material or empirical knowledge but to the realisation of the Self (*Ātman*) and the Supreme Reality (*Param Brahman*). The object of knowledge, therefore, is the Supreme *Brahman*. It is the eternal, all-pervading consciousness.

Now, coming to the next point, i.e., what are the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) through which we can attain direct knowledge of the Supreme *Brahman* or *Paramātmā* according to the *Bhagavadgītā*, it becomes necessary to examine how this spiritual knowledge arises.

First of all, let us take perception (*pratyakṣa*), which is accepted as a valid means of knowledge in all Indian philosophical systems. But in the *Bhagavadgītā*, perception is not regarded as the true means of attaining spiritual knowledge. In chapter 13, verse 15, Śrī Kṛṣṇa clearly points out that *Brahman* cannot be grasped by ordinary sense perception because it is *sūkṣma*, or subtle, and beyond sensory experience.¹⁰ The phrase '*sūkṣmatvāt tad avijñeyam*' emphasises that *Brahman* is beyond the reach of the senses and the intellect. It cannot be seen with the eyes or heard with the ears. In chapter 2, verse 25 of the *Bhagavadgītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes the Self (*Ātman*) as *avyakta* (invisible), *acintya* (inconceivable) and *avikārya* (unchangeable).¹¹ These three terms clearly show that the *Ātman* cannot be perceived through the senses. It is *avyakta* because it does not appear to the eyes or any external organ of perception. It is *acintya* because it is beyond the grasp of the mind and thought; it cannot be imagined or conceived like ordinary objects. It is *avikārya* because it never undergoes any change, whereas perception deals only with changing, material forms. Thus, Kṛṣṇa here establishes that the Self is beyond the scope of sensory perception (*pratyakṣa*). The senses can grasp only the external world or things that have form, colour, or sound. But the *Ātman* has none of these attributes. It is the seer, not the seen. It cannot be an object of perception. True knowledge of the Self, therefore, is not

¹⁰ *bahir antaśh ca bhūtānām acaram caram eva ca sūkṣmatvāt tad avijñeyam dūra-stham cāntike ca tat.*

¹¹ *avyakto 'yam achintyo 'yam avikāryo 'yam uchyate tasmādevam viditvainaṁ nānuśhochitum arhasi.*

empirical but spiritual (*ādhyātmika jñāna*). Hence, perception, as a sense-based process, is inadequate to reveal the truth of ultimate reality.

Let's now move to the next means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), i.e. inference (*anumāna*) and examine whether it is accepted in the *Bhagavadgītā* as a valid way to know the Self (*Ātman*) or *Brahman*. Inference (*Anumāna*), in Indian philosophy, refers to a method of reasoning, such as inferring fire from the perception of smoke. It is accepted as a valid *pramāṇa* in almost all philosophical systems. However, in the view of the *Bhagavadgītā*, inference too cannot reveal the ultimate reality or the Self. Inference operates within the limits of logic and the empirical world; it depends on prior experience and the observation of cause-and-effect relations. But *Brahman*, being beyond time, space and causation, cannot be reached by logical inference. Although inference (*anumāna*) is not the *direct means* of realising the ultimate reality (*Brahman*), it plays a supportive and preparatory role in spiritual understanding. Logical reasoning and philosophical reflection help the seeker to remove false notions about the Self and to develop intellectual clarity about the nature of reality. In this sense, *anumāna* may lead one to the *conceptual knowledge* of the Self, though not to its *direct realisation*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself often uses rational arguments in the *Bhagavadgītā*, for example, in chapter 2, where He reasons about the immortality of the soul and the transience of the body, showing that reason is a helpful tool for spiritual discrimination (*viveka*).

Now let's move to the third means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), namely *Śabda* or verbal testimony. In Indian philosophy, *śabda* means authoritative verbal testimony, i.e. knowledge derived from the words of a trustworthy source, especially from the *Vedas* or divine revelation. Unlike perception (*pratyakṣa*) and inference (*anumāna*), which are limited to the material and logical realms, *śabda* may convey truths that lie beyond sensory experience and rational deduction. As stated in the *Bhagavadgītā*, true knowledge (*jñāna*) of the Supreme Reality (*Brahman*) is revealed through the divine word, the teachings of God Himself. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the embodiment of the Supreme *Brahman*, declares this knowledge through His speech; thus, the *Bhagavadgītā* itself becomes the *śabda pramāṇa* (authoritative verbal testimony) for spiritual truth. In chapter 4, verse 1–2, Kṛṣṇa says that this ancient knowledge of *yoga* was originally revealed by Him to the sun-god Vivasvān and passed down through a chain of sages. The *Bhagavadgītā* argues that spiritual wisdom is received through divine instruction, not by human reason.¹² Similarly, in chapter 15, verse 15, He states, 'By all the Vedas I am to be known'

¹² *imaṁ vivasvate yogaṁ proktavān ahaṁ avyayam vivasvān manave prāha manur ikṣvākave 'bravīt evaṁ paramparā-prāptam imaṁ rājarṣhaya viduḥ sa kāleneha mahatā yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa.*

(*vedaīś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*), confirming that the *Vedas* and divine speech are the true sources of knowledge of the Supreme.¹³ Therefore, *śabda*, the word of God, the scriptures and the enlightened teacher (*guru*) are the means by which one knows the nature of the Self (*Ātman*) and the Supreme (*Param Brahman*).

The *Bhagavadgītā* indeed accepts *Śabda* as the true and authoritative source of spiritual knowledge, but it is not sufficient by itself unless it is assimilated through *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. The seeker first hears (*śravaṇa*), then reflects (*manana*) and finally contemplates (*nididhyāsana*) upon this revealed truth until it becomes direct realisation (*aparokṣa-jñāna*). In the 29th verse of the 2nd chapter, it is said that even after hearing about the Self or *Brahman*, one cannot understand it at all.¹⁴ This verse beautifully shows the limit of ordinary hearing (*śravaṇa*) when it is not supported by inner purity, reflection and faith. The *Gītā* says: '*Śrutvāpy enaṁ veda na caiva kaścit*' — Even on hearing about it, some do not understand it. This means that mere hearing the teachings of the scriptures or the words of the preceptor is not enough to realise the Self. Hearing is only the first step; true realisation dawns only when the seeker becomes established in the Self through reflection (*manana*) and contemplation (*nididhyāsana*).

Now, a question naturally arises: if an aspirant gains knowledge after hearing the words of the scriptures and the *Guru*, why does Kṛṣṇa say that some do not know it even after hearing? The answer is that it depends on the aspirant's inner receptivity. The one who has faith (*śraddhā*) in the scriptures and the preceptor and who strives sincerely gains the knowledge of the Self. But those who lack such faith and inner readiness cannot realise it, even though they may listen to the same teaching. If mere hearing were sufficient, then everyone who listened to the discourses of the incarnations of God or the liberated sages would have attained spiritual realisation. But this has never been the case. In the 3rd verse of the seventh chapter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa further explains why few truly understand the Self or *Brahman*, even after hearing about it.¹⁵ He says among thousands of people, only one strives for spiritual perfection; and among those who have attained such perfection, only a rare one truly knows Him in essence. The verse indirectly explains why mere hearing (*śravaṇa*) or intellectual learning cannot lead to realisation. Most people remain bound by worldly desires and do not seek perfection (*siddhi*). Only the one who

¹³ *sarvasya cāhaṁ hṛidi sanniviṣṭo mattaḥ smṛitir jñānam apohanam ca vedaīś ca sarvair aham eva vedyo vedānta-kṛd veda-vid eva cāham.*

¹⁴ *āścharya-vat paśyati kaḥchid enaṁ āścharya-vad vadati tathaiva chānyaḥ āścharya-vach chainam anyāḥ śhṛiṇoti śrutvāpyenaṁ veda na chaiva kaścit.*

¹⁵ *manuṣyāṇāṁ sahasreṣu kaḥchid yatati siddhaye yatatām api siddhānām kaśchin mām vetti tattvataḥ.*

disciplines the mind and purifies the heart through *karma-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga* gradually becomes capable of perceiving the Divine Truth. The 25th verse of the 13th chapter also states that mere hearing is not enough to know the Supreme Self (*Paramātmā*).¹⁶ It says ‘*śrutvānyebhya upāsate*’, which means that one must not only hear the truth but also engage in worship and spiritual practice (*upāsana* or *sādhana*). This makes it clear that hearing (*śravaṇa*) or *śabda pramāṇa* is not the direct means of knowledge.

Can the other *pramāṇas* provide direct knowledge of *Parama Brahman*? We know that Indian philosophy accepts six kinds of *pramāṇas*. However, other *pramāṇas* such as *Upamāna*, *Arthāpatti*, and *Anupalabdhi* cannot provide direct knowledge of *Parama Brahman* because they ultimately depend on perception, inference, and verbal testimony. So, all the ordinary means of knowledge (*pramāṇas*) do not provide direct knowledge of the Supreme *Brahman*. This naturally raises an important question: Does the *Bhagavadgītā* deny the possibility of any means of knowing the Supreme *Brahman*? If we carefully analyse the teachings of the *Bhagavadgītā*, the answer becomes positive. The *Gītā* repeatedly suggests that the Supreme *Brahman* cannot be grasped by the senses, by reasoning, or even by scripture alone. Rather, the only true and direct means of knowledge of the Supreme *Brahman*, as taught in the *Bhagavadgītā*, is intuition, i.e., the immediate, inner realisation. In the 16th verse of the 2nd chapter, it is said that the unreal (*asat*) has no existence and the real (*sat*) never ceases to exist.¹⁷ The great sages, the seers of Truth (*tattva-darśins*), have realised the final conclusion of both of these; that means they have directly experienced the true nature of both *sat* and *asat*. They know *tattvata* as only pure existence, called ‘*sat*,’ and whatever is apart from existence—*prakṛti* and all actions and objects of *prakṛti*—are called ‘*asat*,’ meaning changeable. That *asat* has no real existence, and *sat* is never absent.

In the 11th verse of the 15th chapter, the *Bhagavadgītā* clearly states that striving yogis can realise the Supreme *Brahman* who dwells within the body.¹⁸ This verse clearly teaches that the Supreme *Brahman* is realised not by external means, but by inner spiritual perception. The word ‘*paśyanti ātmany avasthitam*’ means ‘they see Him established within the Self’. It indicates that this knowledge is direct, intuitive and experiential (*aparokṣa-anubhūti*).

The experience of the truth that exists within oneself (*sat*) is possible only through itself, not through the senses, mind, or intellect (*asat*). The knowledge that arises within oneself by itself

¹⁶ *anye tv evam ajānantaḥ śrutvānyebhya upāsate te 'pi chātitaranty eva mṛityuṃ śruti-parāyaṇāḥ.*

¹⁷ *nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ ubhayorapi drīṣṭo 'nta stvanayoḥ tattva-darśibhiḥ.*

¹⁸ *yatanto yoginaś chainaṃ paśyanty ātmany avasthitam yatanto 'py akṛitātmāno nainaṃ paśyanty ahetasaḥ.*

is independent, but the knowledge that comes through others (mind, intellect, etc.) is dependent. To experience the truth that exists in oneself, one needs no outside help. By the ear one can hear, by the mind one can think, by the intellect one can judge, but through these methods no one can know the Truth. Because the senses, mind, intellect, space, time and objects are all functions of *prakṛti*. How can the Truth be known through functions of *prakṛti*? For example, with the eye one can see the world, but the eye cannot see itself, because the eye is the very means by which seeing happens. Therefore, only when functions of *prakṛti* are given up, when the relation with them is broken, the Truth is attained, and it happens by itself within oneself. The biggest mistake of seekers is that they try to know the Supreme Self in the same way they know the world. But the method for knowing the world and the method for knowing the Supreme Self are different. The world is known through senses, mind and intellect, because knowing it depends on instruments. But the Supreme Self cannot be known through senses, mind, or intellect, because knowing Him does not depend on any instrument. By taking shelter in material conditions, one cannot feel the presence of the Conscious Reality.

The *yogi* who knows the Supreme Self within and knows himself within the Supreme, separates himself from the body, senses, mind and intellect. The 20th verse of the 10th chapter states that God exists within everyone as their true Self.¹⁹ But the person who identifies himself with his body, such a confused and unawakened person, cannot experience the Supreme Self within, even if he tries through the body, senses, mind and intellect. With the word '*Ātmany avasthitam*,' the Lord has said that He is present in the soul of every being (He is all-pervading). To experience this, the seeker must firmly accept a few facts: since the Supreme Self is everywhere (all-pervading), He is here also; since He exists in all times (past, present, future), He exists now also; since He is in everyone, then He is in me also; and if He belongs to all, then He belongs to me also. Seeing in this way, if the Lord is here, there is no need to go elsewhere to attain Him; since He exists now, there is no need to wait for the future; since He is within, one does not need to search outside; and since He is one's own, there is no need to accept anyone else in His place. Because He is one's own, it is natural to feel deep love for Him.

Not only this, in the *Bhagavadgītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa repeatedly emphasises that the truth of the ultimate reality is grasped through intuition. In verses 55–72 of chapter 2, the description of the *sthitaprajña* makes it clear that knowledge arises from inward steadiness and direct insight, not from external *pramāṇas*.²⁰ The famous verse 34 of the 4th chapter advises approaching a

¹⁹ *aham ātmā guḍākeśa sarva-bhūtāśhaya-sthitaḥ aham ādiś cha madhyaṁ cha bhūtānām anta eva cha.*

²⁰ *prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha mano-gatān ātmany-evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ sthita-prajñas tadochyate.*

realised teacher, since the teacher does not give bookish knowledge but helps awaken direct *jñāna* through realisation.²¹ In verses 20–23 of the 6th chapter, meditation is said to culminate in an '*ātma-darśana*' — a direct seeing of the Self — which is explicitly called '*buddhi-grāhyam*,' something grasped by the refined inner intelligence.²² And there are many verses throughout the *Bhagavadgītā* that show that intuition stands as the real means of knowledge. Thus, the *Bhagavadgītā* makes it clear that the direct and immediate means of knowing the Supreme Reality is self-realisation or intuitive, inner knowledge. This knowledge does not arise through the senses, which can grasp only changing objects; nor through inference, which depends on mental constructs; nor even through *śabda* (scriptural testimony), which can guide but cannot give direct realisation. The Supreme *Brahman* is self-luminous and can be known only when the Self reveals itself to itself. Therefore, the highest knowledge in the *Bhagavadgītā* is *aparokṣa-anubhūti*—a direct, inner, intuitive experience beyond all external instruments of knowledge.

²¹ *tad viddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā upadekṣhyanti te jñānam jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ.*

²² *yatroparamate chittam niruddham yoga-sevayā yatra chaivātmanātmānam paśhyann ātmani tuṣhyati.*

References

- Apurbananda, S. (2022). Śrīmadbhagavadgītā. Udvodhan Karyalay.
- Brahmachari, M. (1993). Geeta dhyān. Shri Mahanambrata Cultural & Welfare Trust.
- Madhurananda, S. (2023). Bhagavat Gītā as viewed by Swami Vivekananda. Advaita Ashrama.
- Pradhan, K. (Ed.). (2017). Gītā (Samanvayi bhasya) by Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal. Pragtishil Prakasak.
- Radhakrishnan, S. (1993). The Bhagavad Gītā. HarperCollins Publishers.
- Ramsukhdas, S. (2024). Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Sādhaka Sañjīvanī (Bangla ed.). Gita Press.
- Saradananda, S. (2019). Gītātātva. Udvodhan Karyalay.
- Sharma, I. C. (1965). Ethical philosophies of India. George Allen & Unwin.
- Sri Aurobindo. (2018). Essays on the Gītā. Sri Aurobindo Ashram.
- Tilak, B. G. (1935). Bhagavad Gītā Rahasya (B. S. Sukthankar, Trans., Vols. 1–2). Lokamanya Tilak Mandir.