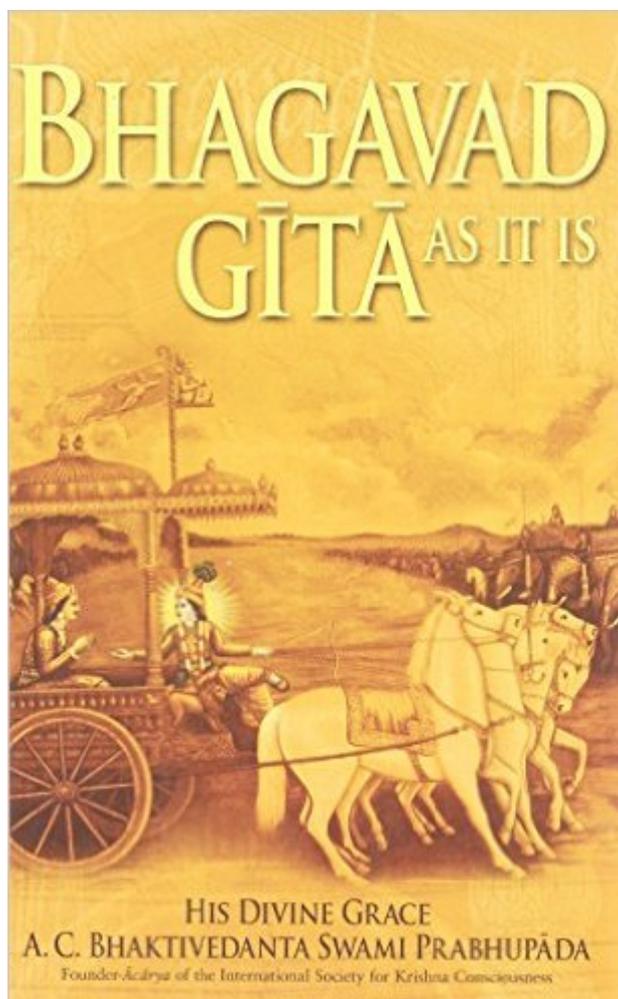


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Bhagavad-Gita As It Is



Synopsis

The Bhagavad-gita is the main source-book on yoga and a concise summary of India's Vedic wisdom. Yet remarkably, the setting for this classic of spiritual literature is an ancient Indian battlefield. At the last moment, the great warrior Arjuna begins to wonder about the real meaning of his life. In the Bhagavadgita, Lord Krsna brings His disciple from perplexity to spiritual enlightenment. Bhagavad-gita As It Is is the largest-selling, most widely used edition of the Gita in the world.

Book Information

Hardcover: 904 pages

Publisher: Bhaktivedanta Book Trust; Revised edition (March 1, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0892131233

ISBN-13: 978-0892131235

Product Dimensions: 2 x 5.8 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (263 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #50,899 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #11 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > Hinduism > Sacred Writings > Bhagavad Gita](#) #14 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Indian](#) #61 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > New Age & Spirituality > Reincarnation](#)

Customer Reviews

I was first given a copy of this most magnificent book in December 1972 on a street corner in downtown Miami by a devotee of the Hare Krishna society. He asked me for a donation and I was unable to give him anything at the time. He said he'd give me the book IF I would promise to read it "cover to cover". I promised. I turned the last page and kept my promise by early 1973. I was just 18 at the time and this remarkable book had made an impression. I knew that it was all true. The path of 'Bhakti' or Devotion was a path of renunciation. I said to myself (and to Krishna), I'm not ready to give up the 'world' just yet...come back for me later...and an inner voice said, "OK." 32 years went by in a flash...and I had read the Gita at intervals in that time. I got married, had a career, had kids, got divorced, the kids grew up and all left, etc, etc. Basically, I had a life in the material world...although I always considered myself to be spiritual and was always studying one spiritual path or another. Then in 2005...October 24th to be exact, a hurricane by the name of Wilma blew through Miami and in the

ensuing days, while cleaning up my property of broken branches and fallen trees, I would take a break from the yard work by early afternoon (I still live in Miami afterall!). During one of those breaks, I felt ready for something...empty, but in a good and receptive way. I looked around in my somewhat extensive library and the Bhagavad-gita As It IS caught my gaze. I pulled it from the shelf and decided to read it through once again. This time after finishing the 18 chapters and 700 verses, I was captivated! My realization was that obviously, whatever I put my attention on...that's where I will go. Simple enough...and very profound at the same time. I was hungry for more. The book had made a significant impression on my more mature mind this time! I reached for a translation of the Srimad Bhagavatam by the same translator, A. C. Bhaktivedanda Swami Prabhupada and I started reading that. I found I couldn't put it down...and there were constant references back to the Gita...over and over again. A few more months went by and I was still reading the Bhagavatam (it's very long - 18,000 verses and commentary) and I found myself going to the local Hare Krishna Temple in the Coconut Grove area of Miami. Anyway, to make a long story longer :-) I met a Guru at the Temple in the tradition of the translator (ISKCON) and got initiated in November 2008 and received my brahminical initiation in September 2009 as Garga Muni das. So, the short version is simply that this book has changed my life...and all for the better in more ways than I can describe. Read this book! And then read it again with a devotee of Sri Krishna. It will change your life as well. An interesting question that was asked of me when I first started attending the Temple was, "You know that it says in the Bible that it's very important to love God with all your mind, heart and soul. Has anyone ever taught you HOW to do that?" I had to answer that no one had ever taught me how to love God...although I knew it was very important. This book will start to teach you about that very thing...if you will read it with an open mind and an open heart. What I found is priceless. Hare Krishna!

This translation of the Gita is a devotional work, true to the famous Ramanuja and Chaitanya tradition. Many in the West are not familiar with the dualist tradition, that is, the dual nature of God and soul within Hindu thought, which is, nevertheless, a mainstream perspective. The book's commentary represents that philosophy. This edition is the Bible of the Hare Krishnas. Now, that group numbers only in the tens, possibly hundreds, of thousands, however this work is in agreement with Northeastern India's major religious perspective, which has tens of millions of adherents. Moreover, Bhaktivedanta's writing here is in line with Ramanuja's, who's doctrine is broadly followed by hundreds of millions, mostly in India, but also worldwide. As such, the book is an important read for anyone wishing to understand traditional

Hinduism and its Vaishnava (principal) component.

Several years back, this was one of the first few translations of the Bhagavad Gita that I read. Compared to other books I found the language of translation very simple to comprehend and I also loved the layout of the book. This book was certainly inspiring as any translation of Gita would be. However a word of caution! People following the path of devotion or bhakti would find this book helpful. The Author believes that Krishna is supreme god-head and in Kali yuga or dark age, worshipping Krishna's form is the best and only path. However one is repeatedly distracted by the author's negative comments and attacks on those who meditate on the formless Brahman. Not stopping with that the author would sometimes go to the extent of mis-translating the verses of the Gita if Krishna himself said anything positive about the absolute and formless consciousness i.e. Brahman. For example for the verse 24, in chapter 4 The Sanskrit verse is: brahmarpanam brahma havirbrahmagnau brahmana hutambrahmaiva tena gantavyambrahma-karma-samadhina. The acceptable translation in most books is "Brahman is the oblation, Brahman is the clarified butter, The oblation is poured by Brahman into the fire of Brahman. Brahman shall be realized by the one who considers everything as an act of Brahman." (Meaning the actor, action, acted and act are all Brahman, one who realizes this realizes Brahman) Whereas Prabhupada's Translation is "A person who is fully absorbed in Krishna consciousness is sure to attain the spiritual kingdom because of his full contribution to spiritual activities, in which the consummation is absolute and that which is offered is of the same spiritual nature." However the word-by-word translation by Srila Prabhupada is closer to truth "brahma--spiritual in nature; arpanam--contribution; brahma--the Supreme; havih--butter; brahma--spiritual; agnau--in the fire of consummation; brahmana--by the spirit soul; hutam--offered; brahma--spiritual kingdom; eva--certainly; tena--by him; gantavyam--to be reached; brahma--spiritual; karma--activities; samadhina--by complete absorption." Notwithstanding all of these shortcomings, a beginner might still benefit from reading of "Bhagavad-Gita as it is", as I myself did considering the very reasonable price, word-by-word meaning and simple language. So this is "cautiously recommended" for beginners. Edit: Please note, that not all editions of 'Bhagavad-gita as it is' have word by word English translations and Sanskrit transliteration. I understand the hard cover edition does have the word-by-word translation, but some paperback editions don't.

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