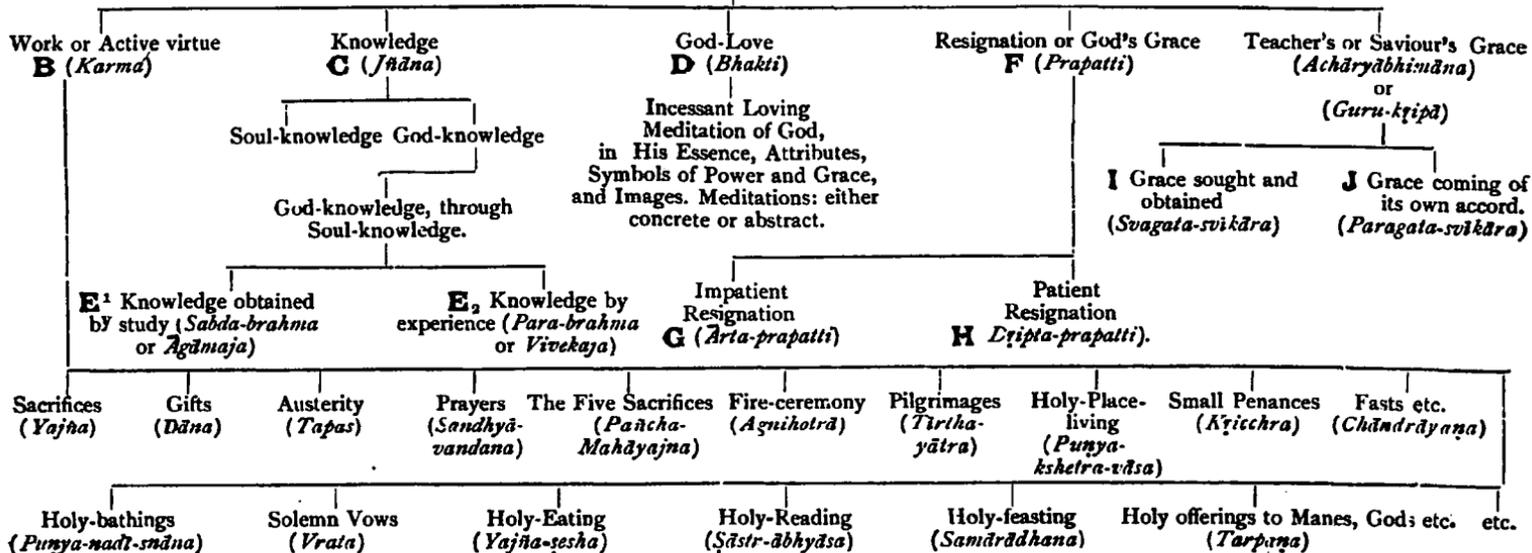


BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ: LECTURE XVIII.

Soteriology or the several Means of Salvation, referred to by the Term *Dharma* in XVIII-66, exhibited in a Tabular Form. The means according to this Table are so comprehensive in their character that every religion finds its place in one or more of them.

THE SEVERAL MEANS OF SALVATION

A (*Upāya* or *Dharma*)



EXPLANATIONS.

A. Spiritual knowledge consists of Five Elements:—(1) Soul-nature (*sva-svarūpa*); (2) God-nature (*para-svarūpa*); (3) End sought (*purushārtha-svarūpa*); (4) Means (*upāya-svarūpa*); (5) Obstacles (*virodhi-svarūpa*). Of these the table (overleaf) concerns itself with (4) *Upāya*. For information, on (1), (2), (3), & (5), read Śri Yogi Pārthasārathi Aiyangār's 'Five Topics' *Hinduism*.

B. Is ancillary or complementary to *Jñāna* (**C**).

C. Includes Yoga or Psychic Developments of man, or mental spiritual Discipline consisting of the seven-fold elements of *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇā*, and *Dhyāna* culminating in *Samadhi* (vide; *Pātanjala-Yoga-Sūtra*). (**B**) and (**C**) are ancillary to **D**.

D. About concrete (*sāmbhava*) and abstract (*nirālambana*) Ways of God-meditation, vide, *Vishnu-Purāna*, VI (*amṣa*), 5, 6 & 7 (*adhyāyas*); and *Sri Bhāgavata* XI. (*skandha*), 14 (*adhyāya*). To a *bhakta*, all sins are remitted except that which has begun to work, and which may require a number of incarnations before it is exhausted (Vide **G** and **H**.)

E₁, **E₂**. About knowledge by faith, and knowledge by actual realization or verification, read *Vishnu Purāna* VI-5-61 & 65. (**E₁**) is stepping-stone to (**E₂**). **E₁** is intellectual assent, **E₂** is actual perception, of Spiritual Truth,

F. This is unconditionally surrendering oneself into the hands of God. or complete resignation in the spirit of the following verses:—

“Thy way, not mine O lord,
However dark it be !
Lead me by Thine own hand,
Choose out the path for me.

The Kingdom that I seek
Is thine ; so let the way
That leads to it be Thine,
Else I must surely stray.

Smooth let it be or rough,
It will be still the best :
Winding or stright, it leads
Right onward to thy rest.

Take Thou my cup, and it
With joy or sorrow fill,
As best to Thee may seem ;
Choose Thou my good and ill.

I dare not choose my lot ;
I would not if I might :
Choose thou for me, my God
So shall I walk aright.

Not mine, not mine the choice,
In things or great or small ;
Be Thou my Guide, my Strength
My Wisdom and my All.”

G. In this case, the *ārta-prapanna* finds his present life so intolerable that he seeks for immediate salvation by death. And therefore in his case, all the two kinds of karma in force [*ahhyupagata-prārabdha*] and karma in waiting [*Abhyupagata-prārabdha*] are at once remitted, and the soul accepted for Eternal Blessedness.

H. In this case, the *dripta-prapanna* finds his present life bearable, and awaits for salvation until after death comes in the natural course of events ; and the present incarnation is the last to this soul as contradistinguished from the *bhakta* (vide, **D**). Christianity teaches this case. Also Mahomedanism.

I. This is the case of souls seeking out a Saviour, to mediate between them and God.

J. This is the case of souls being sought out by God-sent Messengers or Saviours like *Lakṣmī* (the Universal Mother and Mediatrix), *Ālvārs* and *Āchāryas* like *Sri Rāmānuja*, *Christ*, *Mahomet* etc.

I & **J** are hinted in *Gītā* IV-34 : “*Tad-viddhi*” &c.

B to **H** are Salvation-seekers directly with God. And it is left to God to save them or dispose of them otherwise as He may will. But **I** and **J** are, by reason of their Salvation-seeking indirectly, or through God-sent Saviours, necessarily saved, and God can never dispose of them otherwise, than save, by keeping them in bondage etc. For God's will to save through His own will-sent Commissioners, is non-alterable, when such Commissioners execute their mission by bringing to souls God's Feet.