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Season 2, Episode #16
Gita Comes Alive Learning Community
hosted by VASA Publishing
Jeffrey Armstrong | Kavindra Rishi

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*Scribe-RJ for JA: transcribing Jeffrey's words – errors may occur.

December 29, 2021

Chapter 16: The Devas & Asuras: The Enlightened and the Endarkened Beings

Special Guest: Vibhuti Jha – New York

Nicole Ganea: Vancouver, Canada!
Karena: Hi from Eugene Oregon
Keith Villanueva: Queens, NY USA
JITU JHAVERI: Hello from Irvine, CA
Janine Turnbull: So glad to be here from Orillia Ontario
Allan & Diane Williamsport, PA
Roshni Sachar, PhD: I live in San Francisco, am originally from India.
Laura Barry: Sebastopol, ca
Adarsh Deepak: Hi from Virginia—Adarsh Deepak & Ravi Deepak
Sarala: Sarala Vancouver

andrea aw: Hi from Philadelphia PA. USA. Aham prema
Parker - Vancouver, Canada
Sandra from Victoria BC
Aarthi - California
Aparna - Berkeley!
Odette Slater: Hi from Vancouver!!
Reivin Johnson: Dallas
Anthony Carlisi: Hi from Bali
Kate Young: Kate Richmond BC, South of Vancouver BC

This class is about the interaction of dark and light. Teachers of the Vedas honor those Gurus that came before us. Guru Pranams

19:09:24 **JA chants: guru mantra**

Om guru brahma guru Vishnu
guru devo Maheshvaraha
guru sakshat para brahma
tasmai shri guruveh namaha

The guru reveals Brahma, the creator
The guru reveals Vishnu, the preserver

The guru reveals Shiva, the destroyer
The guru reveals the supreme Brahman
I offer my respects to such a divine guru.

- 19:10:40 [Scribe RJ for Jeffrey](#): We've learned a great deal so far. The next two chapters give us some deeper insight as to how this is embodied in the world around us. We were asked to apply this to our own existential dilemma. The question that everyone should ask is how many lifetimes do I have to do this? If the answer is only 1, you should go away depressed. Having a one lifetime view can make you angry because there is no justice. Or maybe you will do whatever someone says. A dharma culture is never to be confused with the 1 lifetime Abrahamic religions. It's the most fundamental question. Our individuality is here to learn. Every single one of us came here with our own volition.
- 19:14:02 [Scribe RJ for Jeffrey](#): Once here, it seems as though we have forgotten everything. When you are in prakriti it is a dark energy, and you are from the light realm called Brahman. The essential nature of prakriti is darkness. Because every single one of us began our journey plunged into prakriti which is called "the gu." Before we came here there was no such thing as time. Here in prakriti there are sequential chains of cause and effect. Here is everything is made of parts. In Brahman it is achintya. Here is everything is run by time. Light has to leak into prakriti from Brahman.
- 19:19:30 [Scribe RJ for Jeffrey](#): There is no committee here that will leave with you with your "gu" body. You will be in the hands of invisible beings. We have been learning about the antakarana and the karana. There is the causal Vishnu who is reclining at the very edge of prakriti. The glance across prakriti created Shiva Shambu. We were on that ship. We are Brahman in nature, and also individual. We are a distinct individual because it is not the illusion. We are covered by a dark substance that obstructs light. All of us are made of prakriti. There is no one who is a different color because everything is all prakriti. Do not call your least favorite the asura. Do not call anyone the most asura. Animals are just entities covered with a unique body, and each being is put together in interesting ways. In the final stages, we are not supposed to look down on anyone. Do not make this a vertical hierarchy. This chapter is a discussion of our journey through prakriti. There are 8,400,000 distinct classrooms that the atma will occupy.
- 19:21:08 VASA: ASURA should not be translated as DEMON!!
- 19:21:28 VASA: DEMON is a Christian term
- 19:23:57 [Scribe for JA - RJ](#): This is the contextual basis of seeing people accurately. Functionally they are the body that they appeared in. But you would not call the owner of a Jeep Mr. Jeep or Mrs. Caddy. Asura does not mean the conventional English word demon. Deva, asura, and human are a symptom of the costume that a person is wearing. In all of the devas are jiva-atmas. Shiva brings us in. Shambu is a

lingas of light that extends into prakriti. Prakriti is Durga. This worldview is the basis of the Vedic knowledge. The knowledge will come out twisted because of language. The reason Bhagavan begins by mentioning that he and Arjuna have a friendly relationship, he means that until you are friendly and willing, this knowledge is never forced on you.

- 19:25:55 From Sandi - VASA: Eternal is "an age" - the atma is immortal - it can never die - it only changes form.
- 19:26:32 [Scribe RJ for Jeffrey](#): Bhagavan is going to tell us the qualities of Devas and Asuras. The word Deva is of the light. The dv root is "of the light." Our atma is a lamp shining out the light which we call consciousness. Chit is emanating from us the atma. We are sat, immortal. Nothing can cause us to die. It can't happen. We are Amara, deathless. This entire exercise to learn the diagnostic symptoms of those being overcome by prakriti and those are called asura. Asura means that their lights have gotten punched out temporarily. They have a temporary bad case of the asura.
- 19:27:54 VASA: GOOD = English word with 2 "o's"
VASA: colloquial use does not change the original meaning of a word
- 19:29:34 [Scribe for JA - RJ](#): An asura has forgotten that they are sat, immortal, chit conscious, ananda, and blissful. vigraha, forms of matter. We are not the forms of matter. We are the atma. Do not use the words good and bad. Good is the English word God with two 'o's.' the English word Gutam comes from the Sanskrit word hutam. When an offering in the fire is made to the Devas to tell them I am going to cooperate in nature, that is called hutam. The smoke coming from a pagan sacrifice is the word God. Words don't change their meanings because someone says so. The word has a meaning. We are the jiva-atmas who crossed over into prakriti. Bhagavan spoke the Gita, not God.
- 19:30:11 VASA: SUBJECTIVE:
19:31:22 VASA: Good or bad = Subjective words -- based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions. They don't have a universal meaning
- 19:31:40 [Scribe for JA - RJ](#): Bad is an old English word from badling which means born with both genitals. Anyone unable to tell their gender was called a badling. That is the only meaning. Either it is used for I like it, or I don't like it. You cannot use good and bad in a conversation like this in Chapter 16. This is not about two teams playing against each other. This is about all of us experiencing every aspect of prakriti while we are here. We must do this before we leave. As a human we come up through the darkness and shed the darkness to become restored through yoga. Just think endarkened or enlightened.
- 19:33:37 **572. v1 1**
[Scribe for JA - RJ](#): abhaya-live free from fear. 2. sattva samshuddhi: sattvic 3. jnana yoga vyavasthiti: discernment of jnana yoga. 4. dana: use material resources correctly 5. dama: control over bodily senses 6. yajna: perform ritual actions that keep them in harmony with laws of nature 7. svadhyaya: constantly discern the difference between

their atma and its material coverings 8. tapas: perform correct yogic practices which restore them to their true nature 9. arjava: live in right relationship with everyone and everything around them

19:35:48

573 v. 2

Scribe for JA - RJ:

10. ahimsa: least harm while remaining true to responsibilities
11. satya: speak truth
12. akrodha: overcome anger
13. tyaga: not addicted to matter
14. shanti: balanced
15. apaishuna: do not gossip
16. daya bhuteshu: kind and compassion
17. aloluptva: not controlled by hungers or desires
18. mardava express gentleness and kindness
19. hri: they are modest, shy
20. achapala: they are loyal not fickle

19:37:00

574. v3.

Scribe for JA - RJ: everyone is changing between deva and asura all day long. This is Vedic science. This is jnana, the analytical study of the characteristics that everyone who comes here will pass through when they come here.

19:37:38

Sandi: The numbering technique used is unique to this GITA. In this case, there were 26 qualities. Jeffrey unpacked each word because there was not always one word for word explanation -- no single word synonym. Use this for your studies.

19:38:34

Scribe for JA - RJ: When these Sanskrit words become your vocabulary, you learn new words that do not exist in English. Try not to use a vague English word to replace or define a much more meaningful term.

19:41:17

Scribe for JA - RJ:

575 v.4 Asuras:

1. dambha: fraudulent
2. darpa: arrogant, self-serving
3. abhimana: conceited
4. krodha: angry
5. parushya: vile, harsh
6. ajnana: lack or are opposed to the laws of nature.

576 v.5

The devic temperament leads to vimoksha, freedom from bondage to the laws of matter, while the asuric temperament leads to nibandha, bondage within the laws of matter. But Arjuna, you were born with the devic qualities. These are indeed temperaments. We can change them more than a million times. We are in charge of certain things. If you extend your fingers, your hands to the edge of what you are in charge of. This is the space 5 foot around you in a bubble. You are a volitional being exercising some control over this area.

- 19:43:55 **577**
6. There are two kinds of beings on Bhumi: one has the deva nature and the other has the asura nature. Here more about asuras.
- 578**
7 Pravritti and nivritti: do not understand what inappropriate and appropriate actions e
8 na shaucha: inherently unclean
9. na achara: cannot act in exemplary manner
10 na satya: they cannot tell the truth.
- 579 v.8**
asatya: against the truth apratishta: only act selfishly.
13. they say there is no higher being or beings controlling the universe.
14. the universe is not cause and effect
15. the assert that it is held together by the force of sexual desire.
- 19:47:50 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** Abrahamic religions have been torturing people in the name of good and bad. They have tried to teach this by force and violence by torture. We should not become a modern-day version of this. We are supposed to see the consequence to uncover oneself at any given time. We think this about ourselves first.
580 v. 9 16. nashtatma: beings whose atma is lost 17. alpabuddhi: beings without the discernment of buddhi 18. ugrakarma: actions are cruel and ugly 581 v.10. kama ashritya dushpura: attached to insatiable and degrading desires 20. dambha: fraudulent and full of hypocrisy 21. mana: arrogance and pride 22. mada: addicted to intoxicants 23. moha: spreading confusion 24. grihit asat graha: attached to ideas which aren't true 25 ashuchi vrata: take vows to accomplish actions that are unclean and degrading to all.
- 19:51:18 582. v.11 26
Scribe for JA - RJ: chinta aparimeya: perpetually filled with endless fears and anxieties
27. pralayanta upashrita: cling to matter and material thoughts to moment of death
28 kama upabhoga parama: material desires only way of life
29. etavaditi nishchita: convinced there is nothing more than this.
582. v. 12: ashapasha shataih: bound by vain hopes and futile wishes
584 v. 13 Today I have obtained the objects that I desired...
585 v.14. Aham ishvara, Aham bhogi, Aham siddhi.
586 v.15 I am wealthy. No one is my equal. Then I will always be happy. Asuras are deluded and bewildered and lost in the darkest ignorance.
587 v.16 Those who are asuric are finally led astray by a myriad of vain and confused imaginings. They descend deeper into addiction, pain, and darkness.
- 19:51:43 **Q&A or comments**
- 19:54:21 **From Kate:** Could Jeffrey Ji elaborate more on verse 7 #8 na shaucha: does this just relate to hygiene and tidy physical environments or is this meaning bigger than this?
- 19:55:02 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** The two poles in their most extreme form. Then what should happen next is that we should see ourselves being described as we flicker back and

forth between two possibilities. One is that we give associating up with matter and reject it. The other is that we go all in. And take and take. What's interesting is that neither is permanent at the beginning. In fact, one at a time, we choose these paths. Patanjali say describing things yogas chit vritti nirodha. 2nd verse in the 1st pada. Describing what yoga is doing to do is remove vrittis. These are twisted departments of our being. Everything here is orbiting. There is no other obvious goal. To take this and apply it to people who are not ready to have this conversation, is very difficult. These questions haven't awakened in people yet. Because this knowledge requires great sensitivity to apply to the removal of the twistedness. The procedures for doing this is not that you just decide to do this. You do practices and departments of your own being.

- 19:56:50 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** Twisted Sister. It's very important to apply what you are hearing. It's a rude awakening to be a person who is the atma. With a degree of intensity. People are in the gunas: sattva, rajas, and tamas. This is the asuras completely in tamas. So, we can see the symptoms of tamas taking over a constitution. So, each of us can see where we are twisted
- 19:59:22 **Sandi – VASA:** Introduces Vibhuti Jha Host of Jaipur Dialogues
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZjxPbi3AeB6YGKcFQ2TroQ>
- 20:01:27 **Vibhuti Jha:** I really enjoyed the study and commentary on CH. 16. I am apart of Jaipur Dialogue where we build narratives that have been wrongly stated. There are certain Sanskrit words with no synonym. I came to the US in 1991 and headed the American Express bank to drum up US business relationships. In 1991, India had no story to tell. All of these questions towards hundreds of CEOs to make India a destination was a huge challenge, but fun. Whenever I have a problem, I read 2 shlokas a day. I wanted to say this was a real delight to be here. If you want to know what democratic socialism is then speak with me. If you talk about equality and equity, and you don't understand the essential differences then it will not work.
- 20:04:15 **Allan:** In the West we get stuck in the qualities, and I was thinking about the gunas. We don't understand the gunas like it is described in the Gita. I was in India, and they were celebrating an asuric king to celebrate. I thought that he was bad. These lists are important. We want to judge in the West. I think reading the Gita is so helpful for the Westerners to open their minds.
- 20:05:19 **From Vibhuti Jha, Long Island, NY:** delight to meet all of you. i say good night with gratitude.
- 20:07:10 **From Sandi - VASA:** So honored you took the time Vibhuti ji
- 20:09:18 **From Manjunath NV:** Bali Chakravarthy is the asura king. He was the Grandson of Prahlada. Bali is the reason for the 5th avatar of Vishnu, the Vamana avatar. Incredible tale! One of the greatest and the noblest of the asura kings.
- 20:09:22 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** The gradient of our psychological growth and holding this perspective. Hold this bigger view of the journey that we are all on. Mahatma Gandhi popularized the term with a political meaning. The word mahatma means that you

hold a wider world view. This magnitude of the experiential process is connected to all of the psychological limitations put on people. Everyone is so upset because they think they have only one lifetime. They have been traumatized and damaged. What we are finding out in the pandemic. What it really is that we have no concept of health by lifestyle. No one says what medicine you get. It could be from the foods that you are eating. Hospital food is the worse in the world. If we cared about long term. The yoga culture is trying to reawaken all around the world where it doesn't exist. All of the places subject to the modern institutions. Lifestyle is the real message of the asura/deva contrast. This is how devas were misunderstood purposefully. They didn't want a populated universe an

20:14:20 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** The Mahabharata is the most complex psychologically literature in the world. There are astrological alignments in the Mahabharata. All of the characters in it are a catalogue of personality archetypes. These are itihasa. History is twisted. Itihasa is a catalog of the lokas around us and the Devas and Devis work in those lokas. Everything we are aspiring to be is a particular mask or process. We already chose the costume. How much of that can be altered. How much of your own attention can you apply to fix it. I am going to learn to be me in ways I was never taught.

20:19:45 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** There is nothing that happens here that can't be undone. When you live like a mahatma all of the balancing parts about devas and asuras. How do we speak out against things that are undermining the planet's harmony. Certain asuras must be pointed out to leading us to darkness. If we keep using a political system, we are changing anything. Political slogans will not work. Ask of yourself, how many pockets of asuras do I have left. This chapter sounds like everything that advertisement is doing as the mind control to consume toxins and poisons for the wealth of someone else. How do we conduct this conversation in such a way that we don't appear converting or forcing people. A deva is so centered in sattva guna. They don't let themselves go from the balance point. They do still do radical actions. Their dosha and svadharma. What are they best used for. This principle of seeing the big picture is the deciding element of whether we will have a Renaissance or not. This chapter is challenging us. What is the vritti is

20:19:55 **588 v. 17**

20:22:34 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** atma sambhavita: self-serving material causes 38. stabdha: stubborn 39. dhana mana mada anvita: arrogance that comes with wealth 40. yajante nama yajna: they pretend to perform vedic rituals under the pretext of helping others 41 dambhena avidhi purvaka: hypocrites who violate vedic dharma while acting only for their own selfish interests 589 v.18 -590 v.'9. There is no end to this. We decide that we are done. The more that you have decided that you are done.

20:28:41 **591 v.20**

Scribe for JA - RJ: Because they enter the darkened wombs of asuric beings, their delusion continues janmani janmani from birth to birth, leading them to the darkest destinations in existence. 592 v. 21 those dark destinations called Naraka 593 v.222 If a human being avoids these three gates to tamas they are gradually elevated by their

personal actions until they finally ascend to Brahman. The term love comes from lobha which means greed. We are trying to express a sentiment. 593 v.22. If a human being avoids these three gates to tamas, they are elevated by their personal actions until they finally ascend to Brahman, the param gati. This shows how determined we are to get out of here. That decision will span 10-100 lifetimes of leaving. We have to control our behavior from here on out. We must be balanced. This is the lifestyle of the yogi. 594 v. 23 But those who ignore the wisdom and conclusions of the vedic teachings and only follow the impulses of their own material hungers, and desires cannot achieve siddhi perfection

- 20:29:40 **Sandi:** People wrote this 7,500 years ago. It is the ultimate self-help chapter.
- 20:30:22 **Roshni:** I was wondering that we have to dedicate some time to remember that we are the atma everyday. Are the Vedic teachings dualistic or non dualistic?
- 20:31:44 **VASA:** Beyond Oneness
20:31:44 **VASA:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Pf4tgmqHsg>
- 20:34:26 **From Sandi - VASA:** The atma is a facet of the Brahman reality and is immortal, conscious, and joyful by nature. All atmas began their journey of samsara, repeated births and deaths, long ago by expressing the desire to experience the matter of Prakriti in millions of unique bodies, as all the species of life. Though small in quantity, the atma is the same in quality as Paramatma, the Supreme Being who pervades and sustains all matter. Like a student in a grand universe-ity, when the atma is ready, they become a yogi and realize “aham brahmasmi, “I am the invisible, indivisible, individual.” They are then eligible to return to Brahman and resume their long-forgotten relationship with Bhagavan.
- 20:34:58 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** English makes this problematic. Are we having a duel over whether we are dual or nondual? If we are having a duel, then it is nondual. Both are true. Brahman is the reality from which prakriti emanates and on which it rests. We are Brahman by nature visiting prakriti. If in our haste to go back. We wave our hands and say it's all one. I am it and I am done. Then that is a reaction to being disappointed by prakriti. Who ever said that Brahman is dualistic? The Gita says that each atma must meditate upon their own self. We can't be one with Brahman because numbers exist as a limitation within prakriti. We are neither dual etc. or dualistic if we are not individuals then the whole thing is a farce. If I say that the being that you have been calling you is just a cover over the true you. Then I have said aham brahmasmi. Bhagavan is not covered in Matter.
- 20:38:06 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** Major religions threaten us and say that we are going to hell. In the Veda, if everything is all one, that will spoil your day. Shankara Acharya. Sees an elderly disciple arguing over grammatical rules says Bhaja Govinda Bhaja Govinda....stop wrangling over useless points and tell people what is important. Aham Brahmasmi. Both are right and both are saying it the wrong way. Someone is trying to make someone wrong.

- 20:40:14 **Malini:** If someone is stuck in the asuric realm. How does one break being stuck in the pattern. Ravana is a famous asura who became who he was from tapasya. How does one break that cycle?
- 20:50:31 **Kavindra:** You start off by not saying good or bad. Get into the habit of not using these words. People do not have a clear idea of how to bring the Sanskrit into English to make the words land. If you follow the pattern of the Gita, it's the issue to become the atma again. Going into lower families is karma. It's not reward and punishment, it's cause and effect. There is one more clue to this that is interesting. All things are not equal, but all things have a cause and effect. Whatever you do here has that. That is also true in the realm of Brahman. People do things there but there is no sequential event that has to happen in any order. There is beauty. The beauty that everyone is chasing here. The one that makes them crazy. Then getting the karmas for getting beauty degraded them. What if the solution is going to beauty because it is a limited commodity. What if beauty here is only skin deep. How long will it take us to learn that. It is up to us and Bhagavan. Jaya and Vijaya were residents of Brahman and t
- 20:53:02 **Manjunath:** Indra goes to Vishnu and asks him to help him. Then Vishnu comes as Vamana. He asks for only 3 feet of land, so he can do his tapasya. He is good man. As soon as he promises that, he grows huge and covers the entire planet. Covers the entire cosmos. And then he jokes you own nothing anymore. Prahlada is another good story.
- 20:55:30 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** Being born as an asura was not a limitation, through Bhagavan they found a light.
- 21:00:00 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** Should we lose hope because all of this seems complicated. Is there a proactiveness coming from Bhagavan? These are called lilas. If we don't think we deserve to do it. Is there a quick way out of stuckness. The most problematic asuras have been completely given the worse asuric qualities that they could have. Ravana was one of the gatekeepers. Who in order to show us tamas became Ravana so Bhagavan could come as Rama and end the story. Ravana has actually gotten Moksha. We are supposed to avoid these behaviors. Whatever guna that we get ourselves in, Bhagavan is stronger.
- 21:00:26 **From Parker Cook:** <https://gitacomesalive.com/pages/membership>
- 21:03:41 **VASA-Sandi:** We are coming up with different themes for Season 3. Jan. 1st we are launching *Gita on the Go* – it can be purchased at www.GitaComesAlive.com
- 21:04:51 **Aparna:** I have heard the story that all of the Pandavas except for Yudhisthira, they all go to Naraka. But Bhagavan tells Arjuna that he has devic qualities. It's kind of unfair because Arjuna goes to Naraka.
- 21:05:39 **Reivin Johnson:** Gita on the Go is available for members inside the membership site
- 21:10:40 **Adarsh Deepak:** 🙏

- 21:20:35 **Kavindra:** If you get overwhelmed by this. Then you should figure out how to have the just right knowledge to integrate this into your life. The beauty is what you are searching for. You will bring chunks of beauty home. We've all had the experience of nature being twisted. The reason that lila is used to help us during these stories, then if we are not careful, we get trapped in the details. Really if you were given a choice. If you get trapped in the closet in the dark that is nirvana. The other is a bright bulb where you experience light. The third is a park where no one gets hurt. There is no harm etc. This world is either the biggest disappointment. Then Bhagavan comes and plays in the whole thing. This gives us the ability to establish a relationship with Bhagavan. We are recovering 'prakriti-holics'. We are getting over having beauty taken away and given back to us. All of this is temporary. Bhagavan and his name are the same. The one thing we can have is a constant relationship with Bhagavan. The way that
- 21:21:43 **Scribe for JA - RJ:** Ultimately in this moment we can choose to always remember and never forget. To do whatever helps us remember, and not do whatever makes us forget. Our sweet loving intimacy with Bhagavan.
- 21:23:59 **Scribe for JA - RJ:**
HOMEWORK: Read the whole Gita out loud to yourself. Read these not all at once. It takes about 4 hours. I have been doing this for years, and I have not memorized it.
- 20:09:32 **Adarsh Deepak:** Thanks thanks, appreciate the excellent discussions- hope you all enjoy a Happy New Year!
- 20:11:03 **Vibhuti Jha,** Long Island, NY: Nilesh Oak will be on my show on Sunday.
- 20:11:15 **Beverly Akhurst:** 🙏
- 21:18:17 **Laurel Airica:** So beautiful, Jeffrey and Sandi. Thank You so much! Lots of Love
- 21:18:23 **Roshni Sachar,** PhD: Many thanks for the brilliant session! 🙏
- 21:23:56 **Karena:** Thank you so much. Namaste. 🙏
- 21:20:37 **Lorea Chilton:** Thank you so very much for such an interesting revealing articulate teaching. It was amazing. I wish for you and all many blessings today. Thank you!
- 21:24:56 **Manjunath NV:** Namaste!
- 21:25:05 **Lorea Chilton:** Namaste!