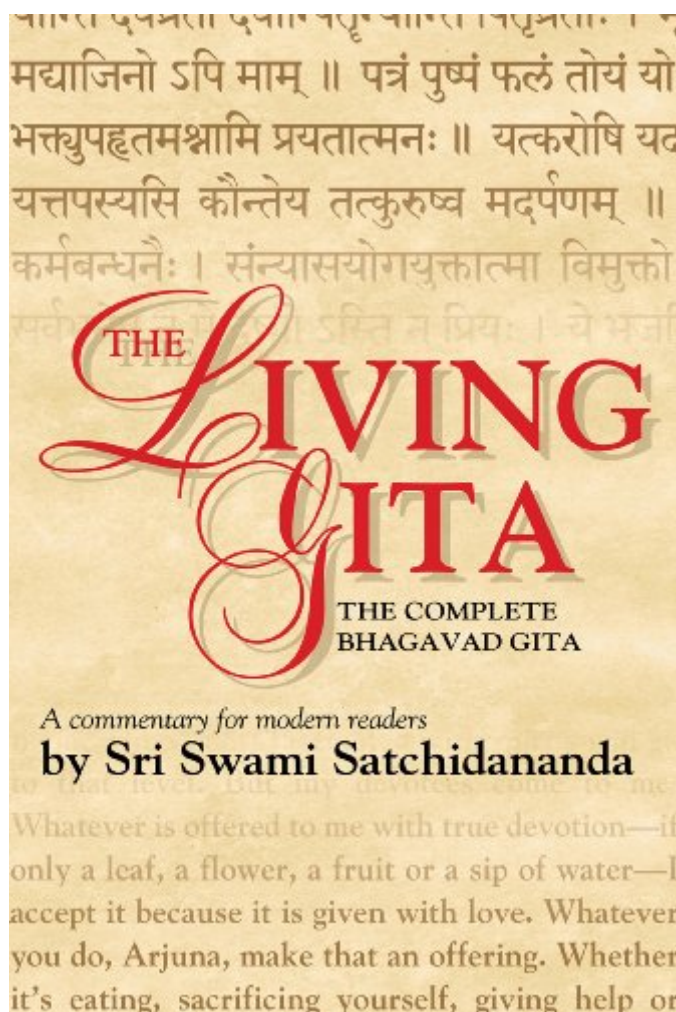


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The Living Gita: The Complete Bhagavad Gita: A Commentary For Modern Readers



Synopsis

The Bhagavad Gita tells the story of how Arjuna, the great warrior, is seated in his chariot about to engage in battle, when he sees his own kinsmen and his revered teacher arrayed in battle against him, and feels that he cannot fight. It is then that Krishna, the Cosmic Lord, comes to counsel him. Arjuna represents the human soul seated in the chariot of the body and Krishna is the inner Spirit, the God within, who is there to counsel him. Today we see humanity divided against itself and threatened with nuclear war and mutual destruction. No political means are adequate to deal with this problem, and many are driven to despair. It is then that the message of the Gita comes to teach us that it is only when we rise above human schemes and calculations and awake to the presence of the indwelling Spirit that we can hope to find the answer to our need.

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Customer Reviews

Sri Swami Satchidananda has brought to life the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita for the modern seeker. The Bhagavad Gita is the beautiful and famous lessons on life that Krishna gave Arjuna on the battle field. The Gita starts with the great war on the battle field Kurukshetra between two families, the Pandavas and the Kauravas. Arjuna belonging to the Pandavas must fight to up hold

righteousness against the evil Kauravas. But on seeing the Kauravas on the battlefield and realizing that he knows many of them as teacher, friend and kin, Arjuna finds that he cannot go in to battle. Krishna observing Arjuna's inner conflict gives Arjuna lessons on the reality of life. Reading the story we see that the battlefield is not the Kurukshetra but our own body. The evil Kauravas our learned habits formed by ego and its manifestations. The Pandavas our pure qualities of love, non-violence, peace and truth. Arjuna is our inner being having conflict with our actions and expressions and Krishna the Lord every loving in his guidance. The Bhagavad Gita is truly a great scripture with much truth contained within its lessons. However as a modern society we often struggle to assimilate spiritual teachings into our present expression of life. Some find it hard to relate to our present life and a lesson that happened thousands of years ago. Here is where Sri Swami Satchidananda has gifted us with a modern commentary on the Bhagavad Gita that relates to our modern mind and environment. To capture the beauty of this book is to express the teachings through action in our every day life. I brought this book for my brother who showed an interest in my love of Vedic teachings. I brought him this commentary and read some of it before I sent it to him. I liked Sri Swami Satchidananda's commentary so much that I went and brought another copy for myself. Full of truth and so easy to relate too!

I have explored several versions of the Bhagavad Gita with commentaries, among them, that by William Q. Judge and the one provided by Paramahansa Yogananda. Previous to reading The Living Gita, I have been confused and haven't understood the ideas expressed. Sri Swami Satchidananda presents the text in easy-to-understand English, and offers concrete examples drawn from our everyday life to support his version and the commentaries he makes. The superficial story is of opposing armies on the battlefield, but the underlying meaning relates more to our everyday fight with our more selfish instincts, and how we can rise above our natural self-centered inclinations. I appreciate the insights that Swami Satchidananda gives us in our daily struggle to be better human beings.

The Gita can be read very easily without much understanding. This translation and commentary is relatively easy to understand. Its lessons can be incorporated into daily life. It is also reassuring that the interpretation is coming from a swami. Swami Satchidananda uses simple examples from life to clarify even the most obscure sentences in this text. **BUY THIS BOOK IF YOU ARE A SEEKER!**

There have been many translations of the Bhagavad Gita, but Sri Swami Satchidananda's is one of

the best. He breaks down the slokas with frequent explanations built into each chapter, which makes the translation even easier for the reader. I use this translation in my yoga teacher training programs and have had many thought-provoking discussions with my training groups. I recommend this translation highly. Tracey L. Ulshafer, author "Butterfly"

The first version of the Gita I read was the translated by E. Easwaran. It was an excellent introduction to this Vedic classic and Easwaran's commentary (though relatively limited) served as good basis for understanding the Gita beyond its prose. Wanting to both read a different translation and to delve deeper into this spiritual cornerstone I chose "The Living Gita". This book delivers precisely what it claims- a commentary for modern readers. Even if you are unfamiliar with Hinduism/Vedic scripture or their spiritual practices this Gita commentary offers a bridge between the modern reader and the ancient context. Swami Satchidananda explains the meaning and implications of Krishna's teachings in a way that is simple though not insulting. His devotion and wisdom are tangible as he brings to life material that continues to influence religious and spiritually minded people. With this commentary it is easy to see why men like Gandhi chose this book for daily reading. The text is rich as is; but for those of us in the West who may not have the time or resources to seek out a Guru this commentary may be the next best thing. Satchidananda's voice is familiar and void of pretense. It is clear that his efforts to bring the beauty and richness of this Eastern staple to the Western reader originated from a heart that is familiar with its content, yet continues to be awed by it. If you wish to understand the Gita more, or the roots of Hinduism/Vedic religion, this book is an excellent start. Like all scriptures it can (and should) be read and re-read. It is accessible and practical and can be turned to for any situation that life may bring. I highly recommend this commentary.

After carefully sifting through the many translations available in English of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, I finally chose to study the "The Living Gita..". I have read other works by the author, Swami Satchidananda, however this would have to be his best! Each verse is translated clearly and his commentaries which follow are explained in plain easy to understand English - amazingly easy to digest and once you pick up this priceless gem its near impossible to put it back down given its rich, inspiring, insightful, relieving, healing, encouraging, nourishing, nurturing content.. simply heart melting and at times way ecstatic you wouldn't know what to do with yourself :-)) Swami Satchidananda's commentaries go a long way in helping to practice/live the Srimad Bhagavad Gita!!

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