

Dnyaneshwari

(The Philosophical Part)

Chapter 2

By

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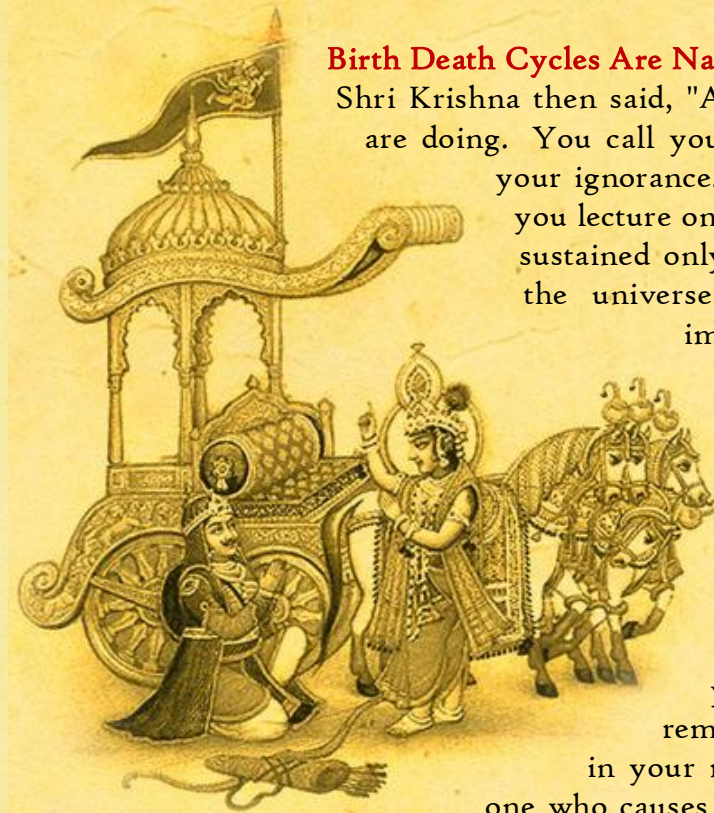
The Path Of Knowledge
Shri Krishna Consoles Arjuna

Shri Krishna said, "Arjuna, first think whether this kind of talk and behaviour on the battlefield becomes you. Realise who you are and what you are doing. (2:6). What has come over you? What is it you are feeling sorry about? It is not like you to bother about irrelevant matters and to give up courage. (2:7-8). You who are famous for unqualified bravery are crying! (2:11). Do not let your mind be overcome by weakness. Gather your courage and come to your senses. Leave this foolishness, get up and take your bow and arrow. What use is compassion on the battlefield? You are an intelligent person. Then why don't you realise that compassion during a battle is of no use? It will only harm your name and make you lose the benefits in the world beyond. (2:17-20). This kind of compassion is of no use during the time of war. Is it only now that you have realised that Kauravas are your relatives? Did you not know that earlier? Is this dispute a new thing in your life? It has been an usual affair between you and the Kauravas. (2:23-25). Due to this delusion you will lose the standing you have gained so far and not only will you lose everything in this world but in the next as well. A true warrior should keep away from the

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weakness of heart, because for a Kshatriya it is his downfall." (2:27-28).

Arjuna however repeated his pleas saying that he could not be so ungrateful as to fight with and kill his own teacher (i.e. Dronacharya) to whom he owed all his battle skills and who was like a father to him and therefore fit to be worshipped. Finally, when he realised that Shri Krishna was not listening to his pleas, he said he felt confused and prayed to Shri Krishna for proper advice consistent with Dharma (code of righteous conduct) adding that Shri Krishna was like his teacher, brother, parents, family deity and saviour. (2:30-68).



Birth Death Cycles Are Natural

Shri Krishna then said, "Arjuna, I am really surprised at what you are doing. You call yourself knowledgeable but do not let go of your ignorance. And when I try to teach you something you lecture on ethics. (2:91-92)." "Tell me, is this universe sustained only because of you? What people say about the universe that it has been existing from time

immemorial must then be false. Is what everybody says about the creation that

"All creatures are created by the one and only God" all wrong? Has the

situation now become such that what is born is created by you and what has died

has been killed by you? And that the Kauravas will be destroyed only if you

wish it so? Or that, if because of your ego you decide not to kill them, they will

remain immortal? Perhaps there is delusion

in your mind that people die because you are the

one who causes death? Arjuna, birth and death are things

established from time immemorial and are natural occurrences, then why should you feel sorry for them for no reason? (2:94-100). Arjuna, persons of discrimination know that both

birth and death are delusions and do not lament either of them. (2:102). The feeling that

"this is born" or "that has died" is created because of *Maya*, otherwise the basic underlying principle which is Brahman is indestructible. (See the note at the end of chapter). Wind

causes ripples on water which takes wavy shape and when wind dies water becomes flat, then what was created and what got destroyed? (2:105-107).

Consider the obvious example of the body. Changes occur with age in the same body. First there is childhood in the body. It goes and youth comes but when one state goes and the

other comes the body itself is not destroyed. In the same way changes in an individual life occur, the difference in this case being that one body goes and is replaced by another, but the

Consciousness (soul) does not get destroyed. He who understands this does not suffer grief due to the delusion of life and death. (2:108-110).

Sense Pleasure Cause Of Delusion

The reason why people do not realise this is that man is a slave to the senses. His mind, being caught in sensual pleasures, leads to the delusive feelings of happiness and sorrow. Enjoyment of sense pleasures leads to feelings of happiness and sorrow and creates attachment to the sense objects. There is nothing steady about sense objects. Sometimes they give pleasure and sometimes pain. For example, praise gives

pleasure while criticism creates unpleasantness; hard objects are unpleasant, soft objects give pleasure, etc. (2:111-114). This leads to the ignorance about the true nature of the Self in this life. (2:118).

People get trapped by the sense organs (Note: The five sense organs are: Eyes, ears, tongue, nose and skin) and when they experience the feelings like hot and cold etc., they get subjected to the feelings of pleasure and pain. Nature of the sense organs is such that it makes them feel there is nothing better than sensual pleasures of the body and mind. And these sense objects are impermanent like a mirage. Therefore you should not keep their company. (2:119-122).

Pleasure and pain do not touch a person who is not influenced by these sense objects, nor has he to go through rebirth. Keep in mind that he who is not trapped by the sense objects is totally indestructible. (2:123-124).

Ultimate Principle - The *Brahman*

A rjuna, I am going to tell you about one more thing which sensible people realise. In this world which pervaded by *Maya*, there is a mysterious principle about which all philosophers agree. (2:125-126). When a man of Knowledge ponders over what is universe etc., matters related to the material world get eliminated and what remains for him to think about is only that principle which is the Self (or soul). Having come to a definite conclusion about what is truth and what is untruth, he is oblivious to an impermanent thing like the body. Careful thinking leads to a conclusion that whatever is impermanent and delusive is inconsequential and what is permanent is fundamental. He who created this universe is devoid of attributes like colour or form. He is all-pervading and beyond birth and death. He cannot be destroyed even if you want to. On the other hand, bodies are naturally perishable, therefore it is proper that you should fight. It is not you who is their destroyer and they also are not destructible only by you. If you think otherwise then that is because of your ignorance. (2:131-138).

Things seen during a dream appear real while the dream lasts but once we wake up we realise that they were not real. You are only experiencing a similar illusion due to the effect of *Maya*. (2:139-140).

Soul Is Immortal

E ven if the body dies, the Soul (*Atman*) does not die. Therefore do not extend your impression about the death of the body to the Soul. (2:141). Just as a person discards his old clothes and wears new ones, similarly the Soul, the master of the Consciousness discards one body and occupies another.

This Soul is without birth, is permanent, eternal, pure and without form. It cannot be cut by weapons, cannot get drowned even in flood waters, fire cannot burn it and wind cannot suck it. This constant and eternal Soul totally pervades everything. It cannot be understood by reasoning but can be experienced only through meditation. This infinite supreme entity is inaccessible to the mind and is unobtainable through implements or techniques. It is unbounded and superior to all living and nonliving things. It is without the three attributes (*Sattva*, the attribute of purity, goodness, knowledge etc.; *Raja*, the attribute of that of movement, desire, passion etc.; and *Tama* that of lethargy, darkness, ignorance etc.), timeless, beyond shape and form and all encompassing. Arjuna, if you are able to realise this Soul which exists inside everybody then all your sorrows will disappear. (2:144-151).

And even if you were to consider the Soul to be destructible there is no reason for you to feel sorry, because the cycle of creation, existence and dissolution continues perpetually like the

flow of the Ganges. (2:152-153). These three states which are applicable to all living beings, are all same to the Soul. Your sorrow in this context is therefore improper because this natural cycle has been going on since time immemorial. (2:155-156). Birth and death are inevitable. (2:158).

What Is Born Dies And Is Reborn

Whatever is born perishes and is later born again. This wheel of life and death has been going on perpetually from time immemorial like the cycle of sunrise and sunset. At the time of the big deluge these three worlds also get destroyed. Therefore beginning and end are inevitable. (2:159-161).

Prior to birth, creatures have no form. They acquire it after birth. When they die they certainly will not reach another state but only the previous. **The form you see between the birth and the death is the projection (an illusive image) of Brahman due to the influence of Maya.** (2:164-166). All creatures acquire a form due to the effect of *Maya*, therefore why should you shed tears over something which does not exist in the first place? Instead, you should think about the eternal Soul (*Atman*). (2:168-169).

Those who develop a love for this Soul (*Atman*) are not influenced by sense-objects. They become detached and dispassionate and live a hermit's life. With the *Atman* as their goal they observe constraints like celibacy and penance. (2:170-171). Many have attained a state of steadiness of mind and by concentrating on that pure Self, have lost all thoughts about the material world. Many have developed detachment and become constantly engrossed with it (i.e. the Self) while singing its praises. Some have left their "I am the body" feeling while some have become one with it (The Self). Just as the river flows merging into the ocean does not revert, similarly superior yogis, once their intellect merges with the Soul become one with it and they are not reborn. (2:172-176). The all-pervading *Brahman* exists within everybody. It cannot be destroyed even if you want to. It is the cause of birth and death of every creature therefore why should you feel sorry? (2:177-178).

Dharma- The Righteous Code Of Conduct

Have you forgotten your *Dharma* (Code of righteous conduct or duty) which guides one through one's life? (2:180). *Swadharma* (i.e. your own *Dharma* or *Dharma* applicable to oneself) is never to be given up whatever may happen to the Kauravas or to you. If you forsake your own *Dharma* (i.e. that of a *Kshatriya* or warrior) and show compassion, will that compassion save you? This fountain of kindness is inappropriate during a war. (2:182-183). Self-interest is harmed if one does wrong things at the wrong time. Therefore come to your senses in time and attend to your *Swadharma*. Behaving as prescribed by *Swadharma* never leads to any blemish. (2:185-186). All desires get fulfilled if you follow *Swadharma*. For you *Kshatriyas* (warrior caste) there is nothing more proper than fighting. (2:188-189). Such opportunities of war come to *Kshatriyas* as a result of a lot of merit. (2:194). If you avoid this war and grieve over wrong things then it is as good as self-destruction. (2:196). If you forsake *Swadharma* then you will be burdened with sin and the blemish of failure will never be erased for ages. (2:201).

And how are you going to leave this battlefield? Your enemies will not understand that you are giving up the enmity out of a clean and kind heart. They will surround you and shower you with arrows and then your kindness will be of no help to you in escaping. Even if you do escape and survive, living that life will be worse than death. (2:202-205).

You have gained an exceptional fame (2:211) and these Kauravas are afraid of you. (2:215) That fear will not remain if you retreat. (2:217). And even if you want to run away they will

not let you. They will catch you and put you to a ridicule. Instead of hearing all that slander and feel broken-hearted, why should you not defeat them by fighting bravely and then enjoy the throne? And even if you were to die fighting then you will naturally attain the kingdom of heaven (which is due to those warriors who die fighting). Therefore do not waste your time in thinking, pick up your bow and arrow and be ready for war. (2:218-221)

Practice of *Swadharma* removes all past blemishes. Why should you then have an apprehension that you are going to commit sin? (2:222). It would be a sin only if you act with the desire of fruits in mind even if the act itself was as prescribed according to *Swadharma*. If you fight as a *Kshatriya* with a *desireless attitude towards the fruits* then there is no sin involved. (2:224-225)

Equanimity Towards Happiness And Sorrow One should not feel ecstasy by happiness nor feel aggrieved by sorrow. Neither should one think about gains and losses. One should not keep thinking in advance about whether one would win or die in this war. One should quietly accept whatever comes to his lot while acting according to *Swadharma*. Actions performed with this attitude do not lead to any blemish, therefore Arjuna go and fight with determination. (2:226-229)

Yoga Of Intellect (Buddhiyoga)

What I have told you so far is the Yoga of Knowledge of the *Sankhya* philosophy. Now I shall tell you the Yoga of Intellect (of *Karmayogis* i.e. followers of the path of action). (2:230) By following this yoga of intellect you do not miss the worldly pleasures and at the same time you are also assured of liberation. As mentioned earlier in connection with *Swadharma*, one should perform one's duties but without bothering about the fruits of his actions. He who is endowed with this attitude of performing his duties without the desire of the fruits thereof becomes immediately free of all encumbrances (of birth and death). (2:233-235).

An intellect which is not touched by the thoughts of sin or merit (i.e. desireless intellect, because it is the desire that leads to worry about sin and merit.), which is extremely subtle and steady and not stained by the three attributes *Sattva*, *Raja* and *Tama*, destroys the fear of the material world if it illuminates the mind even slightly, by virtue of the merit of earlier births. (2:236-237)

Righteous and Base Intellects Even if this righteous intellect were to be present only slightly, it should not be considered as unimportant. This righteous intellect which leads one towards God, is very rare. (2:238-239). This unique righteous intellect in the world has no other goal than attainment of God. All other types of intellect are corrupted intellects which are affected by passions and in which persons without discrimination get enraptured. Therefore Arjuna, such persons without discrimination may attain heaven, earth or hell but never the bliss of the Self. (2:241-244).

These persons establish the greatness of Vedic rituals quoting the Vedas in support, but perform them with the desire of fruits in mind. They say that one should be born on this earth, perform the rituals like *yajna* and then enjoy the consequent pleasures of heaven. (2:245-246). They perform all the rituals rigorously as prescribed but they do one unfortunate thing. By keeping the goal of pleasures as heaven they forget the very God in whose name they conduct the rituals. (2:249-250). Like cooking excellent food and then selling it for money, they sell the *Dharma* for the benefit of pleasure. **Therefore I say that people who**

spend their time in debating on the meaning of the Vedas shelter a corrupted intellect. (2:254-255).

Attributes of the Veda constituents Vedas (which comprise of *Samhitas*, *Brahmanas*, *Aranyakas* and *Upanishads*) are definitely associated with the three attributes *Sattva*, *Raja* and *Tama*. *Upanishads* and other philosophical works should be considered as having the *Sattva* attribute. The rest, which discuss rituals and other exercises for attainment of heaven have the *Raja* and the *Tama* attributes. Therefore they are the cause of pleasure and sorrow and you should not harbour them in your mind. Discard these three attributes, do not speak of "I" and "mine" and keep the bliss of the Self-realisation firmly in your mind. (2:256-259).

Though Vedas tell many things and suggest many rituals, you should choose only that which is beneficial for you. After deep thinking I came to the conclusion that it is proper for you to avoid evil deeds and perform actions as prescribed in the *Shastras* (scriptures) but without the desire for fruits thereof. Do your duty as per your own *Dharma* with a desireless attitude. (2:260-266). But when you are fortunate enough to have achieved success, do not get exhilarated by it nor feel sorry if for some reason you are not successful. If whatever work which was undertaken reaches completion then it is fine but if it does not, then also it is all right. (2:268-269). Whatever work we do, when its offering is made to God, then automatically it becomes complete. (2:271). **A balanced attitude of mind towards both successful and unsuccessful actions is hailed as the best state of Yoga. Equanimity of mind, where mind and intellect work together, is the essence of yoga.** (2:272-273).

Path Of Actions Or *Karmayoga*

Considering everything, the path of actions appears to be of lesser status in comparison with the yoga of intellect. Actually, one achieves success in the yoga of intellect only when the actions are performed with desireless attitude, because negation of the actions (by offering them to God) leads naturally to the state of yoga. Therefore Arjuna, steady your mind with the help of this yoga of intellect, giving up the desire of fruits of your actions. Those who followed this yoga of intellect transcended this material world and were liberated from the entanglement into sin and merit. Such people, even though they do perform their duties, they reject the fruits thereof and therefore are freed from the birth and death cycles and reach the eternal state of bliss. Arjuna, you will become like that when you give up your delusion and your mind becomes dispassionate. Then the very pure mystical Knowledge will rise within you and your mind will automatically become dispassionate. In this state, the thoughts of gaining more knowledge or remembering whatever was learnt in the past do not arise. Then the intellect (mind?) which was wandering due to the influence of sense-organs will easily become steady in the Supreme Soul. When the intellect becomes steady, you will reach a state of *Samadhi*, the steady quiet bliss and only then you will attain the state of yoga. (2:274-284).

[NOTE: This should have been sufficient to make Arjuna come to his senses and fight. But Sauti wanted to present the synthesis of the then current philosophies of liberation paths. All the rest of the Gita seems to have been composed towards this object.]

Stable Insight And Stable Intellect

Arjuna then asked, "Shri Krishna, who should be called a person of stable insight (*Sthitapradnya*) and how to recognise him. Also, what are the characteristics of a person who may be called a person of stable intellect (*Sthirabuddhi*)? And how to recognise a person who perpetually enjoys the state of *Samadhi*? In what state does he remain and what does he look like? (2:287-289). (Note: *Samadhi* is a deep state of trance without thoughts.)

Shri Krishna replied, "The strong desire carried in the mind for sense pleasures is what comes in the way of the bliss of the Self. He who is always contented and whose desire for sense pleasures which is the cause of the downfall of persons, has left him for good and who is always immersed in the bliss of the Self should be considered as a person of **stable insight** (*Sthitapradnya*). (2:291-293).

Desire and anger vanish naturally from the mind of a person who remains unperturbed even when faced with all types of distress and who is not led astray by the lure of pleasure. Having reached a state of perfection he is totally free of fear. Freed of these restraints he has reached oneness with the Brahman. Such a person should be considered as a person of **stable intellect**. (2:294-296).

Such person always behaves with impartial attitude towards all. This nature of his having constant equanimity and compassion towards all creatures never changes. He is never enthralled by happiness from good things nor disheartened by sorrow from the bad. **He who, being bereft of feelings of happiness and sorrow, remains absorbed in the Supreme Self should be considered as a person of stable insight** (*Sthitapradnya*). **And he who is in complete control of his sense organs, should be considered as a person of stable intellect**. (2:299-300).

Controlling Sense Organs

And Arjuna, I shall tell you an interesting thing. Seekers practice restraint and give up sense-pleasures; but they too can get entangled in various types of sense-pleasures if while restraining the ears, eyes etc., they fail to restrain the tongue. (2:303-304). One can restrain himself from all sense-pleasures except that of the tongue. One cannot forcibly restrain the pleasure of the tongue because our life depends on food. But when a seeker attains Self-realisation, the tongue naturally gets controlled and since the "I am the body" feeling has left him he forgets all sense-pleasures. (2:307-309).

These organs cannot be brought under control by any other means. (NB: It is implied that external means like rituals, fasts etc. are not useful. Internal means like meditation only are useful for the purpose). Because even those who constantly try to conquer them and keep their minds under control by observing strict rules and restrictions, are harassed by them. Such is the power of these organs! Even in the case of yogis, the sense objects appear in the form of *Riddhi-Siddhis* (Occult powers) gained by them and rule their minds through the organs. If a yogi is caught in their clutches then he deviates from his study of yoga, such is the strength of the organs. (2:311-314).

Therefore Arjuna, he who leaves all desire of pleasures, controls his organs and is not allured by the sense-pleasures is alone worthy of the trust set by yoga i.e. steadiness of intellect. Such a person has the knowledge of the Self and never forgets me. (2:315-317).

[Note: Shri Krishna presents himself henceforth as Supreme Soul].

On the other hand, he who outwardly gives up sense-objects but keeps on thinking about them must be considered as being entangled only in the materialistic world. (2:318). The slightest trace of desires remaining in the mind destroys discretion. (2:320). Mere memory of these sense-pleasures creates desire for them in the mind of even a detached person. Passions then arise in the mind and where there is passion there is also anger. Anger leads to thoughtlessness. Thoughtlessness leads to loss of memory and then the intellect is engulfed by the darkness of ignorance. The intellect then suffers and loses direction. Thus, the loss of memory leads to confused intellect and this in turn destroys all knowledge. In this way,

even occasional memory of the sense-pleasures can lead to such downfall. Therefore, when these sense-pleasures are totally removed from the mind, anger and hate are automatically destroyed. When anger and hate are destroyed then even if the organs become engaged in the sense-pleasures they do no harm. (2:321-332). Such a person is detached towards sense-objects, free of desire and anger and remains engrossed in the bliss of the Self. (2:334). He who thus remains absorbed in the Self may be considered without doubt to have a stable intellect.

Be Cheerful Worldly sorrows do not enter a cheerful mind. (2:338). How can a person feel unhappy when his heart is cheerful? The mind of such a person remains naturally focused on God. Like a flame in windless air, that person with stable intellect achieves the yogic state and becomes united with Brahman. (2:339-341).

A person in whose mind the thoughts of this yoga do not take root, gets entangled in the trap of sense objects. The intellect of such person is never stable nor does he desire it to be stable. If there is no feeling of stability in the mind then how can he achieve peace? Just as a sinner cannot attain liberation, similarly where there is no love for peace there is no happiness either, even by chance. (2:342-345). Therefore instability of mind is the cause for sorrow and therefore it is best to control the sense-organs. (2:347).

Persons who submit to the demands of the sense-organs do not really transcend the material world, though outwardly it may appear to be so. (2:348). Even a person who has attained Self-realisation, is trapped in the sorrowful consequences of the material world if he pampers the sense organs. Therefore what better achievement is there than conquering the sense-organs? (2:350-351). He whose sense-organs obey his commands may be considered as having a stable insight. Now listen to another characteristic of such a person who has reached perfection. (2:353-354).

Yogi Is Always Awake

When all creatures are in a state of sleep regarding *Brahman* he is ever awake to it and he shuts his eyes at the (material) things for which everybody else struggles. Such a person should be recognised as a great sage free of attachments. (2:355-356). He is not bothered about whether or not he has achieved the *Riddhi-Siddhis* (Occult powers). (2:360). Satiated with Self-realisation, he remains in the state of bliss of the Self and goes about in this world in that state, bereft of ego and all desires. Recognise him truly as a person with stable insight. (2:366-367). This is what is called the extreme state of the Brahman experienced by the dispassionate person who effortlessly becomes one with it. Once they become one with Brahman then there is no question of their mind suffering and becoming an impediment in the way of reaching the state of the Brahman at the time of physical death. (2:368-369).

NOTES:

Brahman, Atman, Soul and **Self** (2:105-107) To explain creation of material world with attributes by an attributeless entity like *Brahman*, existence of *Maya* which holds the power of the Brahman to create the materialistic world is postulated. Other parallel philosophies postulate the same as *Shakti* of *Shiva* or *Prakriti* associated with *Purusha*.)

Brahman is the ultimate principle of the universe which pervades everything, is infinite, formless, attributeless and imperishable. It creates the world through its projection *Maya*.

When an individual is created it has a soul which is same as the *Brahman*. At birth the individual acquires a body which is shed on death but the soul does not die. It acquires another body after some time i.e. is reborn as another creature or person. Individual undergoes millions of life cycles like this. During the period between the birth and death, the individual, due to effects of *Maya* is not aware that he is really the Soul but gives almost full attention to pleasures of the body. In other words he thinks that his Self is his body while actually it is his Soul. Self-realisation is the realisation that one is really the soul and not the body. Thus, *Brahman*, *Atman*, Soul and the Self may be used synonymously depending upon the context.

Attributes (2:144-151): All worldly objects, entities or actions are supposed to have three attributes in different proportions. The attributes are :-

Sattva, the attribute of purity, goodness, knowledge etc.;

Raja, the attribute of movement, desire, passion etc.; and

Tama the attribute of lethargy, darkness, ignorance etc.

Attributes are discussed in detail in Chapters [14](#), [16](#) and [18](#).

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Plastic Surgery- Sushruta Samhita

Susruta lays down the basic principles of plastic surgery by advocating a proper physiotherapy before the operation and describes various methods or different types of defects, viz., (1) release of the skin for covering small defects, (2) rotation of the flaps to make up for the partial loss and (3) pedicle flaps for covering complete loss of skin from an area. He has mentioned various methods including sliding graft, rotation graft and pedicle graft. Nasal repair or rhinoplasty has been described in greater detail, which to this day has stood the test of time and is mentioned as the Indian method of rhinoplasty in the books of plastic surgery. Lastly, labioplasty too has received his attention.

Surgical science – Salyantantra – embraces all processes aiming at the removal of factors responsible for producing pain or misery to the body or mind. Health is, according to Susruta, a state of physical and mental well-being brought about and preserved by the maintenance of humours, good nutrition, proper elimination of waste products and a pleasant harmony of the body and the mind.

Susruta warns that improper intervention with surgical maneuver due either to ignorance of the progress of the disease-process, greed for money or lack of judgment, lead only to complications. A conscientious surgeon, on the other hand, considers his patient as a whole. For diseases divorced from patients are abstractions from reality. Any surgical maneuver is a phased programme planned well and then executed. The pascatkarma included the rehabilitation and removal of complications.