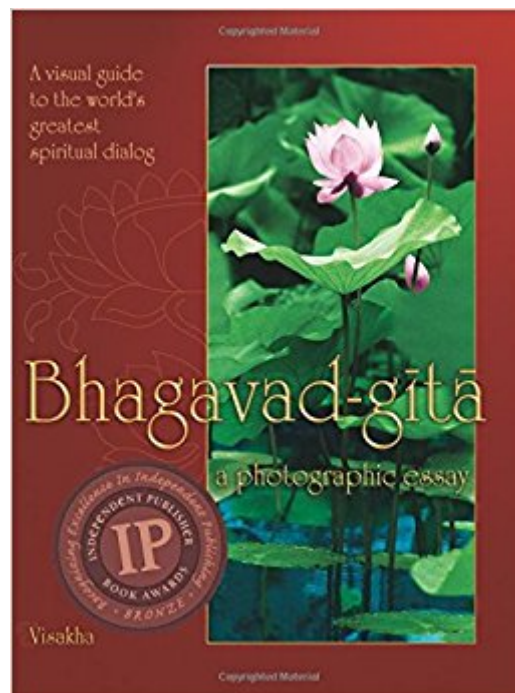




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# Bhagavad-gita: A Photographic Essay: A Visual Guide To The World's Greatest Spiritual Dialog



## Synopsis

\*Independent Publisher's Book Award Winner \*Â A fully illustrated, award-winning summary study of the world's best selling Bhagavad-gita.Â Acclaimed by scholars for its authenticity, clarity, and brilliant photographs, Bhagavad-gita: A Photographic Essay reveals and brings to life the Gita's spiritual wisdom and its beautiful themes of harmony and purpose, work and attitude, love and reciprocation. We're challenged and inspired through its answers to probing questions: What is my identity beyond the body and mind? What is my purpose? How can I be satisfied while in the midst of a turbulent world? Why is life worth living? What happens after death?"In this world," the Gita boldly declares, "there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge is the mature fruit of all mysticism." For those who dare to align their consciousness with that of the Divine's, the Gita's wisdom offers a fulfilling life of inner serenity, balance, and love. In Bhagavad-gita: A Photographic Essay, the depth, resonance, and potency of the original Sanskrit text remains intact as it calls upon each of us to fulfill our highest potential."The ancient, yet universally relevant message to the Gita is extended to us in the modern world through Visakha's clearly articulated understanding along with her powerful photographic expression of its message." -- Graham M. Schweig, Ph.D., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley

"In this publication, we have an extraordinary opportunity to comprehend the Gita as it has been historically understood within its own sacred tradition." -- Howard J. Resnick, Ph.D., Harvard University

"By blending an easy-to-read and highly accessible synopsis of the text with relevant and usefully placed photographs, Visakha has highlighted the essential philosophical points and made them relevant to the modern context." -- Edwin Bryant, Ph.D., Rutgers University

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I recommend this work to devotees of the religious traditions of the Gita and to academic students of the Gita, as well as to all those who desire a glimpse into the mystical vision of the Gita, as it is so eloquently presented herein.-- Graham M. Schweig, Ph.D., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley\*\* Independent Publisher Book Award \*\*The Independent Publisher Book Awards (IPPY) are intended to bring increased recognition to and reward those who exhibit the courage, innovation, and creativity to bring about change in the world of publishing. InÂ 2011,Â Bhagavad-gita: A Photographic EssayÂ by Visakha Dasi won an IPPY award inÂ the Spiritual/Inspirational category. Visakha has made another unique contribution to our study of the spiritual traditions of South Asia. Her illustrated summary of the Bhagavad-gita, the single most influential text of Indian wisdom, comprehends and effectively communicates the timeless relevance of the Gita within a contemporary context. Her mature ability to blend her award-winning skills as a photographer with an appealing and convincing text are clearly in evidence here. In this publication, we have an extraordinary opportunity to comprehend the Gita as it has been historically understood within its own sacred tradition, and yet at the same time grasp its message within a cutting-edge visual and literary picture of life as we live it today.-- Howard J. Resnick, Ph.D. in Sanskrit and Indian Studies, Harvard University Bhagavad-gita, India's most popular and widely read religious scripture, is available in nearly two thousand different versions in almost one hundred different languages. Visakha has added a further unique contribution to this illustrious ongoing commentarial heritage by blending an easy-to-read and highly accessible synopsis of the text with relevant and usefully placed photographs that highlight the essential philosophical points and make them relevant to the modern context. This version will be particularly appreciated by the non-specialized public interested in Indian spirituality.Â -- Edwin Bryant, Ph.D. Rutgers University The Bhagavad-gita, or God's song, is a classical sacred text that comes to us from ancient India.Â The content of this text takes the form of a conversation between the Supreme Lord Krishna and his dear friend Arjuna, who is confronted by universal existential questions that continue to challenge humans: What is my purpose in life? What should be the values by which I can make critical life decisions? What constitutes true happiness and fulfillment while in a world of moral conflict and degradation? What is the ultimate reality and what is my relationship to it? These are just some of the questions to which

this text poses answers. Often called the "Hindu" Bible, the Bhagavad-gita is the most loved and adored philosophical text arising from the ancient culture of South Asia. One remarkable fact about the Bhagavad-gita is that it has captured the minds of and has fascinated non-Indian peoples, especially in the English-speaking world. There have been literally hundreds of translations of the text published in English alone, which is evidence that the voices from ancient India are still speaking to us in modern times. The present work, however, is a unique presentation of key philosophical ideas and understandings of this great text. The author of this work has presented select topics and themes of the text and has explained them with the aid of photographic illustrations. Specifically, she draws from the translation and commentary of the Bhagavad-gita by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (1896-1977), entitled, Bhagavad-gita As It Is. The reasons for this choice may be considered here. One, it may be that Prabhupada's translation and commentary, distributed by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, is the single most widely known translation in English, as well as numerous other languages. It makes sense that the present work would focus on such a celebrated translation. Two, this translation is what I would term a "living translation" of the text, in that it is not merely the philological exercise of a specialist; rather, the Swami's work was translated clearly with the idea that it would be applied in the everyday lives of persons. Indeed, the Swami's mission was itself the cause of the worldwide spread of Vaishnava thought and practice in all major cultures of the world. Finally, the author herself, Visakha, a direct student of Bhaktivedanta Swami since 1971, has been practicing for many years the way of life that is prescribed in the Bhagavad-gita and in the Swami's commentary. We are greatly benefitted by the way Visakha brings together the areas of art and religion from her own life to create the present work. The author harnesses her talents both as an accomplished writer and as a professional photographer (originally trained at the Rochester Institute of Technology). Combined with these talents are her years of dedicated practice of bhakti-yoga, or the practice of living a life in loving devotion to God under the guidance of this century's leading global teacher of Bhagavad-gita, Bhaktivedanta Swami. The ancient, yet universally relevant message of the Gita is extended to us in the modern world through Visakha's clearly articulated understanding along with her powerful photographic expression of its message. I recommend this work to devotees of the religious traditions of the Gita and to academic students of the Gita, as well as to all those who desire a glimpse into the mystical vision of the Gita, as it is so eloquently presented herein.--

Graham M. Schweig, Ph.D., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley

I first heard of Bhagavad-gita when I was trekking with my then boyfriend (now husband) John

Griesser in the Himalayas way back in the summer of '71. We were at the snow line, 10,000 feet at that time of year, and decided to spend a few restful days in an abandoned cowshed. From deep inside his backpack John pulled out a blue paperback with a line drawing of a regal, four-armed person on the cover. During our stay, I sat for hours surrounded by towering snowy peaks in crystal-clear air, with no other humans around, trying to read this early edition of "Bhagavad-gita As It Is" by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. I understood little but I was intrigued. The idea of tolerating dualities and remaining equipoised in their midst enticed me, as did the concept of an eternal spiritual presence within all living beings. And the Gita opened me to the thought that I could improve my character as well as the quality of my life through knowledge. Over the years, as I continued studying the Bhagavad-gita and practicing its precepts, my respect for its wisdom, relevance, and comprehensiveness grew. Gradually the Bhagavad-gita revolutionized my life. "Bhagavad-gita, A Photographic Essay" explains why.

A book not to be just read but studied. Great thematic photographs, good English and articulation, every sentence true to Sreemad Bhagavad Gita As It Is by Sreela Prabhupada. Dare I not say that both Krishna and he are also happy with this masterpiece.

I love it! The pictures with the text broaden and deepen your understanding of this timeless philosophy. It puts huge concepts into simple language. I will purchase many copies for my friends. Great job!

This is a very concise and nice piece of transcendental literature. I would recommend this book to everyone, young or old, highly educated or not so educated, rich or poor, black or white, Hindus, Muslims or Christians. The photographic pieces are well laid out for the ease of the reader. This book is a good guide to become a civilised and God loving individual.

I was very impressed with this book by Vishaka. I have read Bhagavad-Gita for years, but in this format with the photos, it gives a great visual guide to this wonderful story, history and philosophical dialog... Vishaka has put this together in a very readable and illuminating way. Thank you.

As the source of this work seems to be ISKON, I am a little concerned about the bias level in this book. However, after I've read it, I'll be better able to comment better. This book was a gift for my son. As he is getting closer to the teen-age years, I feel it is time to introduce him to some

philosophy.

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