Uddhava Gita appears in 11th Skanda of Bhagavatam. The Uddhava Gita and Bhagatvad Gita have a few things in common. Both of them are the essence of the Vedas, वेदसार, which is the original source of our teaching. Both of them have been taught by Bhagavan Krishna, the Uddhava Gita to Uddhava (a minister and a friend of Krishna), and Bhagavad Gita to Arjuna respectively. In both works the तात्पर्यम् तात्पर्यम् or the intention is the gain of spiritual goal मोक्ष moksham or liberation. Both the works have been compiled by वेदव्यास साधुर्यम् vedavyasacharya. The Uddhavagita consists of 1077 verses while the Bhagavad. Gita consists of 700 verses. Bhagavad Gita has become more popular because of its presence in àSwanÈymeswamprasthaanatryam as smrithiprasthaanam.

Moksha मोक्ष is derived from the root ‘मोक्ष Mokṣh’ - to drop, or give up. In attaining moksha, we do not gain anything, but we drop our self-ignorance, and the ignorance caused problems. In fact any ignorance can be dropped only by knowledge. So by self knowledge one can remove ignorance and also the ignorance generated problems and perceived problems, both of which together is called सम्प्रभु samsara. The generated problems being those caused by one’s own raga and dwesha, and the perceived problems being the pain one endures in natural events in life, like death separation etc. Only self knowledge eliminates these problems, which is said in the shastram as ‘swaroopajnananana-ajanananaasaha, ajnananasahana - samsara - nashaha’.

This self-knowledge is gained only when a person has a prepared mind and an intense desire for Moksha. With these, a Mumukshu, takes to the study of Shastram under the guidance of a competent Guru, known as Jnana Yoga. But, for the person to have the right preparation of the mind and the intense desire for moksha, he has to be a karmayogi. A karmayogi does his actions as an offering to Ishwara and the results of the actions he accepts as prasada, thereby reducing his anxiety and also getting focused to his goal. In karmayoga, understanding and accepting Ishwara in all activities is called bhakti. In Jnana yoga, having reverence to the Shastram, which is considered as independent pramanam and which is given by Ishwara is called bhakti. So in both Karmayoga and Jnanayoga, Ishwarabakhti becomes an integral factor. There is no separate bhakti yoga apart from these. In fact without reverence to Ishwara (called bhaktiyoga) karmayoga, and jnana yoga are not relevant. In the words of Shankaracharya bhakti is the most powerful samagri (ingredient) for jnanam.

The Uddhava Gita is the quintessence of Vedanta. Krishna towards the end of his
avataara, gave this teachings to Uddhava, when he approached him and pleading him not to leave them.

Brahmaji along with his sons, Lord Shiva with his bhutagana’s, Indra with his Maruth’s, the Adityas, Vasus, the Ashwins, Ribhus, Rudras, Vishvedevas, the Saadhyas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Nagas, Siddhas, Charanas, Guhyas, Rishis, Pitris, along with Vidyadharaas and Kinnaras, all of them came to Dwaraka to see Krishna. With great admiration and infinite devotion, they showed their reverence by offering him garlands and made a stuthi with poetic and decorative words as follows, praising Lord Krishna as both saguna and nirguna Brahman.

The Devas said, “We prostrate your feet, which is the liberator of the strong shackles of samsara, through words we sing your stuthi and in mind we meditate your form. You are the srishti, sthithi and layakarta, the karanam Brahman, by your trigunatmakamayasakhti you created this jagat and you are not touched by any of these karmas. Meditating on your feet, a sattwapradhanapurusha (one who is committed to worship, scriptural study, charity and austerities) gains purity of mind, and becomes fit for the knowledge. The impurities in the form of kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, mathsarya are all destroyed and the person becomes asamavibhutihi (having qualities of Bhaghavan).

You are the deities worshiped in all rituals in the karma kanda, you are the Upasyaha in the upasanakanda and you are the Ishiwa in the Jnanakanda where Jnaris discover oneness with you, even while living in the body. Whether you are worshipped for worldly ends or for the sake of reaching swarga etc or for jnanaprapti, you are soulabhyaaha (easy to be pleased and gained). Let the devotion to your feet remove all impurities of the mind.

Your foot alone reached the Brahmaloka, when you appeared as vamana, and as trivkrkrama measured all the lokas upto Brahmaloka. The water which is used to wash your feet by Brahmaji, is the Ganga flowing as Mandhakini in higher lokas, as Ganga in the bhuloka and as Bhogavathi in the lower worlds. To those who follow dharma you become the abhaya-karanam and to those who violate dharma, you become bhaya-karanam. You are the controller of the creation (from Brahmaji onwards up to all the jivas), like bullock being controlled by the string running through its nostrils. May your feet bless all with refinement.

You are in the form of kaala (kalayathi, prerayathi, pravarthayati, sannidhimatrena-sarvam), and also the mayasakthi and mahattatwam. The dharma to be followed for the jagat was given by you in the form of Vedas. Your praises are a stream in which one immerses to get purified.”

Thus the Devas praised Lord Krishna. Brahmaji addressed Krishna, saying that the avatara purpose is over, signified by the removal of the burden that disturbed the harmony of the creation, also establishment of dharma, and the emergence of satpurushas and jnanis. He requested Krishna to give up his mayika-sareeram and return to vaikunda, his own abode. Lord Krishna replied there still remains few more of his avatarakaryams, in terms of wiping out of his own Yadhava clan, necessitated by the fact that having gained lot of power and wealth and in the process grown to be very arrogant, Yadavas will turn out to destroy the whole world. Now that the time for their destruction has been set, in
the form of a curse from the learned Rishis, Krishna wanted to remain till the Yadava clan’s complete annihilation.

With that assurance from Krishna Brahmaji, Shiva and all the devas and celestials returned. Krishna then gathered up all the elders in the Yadhava clan and instructed them to be taken to Prabhasatheertam, where they can take a dip, complete their deva-pitru-tarpanam, and give away various types of dhanam, perform karmas that will help them to cross over samsara.

On seeing the Lord giving instructions and making himself ready to leave, Uddhava, a very close associate of Krishna, called him aside, offered namaskaras and said the following:

“You are the Lord of all Yogasakthi and Mayasakthi, and your namasravanam and keerthanam itself will bring punyam, and reduce attachment to all worldly things. You do not come under the curse of the yadava clan and with you around we will cross over maya and samsara. Only Yogis put forth great efforts, follow brahmacharyam and perform great tapas to gain Brahman, but for us we do not require that, remaining with you alone is samsara-nasa. I have been with you all along, using all things like mala, ghandam, dress, ornaments, etc used by you and by whatever has been left over by you, and now I cannot live even half a minute without you, so you should stay back”. Overwhelmed by grief of parting Uddhava revealed thus, and to him Lord Krishna teaches the Uddhava Gita in the 23 chapters and teaches him dwaita bhakti and advaitajnanam, and makes him understand that Uddhava is never away from Ishwara, and Ishwarais never away from anything.

Classes by Swamini Brahmaleenananda under the auspices of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan & Arsha Vidya Gurukulam
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Started - Sunday, May 31, 2015

Topic - Bhagavad Gita
Day - All Sundays
Time - 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM

Also classes on
Topic - Viveka Chudamani by Adi Sankaracharya

Day - All Mondays
Time - 10:30 AM - 12 Noon