

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 12: Bhakti-Yoga

1/2 (Ślōka 1-8), Sunday, 09 October 2022

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/n6j6koTuMPg>

The Forms of Worship- Nirguna and Saguna

The 12th Chapter of the Bhagavadgītā is about **the Yoga of Devotion**, and describes that HE can be attained by anyone who offers true devotion to HIM irrespective of the fact that it is through manifested or un-manifested worship.

The Vivechan began with the ceremonial prayer and lamp lighting ceremony.

We all are very fortunate to be on the path of reading and understanding the Gita. It is with the Divine's blessings that we are on this path for the Supreme HIMSELF has said in the 18th Chapter 68 and 69 Shloka:

य इदं परमं गुह्यं मद्भक्तेष्वभिधास्यति ।
भक्तिं मयि परां कृत्वा मामेवैष्यत्यसंशयः
न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिन्मे प्रियकृत्तमः ।
भविता न च मे तस्मादन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि

HE says that the one who reads the Gita, teaches Gita and practices it in one's life is most dear to HIM. HE has used the superlative degree to intensify the importance of reading the Gita. People wonder as to why the 12th Chapter has been introduced as the first lesson when one starts learning Gita in this course. The 12th and the 15th Chapter are the shortest lessons with just 20 shlokas in each lesson. It helps the sadhak to gain confidence and move ahead on his path to know the Gita.

Our dharma shastras (scriptures) mention a nyay (law/rule) that ghatita buddhim (that what I understand) ghatika jnyanum karanum which means; if one wants to understand a concept one needs to understand every component of it .

Suppose one says 'A Table is round' then one needs to know the word 'table' and 'round' and the connection why the word 'is' being used. Similarly in the 12th chapter there are three components that one needs to understand. The Gita is the conversation between Arjuna and The Supreme.

The three components Arjuna, Gita and The Divine need to be understood. All of us might be thinking that

Arjuna is a person who is young and depressed, one who has lost all hopes and is in distress. On the contrary Arjuna was 84 years old when the Kurukshetra war was fought and he was a man who was always righteous, who never got defeated and could also please Shiv ji in '**Mallyudh**'. Arjuna was a person who did not lose hope even when the Pandavas had to spend 13 years in exile and he had to spend 10 more years in exile as he refused to get lured by Urvashi's beauty and as a result he accepted her curse to live as Brihannala.

Arjuna wanted to obtain the divine weapons to perform his tapasya (Voluntary acceptance of austerity for the purpose of detaching oneself from the sense objects), mastery over sleep was important, he achieved this goal by performing tapasya on a branch of a tree near a river. He was such a determined person that he was referred to as **Gudakesh** one who won over his sleep. Arjuna practiced sitting on the branch of a tree which was near a river to gain control over his sleep because every time he fell asleep he fell in the river and after doing it for six months he succeeded. Such was the magnanimity of his character that he was the person who could visit **Shareer swarg** i.e. being able to visit Swarg Lok with his Physical Body. This was extremely difficult, one can find an example of the king Trishanku who even after getting the blessings from Rishi Vishwamitra, was still kicked off from the Swarg Lok by Indra thus being stuck between the 3 worlds thereby getting himself his name of Trishanku. Arjuna was courageous, a strategic planner and was always righteous.

In spite of all these qualities Arjuna in the 1st Chapter in verse 28 and 29 tells HIM

सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते

गाण्डीवं संसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते |
न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः |
निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव |
न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे

Arjuna tells The Supreme that he is unable to even stand and face the situation, his whole body shivering and his '**Gandeev**' slipping from his hands as he saw his near and dear ones stand in front of him and he realized that he had to fight against all of them in the battlefield. All of us can relate to Arjuna because we all face similar situations in our day to day lives when we also are battling against our near and dear ones for one reason or the other.

The Gita which is the second component is the conversation between Arjuna and The Divine. The Gita is actually a part of *Mahābhārata* and is placed in a lesson named '**Bhishma Parv**'. It is Ved Vyas ji who wrote this Gita for us to read

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना मध्ये महाभारतम् ।

अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीम्- अष्टादशाध्यायिनीम् अम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्- गीते भवद्वेषिणीम्

This Gita has been imparted to Arjuna (Parth) by Narayna i.e. The Divine and it is the only place where one directly gets to hear the Voice of The Supreme HIMSELF. The Gita was actually meant for the common man to read but Arjuna was the 'Nimit' the chosen one through whom The Supreme wanted all of us to read and learn lessons. Also people wonder as to why did HE choose Arjuna to be instrumental for this Gita.

Adi Shankracharya has said:

The one who has Divine qualities, only that person can spread knowledge, and the person who does not have such qualities will not be able to do so, hence Arjuna was the chosen one. In the 16th Chapter

दैवी सम्पद्धिमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता ।
मा शुचः सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव

The Divine HIMSELF has said that Arjuna possess all the Divine qualities and hence he is the chosen one.

The Gita is a gist of all the upanishads. All great personalities like Gandhiji, Lokmanya Tilak, Vivekanand all found the answers for their questions about life in this manual of life. It is the only document which has 1800 authentic commentaries.

The third component is Krishnaji. In Chapter 1 Verse 21

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥ 21॥
यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।
कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन् रणसमुद्यमे

The premise of the Gita is in the first chapter where Arjuna requested his Charioteer Krishna to steer it amidst the opposing armies. He wanted to take stock of the opposing army and was completely charged up for the attack. Krishna understood this hence didn't steer Chariot towards Duryodhana but placed it facing Bhishma and Dronacharya. Arjuna had been a favourite of both Bhishma and Dronacharya. Bhishma would let a muddied Arjuna hug him, completely disregarding the fact that he always wore white garments, such was his love and adoration for him. During the ceremony to showcase the talents of the kauravas and pandavas after their education came, all the brothers had proclaimed their different identities as prince's, sons etc. Arjuna was the exception who identified himself as the disciple of Droṇācārya, which surprised even Dhritarashtra.

These elders and others in the opposing army were all beloved to Arjuna, the only reason they fought from the kauravas side was, they were bound due to their various oaths and other karmas. Seeing these loving elders and beloved people Arjuna lost his will to fight.

This was Bhagavān's leela to give the Gita updesha facilitated through Arjuna to the mankind at large.. Arjuna simply became the medium. For the First 10 chapters, Narayan explained reaching the sat chit ananda state through Nirguna Brahman (consciousness unmanifested). However chapter 11 onwards we are taught about the saguna brahman (with quality consciousness- manifested), this created a confusion in Arjuna's mind as to which path to follow and what was the better way to reach the ultimate truth. Chapter 12 deals with this part of the conversation.

12.1

arjuna uvāca

**evaṁ(m) satatayuktā ye, bhaktāstvāṁ(m) paryupāsate,
ye cāpyakṣarānavyaktāṁ(n), teṣāṁ(ñ) ke yogavittamāḥ. 12.1**

Arjuna said :

The devotees exclusively and constantly devoted to You in the manner stated just earlier, adore You as possessed of form and attributes, and those who adore as the supreme Reality only the indestructible unmanifest Brahma (who is Truth, Knowledge and Bliss solidified)- of these two types of worshippers who are the best knowers of Yoga?

Arjuna wanted to know which was the better path of worship, a path taken by a devotee who was ever integrated with the Unmanifested form of Brahman or the one adopted by someone who worships the Manifest form (Sagun Brahman) of Śrī Bhagavān. Happiness is the main goal of all

pursuits, material or spiritual and the main source for eternal happiness (Paramanand) is the Bhagavān Krishna himself. Both these paths involved constant contemplation of Śrī Bhagavān. So when Krishna started talking about Sagun Brahman, Arjuna was confused and hence he asked which was the better path?

12.2

śrībhagavānuvāca mayāveśya mano ye mām(n), nityayuktā upāsate, śraddhayā parayopetāḥ(s), te me yuktatamā matāḥ. 12.2

Śrī Bhagavān said :

I consider them to be the best Yogīs, who endowed with supreme faith, and ever united through meditation with Me, worship Me with their mind centred on Me.

Then Śrī Bhagavān said; those who were integrated with him and completely fixated on him were the true yogis. However one should remember that conscious bhakti is better than unconscious bhakti and unconscious bhakti was better than no bhakti.

Śrī Bhagavān mentioned that individual sadhak would determine what type of Bhakti he was to follow just as one mathematical question can be solved by different children in different ways. Śrī Bhagavān further states that for most common people Bhakti yoga is relatively easier. However, that wasn't the only method, the next shloka enlightens us further.

12.3

ye tVākṣaRāmanirdeśyaṁ(m), avyaktaṁ(m) paryupāsate, sarvatragamacintyaṁ(ñ) ca, kūṭasthamacalaṁ(n) dhruvam. 12.3

Those, however, who fully controlling all their senses and even-minded towards all, and devoted to the welfare of all beings, constantly adore as their very self the unthinkable,

Bhagavān explained the Nirguna Brahman (unmanifest consciousness) as Akshar Swarup (that which never decays/destroys/degrades), anirdeshya (that which could not be indicated), Avyakta(indescribable), that which was invisible.

The Upanishads described Nirguna Brahman as something that couldn't be seen through our eyes but our eyes were powered (to see) as it was omnipresent. This was proved by Narsimha Avatar to Hiranyakashipu when he asked Pralhad whether his Vishnu was in the pillars, Pralhad agreed and Bhagavān Narsimha appeared when Hirankashyapu mockingly crashed the pillar.

Bhagavān is in every atom, he is achintyam (something that is beyond dreams and thoughts of beings) Kuthastha (the cause of Maya-illusion). The thought Ekam Satya Jagan Mithya came to mind when describing Maya. Truth is one, the world is an illusion. The Nirguna Brahman is also eternal (dhruvam) and unmovable (achalam).

Meditating on either Sagun or Nirgun Brahman, allowed one to reach their goal of liberation(moksh).The fourth shlok elucidated the qualities of a jñānayogī or a seeker. The 4 parts of the shloka elaborate the way of life (achar samhita), our will or vision, action required for the welfare

of all beings and fruits of our actions respectively. It is important to have control over our 10 senses at all times, (5 jñānanendriyas and 5 Karmendriyas). We should consider all living beings as equal (here it means sam darshan and not sam vartan -impartial in consideration and not action), e.g. consideration for a dog as fellow soul and not treating the dog as another human being. We should be engaged in activities that lead to the welfare of all. Here Śrī Bhagavān assures such a devotee would attain HIM.

12.4

**sanniyamyendriyagrāmaṁ(m), sarvatra śamabuddhayaḥ,
te prāpnuvanti māmeva, sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ. 12.4**

omnipresent, indestructible, indefinable, eternal, immovable, unmanifest and changeless Brahma, they too come to Me.

Arjuna from his actions seemed to seek more guidance, and Śrī Bhagavān in all his compassion gives us another method. That is to completely surrender to HIM. One should meditate on HIM with exclusivity and devotion, and dedicate all of their karmas (actions) to HIM. If one does this, Śrī Bhagavān would make them cross the bhavsagar (the ocean of birth and death of the created world/samsar). When the Mind and Intellect, both in a person are completely absorbed and fixed on Śrī Bhagavān, ultimately they would reach HIM.

12.5

**kleśo'dhikatarasteṣāṁ(m), avyaktāsaktacetāsām,
avyaktā hi gatirduḥkhaṁ(n), dehavadbhiravāpyate. 12.5**

Of course, the strain is greater for those who have their mind attached to the Unmanifest, as attunement with the Unmanifest is attained with difficulty by the body-conscious people.

Bhagavān also acknowledged that the strain and struggle was higher when one followed the path with the unmanifest, especially since we are limited by our physical bodies.

12.6

**ye tu sarvāṇi karmāṇi, mayi sannyasya matparāḥ,
ananyenaiva yogena, mām(n) dhyāyanta upāsate. 12.6**

On the other hand, those depending exclusively on Me, and surrendering all actions to Me, worship Me (God with attributes), constantly meditating on Me

Arjuna from his actions seemed to seek more guidance, and Krishna in all his compassion gives another method, that is to completely surrender to HIM. One should meditate on him with exclusivity and devotion, and dedicate all of their **karmas** to HIM.

12.7

**teṣāmahaṁ(m) samuddhartā, mṛtyusaṁsārasāgarāt,
bhavāmi nacirātpārtha, mayyāveśitacetāsām. 12.7**

with single-minded devotion, them, Arjuna, I speedily deliver from the ocean of birth and death, their

mind being fixed on Me.

If one does this, Bhagawan would make them cross the bhavsagar (the ocean the created world/samsar) and get one freed of the vicious cycle of birth and death.

12.8

mayyeva mana ādhatsva, mayi buddhiṁ(n) niveśaya, nivasiṣyasi mayyeva, ata ūrdhvaṁ(n) na saṁśayaḥ. 12.8

Therefore, fix your mind on Me, and establish your intellect in Me alone; thereafter you will abide solely in Me. There is no doubt about it.

When the mind and intellect of a person are completely absorbed and fixed on Bhagvan, ultimately they would reach the Supreme.

The Vivechan concluded with chants of Harinaam and Question and Answer Session

1) Question by Ms Neeru Dogra

'Achintayam' is something which we have never heard or seen before: What about the inspiration you get for new inventions and discoveries?

Answer

The inspiration to invent something new is based on something old. The un-manifested form is something which one has never seen or heard and it has no name and no form . To think about something one has to either know the name or have any form and the un-manifested form has none of these hence it is Achintayam' .

2) Question by Karan Jangrid

What is the purpose of having 5 idols (Ganesha, Vishnuji, Shivji, Adishakti and Surya), in our places of worship and how are they connected?

Answer

It is not compulsory to place them, but it is beneficial to do that. It is a misconception that people still believe; those who worship Vishnuji cannot worship Brahmaji and vice versa or they cannot worship Adishakti. Hence to do away with such thoughts one has all the idols in the same place of worship and there remains no room for the misconception anymore. Ganesha is the most preferred devata and Surya NARAYAN is the only Devata we can see and hence we should give arghya (offerings in the form of water). It also makes our life better.

3)Question by Jagdish Sharan

'Yeh Tu Sarvani Karmani' how to keep the alertness of offering all the fruits of the actions to HIM?

Answer

When one starts believing that this physical form has been sent by HIM and all the duties as a Father, son, husband, brother or any relation is being performed just to please HIM only then can we get rid of the feeling of 'MY'ness and we can offer all the fruits of action to HIM.

4) Question by Baburamji

In-spite of regular chanting Ramcharitmanas I get disheartened and feel angry that there is no God and wonder why I am unable to control my anger?

Answer

One has to cleanse oneself from within to be able bring a change in one's behaviour. If one has enough money but does not spend it then it is of no use having the money. Similarly if one keeps chanting but does not practice the desired behavior then it will not bring any change. Reading the Gita will help more because it helps to apply things in practical life.



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Thank you-For reading the summary

You have enjoyed this vivechan writeup! In spite of intense editing and proofreading, errors of grammar, as also of omission and commission may have crept in. We appreciate your forbearance.

Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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|| OM ŚRĪKṚṢṆĀRPAṄAMASTU ||