

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 2: Sāṅkhya-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/IjiiwQT4mVs>

Who Am I: Knowledge of Self, The Fundamental Principle Of Gīta

॥ श्री ॥

The 2nd chapter of the Bhagavad-Gītā, is **Sāṅkhya Yoga - The Yoga of Knowledge**.

The session began with the customary lighting of Diya (lamp) and praying obeisance to the Gurus and Parameśvara.

Bhagavadgīta is the Eternal Song of Bhagavān, that was sung from the battlefield of Dharma, the Kurukṣetra. The first chapter gave us the context and the gravitas of the moment of this elixir of knowledge. Where after the query by Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Sañjaya began the narration of the battleground, of its formations and the conversations between Duryodhana, Bhīṣma and Droṇācārya. As the Bugle of War was sounded, and the sounds of conches, War instruments and War cries reverberated through the skies and the war arena, terrifying man and beast alike, Arjuna and Bhagavān entered the scene.

One saw the initial bravado of Arjuna in asking Bhagavān to steer him in the centre of the Battlefield to observe his enemies. Once facing his beloved elders, the same Arjuna began his lamentation of not fighting the war...this has also given the first chapter its name, Arjuna-Viṣāda-Yoga, the Yoga of Despondency of Arjuna.

It is extremely crucial to have a motivated force and army to win any war. And here, one could find the most important of the Pāṇḍava warriors, Arjuna, had severe depression to the point where he displayed symptoms similar to a panic attack, where he has lost hold over his mighty bow, his body shaking and then he sits down at the back of the chariot refusing to fight.

Bhagavān had been a patient listener throughout Arjuna's lamentation, but on seeing his beloved Arjuna in the throes of Depression due to attachment, so much so that he even had forgotten his duty as a warrior, and had lost any motivation and even lost the ability for discernment between right and

wrong, Bhagavān became his counsellor and Guide.

What is Dharma? In Bhagavadgītā, Dharma is performing one's duty. When one hears 'mama Dharma', e.g., Student Dharma, Husband's Dharma etc. It alludes to duty and the discernment to know what action to perform at any given moment.

The **second chapter** marks the beginning of the Shastra (science) of Bhagavad-Gītā, taught by the Divine Himself. This chapter is also known as the Index chapter, which allows a glimpse into all the others. However, such a secret and beneficial knowledge that had till now been kept under wraps, **What occurred that caused Bhagavān to disclose it at this moment? What prompted it? And what can we as ordinary seekers gain from it?**

These are some of the aspects that one would be looking at in this chapter. Let us dive into that moment of utter despondency of Arjuna, Lost and Confused sitting in his chariot...this is the sight that Sañjaya saw as he continued his narration to Dhṛtarāṣṭra....

2.1

**sañjaya uvāca
taṁ(n) tathā kṛpayāviṣṭam, aśrupūrṇākulekṣaṇam,
viṣhīdantamidaṁ(m) vākyam, uvāca madhusūdanaḥ. 2.1**

Sañjaya said:

Śrī Kṛṣṇa then addressed the following words to Arjuna, who was as mentioned before overwhelmed with pity, whose eyes were filled with tears and agitated, and who was full of sorrow.

Seeing such a sight, Sañjaya continued his narration. He described Arjuna to be overwhelmed with tears, distressed and his eyes are said to be **viṣhīdantam** (grief-stricken). The words are carefully chosen here, **viṣhīdantam** alludes to a kind of mourning or grief that leads to one forgetting their duties. This is a severe despondency.

In such a pitiful state, Arjuna went back to his chariot and sat down. Seeing the grief stricken state of Arjuna, Madhusūdana, the slayer of the evil Asura Madhu, began speaking. Here, usage of Madhusūdana is the affirmation that just as Bhagavān Shri Krishna had slayed the Asura Madhu; Similarly, HE could slay the Moha (attachment/desire) of Arjuna that has lead to his despondency.

In a way one can learn the importance of being a good listener from Bhagavān. HE had been quietly listening as any good counsel would. Then as He saw the tragic state of such a great warrior, HE spoke harshly. This was to awaken Arjuna from his trance, as he was no longer acting rationally.

The mind is one of the most important tools of our existence. Only by conquering our mind is one able to work to their full potential.

A couplet by KabirDas ji illustrated the importance of mind,

मन के हारे हार है, मन के जीते जीत।
कहे कबीर हरि पाइए मन ही की परतीत।।

Meaning that only by winning the mind can we win the battle, those who have lost in their mind would lose the task even before they begin.

Thus, victory or loss are truly an expression of the mind. Arjuna here had already lost the battle in his mind. It would not be possible for him to obtain victory in such a state. Therefore, Parameśvara had to step in.

2.2, 2.3

śrībhagavānuvāca
kutastvā kaśmalamidaṃ(m), viṣame samupasthitam,
anāryajuṣṭamasvargyam, akīrtikaRāmarjuna. 2.2
klaibyaṃ(m) mā sma gamaḥ(ph) pārtha, naitattvayyupapadyate,
kṣudraṃ(m) hr̥dayadaurbalyaṃ(n), tyaktvottiṣṭha parantapa. 2.3

Śrī Bhagavān said:

Arjuna, how has this infatuation overtaken you at this odd hour? It is shunned by noble souls; neither will it bring heaven, nor fame to you.

Yield not to unmanliness, Arjuna; it does not befit you. Shaking off this base faint-heartedness stand up , O scorcher of enemies.

The first of the 2 verses begin by the statement **śrī-bhagavān uvācha**. This is the first time in the Mahābhārata where one sees the usage of "**Bhagavān uvācha**" meaning Bhagavān said. Until this point one only sees the usage of terms like Vasudeva uvācha or Shri Krishna uvācha.

Then why do we see Bhagavān here? Let us first understand what is the meaning of Bhagavān.

Parashar Muni had described it in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa as,

aiśvaryaśya samagrasyavīryasya yaśasaḥ śriyaḥjñāna-vairāgyayoś caiva

Bhagavān means the one who possesses these six opulences in full: all riches, all strength, all influence, all wisdom, all beauty, all renunciation.

Thus, Śrī Bhagavān is characterized with properties of divinity (ishatva), HE sustains the Universe (**dharma**), HE is the Storehouse of Complete Knowledge (**jñāna**) and Wealth (**Śrī**), and HE is detached from all HIS possessions (**Vairāgya**).

Usually one can find only some of these qualities in any individual, however, here even the seemingly opposite characteristics like Śrī (wealth) and Vairāgya (renunciation) are present in Yogeśvara. At this moment in history, on the Kurukṣetra, denoting Bhagavān to Shri Krishna was an acknowledgement that; the one who was speaking was **Parameśvara Himself giving this elixir of Knowledge, that is the Bhagavadgīta**.

This is also mentioned in the last verse of Gītā,

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।

तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥ 78॥

Wherever there is Shree Krishna, the Ruler of all Yoga, Yogeśvara, wherever there is Arjuna, the supreme archer, there certainly will be unending opulence, victory, prosperity, and righteousness. Of this, I am certain.

Thus, the presence of Yogeśvara guarantees victory.

The Divine Counsellor

Bhagavān admonished the despondent Arjuna by asking him as to where he had gotten the delusion of attachment at such an inopportune time, since the enemy was right in front of them.

The words again are judiciously chosen, HE asked Arjuna not to show the behaviour of **anārya**, which would be opposite of **ārya** ~ which means a person of noble attributes. The term **ārya** has been vilified and mistranslated by the West by giving it a different meaning of race. This is simply done for nefarious reasons. Even a wife calls her husband ārya.

Bhagavān is asking Arjuna not to show despicable behaviour as he certainly won't be attaining any higher planes after death, instead would gain infamy of running from his duty. There would be no commendation for showing ahimsa, non violence, since he would be running away from his duty and Dharma.

Yogeśvara has used extremely harsh words which could have infuriated anyone else as HE used the terms **klaibyam** (impotence) and **kṣudram** meaning; being petty. Again the importance of pronunciation and correct interpretation is shown here, as a simple pronunciation error changes the message and meaning. Here the term used is **kṣudram** (petty behaviour) and not **ṣudram** (of the 4 Varnas). Hence one must be alert in getting the correct message.

Any person who has lost his confidence needs a serious boost up and a reminder so that he can correct the mindset. Billy Graham once said, "**When wealth is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is lost; when character is lost, all is lost**"

One can attain wealth and health but once your confidence has taken a hit, it is difficult to revive. Even Hanumān ji had forgotten his powers and regained them only after being reminded by Jambavan.

This incident is also shown in the Valmiki Ramayana, in the Kiskindhā Kāṇḍ where Jambavan stated,

बलम् बुद्धिः च तेजः च सत्त्वम् च हरि सत्तम ।

विशिष्टम् सर्वं भूतेषु किम् आत्मानम् न बुद्धयसे ॥

'O leader of the monkeys! you are superior in strength, wisdom, brilliance and valour to all beings. Why do you not realise your own strength?

After narrating the entire tale, finally Jambavan encouraged and motivated Hanumān ji by saying,

उत्तिष्ठ हरि शार्दूल लङ्घयस्व महा अर्णवम् ।

परा हि सर्वं भूतानाम् हनुमन् या गतिः तव ॥

O Hanuman, tiger among monkeys, rise up and cross this great ocean. You have that supreme capacity among all beings.

Similarly, here Yogeśvara too after severely admonishing Parth (son of Pritha, Kuntī), encouraged him to rise above the mundane and unworthy behaviour as it does not befit a warrior like him. Such weak hearted behaviour does not befit a warrior like him as it brings him disgrace; Therefore, HE is asking him to **Arise! oh conqueror of enemies.**

Bhagavān comes to us as a guide, who helps us navigate this Saṃsāra (material and immaterial world of existence) and Bhagavadgītā is HIS manual to help us in our hours of distress when we are low in confidence and Self esteem.

Any time if one is confused regarding the future path and correct choices.....Bhagavadgīta should be the refuge.

2.4

arjuna uvāca
katham(m) bhīṣmamahaṁ(m) saṅkhye, droṇaṁ(ñ) ca madhusūdana,
iṣubhiḥ(ph) pratiyotsyāmi, pūjārḥāvarisūdana. 2.4

Arjuna said:

How Kṛṣṇa, shall I fight Bhīṣma and Droṇa with arrows on the battle-field ? They are worthy of deepest reverence, O destroyer of foes.

Thus, Yogeśvara admonished and encouraged Arjuna, through the previous verse. The Jñāneshvari by the revered Saint Jñāneshvara (treatise on Bhagavadgīta in Marathi) gives an interesting perspective on the inner motivations of Bhagavān and Arjuna in this context, as HE stated,

तूं शूरवृत्तीचा ठावो। क्षत्रियांमार्जी रावो।
तुझिया लाठेपणाचा आवो। तिहीं लोकीं ॥ ९ ॥
तुवां संग्रामीं हरु जिंकिला। निवातकवचांचा ठावो फेडिला।
पवाडा तुवां केला। गंधर्वासीं ॥ १० ॥
पाहतां तुझेनि पाडें। दिसे त्रैलोक्यही थोकडें।
ऐसें पुरुषत्व चोखडें। पार्था तुझे ॥ ११ ॥

You are the abode of valour, the prince among warriors; all the three worlds stand in awe of your valour. You conquered Bhagavān Shiva in war and dispatched the Nivatakavacha Daityas and made the Gandharvas sing your praises. The world looks small in comparison with you, so great are your qualities, O Partha. It is strange that losing your heroic spirit, you are lamenting with face downcast.

म्हणौनि अझुनी अर्जुना। झणें चित्त देसी या हीना।
वेगीं धीर करूनियां मना। सावधु होई ॥ १७ ॥
सांडीं हें मूर्खपण। उठीं घे धनुष्यबाण।
संग्रामीं हें कवण। कारुण्य तुझे ? ॥ १८ ॥

Think for yourself, O Arjuna, how wretched you are with this compassion: Therefore, O Arjuna, do not think of such things. Take courage and come quickly to your senses. Give up this folly, arise and take the bow in hand. Of what avail is this compassion on the field of battle?

Thus, at this moment Arjuna was filled with empathy and compassion. Bhagavān was reminding him that beginning of War was not the moment where one should be exhibiting these qualities. Didn't he know that who were going to be his opponents before the war began? **Compassion and empathy for his opponents at this stage was simply folly and idiocy, and this was a certain way to lose a war.**

Sensing the clear displeasure of Parameśvara, Arjuna proclaimed that he could certainly fight others like Duryodhana but couldn't fight against his beloved grand uncle Bhīṣma and his teacher Droṇācārya. He asked Madhusūdana that one was his beloved elder and the other the one who had given him his knowledge and abilities. How was he to shoot arrows against them? This was unethical and unthinkable for him.

These were his revered heros, how then they could be attacked? (Again interesting choice name for Bhagavān here, **ari-sūdana**: destroyer of enemies, perhaps to denote that these 2 were not for

Arjuna).

2.5

**gurūnahatvā hi mahānubhāvān,
śreyo bhoktuṃ(m) bhaikṣyamapīha loke,
hatvārthakāmāṃstu gurūnihaiva,
bhuñjīya bhogānrudhirapradigdhān. 2.5**

It is better to live on alms in this world by not slaying these noble elders, because even after killing them we shall after all enjoy only blood-stained pleasures in the form of wealth and sense-enjoyment.

Here, the tone of Arjuna's lament and protestations have already shifted. He proclaimed that it was better for him to accept alms as a hermit and live on *bhiksha* (donations or alms received in the single bowl, and survive on it).

Again, Arjuna's motivation could be understood from Jñāneshvari, where Arjuna said,

हैं झुंज नव्हे प्रमादु । एथ प्रवर्तलिया दिसतसे बाधु ।
हा उघड लिंगभेदु । वोढवला आम्हां ॥ ३१ ॥
देखें मातापितरें अर्चिजती । सर्वस्वें तोषु पावविजती ।
तिये पाठीं केवीं वधिजती । आपुलिया हातीं ॥ ३२ ॥
मी पार्थु द्रोणाचा केला । येणें धनुर्वेदु मज दिधला ।
तेणें उपकारें काय आभारैला । वधी तयातें ? ॥ ३७ ॥

This is not a war but a blunder on our part. Our engagement in it will be disastrous, involving the slaughter of our elders. We should be serving our parents and giving them joy in every way. Instead, how can we slay them with our own hands? What's wrong with everybody? Woe upon our life that we should use against them the military skills learnt from them! it is Drona (as I was his pupil) who taught me the science of archery. Shall I then return this favour by slaying him?

Thus, Arjuna was now undergoing a slight change in attitude, as though he was still despaired yet he had regained some of his spark, trying to find a new perspective on his issue, and with the recognition that he actually was averse to fighting only 2 of the several men on the opposing side.

2.6

**na caitadvidmaḥ(kh) kataranno garīyo,
yadvā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ,
yāneva hatvā na jijīviṣāmaḥ(s),
te'vasthitāḥ(ph) pramukhe dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ. 2.6**

We do not even know which is preferable for us- to fight or not to fight; nor do we know whether we shall win or whether they will conquer us. Those very sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, killing whom we do not even wish to live, stand in the army ranks.

Noticing that Bhagavān didn't look very pleased with him, Arjuna had undergone a shift in his understanding that perhaps he was wrong in his thoughts. Knowing that **I do not understand** is the first step towards the possibility of learning new things. One cannot gain new knowledge without humility and keeping an open mind.

Arjuna stated that he did not know what was better, to be victorious or be vanquished? as victory itself could seem like defeat for him by being forced into the situation of having to slay his beloved ones.

A very famous couplet from the Ramayana illustrated the importance of their motherland,

अपि स्वर्णमयी लंका न मे लक्ष्मण रोचते।

जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी॥

Here, Bhagavān Rām had confessed to Lakshmana that HE felt no interest towards the Gold City of Lanka, emphasising that even the Svarga-loka couldn't surpass the greatness of Mother and one's motherland.

Despite this, Arjuna proclaimed that he did not wish for the riches or wealth of his kingdom, if it meant that he had to kill ataatayis (aggressors) like Duryodhana. For he felt disgusted killing even these as it meant attacking his beloved ones and he would die after such a victory. What was the use of obtaining a blood soaked throne, when there were no loved ones to enjoy them with? But it was after all their Kingdom and as a Kshatriya, it was his duty to eliminate the Ataatayis.

Thus, he was baffled and confused regarding his future course of actions. When a warrior like Arjuna, who is also beloved of Parameśvara becomes distraught to such an extent that he had lost the ability of discernment between right and wrong actions, **one realises the impact of conflicting choices and also the impact of mind over our actions.**

The acknowledgement that there is an issue leads to seeking the refuge of the advisor, which is the key to understand and course correct our paths when in a state of confusion.

2.7

**kārpaṇyadoṣo pahatasvabhāvaḥ(ph),
prcchāmi tvām(n) dharmasaṃmūḍhacetāḥ,
yacchreyaḥ(s) syānniścitaṃ(m) brūhi tanme,
śiṣyaste'haṃ(m) śādhi mām(n) tvām(m) prapannam. 2.7**

With my very being smitten by the vice of faint-heartedness and my mind puzzled with regard to duty, I beseech you! tell me that which is decidedly good; I am your disciple. Pray, instruct me, who have taken refuge in you.

The next 2 verses are called the key to the Bhagavadgīta. Realising the change in his core personality, Arjuna became baffled but it also gave him the required push to ask for advise.

Arjuna stated that he felt his natural qualities of valour and courage subdued by a feeling of helplessness in not having the desire, even to live and he felt it was paapa (evil actions) in even considering to deign to participate in the destruction of a dynasty. This he called **kārpaṇya-doṣha** (the flaw of cowardice). This was formed due to a shift in his core nature, where he was filled with feeling of empathy and compassion 'Karuna'. This was not his personality.

When one's mind is perplexed regarding duty and responsibility one should definitely take direction from higher authority.

It is said that one should give food and medical aid without any need for the other to ask; However, one should never give unsolicited advice. The one who feels that he knows everything cannot be

taught, only a person who wants to know and has kept an open mind, while also keeping the possibility that what they might know may be wrong, could be taught.

This was not the first time that Arjuna had posed the query, mentioning his confused mind and what should be his future course of action. He had also raised the point on the futility of killing his kin for Kingdom.

For example in chapter 1 when he stated,

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ॥३०॥

निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ।

न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ॥३१॥

My mind is in quandary and whirling in confusion; I am unable to hold myself steady any longer. O Krishna, killer of the Keshi demon, I only see omens of misfortune. I do not foresee how any good can come from killing my own kinsmen in this battle.

Then what changed? **What was different this time, that Bhagavān gave such a detailed knowledge that had been so far withheld?**

The difference was the change in attitude of Arjuna. Having realised that he needed help and course correction, he humbly surrendered to Bhagavān like a good student. A good pupil does not ask advise to reaffirm his own thought process but has a genuine curiosity to learn something he does not understand.

He asked for instructions as a disciple, and the way he asked for it is for all of us to note down if ever one wants to ask something from the Divine. Since he had become confused, he asked Parameśvara to instruct him to proscribe a course of action that would be śhreyah (that which would be beneficial for him) instead of Preyas (that which he wanted). He surrendered to HIM to help him understand his Dharma.

2.8

**na hi prapaśyāmi mamāpanudyād,
yacchokamucchoṣaṇamindriyāṇām,
avāpya bhūmāvasapatnamṛddham(m),
rājyaṁ(m) surāṇāmapī cādhipatyam. 2.8**

For, even on obtaining undisputed sovereignty and an affluent kingdom on this earth and lordship over the gods, I do not see any means that can drive away the grief which is drying up my senses.

He had now come to an understanding that his own confusion and dilemma regarding the correct path to take was so tremendous that he couldn't solve this issue on his own, and sought HIS guidance.

Arjuna described his state, his grief being so profound that no amount of material success, whether victory in this war or even if he won the post of Indra and ruled over the Svarga-loka, would make him happier as nothing could overshadow his grief.

This is a great lesson for us, for if one ever fortunate enough to encounter the Supreme, or even in our day to day prayers, one should be like Arjuna and request for his blessings in what is beneficial for

us, instead of asking for materialistic things.

The biggest paradox is this, that a man is in pursuit of Blissfulness yet he chases happiness, and thinks that materialistic pursuit would help him there. Yet, this lament of Arjuna and his dilemma shows us a mirror in understanding that **materialistic success do not translate into happiness.**

Samarth Ramdas Swami ji beautifully described it in his bhajan Pawan Bhiksha,

पावन भिक्षा दे रे राम | दिनदयाळा दे रे राम ||१||
अभेद भक्ती दे रे राम | आत्मनिवेदन दे रे राम ||२||
सद्विद्या मज दे रे राम | अर्थारोहण दे रे राम ||३||
सज्जन संगती दे रे राम | अलिप्तपण मज दे रे राम ||४||
ब्रह्म अनुभव दे रे राम | अनन्य सेवा दे रे राम ||५||
कोमल वाचा दे रे राम | विमलकरणी दे रे राम ||६||
प्रसंग ओळखी दे रे राम | धूर्त कला मज दे रे राम ||७||
हितकारक मज दे रे राम | जन सुखकारक दे रे राम ||८||
अंतरपारखी दे रे राम | बहुजन मैत्री दे रे राम ||९||
ज्ञान वैभव दे रे राम | उदासिनता दे रे राम ||१०||
मागो नेणे ते दे रे राम | मज न कळे ते दे रे राम ||११||
तुझी आवडी दे रे राम | दास म्हणे ते दे रे राम ||१२||
शब्द मनोहर दे रे राम | सावध पण मज दे रे राम ||१३||
दास म्हणे रे गुणधामा | उत्तम गुण मज दे रामा ||१४||
पावन भिक्षा दे रे राम | दिन दयाळा दे रे राम ||१५||

Confer me the sacred endowment. Oh compassionate.(1)
Bless me with undivided devotion. Introspection (2)
Divine Identification. Total comprehension (3)
Company of Good. Sans Involvement (4)
Ultimate Experience. With Ultimate Commitment (5)
Unity with Empathy. So says Ramdas(6)
Bless me oh Rama.
Courteous speech. Clean Deeds(7)
Situation analysis. With Shrewdness (8)
Good Acts. Beneficial to all(9)
Understand people with insight. Cultivate Friendship.(10)
Gift me with knowledge. But with detachment
Without my seeking. Anything I don't know (12)
Everything else as you please. So says Ramdas (13)
Bless me with the Art of music. With virtuous accomplishment(14)
Pleasing expression. Comforting words(16)
Grasp of epics. Understanding ancient texts (17)
Sense of Rhythm. Art of Dance (18)
Let me be cautious. Well read. (19)
So Says Ramdas, confer upon me. All Good Virtues and Abilities.(20)
Bless me oh Rama, Confer me with the sacred endowment.

Thus, as Arjuna sought HIS refuge and guidance; Bhagavān bestowed Arjuna and through him us ordinary mortals with the nectar of Bhagavadgīta.

2.9

**sañjaya uvāca
evamuktvā hṛṣīkeśaṁ(ñ), guḍākeśaḥ(ph) parantapa,
na yotsya iti govindam, uktvā tūṣṇīm(m) babhūva ha. 2.9**

Sañjaya said:

O King, having thus spoken to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna again said to Him, "I will not fight " and became silent.

Sañjaya continued with his narration and stated that Arjuna having spoken to **hṛṣīkeś**, to Shree Krishna, the master of the mind and senses; **guḍākeśhaḥ** (Arjuna, the conquerer of sleep), **parantapaḥ** (Arjuna, the chastiser of the enemies) declared that, "Oh **Govinda!** (Krishna), I shall not fight!"

2.10

**tamuvāca hṛṣīkeśaḥ(ph), prahasanniva bhārata,
senayorubhayormadhye, viṣīdantamidaṁ(m) vacaḥ. 2.10**

Then, O Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as if smiling, addressed the following words to Arjuna, sorrowing in the midst of two armies.

Sañjaya addressed Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the descendent of Bhārata and continued with his narration where he described Bhagavān to be amused by the words of Arjuna and thus, **Hṛṣīkeśhaḥ with a smiling countenance began his narration of the eternal immortal song of Bhagavadgīta, for the benefit of the grief stricken Arjuna.**

Again the choice of words, usage of **Hṛṣīkeśhaḥ** denoting one in control of their senses as opposed to Arjuna who was **viṣīdantam** (grief-stricken). The word used to denote the expression of Bhagavān is **prahasan**, meaning with slight amusement or a smiling countenance and different from happiness or joy or laughter.

The use of specific words, also helps us in understanding the underlying tenor of the conversation, where Bhagavān was feeling amusement and had slightly benign expression towards the lament of Arjuna as he had finally acknowledged the discrepancy of his actual personality and current disposition. And in conflict, had sought the refuge in Bhagavān for his guidance and advise.

2.11

**śrībhagavānuvāca
aśocyānanvaśocastvaṁ(m), prajñāvādāṁśca bhāṣase,
gatāsūnagatāsūṁśca, nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ. 2.11**

Śrī Bhagavān said:

Arjuna, you grieve over those who should not be grieved for and yet speak like the learned; wise men do not sorrow over the dead or the living

While the first chapter, gives us the reference for the context and background of the events that lead to the Mahābhārata War, this verse marks the beginning of the Bhagavadgīta.

A good counselor goes to the root of the issue before making any diagnosis. Bhagavān too went to

the root of Arjuna's problems by being an excellent listener and having understood his core issue gave a solution for it.

All of Arjuna's grief stemmed from his ignorance of his Self. That, he had neither the awareness nor knowledge of it and he had not realised his Self. Like Arjuna, most of our problems stem from this ignorance of Self.

What one desires is blissfulness, and yet they chase after happiness. We mistakenly assume that materialistic success translate into happiness that is forever. Such happiness is short term and certainly does not lead to contentment.

Knowledge of Self is the Core on which the Bhagavadgīta stands. The entire composition is to first understand and then gain tools so that one can apply them for our realisation of self.

Having figured out Arjuna's root cause of despair and lamentation, HE admonished Arjuna that here he was debating with the words of wisdom, (**prajñā-vādān**) thinking he was Wise, yet like an ignorant was mourning (**anvaśhochāḥ**) over the trivial things, for the paṇḍitāḥ never lament (**anuśhochanti**) over the dead (**gata āsūn**) or the living (**agata asūn**).

Here, the term used is **paṇḍitāḥ** denoting the one who has realised Self, coming from the root **paṇḍa** (one who has the knowledge of Self).

The entire process from knowing the Self to Realising it, is beautifully explained by Bhagavān in the composition of the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā.

Thus, it is also a reminder that instead of debating without the proper knowledge, it is advisable to seek the guidance of our Guru or Bhagavān, like Arjuna had here, for all our grievances of material nature are a direct consequence of ignorance of Self. Gītā acts as excellent counsel for such pursuits.

2.12

**na tvevāhaṃ(ñ) jātu nāsaṃ(n), na tvaṃ(n) neme janādhīpāḥ,
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ(s), sarve vayamataḥ(ph) param. 2.12**

In fact, there was never a time when I was not , or when you or these kings were not. Nor is it a fact that hereafter we shall all cease to be.

We now address the fundamental of our existence, **Who am I?** Let us look at it from the angle of a Scientific theory, for Bhagavadgītā is a Shastra (science) like Bhugol Shastra (Geography), Khagol Shastra (Astronomy), etc.

Any Scientific Principle rests on the bedrock of Hypothesis, and if proven becomes a principle.

Now, if one wants to verify it, they could do so through reproduction of the results by experimentation by the given methodology of the published research. It would contain Aim, Introduction, Apparatus, Procedure, results and Conclusion.

Similarly, Bhagavadgītā is **the proven Principle of the Knowledge of Self and Realisation.** If one wants to test it, they could by following all the different methodology given, and can also compare with various stages of results.

Then what is the **Principle of Self**? The self is eternal and unchanging, indestructible and the cause of our consciousness.

Bhagavān explained the **nature of Self** in this Verse, where HE proclaimed that their never existed a time, where HE did not exist or Arjuna didn't exist. Nor was there a time where all the people he was seeing, Rulers and all didn't exist. They all have always been present here eternally.

Then one may ask, how did we exist say, 65-100 years before? To this, the WE here, is not the body, but the Self.

In fact there would never be a time where they won't exist. **The body may be perishable but the Self is imperishable, Indestructible, eternal.**

Then what is this Self? It can be explained with a simple example.

One looks at their old photos, the baby in the photo, the youngster, the adult and aged person can all be identified as the same person. We look at our old photographs and say that "**its me**" though we have changed. The process is very natural and we accept it as part of course.

The Jñānis (Sages) too understand this journey of the Atman (Self) from one body to the other in a similar manner. Hence, **there was no need for grief or lamentation over mere life and death as the Jivātman that resides in it and makes its identity, is eternal.**

In all the three times (past, present and future), we are eternal in our nature as the Self. The plural number (in we) is used following the diversity of the bodies, but not in the sense of the multiplicity of the Self.

The Jñāneshvari provides us with some insight into this,

तूं जाणता तरी म्हणविसी । परी नेणिवेतें न संडिसी ।
आणि शिकवूं म्हणों तरी बोलसी । बहुसाल नीति ॥ ९२ ॥
तूं आपणपें तरी नेणसी । परी या कौरवांतें शोचूं पहासी ।
हा बहु विस्मय आम्हांसी । पुढतपुढती ॥ ९४ ॥
परी मूर्खपणें नेणसी । न चिंतावें तें चिंतीसी ।
आणि तूंचि नीति सांगसी । आम्हांप्रति ॥ १०१ ॥

Then HE addressed Arjuna: I am really surprised by what you propose to do in the midst of war. You call yourself clever, but you are not conscious of your ignorance. Well, if I wish to enlighten you, you raise various moral issues. You are ignorant of your Self and grieve for the Kauravas. This is what amazes me over and over again.

Then HE asked Arjuna, if he was the one who supported the three worlds? Did he think that this beginningless creation of the world was untrue?

Bhagavān continued,

देखैं विवेकी जे होती । ते दोहीतेंहीं न शोचिती ।
जे होय जाय हे भ्रांती । म्हणौनियां ॥ १०२ ॥
हे उपजे आणि नाशे । तें मायावशें दिसे ।
एन्ही तत्त्वता वस्तु जें असे । तें अविनाशचि ॥ १०५ ॥

Not knowing this, you think the unthinkable out of folly and on top of it profess to give us lessons in

morality. The discriminating do not grieve over birth and death, as all our thinking about them is due to delusion. If you get rid of your delusion, you will realise that it is not so. What we see as birth and death are due to illusion, *Maya*; otherwise the entity which really exists is indestructible.

The nature of Self is the Core of the Bhagavadgīta, and also the core of our existence. The knowledge of this alleviates one from the grief caused due to our attachment of material nature.

2.13

**dehino'sminyathā dehe, kaumāraṁ(m) yauvanaṁ(ñ) jarā,
tathā dehāntaraprāptiḥ(r), dhīrastatra na muhyati. 2.13**

Just as boyhood, youth and old age are attributed to the soul through this body, even so it attains another body, The wise man does not get deluded about this.

The Self or the Jivātman is the constant that is carried from one stage to the other from a baby to old age; It is that which forms our core essence, that remains unchanging through the numerous changes in our life.

This is the essence that one identifies with. The 2 forms of the body,

- **Stul Deha (Gross body):** That what is seen and occupies space
- **Suksma Deha (casual body):** That which makes one conscious, the chaitanya (Consciousness).

To understand this, take the **example** of an instrument like smartphone or a speaker, one can consider the instrument as the gross body, but what is it that makes it work? Electricity. If you shut down the electricity, the instrument can no longer function.

Similarly the Jivās cannot function without the presence of the Jivātman or Dehino, as it is mentioned here. The Jivātman is eternal and does not perish when the physical body perishes; therefore those Sages and Jñānais who understand its true nature are not deluded by the birth or destruction of the body knowing that the eternal Jivātman is not subject to birth or death..

We conclude our session with Harinaam Sankirtan....

Let us look at some of the Q& As of this session.

Keshav ji

Question: What to do when faced with difficult choices as Arjuna, do we also go against our own Kin? In that scenario were Aurangzeb's actions justified?

Answer: One learns Bhagavadgītā, in order to face such difficult choices, to help us on the path of Dharma. If your duty is so, one has to take a similar path.

Regarding Aurangzeb, his own diaries reveal his state and intentions. One begins their journey of learning when they realise that perhaps their actions do not conform to Dharma, and are faced with the dilemma on how to act. In case of Aurangzeb, his entries at the end of the life reveal that he was scared that his actions meant he would suffer in the lower realms due to his evil actions. Thus, it was quite self evident that he knew he would face consequences for his actions were evil.

The intention and the greater cause of good of humanity, and if it upholds the laws of society for its sustenance is Dharma, simply put, duty. Arjuna had all the qualities of a devotee, and was always on the correct side of conduct, thus, he instantly realized that his actions were against his core nature and sought guidance from Bhagavān.

Deepa ji

Question: The changes that occur in the body from baby to old are gradual and subtle over a period of time, hence, easier to accept. But Death is sudden and sometimes painful, how does one accept it as naturally as the other process?

Answer: For those who realise their true Self, the Sages it is the same as the other processes, for us one needs to practice. Bhagavadgīta is an excellent manual for the same. It is also known, that one has to have some Karmic fate, to be provided with such a knowledge. Hence, gradually through practice, and HIS blessings one can attain this state.

It is easier said than done, as to have no connection to body is easy to say, but the moment one pinches you, you would shout in pain. Thus, it is slow process and a gradual process, but one needs to slowly utilise all the methods given here in order to achieve it. Patience is the key here.

Manish Inamdar ji

Question: Can one gift Bhagavadgīta as a gift, since it is said to be a manifestation of Bhagavān Himself?

Answer: Definitely, it is perhaps the most precious gift one can give the other.

Harsha ji?

Question: what to seek from Bhagavān? Is it the **7th shloka of the 2nd chapter** as given here?

Answer: One should seek guidance from Parameśvara as Arjuna did. Perhaps the most pertinent verse, one should memorise it and if ever encounters Bhagavān, then he should ask HIM the same. This is Shreyas, that which is beneficial for us instead of asking for Preyas, that which we like.



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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!

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