

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 2: Sāṅkhya-Yoga

4/5 (Ślōka 42-54), Saturday, 03 June 2023

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/hJp3j2-IVpw>

## Karmayoga cannot be achieved without Sankhya Yoga

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

The session began with the auspicious lighting of the lamp and the prayer.

Today's session is the continuation of efforts to create a deeper meaning of the life we all want to live. It was reiterated that we are trying to understand certain principles of Bhagavadgita that are very important for an effective living and, for attaining the ultimate goal. In the last session, we saw how the actions (karma) we do for our upliftment, bind us and keep us entangled in the vicious circle. Bhagavan Sri Krishna advises us to follow Karma yoga, which will free us from the shackles of karma. The last session was concluded on the following verse.

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन।

बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥2.41॥

O descendent of the Kurus, the intellect of those who are on this path is resolute, and their aim is one-pointed. But the intellect of those who are irresolute is many-branched.

How the focused intellect is fixed in HIM and is able to make a commitment and ensure it's fulfilment. Such an intellect is focused or a firm intellect. Another type of intellect is the one which is having multiple temptations and tries to dissuade one from focusing or, pulls back the doer.

In verse 39, HE had made a transition from the knowledge of the Jivatama (Sankhya yoga) to the importance of action (Karma yoga)

एषा तेऽभिहिता साङ्ख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां शृणु ।

बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥ 2.39॥

Hitherto, I have explained to you Sāṅkhya Yog, or analytic knowledge regarding the nature of the

soul. Now listen, O Parth, as I reveal Buddhi Yog, or the Yog of Intellect. When you work with such understanding, you will be freed from the bondage of karma.

In the following 3 verses, HE moves on to explain how to identify those with the intellect of multiple temptations.

## 2.42, 2.43, 2.44

**yāmimāṃ(m) puṣpitāṃ(ṁ) vācaṃ(m), pravadantyavipaścitaḥ,  
vedavādaratāḥ(ph) pārtha, nānyadastīti vādinaḥ.2.42  
kāmatmānaḥ(s) svargaparā, janmakarmaphalapradām,  
kriyāviśeṣabahulāṃ(m), bhogaiśvaryagatiṃ(m) prati. 2.43  
bhogaiśvaryaprasaktānāṃ(n), tayāpahṛtacetasām,  
vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ(s), samādhau na vidhīyate. 2.44**

Arjuna, those who are full of worldly desires and devoted to the letter of the Vedas, who look upon heaven, as the supreme goal and argue that there is nothing beyond heaven, are unwise.

They utter flowery speech recommending many rituals of various kinds for the attainment of pleasure and power with rebirth as their fruit.

Those whose minds are carried away by such words, and who are deeply attached to pleasure and worldly power, cannot attain the determinate intellect concentrated on God.

These 3 verses explain the fickle minded intellect.

Herein Sri Bhagavan explained the behaviour of those who have an unsteady and indecisive mind, and described the intellect of those who are driven by worldly desires. The right diagnosis is crucial for the right treatment, hence we need to understand the nature of the intellect.

The nature of desire is such that, one desire gives rise to another. For eg. one wants to get good marks, followed by a good job, then wants to get married, and so on. The cycle will never end and one is excessively engrossed in desires.

Vedas are beautiful scriptures that tell us the way of life. But those with indecisive minds, absorb only those teachings from Vedas, which fulfil their desires and perspectives. They follow rituals for the attainment of pleasure and power only - (the *phala shrutis* like *Roopam Dehi, Jayam Dehi, Yasho Dehi...*).

Eg. If food is served on a platter, one will only pick one's favourite, which may be a Rasgulla. **This kind of approach is short-lived and keeps one entangled in the same wheel.**

Such people are unable to focus on anything, If they have to focus on studying something, they will experience multiple distractions. They cannot distinguish between what is real and not real, what is perishable and imperishable. Whatever they may do, their actions are **janmakarmaphalapradām** i.e. focused on getting the pleasures of life, and such actions become the cause for them to get stuck in the cycle of birth and death. Such people have their minds drawn away from their aim **āpahṛtacetasām**.

Most people think that life is only for enjoyment i.e. **bhogaiśvaryagatiṃ**. Their desires revolve around the worldly pleasures. The problem here is not the objects of enjoyment, but it is with our attachment to the things around us. AS long as the attachment continues, realisation will not happen. **One will always be pulled back into worldly pleasures and not be able to focus on realising the Ultimate Supreme, resulting in remaining trapped in the cycle of birth and death.**

Many people say that they can not meditate, and they are unable to focus on their breath, this is because of the obsession of the mind with the things around it. The problem lies with the intellect and not with the objects.

Suppose one has one hour of free time. Those with a fixed intellect will utilise the time in reading the scriptures or meditating upon the Divine. However, those with a fickle or a wavering intellect would watch TV or do things for their enjoyment. Their minds are distracted from their goal of life i.e. Liberation. For them life is only for enjoyment.

Paramatama says **we can attain the ideal state of living by overshadowing the 3 gunas and by establishing our minds on the eternally existing Divine.** We have learnt in the 14th chapter, Guṇatraya-Vibhāga-Yoga, about Sāttvika, Rājasika and Tāmasika Guṇas. All these 3 gunas are binding in nature. Sri Bhagavan says that we have to free ourselves from the shackles of these Gunas and become **Gunateet**, attributes of which have been explained in the 14th chapter.

2.45

**traiguṇyaviṣayā vedā, nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna,  
nirdvandvo nityasattvastho, niryogakṣema ātmavān. 2.45**

Arjuna, the Vedas thus deal with the evolutes of three Guṇas (modes of Prakṛti), viz., worldly enjoyments and the means of attaining such enjoyments; be thou indifferent to these enjoyments and their means, rising above pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain etc., established in the Eternal Existence (God), absolutely unconcerned about the fulfillments of wants and the preservation of what has been already attained, you be self-controlled.

Here, Paramatama said that the Vedas help us understand and live an ideal life. They also explain the attributes of these 3 Gunas, the Rajo Guna, the Tamo Guna, and the Sattva Guna.

**The Vedas give us a comprehensive knowledge of all three gunas. However HE advised, one has to go beyond these gunas (nistraiguṇyo) and attain the state of a Gunateeta.** The characteristics of the three Gunas and how to become *Gunateeta* has been elaborated in Chapter 14. However the concept has been introduced here as well, where HE advised Arjuna on how to overcome the three Gunas.

To go beyond the Gunas one needs to be free from the two conflicting states ie. **nirdvandvo**. One is advised to rise above the pairs of opposites like sukha - dukha (pleasure and sorrow) etc. For eg. when good things happen in life as per one's expectations, there is no end to one's ecstasy, and similarly, when things go wrong, against their expectations one is utterly distressed. HE said one has to be free from these emotions and achieve a state of Nirdvandva, that is being free from conflicting states and their effects, and, establish one's mind in HIM always ie. become **nityasattvastho**.

In this busy age it is not easy to meditate on HIM for hours. So **HE said whatever action one may do must be done as an offering to HIM, and keeping the mind focused on HIM.**

Next, one was advised to free one's mind from the tendency of acquisitions and preservations - **niryogakṣema**, and maintain a balance between the two. One must have faith that Bhagavan will take care of one's wishes and aspirations, be free from the worries of acquiring and preserving and focus on realisation and establishing oneself in HIM. **Yogakṣema** results in HIM opening avenues for one to achieve whatever one desires. One who desires Paramatama will be graced to acquire knowledge of the self. One who desires a good job, provision for achieving the same will be provided

by HIM.

Lastly one is told to establish oneself in the Self - **ātmavān**, to overcome the three Gunas.

The concept of being unaffected by the events of life may seem very complex, but it is simple if we take micro steps at a time. For example, students could focus on giving their best but not be affected by the marks they achieve. One's maid may not come some day, but one must not stress but try to remain poised. If we keep practicing being in balance with small everyday things of life, we will gradually reach the equanimity we are trying to achieve and this is beautifully explained by Sri Paramatama in the next Shloka.

## 2.46

**yāvānārtha udapāne, sarvataḥ(s) saṃplutodake,  
tāvānsarveṣu vedeṣu, brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ. 2.46**

A Brāhmaṇa, who has obtained enlightenment, has as much use for all the Vedas as one who stands at the brink of a sheet of water overflowing on all sides has for a small reservoir of water.

Paramatama, told Arjuna, by attaining nistraiguṇyo state (where one is free from 3 gunas) one gets the knowledge of the ultimate **Brahma**. After attaining this knowledge small pleasures, victories, and defeats will not affect one.

HE gave a beautiful example in this verse. An enlightened being will have no use of the knowledge of the scriptures. Similarly one on the banks of the mighty river Ganga, will be so mesmerised by its expanse, that the thought of a small bucket or tank full of water will not occur to him.

Likewise, on realising HIM, one will not be affected by small wins and losses. It is like a person who has become a Prime Minister will not be interested in a corporate job, or a vice chancellor will not aspire to become a primary school teacher. **It means that someone who has come to understand the Brahmand (the whole universe) will not be stuck with small worldly things.**

## 2.47

**karmaṇyevādhikāraṣte, mā phaleṣu kadācana,  
mā karmaphalaheturbhūr, mā te saṅgo'stVākarmaṇi. 2.47**

Your right is to work only and never to the fruit thereof. Do not consider yourself to be the cause of the fruit of actions, nor let your attachment be to inaction.

This is one of the most important and popular verses of Bhagavadgita which most of us may have heard. Each of the charan in this shloka communicates one law of Karma yoga. When a shloka is most spoken about, there will also be different interpretations of it. The most common interpretation of the shloka is, one only has the right to do one's deeds, but has no rights to its fruits. This understanding has resultant corollaries that have made some people wonder if one is not going to get the fruit, why should one even do the action? Such misinterpretations are the result of a misunderstanding of the word **Aādhikāra** in this shloka. It is commonly understood as ones rights, but in Sanskrit it means eligibility, capability, qualification. For e.g.. if we need admission to a particular university, we need to qualify for the same. Sri Bhagavan says, such eligibility, we have only on our actions, but its outcomes do not come under the purview of our control. **It is very important that we understand that Aādhikāra is not about ones rights, but it is about our eligibility for tasks and not on the fruits of the action.**

There is an irrefutable law about karma (action), it is that one can not stop oneself from action. This is the reason why we find it very difficult to meditate or sit stable without doing anything.

Here we must understand two important things, One is, that inevitably a person will perform actions. Once the action is done, there surely is some outcome in which one has no control. Hence, one needs to focus on actions alone. Second is, that when no action is done, there is no result / fruit either.

Sri Bhagavan said that we get the result of whatever action we do. The account of all our actions is being recorded somewhere in this cosmos. But, we are not eligible to know what results we will get and when. For eg. We are listening to this Vivechan, which will have some outcome, but we are not eligible to know what is the outcome and when will it happen or in what quantity. Hence we must only focus on doing good Karma in the best possible manner without expecting the fruits from our actions.

**HE says the fruit of the action must not be our motive (karmaphalahetur). Focusing on results affects the quality of one's actions.** Whatever one does should be done in full faith without thinking about the benefits of the action. A student who wastes time thinking of results while studying for an exam, diminishes his efforts. His focus should be only on studying well.

Swami ji says **every work should be done with complete devotion and caution (savadhaanta)**. Herein the meaning of caution was explained by the following example. A student does selective study with complete devotion. In the exam chapters not studied are questioned, thus inspite of devotion towards the studies he does not get good marks. Hence, it was stated that caution towards work is also a must. Only with both caution and devotion desired results can be achieved. However, again one must be engrossed only in the task, and be completely detached from the result of the action. Accept the results gracefully (*Hari ichha*)

Sri Bhagavan elaborates these principles with Arjuna, as Arjuna was confused about what is right and wrong, what action he should take, to fight or not to fight the war.

In this verse the most important message is that we should think right. We must change our attitude and develop the right perspectives. We may have heard people say 'I feel like running away from everything'. Some people like to travel or shop to distract their mind and rejuvenate. But wherever one may go, one carries ones mind and the problems too. Changing just the location does not help. **Hence it is imperative to change one's perspectives and develop the ability to think right. This will help one in dealing with the consequences of ones actions whatever it would be.**

There are 3 types of attachments that come with action; let us understand them and how to be freed from them, in the next shloka.

**2.48**

**yogasthaḥ(kh) kuru karmāṇi, saṅgaṃ(n) tyaktvā dhanañjaya,  
siddhyasiddhyoḥ(s) samo bhūtvā, samatvaṃ(ṽ) yoga ucyaṭe.2.48**

Arjuna, perform your duties established in Yoga, renouncing attachment, and be even-minded in success and failure; evenness of mind is called "Yoga".

Here Paramatama gives us the right definition of Yoga and tells us about how we should do our actions.

HE said whatever action one is doing, one must be steadfast and be established in Yoga - **yogasthaḥ**,

and, be detached from the results of action - **sañgaṃ tyaktvā**.

HE speaks of 3 types of attachments that come with actions. They are:

1. **Attachment to the act itself.** That is, I have to do this karma, I have to do it in such and such a manner, etc.
2. **Attachment to the result / fruit of the action.** A salaried person equates his work to the salary received.
3. **Attachment to the doer.** ie. a sense of I, that I am the doer. This is the ego of being the doer.

Sri Krishna said that we must abandon all such attachments to the action and maintain equanimity. We may have heard people saying how much they did for their children, and the children were not caring for them in their old age. One should be happy about doing their duty towards their children and be equanimous with whatever they get in return, irrespective of whether they got what was expected or not. Such an attitude requires us to be free from the attachments from the inside, and mere external changes will not help. This helps in attaining the state of Yoga, the state of not being attached.

To be established in Yoga, HE advised one to remain equanimous (**samo bhūtvā, samatvaṃ**) whether one gets desired results (**siddh**), or undesired results (**asiddhyo**).

Such a state requires us to carefully guard our minds. For eg. When a doctor is doing surgery, he wears gloves so that the infection if any, in his hands does not reach the patient, and the infection of the patient if any does not reach the doctor. Similarly, we wear gloves to keep our hands clean when we do actions like cleaning. Likewise, we need to wear gloves on our minds so that the impurities of the world do not affect the mind. This way the mind will remain happy and peaceful because ultimately it is part of Paramatma, hence its nature is to be happy. HE says this is how the state of our mind should be.

**2.49**

**dūreṇa hyavaraṃ(ñ) karma, buddhiyogāddhanañjaya,  
buddhau śaraṇamanviccha, kṛpaṇāḥ(ph) phalahetavaḥ. 2.49**

Action with a selfish motive is far inferior to this Yoga in the form of equanimity. Do seek refuge in this equipoise of mind, Arjuna; for poor and wretched are those who are the cause in making their actions bear fruits.

There are 2 types of yoga, Sankhya yoga, and Karma yoga.

Karma yoga is the Yoga of action. However, action leads to different types of desires and attachment to the result of actions. To move ahead, and to free our minds of these desires, one requires the help of both Sankhya Yoga and Karma yoga. Yoga of Wisdom (Sankhya Yoga) helps to free our minds from seeking the results of actions. The one who takes refuge in right thinking (in wisdom), does not get affected by the results and thus gets established in Karma Yoga.

Those who are fickle-minded - **kṛpaṇāḥ**, are always going to desire the fruits of actions and get caught up in the cycle of misery. **Hence, we must shape our intellect in such a way that it does not get affected by external things and become helpless.**

**2.50**



**buddhiyukto jahātiha, ubhe sukṛtaduṣkṛte,  
tasmādyogāya yujyasva, yogaḥ(kh) karmasu kauśalam. 2.50**

Endowed with equanimity, one sheds in this life both good and evil. Therefor, strive for the practice of this Yoga of equanimity. Skill in action lies in the practice of this Yoga.

Those endowed with the right intellect are able to shed both good and evil deeds (**sukṛtaduṣkṛte**).

One devoted to yoga, will become skilled in action and be able to do it the right way. For example, if one is walking on the road and is splashed with a lot of muddy water by a passing vehicle, just by changing the external clothes the person will become clean once again. Likewise the act of removing the outer cover of the mind will keep the mind clean.

So whether one is celebrated for something good he has done or punished for a bad deed, one who is endowed with the right thinking will remain unaffected internally, despite experiencing good or bad, in both situations.

**2.51**

**karmajaṃ(m) buddhiyuktā hi, phalaṃ(n) tyaktvā manīṣiṇaḥ,  
janmabandhavinirmuktāḥ(ph), padaṃ(ñ) gacchantyanāmayam. 2.51**

For wise men possessing an equipoised mind, renouncing the fruit of actions and freed from the shackles of birth, attain the blissful supreme state.

Paramatma has said that actions are borne from the intellect.

HE already spoke about our eligibility to do only karma and that we cannot desire any particular kind of outcome. To be able to do our action with detachment to the results, one needs to fix one's intellect. Our intellect steers our actions For eg. We all in Geeta Pariwar are blessed as we all have decided to engage the mind in Bhagavadgita. It is our intellect that has helped us take such an action. The kind of actions we take will decide whether we will be free of this cycle of birth and death. **One's intellect is the charioteer of one's life.**

Hence people with wisdom are able to attain a balance in life and be free of the attachment to the fruits of action, thus freeing them self from the cycle of birth and death, and attaining a blissful state with the unison of the Supreme.

**2.52**

**yadā te mohakalilaṃ(m), buddhirvyatitariṣyati,  
tadā gantāsi nirvedaṃ(m), śrotavyasya śrutasya ca. 2.52**

When your mind will have fully crossed the mire of delusion, you will then grow indifferent to the enjoyments of this world and the next that have been heard of as well as to those that are yet to be heard of.

Sri Bhagavan said that this intellect is the problem. When it is fixed in the delusional world (**mohakalilaṃ**) we are unable to take refuge in its wisdom. Only when the intellect moves beyond the delusion, we will become indifferent to the actions around us. If we are looking at ourselves in a mirror that is covered with dust we can not see the correct reflection of ourselves. For this, we first need to clean the mirror. Similarly, when our intellect is veiled with delusions it can not think rationally. Only after this veil of ignorance is replaced with knowledge, it will become indifferent to

what is happening in the world, to what is being heard and not heard yet (**śrotavyasya śrutasya ca**). It will only connect with its inner self.

2.53

**śrutivipratipannā te, yadā sthāsyati niścalā,  
samādhāvacalā buddhiḥ(s) tadā yogamavāpsyasi. 2.53**

When your intellect, confused by hearing conflicting statements, will rest steady and undistracted (in meditation) on God, you will then attain Yoga (Everlasting union with God).

Here Sri Krishna speaks about how our mind is perplexed by what it hears and ends up storing wrong perceptions. For e.g.. we may decide to visit a particular temple because someone said Prasad (food offered to god and distributed to devotees) there is tasty. The reputation of the Prasad drives us there.

If there are big crowds in temples, it may not mean that people are becoming devotional, it may also be because their desires are increasing and they are praying for the fulfilment of the same. So it could be an indicator of rising desires and may not be of increasing faith.

What is driving us will play an important role in us reaching our destination. **Hence fixing the intellect is important to ensure that it does not get influenced by false things.**

2.54

**arjuna uvāca  
sthitaprajñasya kā bhāṣā, samādhisthasya keśava,  
sthitadhīḥ(kh) kiṃ(m) prabhāṣeta, kimāsīta vrajeta kim. 2.54**

Arjuna said:

Kṛṣṇa, what are the characteristics of a God-realized soul, stable of mind and established in Samādhi (perfect tranquility of mind)? How does the man of stable mind speak, how does he sit, how does he walk?

Now that Arjuna has become aware of the role intellect plays in making the right choice, he asked HIM about the qualities of a person with steady wisdom (**sthitaprajña**). He wants a description of this person who is always in Samadhi state (**samādhisthasya**) and wants to know how does he sit (**sthita**), speak (**prabhāṣeta**), and does his daily actions (**vrajeta**)?

Sri Paramatama beautifully described the attributes of such a person, in the verses that follow. These are beautiful characteristics that we all have to attain as we are interested in learning and living Gita. For us to live Gita, it is important to fix our intellect. We will learn about how to fix the intellect, in the next session.

The session concluded by offering the discourse at the lotus feet of Sri Krishna Paramathma and obsequence to Gurudev followed by a Question and Answer round:

**Question: Mr. Shivaprasad T Ji**

In shloka no. 45 Bhagavan asked Arjuna to be *Gunateeta*. What does this mean?

**Answer:**

Bhagavan speaks about *Gunateeta* person in the 14th chapter. In the 2nd chapter, HE explained how to become free from the 3 Gunas. Every action is a result of 3 Gunas. For e.g.. If we sleep during a



discourse, it is the effect of Tamo guna, to suppress it we need to become alert and awaken the Rajo guna, and we must focus on the intent with which we are sitting for the discourse to increase the Sattva guna. Balancing these 3 Gunas and not being affected by any of these, irrespective of our ability to balance them is being in a *Gunateeta* state. The qualities of a *Gunateeta* person include *Nirdvandva*, which means not being affected by the dualities like pleasure and pain, results of the 3 gunas. A *Gunateeta* lives in the state of yoga, where one is not affected by any of the 3 gunas.

**Question: Mr. Narayan Appachar ji**

You mentioned that a person should do karma without focusing on the result. Does that mean when we implement projects we must not look at results? Our intention is to make a project a success. Achieving results are important for the success of the project. Is this approach wrong?

**Answer:**

When we say don't focus on the result, it is meant that we must not be affected by the result. We discussed that the action must be done with caution and devotion. Once the action is done with complete devotion we must not be disturbed by its result and accept it with a sense of detachment. In fact such an attitude enhances the quality of the work done and one is able to continue working with the same level of enthusiasm.

**Question: Neena Murthy ji**

When people are suffering, they say it is our fate, People also say that Krishna is testing us?

**Answer:**

Sri Krishna Paramatma only loves us. what happens in our life is the result of our karma. Bhagavan has nothing to do with that. For e.g.: a naughty child who plays pranks gets scolded by his mother who would be tender and calm with an obedient child. However, she will love both children equally. The different treatment meted out to both is because of their actions (karma).

The Session ended with the closing prayer



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**Jai Shri Krishna!**

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar – Creative Writing Department

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