

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 2: Sāṅkhya-Yoga

5/6 (Ślōka 39-53), Saturday, 17 June 2023

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/xSAMbEYZU40>

Practice Samatva to Become Buddhiyuktaḥ

The session started with lighting of the divine lamp and prayers to the Supreme and the Gurus.

The second chapter is **Sāṅkhya Yoga - The Yoga of Knowledge**.

Chapter one of the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā begins with the Kurukshetra, where the Pandavas and Kauravas were gathered for a war. Arjuna was preparing to fight against the Kauravas, but got deluded when he saw that he had to fight against his own people who he admired and loved. Sri Bhagavan started convincing him to fight, giving HIS reasons from different perspectives. First, from the spiritual or philosophical point of view, HE explained about 'Sat-Asat', and gave the Supreme knowledge of the *Ātma tattva*. HE said that the Soul is *Sat*, permanent, and cannot be destroyed, while the Body is *Asat*, impermanent and is prone to be destroyed. Hence, there was no point in having anxiety about destroying the Soul as it cannot be destroyed. Next, HE explained about *Ātmasvarūpa* and described the nature of the Soul, that it cannot be cut, burnt, wetted or blown away.

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।

न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥ 2.23॥

HE further said that the soul, being divine and beyond the realm of material energy, is invisible to our eyes, is unconceivable or unchangeable. Hence, one need not grieve for it.

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।

तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥ 2.25॥

Then, HE tried to convince Arjuna from the view of the material world, as to why he should fight against them. As a Kshatriya, it was his duty to fight against his enemies. He would not incur any sin by killing any one, since he was performing his duty without any personal attachment to the action. HE also told Arjuna of the consequences of his refusing to fight.

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययम् ।

सम्भावितस्य चाकीर्तिं मरणदतिरिच्यते ॥ 2.34॥

HE said his reputе as a great warrior will fall, and that disgrace is worse than death itself.

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।

तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥ 2.37॥

On the other hand, he had nothing to lose if he fought the war. If he won, he would enjoy the worldly pleasures of the kingdom; if he lost and died in the battle, he would reach heaven, and enjoy the heavenly pleasures.

Now, he talks about **Karma Yoga**, and explains about the mindset of a **Buddhiyuktaḥ**.

2.39

**eṣā te'bhihitā sāṅkhye, buddhiryoge tvimāṃ(m) śṛṇu,
buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha, karmabandhaṃ(m) prahāsyasi. 2.39**

Arjuna, this attitude of mind has been presented to you from the point of view of Jñānayoga; now hear the same as presented from the standpoint of Karmayoga (the Yoga of selfless action). Equipped with this attitude of mind, you will be able to throw off completely the shackles of Karma.

Hereon, Shri Krishna explains *samatā buddhi*. It is a state obtained by a person who is equipoised and stable in all situations. His emotion is stable in any given circumstance, be it desirable or undesirable. He also explains the true and deep meaning behind the Karma theory, that plays a fundamental role in our tradition. We tend to talk about Karma in relation with our *Bhāgya* or luck. But, in reality, it is related to our actions, both past and present. Whatever happens to us is the result of our previous karmas, done in this lifetime as well as previous births. Whatever we do now will affect our future.

Anything that happens to us has multiple reasons as the source. For example, we are now connected through Zoom platform. What are the reasons for us to be connected?

There are many but to name a few; Geeta Pariwar; Swamiji who established the Geeta Pariwar, the people who are associated with the Swamiji, the volunteers involved, the COVID pandemic, and the commitment of determined people like Ashu Goyal ji and Sanjay Malpani ji initiated the commencement of the online classes. In addition to these, your own reasons for joining the class, and the people who introduced you to the class, all made this connection possible. Whatever is happening in our daily lives is the result of many factors. Bhagavan Shankaracharya ji said that even the blinking of our eyelids is the consequence of our previous karma. The theory of Karma is very deep and incomprehensible to common people like us. Shri Krishna himself said in **chapter 4 'gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ'** - imponderable (impossible to assess) is the nature (path) of action. The theory of Karma is very deep

A person becomes **Samabuddhi** when he begins to see **Paramātmā** everywhere and in everything, **'Vāsudevaḥ sarvamiti - (The Divine in everything)** An house of mud may have many rooms, each different from the other. But a person with *samabuddhi* will see every room as the same - made of mud. Likewise, everything in the entire Universe pervades **Paramātmā**. When a person realizes this fundamental truth of Vedanta, he attains the element of *Samabuddhi* and treats everyone and everything with equanimity. It doesn't make him apathetic or careless. It means his attitude towards all would remain same. He will have the same loving feeling for his own mother and some one else's mother too.

Once this state is achieved no more sins get accumulated. One accrues sins because of the attachments to things. The degree of attachment varies with one's desires. The attachment to certain things are more as compared to others. The actions performed are based on the attachments and the desire for favourable results. More attachment causes us to have strong desires, while less attachment results in weak desires. One feels the loss of a person who is close, more strongly than someone who isn't. This is so due to difference in the degree of the attachment, and expectations from that relationship. When one is equipoised, that attachment is lost, and one does not experience pain over loss that is inevitable.

Whatever Karma one does becomes the *Samskāra* (habit), and then it becomes our **Vāsanā** (tendency). When we do our Karma as KarmaYoga, and perform it for HIM without a thought for the results and treat it as just **an offering to the Divine - 'Aum śrī kṛṣṇārpaṇamastu'**, good

Vāsanās get carried from one birth to another stored in our *Antaḥkaraṇa* (mind). This will inspire one to do more of the good deeds. On the other hand, people who commit sins will accumulate negative *Vāsanās* that force them to traverse deep onto the path of sin. Hence, we should always try to do good deeds, and be in the company of good.

2.40

**nehābhikRāmanāśo'sti, pratyavāyo na vidyate,
svalpamapyasya dharmasya, trāyate mahato bhayāt. 2.40**

In this path (of selfless action) there is no loss of effort, nor is there fear of contrary result, even a little practice of this discipline saves one from the terrible fear of birth and death.

When one practices *samatva* and becomes **Buddhiyuktaḥ**, that effort never gets destroyed. Material accumulation like money or even skills learnt will be destroyed one day, but the skills learnt under the desire of *samatva* do not get destroyed. The desire aroused by pure intention of attaining *samatva* is also pure, and will not be destroyed. Attaining *samatva* is not easy, and cannot be accomplished in one lifetime. But failure to attain that stage in this lifetime does not mean that all our efforts are wasted and that we should start afresh in the next lifetime. Efforts of this lifetime will form the base for the *Sādhana* that one will do in one's next life.

Our Vedas prescribe some *vidhis* (rules) that need to be followed when doing specific karmas. He who fails to follow these *vidhis* will be committing sin. But, during the practice of *Samatva buddhi*, even if one makes some mistakes by not following the *vidhis*, it is not considered a sin, because the action was not based on attachment to results, but was done with equanimity.

A mind which is not stable and is poisoned with desires will accumulate sins, not the *samatva* mind which is functioning from a detached state.

In this respect, Arjuna will not be committing a sin even if he kills his guru Dronacharya, because he did it as a duty without any selfish motive. Whatever little amount of discipline is accumulated during the *Samatva* practice, even that will not be destroyed; it will be permanent, and will save the person from great difficulties. It will give him fearlessness and strength to face adversities.

2.41

vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ(r), ekeha kurunandana, bahuśākhā hyanantāśca, buddhayo'vyavasāyinām. 2.41

Arjuna, in this Yoga (of selfless action) the intellect is determinate and directed singly towards one ideal; where as the intellect of undecided (ignorant men moved by desires) wanders in all directions, after innumerable aims.

Bhagavan is talking about two categories - **Vyāvasāyī** and **Avyavasāyī**.

- **Vyāvasāyī** is a person with stable mind that has a single focus; to reach the Supreme stage.
- **Avyavasāyī** is one without a stable mind that is easily distracted by many desires. His mind is focused on many desires at a time.

Vyāvasāyī 's goal is to reach the Supreme stage from where there is no coming back to this material world '**yasmingatā na nivartanti bhūyaḥ**' - **where having gone, none returns again**. He puts all his efforts to reach that stage, and he is sure to reach that goal.

But Avayayasayī has multiple branches of desires. His mind is distracted, and there is no consistency in his efforts towards any goal. He achieves only partial knowledge of everything, which is equal to poison '**adhurājñam viśa samānam**'. This is true even for our physical activities. A person with a single goal works consistently towards achieving it and attains mastery over it. But, when one has multiple goals and focuses, like power, money, recognition, etc., his mind is like a multiple-branched tree. He cannot focus on any one completely, and doesn't master anything. He gets only half knowledge of everything, and he will not obtain the ultimate happiness or peace.

To achieve perfection in any act, either in the physical or spiritual life, we should become **Vyāvasāyī**. With a single-pointed focus, and consistent practice directed towards that one goal, we will definitely achieve the same.

2.42

yāmimām(m) puṣpitām(ṽ) vācam(m), pravadantyavipaścitah, vedavādaratāḥ(ph) pārtha, nānyadastīti vādinah.2.42

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.

The Vedas talk about two paths - **jñāna kāṇḍa** and **karma kāṇḍa**. *jñāna kāṇḍa* is the *Vedanta* that talks about the Supreme Element, the Paramātmā' **nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ....** '**dehino'sminyathā dehe...**'. *Karmakāṇḍa* talks about the route to reach *Swarg*, heaven, and also obtain worldly pleasures. To reach the heaven, one should do good karma daily and consistently. If one desires worldly pleasures, specific sets of *Yajya* need to be carried out. If done faithfully, one gets *punya* and can enjoy the results, but it is temporary. Once the results or *punya* are nullified, the person returns to this world, and has to face the difficulties of the mortal world, as explained in the 9th chapte: '**gatāgatam kāmakāmā labhante.**' - **they attain to the state of going-and-returning (SAMSARA)**

Shri Krishna is explaining the right way of following *Karmakāṇḍa*. *Karmakāṇḍa* done with *Buddhiyoga*, without thinking about the results, but doing it for the sake of Bhagavan, will result in bliss or *Moksha*. People who are very attached to the Vedas with sole interest of enjoying heavenly pleasures or attaining worldly pleasures, will not reach beyond the heavens.

2.43

kāmātmānaḥ(s) svargaparā, janmakarmaphalapradām, kriyāviśeṣabahulām(m), bhogaiśvaryagatim(m) prati. 2.43

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

There are two types of Karma:

- **Sakāmakarma** and
- **Niṣkāmakarma**.

Sakāmakarma is the set of actions done to fulfil the desires, with selfish motives. *Niṣkāmakarma* is the set of actions done for the sake of Bhagavan. The mind of those doing *Sakāmakarma* is filled with many desires, and Heaven is their supreme achievement. They will get new births and perform their actions, and get fruits again and again. To enjoy the fruits of their actions, they have to take rebirth again. This never ending cycle will continue for such people who follow *Sakāmakarma*. To attain the worldly pleasures and heaven, they also need to do many types of rituals.

2.44

bhogaiśvaryaprasaktānām(n), tayāpahṛtacetasām, vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ(s), samādhau na vidhīyate. 2.44

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.

The minds of those people who are very much interested in wealth and pleasure, becomes blinded and they blindly follow the instructions given in the *Vedas*. Unlike the *Vyavasāya* ones, they do not have stable mind, and hence cannot sit in *Samādhi* and focus their mind on HIM. As a result, they cannot fulfil the ultimate goal of life.

The ultimate goal of life is happiness, and it is normal to think that these worldly pleasures are giving us happiness. But the happiness that these worldly pleasures give is '**Vishasamprutha annam**' as coined by Vachaspati Mishraji in his commentary, **Bhamati**. The *annam* or food that is poisoned gives us pleasure at the time of consuming it, but in the end the poison kills us. Similar is the case with the worldly pleasures. In the beginning, they give us happiness, but later end in sorrow. Hence, Bhagavan tells us to become *Vyāvasāyi*.

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.

Shri Krishna asks Arjuna to overcome the borders of the three *gunas* (*satva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*) ascribed in the *Sakāmakarma*. Instead, he should follow the *Niṣkāmakarma*, become devoid of the

opposites like happiness and sorrow (*nirdvandvo*), become stable with his mind always focused on the *Paramātmā* (*nityasattvastho*), not even thinking about his personal welfare (*niryogakṣema*) but focusing only about his real identity, THE SELF (*ātmavān*). He asks Arjuna not to get attached to the external things, and tells him that if he is a *Buddhiyuktaḥ*, whatever he does will not incur any sin.

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.

Here, Bhagavan gives an example to explain the concept. If one is near an ocean, he will not go to a small pond to fulfill his need for water. All his needs will be fulfilled by the ocean itself. The pond is of no use to such a person. Similarly, the person who knows the Supreme Element does not need the smaller portions of the *Vedas* like the *Sakāmakarma* which gives temporary material happiness.

He obtains the Ocean of Bliss that is permanent and real. One needs to put in huge efforts to follow the difficult rituals described in the *Karmakāṇḍa* in order to obtain the results as per *Sakāmakarma*. The results obtained although beneficial are only temporary, and he still has to face difficulties. But the person who is doing *Niṣkāmakarma* will obtain the Ocean of Infinite Bliss. Such a person will not get distracted by these small *Sakāmakarmas*.

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 the most famous shloka of the *Gita*, that explains the right to do one's karma; but the result is not in one's hands. As explained earlier, everything happens due to multiple reasons. In spite of putting efforts, one may not get expected results. This may be because of previous karmas. One must not get disappointed with unfavourable results and give up on it. Rather one must continue to put in more efforts that gradually deplete the previous karmas one day, and finally achieve the set goal. One's past is not in one's hands; one cannot erase the previous karmas. But the present decides one's future, so one can work to accumulate good karmas that would be beneficial in the future.

One needs to live in the present. '**nehābhikramanāśo'stitrāyate mahato bhayāt**' a small good work done in the present will give good result in the future. This is the same about wrong doings also. Even if one is not affected in the present, one will have to face the consequences in the future. Since past karmas have a strong hold on the results of the present actions, one should not credit the present efforts for the results obtained. Every karma has a *Vāsanā* that binds one when the ego is present, and one has to face the consequences of the karma, good or bad. If the work is done without giving the credit to oneself, '**ahaṃ na kartā, iidaṃ na mama** - '**I am not the doer, this is not mine**', the ego is absent, and the *Vāsanā* of that karma will not get attached to one. When one does not get attached to the results, one remains free from the karma.

2.48

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

Bhagavan is asking Arjuna to be in Yoga buddhi and do his work renouncing any attachment to the karma and its results, being equanimous to success and failure (*siddhi-asiddhi*). *Samatva* is the **Yoga**, Union with the *Paramātmā*.

One gets connected with the *Paramātmā* when one is in the *Samatva* situation with everyone.

Samatva situation is attained when one begins to see *Paramātmā* in everything and everyone '**Vāsudeva sarvamiti**.'

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.

Shri Krishna advises Arjuna to take the *Buddhi Yoga* path instead of the *Sakāmakarma* path. *Sakāmakarma* is equal to total darkness, and is inferior to *Buddhi Yoga*, which is equal to bright light. One should take refuge in the *Samabuddhi* by developing equipoise in all situations and not taking credit for the fruits of action, as explained earlier.

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. Therefore, strive for the practice of this Yoga of equanimity. Skill in action lies in the practice of this Yoga.

Shri Krishna re-emphasizes the importance of becoming a *Buddhiyuktaḥ* by developing the *Samatva buddhi*, and also renouncing both good (*sukṛt*) and evil (*duṣkṛt*). HE is asking to renounce not only the bad karmas, but also the punya karmas. When one does all karmas for *Paramātmā* and with equanimous mind, one obtains the skill of action, which is called **Yoga**.

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.

When we become a *Buddhiyuktaḥ*, and renounce whatever consequences we get as result of our actions, we will become free from the bondage of birth and **attain the Supreme *Paramātmā* state**.

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.

When the mind has conquered the delusion and goes beyond it, then one becomes indifferent to the information about the worldly and heavenly enjoyments that *Sakāmakarma* can yield. The mind will become neutral not only to the information received in the present, but also to that which will be received in future, because one would have obtained the Ocean of Bliss.

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).

Different ideologies will give different opinions about the karmas and duties one has to follow. When one hears concepts that are different from one's ideology, one gets agitated. But when one becomes a *Buddhiyuktaḥ*, one remains no more confused or agitated on hearing different opinions, because one is completely stable in the samatva state **of Samādhī, and will attain the Yoga.**

So far, Bhagavan explained about the right way of doing karma. He said that one should perform the karmas without thinking about the past or future, but devote it to HIM. This will give permanent happiness. With this explanation, HE helped bring clarity to Arjuna's confused mind.

The next session will cover the questions raised by Arjuna who gets interested to know more about the *Yoga*.

The session concluded by chanting of *Hari Sharanam* and rendition of the **Hanuman Chalisa.**



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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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