

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 12: Bhakti-Yoga

1/2 (Ślōka 1-8), Sunday, 05 March 2023

Interpreter: GĪTĀ PRAVĪṆA RUPAL SHUKLA

YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/UWx02edQii8>

## Manifest and Unmanifest form of worship - Bhakthi yoga

The session began with the customary prayers and lighting the lamp.

We are so fortunate and chosen ones by Bhagavan himself and to be blessed to learn Gita.

12th Chapter of Bhagavadgita is the **Yoga of devotion** and teaches us the path to attain the supreme soul.

This chapter commences with Arjuna's question to understand different forms of worship as described by Bhagavan in previous chapters. Vedas are the main source of knowledge and because of Vedas, we are able to know everything, we are able to talk, walk, and Vedas are considered as the exhales of the supreme, whereas Gita is the direct voice of lord. When we are getting this opportunity to learn Gita, we must take advantage of it.

Some may have doubts in the mind and want to understand the reason why Level 1 has started with 12th Chapter. Some even thought they have joined the wrong group. The reason being; 12th & 15th chapters are relatively the smallest chapters so we start with 12th after learning it confidence gets built to proceed with the rest of the chapters. Beginning the sacred journey of Gita if we start with chapter 1 wherein 47 verses are there, one may lose the confidence and there remains a possibility of giving up.

Firstly gaining confidence is very important and secondly 12th chapter deals with '**Bhakti yoga**' or the **Yoga of devotion which sets the tone for the spiritual journey**.

Having completed 10 shlokas in this chapter, we have gathered for this discourse and will try to understand the essence of the teachings.

Whenever we start learning something as per scriptures and our culture we have to understand the concepts first. For example: If one says table is round, we have to understand what is a table and what is round and so on.

Similarly when we want to understand the 12th chapter, we must know the components. Bhagavadgita is the conversation between Krishna and Arjuna. Here the components are Bhagavan Sri Krishna, Arjuna and the Bhagavadgita. We may feel we know and understand but there are some hidden points in this.

Firstly who is Arjuna whom we possibly imagine as a young man in late 30s, very much tense and depressed and does not want to fight. We may also think that he is also like us as troubled like us, stressed like us and does not want to fight as we feel at times. But it is not so.

Arjuna in this instance of Geetopadesha is 84 year old mature person and he was a warrior who remained undefeated in his life. He had won thousands of battles and even pleased Bhagavan shiva in a Wrestling bout (mallayudha).

Arjuna followed the diktats of dharma so intensely that he accepted a curse from Urvashi but did not accept her. This curse eventually became a boon for him to adorn the guise of Brihannala during the Pandavas exile wherein the final year they had to live incognito.

The Pandavas were sent to exile for 13 years and lived in forest but Arjuna lived for 12 more years because of the incident when he entered the palace of Yudhishtira while he was playing dice with Draupadi. As per the agreement Arjuna kept his word and went to forest for 12 more years and did not give up on dharma.

Arjuna is also named '**guḍākeśa**', as he won over sleep. When he was performing penance to acquire the divine asthras (weapons), he did not want to fall asleep. Whenever he felt sleepy he would sit on a branch of the tree hanging over the river. If he fell asleep he would fall into the river and wake up. He continued to do this for 6 months until he could conquer sleep. Arjuna was also the only person to have gone to swarg (Heaven) when he was alive.

Before him Satyavrat had tried to go to heaven but was thrown out by Indira the the King of devas and hence he got stuck in between Earth and Heaven and is known as 'Trishanku'. Sage Vishwamitra also tried but could not enter the Heaven. So one notices such a man of determination, strength, knowledge has turned vulnerable and did not want to wage the war.

In chapter 1 , Shloka

सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ।  
वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ॥

गाण्डीवं संसते हस्तात्त्वक्चै व परिदह्यते ।  
न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ॥

Arjuna had averred to Sri Krishna that he was not even able to stand as he was upset and his body was shivering and sweating. Arjuna used to say, if someone wanted him to put down his Gandeeva (bow) he would kill that person but now he himself is saying he will put down the bow as his mind is disturbed and he cannot fight. He is stressed completely.

We are learning Bhagavadgita as the conversation between 2 people wherein Arjuna is being guided by Sri Krishna. In the epic of Mahabharata the chapters are called 'parvas'. It is in Bhishma parva that the Gita is written and later Sage Vysaraya wrote these 700 shlokas exclusively as Bhagavadgita.

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

अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीम्- अष्टादशाध्यायिनीम् अम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्- गीते भवद्वेषिणीम्

**O Divine mother, she who showers Elixir of Advaita on us, O mother of 18 chapters, I meditate on thee, O Bhagavad gita, the destroyer of illusion of manifestation**

The Bhagavadgita was meant to make Arjuna understand and was addressed by Narayan Bhagavan himself. The gist of vedas are upanishads, gist of upanishad is gita and **gist of gita is the sharanagathi or surrender to the supreme and gist of this is 'Bhakti yoga as in 12th chapter'**.

Question may arise as to why Bhagavan said this only to Arjuna and not to any other like; Duryodhana, or Dushyasana or any one else.

Ādi Śankarācārya had mentioned in *Shankar Bhashya*; in order to spread knowledge, it should be taught first to someone who has more *gunas* (qualities), otherwise it remains static.

One who is having good qualities than anyone, if something is conveyed to him it will spread the good word to all. If it is told to someone who does not have the good qualities it does not get spread and loses the intent. How is Arjuna judged to have more good qualities?

In 16th chapter, Shloka 5 Bhagavan himself says;

**दैवी सम्पद्धिमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता |**

**मा शुचः सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव**

**The divine qualities lead to liberation, while the demoniac qualities are the cause for a continuing destiny of bondage. Grieve not, O Arjun, as you were born with saintly virtues.**

Bhagavan says O' Pandava, you are equipped with all the 26 qualities because of which he was so loveable to Krishna.

Bhagavadgita in only 700 shlokas has all answers available. If one studies Gita it has everything required to lead a life of Bhakti and Dharma. Reading Vedas, Upanishads take a long time, but Gita has the gist of all scriptures. There are 1800 authentic commentaries written on Gita. Lakhs of people have read it. Mahatma Gandhi who called Gita as his mother, Lokmanya Tilak, Einstein, Shankaracharya, and so many others said they found best solution to all Gita.

Krishna had accepted to be the charioteer to Arjuna in the Kurukshetra war. In 1st chapter, Arjuna asks Krishna;

**सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ||**

**यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् |**

**कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन् रणसमुद्यमे ||**

O Infallible One, please take my chariot to the middle of both armies, so that I may look at the warriors arrayed for battle, whom I must fight in this great combat.

Arjuna wants to see the entire army both sides. Sri Krishna did not stop the chariot in front of Duryodhana or Dushyasana knowing that Arjuna was angry with them and was eager to kill them, but HE took the chariot and stopped in front of Dronacharya and Bhishmacharya. Why so? Because he wanted to give Gita Gyana, the knowledge he imparted to Arjuna to us and only a person of good qualities will ensure that good knowledge reaches the masses.

What is the connection here? Arjuna loved both of them immensely and everyone also loved Arjuna. However, Dronacharya and Bhishma, though they loved Arjuna, had taken pledge to support Kauravas. When Arjuna sees them in front of his eyes he gets upset and feels he cannot kill them.

When the Kauravas and Pandavas completed studies they had to present their skills to all. All were introducing themselves with long introduction about themselves. When Arjuna went he just said 'I am Arjuna, the disciple of Dronacharya and going to present what was learnt by him'.

Dhritarashtra stopped and asked whether he did not have any other identity. Arjuna had replied that when he has to present the skills learnt from his teacher can have only one identity and that of his teacher. 'Brahmastra' a divine weapon was taught by Dronacharya only to Arjuna and none of the other disciples.

Bhishma Pitamah always wore white clothes. When the students came back from practice they would be dusty and dirty still he used to hug Arjuna first and showered his love.

This is the reason Sri Krishna intentionally stopped the chariot in front of Dronacharya and Bhishma making Arjuna the reason for him to teach Gita .

## 12.1

### **arjuna uvāca evaṁ(m) satatayuktā ye, bhaktāstvām(m) paryupāsate, ye cāpyakṣaRāmayaktaṁ(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?

1st to 10th chapter Bhagavan talks about '**Nirguna Nirakara**' or the unmanifest form of worshipping.

In the 11th chapter 55th shloka:

**मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।  
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥**

Those who perform all their duties for MY sake, who depend upon ME and are devoted to ME, who are free from attachment, and are without malice toward all beings, such devotees certainly come to ME.

Here HE referred to the manifest form of worshipping. Arjuna got confused why Bhagavan started talking about manifest form. The 12th chapter first shloka starts with this question of Arjuna.

Arjuna says here that such of those devotees are ever integrated with you and always connected to you and meditating.

**ye cāpyakṣaRā-** Akshara Brahma is it the better form of devotion? The one who follows the unmanifest or the manifest form of worshipping. Which is good? Which is the right way to worship for a devotee?

There are 2 ways

- 1.Gyana marga
- 2.Bhakti marga

Both tend towards achieving the ultimate goal to gain happiness. One gets a job to earn money.

Money brings happiness. Then one has to study, get married, have children and everything for happiness.

In 15th Chapter shloka 7, Bhagavan says:

**ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।  
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥**

The embodied souls in this material world are MY eternal fragmental parts. But bound by material nature, they are struggling with the six senses including the mind.

Ultimately we have a fragment of HIM within us. Our real self is 'Chidananda roopa' or Self full of ultimate happiness. Then why struggle all the life? One should worship within for the mind to attain calm and peace and feel nearer to the HIM.

If there is a light burning and we go near it, the lights reflects on us too and basks us in its glow. HE is also 'sacchidananda Swaropa' and when we go near HIM we get happiness. Hence Arjuna had this question in his mind on the the preference between manifest worshipping and unmanifest worshipping. Bhagavan wanted him to ask this question and being the all knowing, he had led Arjuna to the question.

## 12.2

**śrībhagavānuvāca  
mayyāveśya 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.

**mayyāveśya mano ye mām-** those who are integrated with HIM and are fixed into HIM and worship HIM in a supreme way.

It is good even if one worships on his own or one is asked to do it. If someone is asked to do it may result in real worshipping in due course of time. Shraddha or faith is important.

**te me yuktatamā matāḥ** - Such persons are considered as absorbed in HIM and they are better knower's of yoga. in the verses 1 to 10 HE has explained on the Akshara brahma form, the unmanifest form and in earlier chapter HE had spoken about 'saguna sakara Bhakti or the manifest form of devotion'.

If you ask students to calculate 3 + 3, a grown up gives the answer easily. A child who started learning will start counting on fingers or Draw lines to count and get the answer. One person may take abacus, one may take calculator and one may use mobile. Any mode is acceptable as it depends on what is best and what is comfortable for each one of them. Saguna sakara the manifest form of devotion is considered good because it is easier to follow. But if one wants to follow the unmanifest form of devotion it may be difficult for some.

## 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,

Bhagavan explained the Akshara brahma the 'Nirguna nirakara brahman'. It is not possible to explain what is brahman, or how it appears in form, or how can one see it.

- **kṣāram**- means one which is decreasing always.
- **ākṣaRām** - one which does not get decreased or destroyed which is Brahman
- **anirdeśyaṁ** - cannot indicate (opposite of nirdehsyam ).
- **avyaktaṁ** - not visible (opposite of vyaktha) cannot be described.

In Kathopanishad, Verse 9;

अस्य रूपं सन्दृशे न तिष्ठति। कश्चन एनं चक्षुषा न पश्यति। मनीषा हृदा मनसा सः अभिक्लृप्तः। ये एतत् विदुः ते अमृताः भवन्ति ॥

The form of HIM stands not within the vision and none beholdeth HIM by the eye; but by the heart and the mind, for in the heart is HIS station; who thus know HIM, they become immortal.

Cannot be seen with own eyes but the eyes get power from that unmanifest Brahman, ears get power, body gets power from this unmanifest almighty. A form which cannot be described and that is Brahman.

**sarvatragamacintyaṁ** - One which is everywhere, omnipresent.

When Hiranyakashyapu asked whether God is in a pillar, Prahladji the ardent devotee of Narayana Bhagavan confidently said 'Yes'. Sri Narayana in the form of Narasimha came out of the pillar. Bhagavan is present everywhere. Whatever we dream and imagine we must have seen before and that is chintyam the thought. We can think of it only when we have seen it.

**acintyaṁ** - Brahman is unmanifest. One can worship the unmanifest only by utmost focus and concentration

**kūṭastham** - kūṭa means Maya and because of Maya, everything is visible.

In Advaita philosophy Adi Shankaracharya said - '**brahma Sathyam jan mithyam**' - only Brahma is truth and this world is Maya.

**acalaṁ**- unmovable. Brahman is everywhere and hence cannot move around. It is unmovable as it is everywhere and It is eternal.

### **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.

This is in acharya Samhita or Charaka Samhita where it states How one should live, What should be

our vision? What we need to do if one has to get HIM only

**sanniyamyendriyagrāmam** - The karmendriyas and jnanendriyas should be controlled.

- **The karmendriyas** - The Tongue, Hands, Feet, Excretory organs and Sexual organs
- **The Jnanendriyas**- sensory organs are the vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch

**sarvatra śamabuddhayaḥ**,- Seeing everyone equal and not differentiating among caste or creed and also not being partial.

If there is a dog it also is a living being and we should have concern for the dog but we cannot be equal in behaviour as we cannot call the dog to eat in our plate. This should be understood here when we talk about not differentiating.

**samadarshana** - seeing everyone equal

**te prāpnuvanti māmeva**,- one who is busy engaged in welfare of everyone will always be ONE with ME. This is what HE says for devotees who follow and live as guided by HIM

## 12.5

### **kleśo'dhikatarasteṣām(m), avyaktāsaktacetāsām, avyaktā hi gatirduḥkham(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.

**kleśo'dhikatarasteṣām** - One who worships the unmanifest will encounter some struggle as worshipping the unmanifest requires lot of practice, and focus

**avyaktā hi gatirduḥkham**- The goal is difficult in worshipping the unmanifest form

**avyaktā asaktacetāsām**,- whose mind is set in the unmanifest.

**dehavadbhiravāpyate** - attaining the goal for the mortal bodies like us is difficult

Hence *saguna sakara bhakthi* or the manifest form of devotion is considered easier to follow.

For those whose minds are attached to the unmanifested form, advancing in the devotion path is difficult as they are used to the embodied form.

## 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

Bhagavan says HE is always for those who dedicate their actions to HIM and (**matparāḥ**) hold HIM as their supreme self and (**ananyenaiva yogena**) worship with the firm belief that there is no one other than HIM

**mām(n) dhyāyanta upāsate-** meditate with HIM in mind with exclusive devotion and dedicate all karmas to HIM

The bhajan below by Meera Bai depicts the exclusive devotion mentioned above.

मेरे तो गिरधर गोपाल दूसरो न कोई |  
जाके सर मोर मुकुट मेरे पति सोयी ||  
मेरे तो.....  
अंसुवन जल सींचि-सींचि प्रेम-बेलि बोई ||  
अब तो बेल फैल गयी आणंद फल होई ||  
मेरे तो.....  
तात मात भ्रात बन्धु आपनो न कोई |  
छांड़ि दई कुलकी कानि कहा करिहै कोई || ||  
मेरे तो.....  
चुनरी के किये टूक ओढ़ लीन्ही लोई |  
मोती मूंगे उतार बनमाला पोई |

The only one for me is Giridhar Gopal (=Krishna the cowherd, who held up a mountain)  
the one with the crown of peacock feathers is my husband.

I watered the creeper of love with my tears,  
now that the creeper has spread, there are flowers of happiness.

Father, mother, brother, friend - I have no one who is mine,  
I have left the honour of my family, what can anyone do.

I have forsaken my head scarf and wrapped myself in rough clothing,  
I have shed my jewels (pearls & ??) and wear a garland of forest flowers.

## 12.7

**teṣāmaham(m) samuddhartā, mṛtyusaṁsārasāgarāt,  
bhavāmi nacirātpārtha, mayyāveśitacetasām. 12.7**

with single-minded devotion, them, Arjuna, I speedily deliver from the ocean of birth and death, their mind being fixed on Me.

**teṣāmaham(m) samuddhartā** - HE is the deliverer

**mṛtyusaṁsārasāgarāt** -from the ocean of birth and death

**mayyāveśitacetasām** - Those who give up everything and fix their mind on ME

**bhavāmi nacirātpārtha** - HE will take them and make them pass the life

## 12.8

**mayyeva mana ādhatsva, mayi buddhiṁ(n) niveśaya,  
nivasīsyasi 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.

Whatever we think we do it with our mind. HE says whatever you do think about HIM instead. There is no doubt that if you just dedicate your mind to HIM then such people will be in HIM as they alone dwell in HIM.

### **Question and Answer:**

#### **Janakiji**

**Question:** How age of 84 arrived as age of Arjuna ?

**Answer :** Not stated anywhere but the time line is made by research, when Krishna left gokula he was 12, when met Arjuna he was 33 yrs of age, then 12 years Arjuna was in forest, and then lived in Lac palace and so etc. When all such are calculated it gives the number with these incidents. Krishna could be about 87 or 89 year. Bhishma would be around 200 years age.

#### **Prithamji**

**Question:** What is difference between manifest and unmanifest? Which worship is better?

**Answer :** Manifest is one you can see, describe, touch, unmanifest is opposite. Sri Krishna says both are good, but worship unmanifest is difficult. Like you close your eyes and think about Krishna only and focus without seeing anything else. HE says **dehavadbhiravapyathe**.- It is difficult for those who are embodied to worship the unmanifest, Sri Krishan says

#### **Abhijit ji**

**Question:** Does Bhagavan asks us to worship only himself ?

**Answer:** Mahabharata has 1 lakhs shloka where terms are used as Vasudeva uvacha, Krishan uvacha. But in 18th chapter sage Vyasa uses Bhagavan uvacha as here he is not just Sri Krishna but spoke as Bhagavan the supreme power. Wherever he says 'mam' in the shloka it can be attributed to any God as one can pray shiva or Rama or adishakthi Durga, or SriKrishna everything reaches HIM only.

#### **Cheenaji:**

**Question:** I have read gita in different points in life. I understood what I could and what could practice. I know yoga and Upasana a little bit. My mind is involved in the world. If Maya is Shakthi of God can we connect to God through Maya.

**Answer :** NO. You must have played video game. In every game there are obstacles. The player cannot reach destination if you do not cross the obstacles. In life Maya is the obstacle given by god and we have to cross this if we have to reach him. The happiness and pleasure in materialistic life itself is Maya. Offering to God is our action. God does not ask.

Parent gives money to child and the child buys gift for the parents. Similarly everything belongs to God, our offering is also like that we give back to HIM. By offering, our mind gets purified and we learn to bow. Doing something and getting tempted are two different things. Having jewellery or clothes is not the problem, but the temptation to have them is the problem. Greed and temptation should be controlled. One's action should be as duty and not to please others.

#### **Chinmayaji**

**Question:** Chapter 2 shloka 27 Bhagavan says:

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च । तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥

(Death is certain for one who has been born, and rebirth is inevitable for one who has died. Therefore, you should not lament over the inevitable), then who am I? and what is my final destination?

**Answer :** Final destination is to reach God and attain our original form.

It is not that we have to reach somewhere. We are already there. If we stand in front of a mirror full of dirt we cannot see reflection. If we clear the dust we can see. Similarly our desires are like dirt that clouds our mind. Our body has changed throughout life but still we say it is us. Feeling does not change but the body changes. "I" does not change and that means "I" is different from the body. One should realise this.



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**Thank you-For reading the summary**

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**Jai Shri Krishna!**

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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**|| OM ŚRĪKṚṢṆĀRPAṆAMASTU ||**