

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 4: Jñāna-Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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Jñāna: Path Of The Supreme

The **fourth chapter** of Bhagavadgītā is known as the **Jñāna-Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga- The Yoga of Knowledge and disciplines of Action and Knowledge.**

Today's session began with the auspicious lighting of the lamp invoking the blessings of Mata Saraswati, the Deity of learning, omniscient Yogeśvara to rid our minds of the darkness of ignorance followed by chanting slokas to the holy feet of great spiritual masters and Param Pujya Guru Govind Dev Giri Ji Maharaj.

This chapter is about prescriptions and the learnings related to Jñāna yoga.

All of us want to win and never like to lose. Everyone wants success but never failure and taste prosperity. Arjuna also was desirous of a win which was imminent with Bhagavān as his charioteer. Parameśvara did give him the win he wanted in the end but in the initial stages, the path to this win was something which was disturbing his mind.

In the journey of life, while discharging our duties especially with the tendency of expectations of a favorable result. It is also not an easy task to maintain the balance between **anukūlatā** or conformity and **pratikūlatā** or prejudices. This balancing act is what we have to learn through this great epic Bhagavad-Gita which is a direct message from the voice of Bhagavān himself.

In the epoch of war, these couplets reflect the conundrum of loss and victory and the balance to be maintained.

क्या हार में, क्या जीत में, किंचित नहीं भयभीत मैं।

कर्तव्य पथ पर जो भी मिला, यह भी सही वो भी सही।

"Be it in loss or victory I am fearless, whatever I receive while being on the path of the path of duty be it this or that is acceptable."

Bhagavadgītā teaches us to be balanced and be without fear following the path of Dharma.

The chapter begins with Bhagavān mentioning to Arjuna about the origins of the knowledge HE was revealing to him. He declared the HE had declared this same Yoga to the Sun before, a long time ago. Afterwards the Sun imparted this Yoga to *Vaivasvata* Manu. Manu practised it himself and then taught it to Ikshwaku. Thus this tradition has come down to us from ancient times....

HE disclosed the mysterious nature of Creation, HIS role in the establishment of Dharma. The classification of the society in maintaining it, thereby creating the "4 *varnas*".

Once again emphasising Karma Yoga, HE described its nature and the principle behind Karma, Akarma, Vikarama. The fundamental principle behind Karma Yoga is then described in detail, "**Yajña**". Actions performed as an act of '**Yajña**', as an offering to HIM one becomes free of its consequences. The Yogis who lived their life as a Yajña performed all their actions as an offering towards HIM.

Thus, they remain unaffected by happiness, distress, success, or failure. When Yajña is suitably dedicated, performed with proper knowledge and pure sentiments, then its remnants become like ambrosia. And by partaking it, the devotees are cleansed of all impurities. Even the one with evil actions may cross over the ocean of material miseries by boarding this boat of eternal knowledge!

Karma or our duties should not be weighing on us one has to convert it to *akarma* to make the song of life melodious.

Yajña is to perform any kind of duties or work with full involvement and sincerity. The universe was created through the yajña and one should have a basic feeling of surrender thereby giving oneself as the āhūti or offering in total involvement in whatever we perform. The mind should always be in the divine state that whatever action one performs is for the Paramātmā. This is explained in the 7th chapter as also the last chapter.

Jñāneshvara Maharaj has described in the following verses on how to practice Yajña in everything action even in our homes.

स्वधर्मु जो बापा । तोचि नित्ययज्ञु जाण पां ।
म्हणोनि वर्ततां तेथ पापा । संचारु नाहीं ॥ ८१ ॥
म्हणोनि स्वधर्मानुष्ठान । ते अखंड यज्ञयाजन ।
जो करी तया बंधन । कहींच नाहीं ॥ ८३ ॥
हा लोकु कर्म बांधिला । जो परतंत्रा भुतला ।
तो नित्ययज्ञाते चुकला । म्हणोनियां ॥ ८४ ॥
हा लोकु कर्म बांधिला । जो परतंत्रा भुतला ।
तो नित्ययज्ञाते चुकला । म्हणोनियां ॥ ८४ ॥

"My boy, know that one's duty itself is an obligatory sacrifice. If one performs his duty, demerits do not affect him. When a person abandons his duty and takes delight in prohibited deeds, he becomes entangled in worldly bondage."

"Therefore, know that the discharge of one's duty is a continuous sacrificial session. Whoever performs his duty as a sacrifice does not suffer bondage. A person becomes bound by his actions in this world, if he comes under the spell of *Maya* and strays from his path of duty."

Why is the concept of Yajña so prominent, why do we work towards changing our mindset to develop into that of offering and surrender?

The thought of offering changes our outlook and such an outlook transforms us as if it were a fire sacrifice! Verily he transforms to Narayana Himself! Yet, those who cannot develop such an attitude, cannot achieve progress either in the earthly realm or beyond.

Every action that we undertake, be it following our Dharma, actions pertaining to our responsibilities and duties, on should offer it to Bhagavān, or offer it to the nation, or offer it to the kith and kin. The thought of performing for HIM who reside in us gives us strength and energizes us. One should remember HIM always to ensure that HE resides in us and gives us the strength and shows us the right path.

Bhagavān had imparted on the various type of Yajñas. Some perform sacrifice with material possessions; some offer sacrifice in the shape of austerities; others sacrifice through the practice of Yoga; while some striving beings, observing austere vows, perform sacrifice in the shape of wisdom through the study of sacred texts.

All who know the principles of yajña and who perform yajña as described above gradually advance in knowledge, by which they can attain Brahman. They also taste the ambrosia, the remnants of yajña, such as mundane enjoyment, opulence and mystic perfections..

4.32

evaṃ(m) bahuvīdhā yajñā, vitatā brahmaṇo mukhe, karmajānviddhi tānsarvān, evaṃ(ñ) jñātvā vimokṣyase. 4.32

Many such forms of sacrifice have been set forth in detail in the Vedas; know them all as involving the action of mind, senses and body. Thus, knowing the truth about them you shall be freed from the bondage of action (through their performance).

The Yajñas described in the Vedas are performed by the activities of the body, mind and speech; therefore, they have no relationship with the true nature of the self. The ātmā remains indifferent to and detached from all of these processes. Attainment of this knowledge frees one from bondage to this material world.

Where **Brahmaṇah** is 'of the Vedas' and **mukhena** is 'from the mouth'. **Vedena**, 'clearly spoken from My own mouth'. **Karma-jān**, 'born of the action of speech, mind and body'.

Some of the different types of Yajñas are described below:

Dravya yajña: donation of material wealth.

Tapo yajña: In this type of yajña, the person follows some disciplines. He usually faces hardships as a result of following these disciplines but gets joy and reaches his aim of self realization through these disciplines.

Yoga yajña: In this all actions are attached to HIM.

Panchavratā yajña: The person follows the 5 tenets of yoga to build moral conduct :

- *Satya* (truth)
- *Ahimsa* (do no harm)
- *Asteya* (not stealing)
- *Aparigraha* (not hoarding)
- *Brahmacharya* (those seeking the Brahman).

Swadhyaya yajña: This person will pick up one principle and follow it diligently throughout his life. For example, read a certain spiritual text, go to a certain teerth every year, etc.

One can follow any type of yajña suitable and which one can perform with sincerity and concentration. All types of Yajñas are acceptable practices.

There are so many of yajñas described here, which is the one to be followed then?

Paramātmā said that Jñāna yajña is the most important of all. The word **jñāna** is one of the often used word in Gītā.

Knowledge is the only thing that never reduces after giving. Instead, it gets refined the more one shares. The more one shares, the more one knows. Whatever 'jñāna' or knowledge that we learn or impart and share with others will only increase depth of knowledge and will not diminish it over time.

Jñāna is often described in the context of the '**loukik jñāna**', the worldly knowledge or the '**aloukik jñāna**', knowledge of the 'ātman'.

Eg: Whether it is Engineering, or music, or sports or any worldly matters that one may follow termed as '**loukik jñāna**'.

'**aloukik jñāna**' is when one can follow 'ātma jñāna' which is said as being superior to all other type of jñāna'.

Eg: A teacher imparts knowledge to his student, but his knowledge does not diminish because of this.

The desire for learning Gītā in a person should be merged with one's inner self to increase the level of interest and to continue imbibe and enhance the knowledge and understanding of Gītā.

4.33

**śreyāndravyamayādyajñāḥ, jñānayajñāḥ(ph) parantapa,
sarvaṃ(ṅ) karmākhilam(m) pārtha, jñāne parisamāpyate. 4.33**

Arjuna, sacrifice through Knowledge, is superior to sacrifice performed with material things. For all actions without exception culminate in Knowledge, O son of Kuntī.

This verse describes the ascending order of the 'jñāna' stating which is considering the most higher in the scale.

Here '**dravya**' meaning any object has no reference to wealth or money. It means any offering made to the sacred fire.

Jñāna-yajña is superior to **karma-yajña**, or **dravyamaya-yajña**, which consists of material rituals and sacrifices. **Why so?**

This is because the attainment of **jñāna-yajñāḥ** (transcendental knowledge) is the fruitful

culmination (**parisamāpyate**) of all action (**karma-akhilam**). In other words, fruitive action (karma) ceases to exist, or loses its fruitive aspect, after one attains transcendental knowledge, or jñāna.

Thus, Jñāna yajña is more important of all the karma that we perform in one's journey towards the ultimate destination of life.

The creation has resulted in 5 characteristics of the matter on earth.

Five Kośas of existence on earth

- **Annamaya-kosha** (food sheath, Earth element) – Matter present in all objects on earth...
- **Prāṇamaya-kosha** (vital sheath, Water element) – Present in all living beings including the trees and plants which also breathe.
- **Manomaya-kosha** (mental sheath, Fire element) – Present in living beings like any bird or any animal which also have emotion and feeling as they also have a mind.
- **Vijñanamaya-kosha** (intellect/intuitive sheath, Air element) – Present in animals but it is not as developed in them as compared to a human being whose mind is coupled with a intellect and are able to think and act.
- **Anandamaya-kosha** (bliss sheath, ether/space element)-The highest and most superior state of a living being reaching a state of bliss.

The emphasis on Jñāna is dominant because it is only when one is fortunate enough to take birth as a human being, that one may have the capability of achieving higher knowledge and intellect to understand HIM, and the Self.

What is Jñāna? Samarth Ramdas swami Maharaj described it beautifully,

एक ज्ञानार्थे लक्षणं ज्ञानं म्हणजे आत्मज्ञान ।

पाहावे आपणासि आपण । या नांव ज्ञान ॥१॥

"Listen to the indicators of Knowledge, Jñāna is the Knowledge of Self; When one looks for Self in Oneself, this is Jñāna!"

What is Ajñāna then? Jñāneshvara mauli explained it as he stated,

आपला आपणपेयां । विसरु जो धनंजया ।

तेचि रूप यया । अज्ञानासी ॥ ७१ ॥

"But why say more? What is known as ignorance is this, O winner of wealth. Ignorance is that by reason of which, we forget our essential nature."

Sant Jñāneshvara in his verses said that one has to understand oneself. Whether it is only the body which is recognized or an existence beyond that. To reach a state of oblivion and to live in the body is the knowledge that one must aim to understand.

Only a human being can understand the three forms of jīva (Life), jagat (World) and jagadīśa (Brahman).

The accomplished saints could reach this stage and are trying to guide us in this path and help us to reach that stage of bliss.

Arjuna was also advised that there is no need to achieve the jñāna' by action but the need is to understand this knowledge which will help tread the path of jñāna'.

Jñāneshvara mauli stated,

जेथ वैराग्याचा पांगु फिटे । विवेकाचाही सोसु तुटे ।
जेथ न पाहता सहज भेटे । आपणपें ॥ १६४ ॥

"When his dispassion does not limp, he loses his zest for discrimination, and without effort he becomes united with the Self."

When once reach the ultimate stage of jñāna yoga, it is not even required to be either a renunciator or a wise person as that will be a state of natural inner self when nothing else matters. It is at this point of infraction that the disturbances of karma calms down and when even while performing the karma one is free from the results of actions.

This is the ultimate destination of Ātma-jñāna (Knowledge of Self) whose path is illuminated by various sages and saints through their sharing of experiences and through scriptures.

But where does one find this knowledge then?

When we do not have something and we want it, we can only ask from one who has and hence, Arjuna too was advised to seek from those "who had this knowledge."

With Arjuna as the medium, this knowledge is available to any of us also through Gītā. However, one must be aware that just by reading, listening to vivechan or browsing the internet one cannot achieve jñāna. One has to tread the path of dissolution of problems rather than search for solution in those actions to achieve it. Hence, reading or listening about it blindly without leads will not achieve much; instead, one must reach out to the one who has this knowledge and understanding to attain it!

4.34

tadviddhi praṇipātena, paripraśnena sevayā, upadekṣyanti te jñānaṃ(ñ), jñāninastattvadarśinaḥ. 4.34

Understand the true nature of that Knowledge by approaching seers of Truth. If you prostrate at their feet, render them service, and question them with an open and guileless heart, those wise seers of Truth will instruct you in that Knowledge.

Paramātmā, having known Arjuna and his capabilities is aware that he has the knowledge but had to look into his inner self. However, there was a need for him to have a teacher who could bring out this in Arjuna and hence Bhagavān advises him to find a Guru. In advising Arjuna HE has in this verse explained how to approach a Guru and gain knowledge firstly by prostrating in front of Guru who has knowledge. The way to approach a teacher is to be humble, respectful and by serving the teacher who can impart knowledge.

Parameśvara indicated that it is important to be of service to the teacher and follow his practices and be in consonance with the teacher's likes, dislikes, follow his time for worshipping and teaching and overall resonate with his daily schedule.

An illustration describes the point beautifully,

Sant Gulabo Maharaj had a disciple Babaji Maharaj pandit who was serving the Sant as his guru since his youth. He was not engaged in any of the classes and had not studied anything. However, he was serving the Sant guru by cooking for him, taking care of all his daily needs and requirements and was totally

engrossed in this and nothing else mattered to him.

This disciple had uttered that Gita will become a dharma grantha or the holy epic, 50 years back. This is now becoming true as we are watching Gita is spreading far and wide around the world.

Even when his guru had high fever and he was instructed to ready him for cold water bath he complied with the request despite the protest by others around. Such was his devotion to his Guru's words and faith that Guru can never be wrong. He never had heard even one vivechan of his guru whereas other disciples were listening diligently and taking notes and writing books.

When Sant Guru left for the heavenly abode, all the disciples were asked to write a difficult verse. Babaji Maharaj did not want to attempt thinking he does not know but Guruji came to him and led him to go ahead assuring that his blessings were with him and he should not fear. The undivided devotion with sincerity towards his Guru made him a knowledge disciple.

The one who know the concept is the Guru who can impart knowledge. In order to follow the advise of Bhagavan, one should know How should a guru be ?

The one who has a conceptual expertise should be the perfect one, not just a well read scholar who has no experience in reaching the supreme soul out his experience in fulfillment of his inner '**ātma jñāna**'. If someone has not experienced how can he teach?

A guru has to hence experience and also have the capability to bring the disciple out of his confusions and take him to the path of reaching the supreme soul.

Even in current times when one goes to learn this supreme knowledge, the disciple had to serve the teacher and after assessing the commitment and capability the Guru decides whether the person is ready for learning.

Each disciple is different and the transformation of these are not uniform. Sri Govind dev Giri Maharaj says; the transformation happens based on the extent of their surrender to the Guru. When it is said 'vruddho ka seva' it does not mean to serve the old people, but it means serve the person who has knowledge and is expert in the subject and learn from such people. The knowledge gained is not just the concepts in the subject but the experience which matters the most.

An incident described this prominently,

Swami Vivekananda was also searching for such an experience. He was a person who had the capacity to test his own guru, such was his stature. Before he went to Ramakrishna he went to Babaji Maharaj who was a worshipper of unmanifest god as he did not believe in Manifest god. Swami Vivekananda was asking people whom he met how was the manifest god and he got several answers. He was not satisfied and went to Babaji and asked how he perceived unmanifest god. Baba said that he saw him in a form of Krishna, Ma Jagadamba, and any form he thinks of in his mind.

In another instance Swami Vivekananda wanted to test his Guru Ramakrishna. Saint Ramakrishna used to says that if he sees gold he gets disturbed. To test Swami Vivekananda he kept a gold coin under his Guru's mattress. Saint Ramakrishna as soon as he lay down felt disturbed and got up immediately and started asking who kept some gold under the mattress. He comes to know that it was Vivekananda. Instead of getting upset, he felt good that the disciple was testing him. Such should be the relationship between Guru and disciple.

How does one identify his Guru?

Jñāneshvara ji explained it as follows,

तैसैं स्मरतेनि आदरें । सबाह्य सात्विकें भरे ।
जंव काठिणपण विरे । अहंभावाचे ॥ १८७ ॥
विषयांचा विसरु पडे । इंद्रियांची कसमस मोडे ।
मनाची घडी घडे । हृदयामार्जी ॥ १८८ ॥

"When he remembers the Guru with reverence, his mind becomes full of sattva quality and his egoism loses its strength. He will then be oblivious to the sense-objects, his senses will lose their vigour, and the mind will settle down in the heart."

Sant Jñāneshvara said one remembers a person mind should become peaceful and all the disturbance in mind should be gone. The senses then will find all goodness to feel and experience and they will become calm and peaceful.

Sant Jñāneshvara maharaj wrote 9000 verses in 16 years and offered it to his guru and showed that he practiced what he had written. He had surrendered to the guru without a hint of pride or ego.

He declared,

तरी तनुमनुजीवें । चरणासी लागावें ।
आणि अगर्वता करावें । दास्य सकळ ॥ १६७ ॥

मग अपेक्षित जें आपुलें । तेंही सांगती पुसिलें ।
जेणे अंतःकरण बोधलें । संकल्पा न ये ॥ १६८ ॥

"You should fall at their feet with body, mind and being and enter their service without pride. Then they will tell you, when questioned, whatever you wish to know. When your mind becomes enlightened, it will not succumb to desire."

Once Bhagavān Rām asked Hanuman ji what is their relationship explained as. In Hanuman sukta as composed by Adi Shankaracharya (*Hanumatpanchratanastotra*) Hanuman ji is mentioned as stating,

देहदृष्टया तु दासोऽहं जीवदृष्टया त्वदंशकः ।
वस्तुतस्तु त्वमेवाहमिति मे निश्चिता मतिः ॥४०॥

"When I am conscious of my body, I am Thy servant. When aware of myself, I am a part of Thine."
"When I know my essence, I am verily Thyself. This is my certain belief."

Yogeshvara advised Arjuna that he should surrender to the Guru from whom he should learn and imbibe knowledge setting aside pride, ego and with humility and complete confidence.

Seeking surrender at the feet of those on whom we (ego) become small is verily an invitation to Saraswati Herself! But what may we gain of it?

Bhagavān answers this next!

4.35

**yajñātva na punarmoham, evaṃ(m) yāsyaṣi pāṇḍava,
yena bhūtānyaśeṣeṇa, drakṣyasiātmanyatho mayi. 4.35**

Arjuna, when you have achieved enlightenment, ignorance will delude you no more. In the light of

that knowledge, you will see the entire creation first within your own Self, and then in Me (the Oversoul).

Once Arjuna listened to all the teachings, his mind which was now encircled by attachment would never again be troubled by the emotion of attachment. Arjuna was attached to his kith and kin so much that he wanted to forego his right on the throne, wanted to walk away from the war.

The only way to find out whether this feeling of attachment is gone, Arjuna should look into his inner self and introspect. Having gained the the knowledge he would not be different from the Paramātmā. In that condition Arjuna would be able to see HIM in every person and hence would be devoid of the desire of attachment which was weakening him.

In an episode, Yaksha had asked Dharmaraj 100 questions. When the other Pandavas had gone to the lake to get water and could not answer the question from Yaksha, they were turned to stone. When Dharmaraj came, Yaksha asked what should be the direction of life. Dharmaraj said it is the direction of the saints which means the path that the saints have tread is the right direction.

Jñāneshvara mauli stated,

ऐसें ज्ञानप्रकाशें पाहेल । तैं मोहांधकारू जाईल ।

जैं गुरुकृपा होईल । पार्था गा ॥ १७१ ॥

"When you win the favour of your good teacher, O Partha, then wisdom will dawn upon you and dispel the darkness of delusion."

Sant Jñāneshvara Maharaj said that when knowledge is acquired, the person will see the entire beings as the Bhagavān and all darkness in the mind will get illuminated.

Nothing will be made available by the Guru without asking. Only when the disciple asks will the Guru impart the 'ātma jñāna'. Guru may teach any other knowledge but 'ātma jñāna' is imparted only when the disciple asks for it.

Sant Ramakrishna had cancer of the throat. He loved sweet and desired for it. Hence expresses the desire which he could not consume because of his cancer. Swami Vivekananda felt very sad that his guru could not eat. He tells the guru to pray Jagadamba Ma and for a moment ma can let him eat by stopping the discomfort with her spiritual powers. Ramakrishna said that since Jagadamba ma had already become one with the supreme soul it is not right to disturb her to come back for quenching his desire for sweets.

Sant Ramakrishna tells Vivekananda, that both of them are not different and hence it doesn't matter, if his disciple eats, it is as good as he himself has consumed. Illustrating the close connection of jivas between a teacher and a disciple.

4.36

**api cedasi pāpebhyaḥ(s), sarvebhyaḥ(ph) pāpakṛttamaḥ,
sarvaṃ(ñ) jñānaplavenaiva, vṛjinaṃ(m) santariṣyasi. 4.36**

Even if you were the most sinful of all sinners, this Knowledge alone would carry you, like a raft, across all your sins.

Parameśvara had asked Arjuna why he was having the fear of acquiring demerits due to effects of the war. HE consoled Arjuna that if he was on the knowhow of knowledge, he would be free from any demerits.

Eg: Sometimes people mistakenly think that if they do not worship in some specific manner they will become sinners. These are not sins and it is a thought in the mind.

However, if one hurts others, exploit someone, such negative acts are sins. The conscience should be clean to keep one away from *paap*. Unknowingly, one may act in a manner to hurt others. When such acts happen one has to go into the path of rising above such actions.

किसी के काम जो आये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं।
पराया दर्द अपनाये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं॥

कभी धनवान है कितना, कभी इन्सान निर्धन है।
कभी सुख है, कभी दुःख है, इसी का नाम जीवन है॥
जो मुश्किल में न घबराये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं॥
किसी के काम जो आये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं।
पराया दर्द अपनाये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं॥

यह दुनियाँ एक उलझन है, कहीं धोखा कहीं ठोकर।
कोई हँस-हँस के जीता है, कोई जीता है रो-रोकर॥
जो गिरकर फिर सँभल जाये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं॥
किसी के काम जो आये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं।
पराया दर्द अपनाये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं॥

अगर गलती रुलाती है, तो राहें भी दिखाती है।
मनुज गलती का पुतला है, यह अक्सर हो ही जाती है॥
जो कर ले ठीक गलती को, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं॥
किसी के काम जो आये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं।
पराया दर्द अपनाये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं॥

यों भरने को तो दुनियाँ में, पशु भी पेट भरते हैं।
लिये इन्सान का दिल जो, वो नर परमार्थ करते हैं॥
पथिक जो बाँट कर खाये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं॥
किसी के काम जो आये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं।
पराया दर्द अपनाये, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं॥

One should have the intent to correct oneself. Sant *Sukhdev* said; to correct the sins and mistakes one has to chant the name of Bhagavān to cleanse the mind and brings some discipline in life. A sin increases by hiding them and by being transparent and accepting the mistakes one can become cleansed by correction. Some conduct mistakes but hides behind a show of worshipping and puja and using social media to show people that they are good. Yogeśvara declared that one need to accept the mistakes and tend to get consumed by knowledge.

4.37

**yathaidhāṃsi samiddho'gniḥ(r), bhasmasātkurute'rjuna,
jñānāgniḥ(s) sarVākarmāṇi, bhasmasātkurute tathā. 4.37**

For, as the blazing fire reduces the fuel to ashes, Arjuna, even so the fire of Knowledge turns all actions to ashes.

All sins and mistakes can be consumed by fire to destroy them into ashes. The fire of knowledge also acts on us in a different way.

There are 3 types of Fire in us ;

- **Kamagni** – When ones runs behind the desires
- **jatharagni**- where the digestion happens
- **jnanagni**- knowledge when lighted actually cools and develops the desire to learn, understand, and pursue towards improving the intellect.

The mind does not show interest in worldly matters. The knowledge of Bhagavadgita when lighted in our mind, the desire to chant, memorise, give exams raise the head naturally. This is mainly because of lighting the jnanagni. One this is lighted the resultant of karma becomes calmness and the disturbance in mind will die down.

- **Sanchita Karmas** are the accumulated works
- **Prarabdha Karmas** are ripe of fructiferous actions
- **Kriyamana Karmas** are current works

Like the results of the exams we need to wait. The results of karma also takes time and the resultant is the **prarabdha** which one has to undergo. Many karma which we undergo may not be matured enough to experience the effects.

Bhagavan says knowledge and nothing less is what purifies us!

Bhagavad-Gita is that ambrosia that purifies us. As aptly described in the Gītā Mahatmya by Adi Shankaracharya ji,

मल निर्मोचनम पुंसम, जल स्नानम दिने दीन,
सक्रिद गीतम 'भासि स्नानम, संसार मल नाशनम ।

"One may cleanse himself daily by taking a bath in water, but if one takes a bath even once in the sacred Ganges water of Bhagavad Gītā for him the dirt of material life is altogether vanquished."

4.38

**na hi jñānena sadṛśaṃ(m), pavitramiha vidyate,
tatsvayaṃ(m) yogasaṃsiddhaḥ(kh), kālenātmani vindati. 4.38**

In this world there is no purifier as great as Knowledge; he who has attained purity of heart through prolonged practice of Karmayoga, automatically sees the light of Truth in the self in course of time.

The fire converts whatever offered into ashes. However, in case of knowledge, it is like gold thrown into fire. The impurities will be destroyed. Likewise once the knowledge is dipped in fire, it will make one more pure. There is nothing else in this world which can make the soul pure.

A person to wash the dirt takes bath in water every day. Likewise ablution in Gītā can be by chanting atleast some shlokas every day to destroy the impurities. We carry in this worldly life. We are now trying to understand the concept. Hence, it is stated in pushpika as '**Brahmāvidyāyāṃ(m) yogaśāstre**' which is referenced to theory and practice. The **kama(desire), krodha(anger), lobha(greed), moha(attachment) come to us any time any day.**

Eg : When we see a Rasgolla we can know about how to prepare, its color , texture everything. But this is only theory and unless we put it on our tongue we cannot experience its taste. Similarly, Knowledge, one may learn but it has to be experienced.

This is the advice Bhagavān is giving Arjuna. It is only by imbibing the learnings and experiencing it one can achieve the ultimate knowledge.

A Guru will show the way but it is the individual who can absorb and reach the ultimate with diligent practice and by having patience to wait in reaching the moment of truth of oneness with the Paramātmā.

Eg; A father plants a seed and tells the son that it will grow into a tree. If the son digs every day and checks if the plant is growing, what will happen.

Eg, Once a disciple went to Narada and said, I have been learning and practicing but when will I achieve complete knowledge. Narada maharaj says as many leaves are in the tree, that many years the disciple will take to achieve knowledge. Another disciples asks the same question and gets the same answers. The first disciple felt dejected that he will never achieve as he may not live as many years, but the second disciple says he will keep waiting for the day. The guru meant that they will achieve slowly as they learn that karma will get converted to karma yoga.

4.39

**śraddhāvā~llabhate jñānaṃ(n), tatparaḥ(s) saṃyatendriyaḥ,
jñānaṃ(m) labdhvā parāṃ(m) śāntim, acireṇādhigacchati. 4.39**

He who has mastered his senses, is exclusively devoted to his practice and is full of faith, attains Knowledge; having had the revelation of Truth, he immediately attains supreme peace in the form of God-realization.

Bhagavan says, to achieve knowledge faith and belief is very important. One should have the desire to put efforts to achieve and finally one should have the control over the indriyas or the senses. One should control on how much to listen, how much to speak, and so on. These are the 3 conditions Bhagavan advised.

After gaining knowledge one can immediately get the ultimate peace HE had said. Whether it is elders are the Guru or anyone else, we should have the faith in them.

EG : In geometry a teacher shows a dot and says it is a entity which does not have any length breadth or thickness. A student may dispute saying that the dot drawn on the black board has some length or breadth. The teacher clarifies by saying that it is ok and asks to consider his statement so as to understand the concept that the dot is on the board.

When someone teaches about atom, one may speak about it as a smallest particle and that the neutron goes around and then there is an electron and so on. Student may ask to be first showed the atom physically to see and that then only he will believe the teacher.

These are concepts and one has to accept it for learning. This is faith and the truth which can be achieved only be belief and acceptance.

4.40

ajñāścāśraddadhānaśca, saṁśayātmā vinaśyati, nāyaṁ(m) loko'sti na paro, na sukhaṁ(m) saṁśayātmanaḥ. 4.40

He who lacks discrimination, is devoid of faith, and is at the same time possessed by doubt, is lost to the spiritual path. For the doubting soul there is neither this world nor the world beyond, nor even happiness.

Bhagavan said some are not ready to believe and accept anyone and anything. Such persons life will be full of ups and downs.

Eg : When a grand mother goes to temple and prostrates, the child also will follow suit.

But as they grow, some persons do not believe anything. Such people are ignorant and are suspicious. Such a person will destroy their own life and will deviate from the right path. To understand one has to accept the concept.

Sant Tulsidas ji in his beautiful composition Rudrashtakam stated,

**नमामीशमीशान निर्वाणरूपं। विंभुं व्यापकं ब्रह्म वेदस्वरूपं।
निजं निर्गुणं निर्विकल्पं निरीहं। चिदाकाशमाकाशवासं भजेऽहं।।**

"Vibhu moksha personified, Veda incarnate, all-pervading Prabho, Prabho, master of all, I pay obeisance to you, and am ever-worshipful, Away from maya and the cycles of nature, of conscious desire, I chant to you Oh Digambara, who wears the sky as a garment."

Tulsidas ji explained the nature of HE who is Brahman, in HIS unmanifest Universal aspect, the Paramātmā!

Eg: Sant Ramakrishna said - When one wants to find sugar one has to check all the boxes to know if it is available not. Without searching nothing is available. One has to search to experience and reach the supreme goal. One should have belief and effort should be present.

4.41

yogasannyastakarmāṇaṁ(ñ), jñānasañchinnasaṁśayam, ātmavantaṁ(n) na karmāṇi, nibadhnanti dhanañjaya. 4.41

Arjuna, actions do not bind him who has dedicated all his actions to God according to the spirit of Karmayoga, whose doubts have been dispelled by wisdom and who is self-possessed.

One who chooses Bhakti yoga may think why do they need karma yoga or Jnana yoga.

Bhagavān said here that one has to understand all the three. With knowledge all the doubts get destroyed leading to control of the inner self. One should not think of fruits and live.

Even the Karma path will bring happiness and peace if followed in the righteous way. The persons with whom we live, we know them very well, similarly if we remember Bhagavān every day and in our life, we will understand and know HIM too. The result will be that life will be a smooth transition in the path of karma.

4.42

tasmādajñānasambhūtaṃ(m), hṛtsthaṃ(ñ) jñānāsinātmanaḥ, chittvainaṃ(m) saṃśayaṃ(m) yogam, ātiṣṭhottiṣṭha bhārata. 4.42

Therefore, Arjuna slashing to pieces, with the sword of knowledge, this doubt in your heart, born of ignorance, establish yourself in Karmayoga in the shape of even-mindedness, and stand up for the fight.

Even when practicing jñāna yoga also one should not give up the Karma path.

Arjuna is told that to be in war is also to be in the path of karma. HE asks him to use his sword and even being in the ambit of jñāna yoga to get up and be in the action that he had to follow as a part of the karma.

Bhagavān advised that one should follow the path of Karma and should not keep oneself away from the responsibilities and duties.

We should remember here the swami Vivekananda said 'Arise, awake, and stop not until the goal is achieved!'

Question and Answers:

Sheelaji

Question: While performing puja sometimes we feel we are getting engulfed in karma practices like these?

Answer: We should think of it as a necessity as this is how the future generations also follow and the practices remain forever. It is not that one should always be engaged in performing such karma always.. it is the samskruthi and such practices is required.

Om tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyāṃ(m) yogaśāstre śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṃvāde jñānakarmasannyāsayogonāma caturtho'dhyāyaḥ

Thus, in the Upaniṣad sung by the Lord, the Science of Brahma, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, ends the fourth chapter entitled "The Yoga of Knowledge as well as the disciplines of Action and Knowledge."



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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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