

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 18: Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga

3/6 (Ślōka 26-32), Sunday, 15 October 2023

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/Du9vyPkjF1I>

The three modes of Guna which influences the doer of action

Chapter 18 - **Mokṣha Sanyās Yog - Yog of renunciation and surrender.**

The 18th Chapter of Srimad Bhagavad Gītā is known as Ekadhyaye Gītā as it is the crux of the entire Gītā. Although no new concept is being introduced in Chapter 18, the concepts discussed are in more understandable words. The critical aspects that a seeker should remember are covered in this Chapter. Hence, this makes Chapter 18 as the one of the most important chapters to contemplate. Like how the highlights help one catch up when one misses the match, the important and critical aspects are covered in this chapter for the seeker to pursue the spiritual journey. Bhagavān has explained different types of Tyāg or renunciation, different types of knowledge to Arjun in this Chapter. Knowledge is used to execute different types of tasks and the success or failure of these tasks depends on five entities as explained in the below shloka:

**adhīṣṭhānaṁ tathā kartā karaṇaṁ cha pṛithag-vidham
vividhāśh cha pṛithak cheṣṭā daivaṁ chaivātra pañchamam**

The body, the doer (soul), the various senses, the many kinds of efforts, and Divine Providence—these are the five factors of action.

Bhagavān then explains the inspiration behind Karma and what transpires into Karma in Shloka 18:

jñānaṁ jñeyam pariñātā tri-vidhā karma-chodanā

The knowledge, object of knowledge that is knowable and the knower of the knowledge are the three factors that inspire to perform any action.

karaṇaṁ karma karteti tri-vidhaḥ karma-saṅgrahaḥ

The instrument of action, the act, and the doer are the three constituents of action.

Bhagavān also elaborates the three types of Gunas, and the modes of actions based on the three

Gunas in detail in this Chapter. There are few shlokas in the Srimad Bhagavad Gītā which are of immense importance and worth contemplation. As we say, **Gītā Padhe, Padhayein aur jeevan mein Laaye**. There are few shlokas which are extremely important, which one should imbibe in all walks of life. The forthcoming shlokas fall in this category where Bhagavān explains how to actions of the doer are driven by one of the three Gunas.

The session begins with the prayer.

गुरूर्ब्रह्मा गुरूर्विष्णुः गुरूर्देवो महेश्वरः ।

गुरूर्साक्षात् परब्रह्म तस्मै श्री गुरवे नमः ॥

ॐ कृष्णाय वासुदेवाय हरये परमात्मने।

प्रणतः क्लेशनाशाय गोविंदाय नमो नमः॥

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

अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीम्- अष्टादशाध्यायिनीम् अम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्-गीते भवद्वेषिणीम् ॥

18.26

muktasaṅgo'nahamvādī, dhṛtyutsāhaṣamanvitaḥ, siddhyasiddhyornirvikāraḥ(kh), kartā sāttvika ucyate. 18.26

Free from attachment, unegoistic, endowed with firmness and zeal and unswayed by success and failure-such a doer is said to be Sāttvika.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains the characteristics of a doer who functions from the Guna of Sāttvika. The term **muktasanga** refers to the one who is free of all attachments. Ideally, for the one who is focused on the results, the actions would be result oriented. One would end up contemplating if the action would bring fame or success. The doer is attracted or stuck to a particular action. However, for the one who performs the actions from a Sattvik state is free of all attachments.

One can understand the Sattvik quality with the example of a mirror. When one faces the mirror, the mirror is completely engrossed and involved in the one facing it. The only thing that the mirror focuses on is the current image (neither the past image nor the future image). The moment one steps aside, the mirror forgets the image that it was reflecting.

Similarly, a doer from Sattvik state focusses on the current action and does not oscillate between the past or the future. The doer who functions from this state neither worries about the past thoughts nor is gripped about the fears or worry of the future. Consider a Shivlinga which is offered with various things like Gangajal, panchamrut or chandan. However, nothing stays forever. Similarly, one should be similar to the Shivling where the actions does not stick to the sub-consciousness mind.

One may contemplate that forgetting the past might lead to identity crises or other bigger problems. However, one must understand that events of the past could be remembered but one should not dwell in the scars of the past events.

Bhagavān then explains **Annahamvādī** or free from the sense of doer ship. A category of people

always indulges in a sense of doer-ship where they take credit of every task or swell with pride for every successful task. This only results in devaluing a task and contribution. Consider Brahmā Ji, the creator of the entire universe. Had Brahmā Ji indulged in self-praise and credit, the entire act of creation of the universe would have become mediocre. One should refrain from self-praise and self-advertise. The doer of action from Sattvik state refrains from this quality and does not indulge in self-praise. The sense of doer-ship is absent in the Sattvik state.

Consider the example of Gnyaneshwar Maharaj, the one who wrote Gnyaneshwari. He was of the opinion that Vitthal Bhagavān was responsible in helping him complete Gnyaneshwari. One can clearly see the absence of doer-ship in such great saints who functioned from a Sattvik state of consciousness.

Consider the example of Dhruva. who was a great devotee of Bhagavān Vishnu. Dhruva is known to have performed the toughest penance at a very young age. When he gets the darshan of Bhagavān Vishnu, he mentions that he was unable to speak and the touch of Bhagavān Vishnu from his divine shell made him speak. He also gives the credit of being able to perform the meditation to Bhagavān Vishnu.

Hence, one needs to give up on three things - The action, the ego of being the doer and the attachment towards the action which makes one swell with pride. Gītā teaches the highest level of psychological management and helps one follow these principles. If one follows these principles, one would be able to keep depression at bay and reach greater heights.

Bhagavān then uses the term **Driti** and **Utsaha**. The one who performs an action with utmost happiness is said to have Utsaha or enthusiasm. Some volunteers are so enthusiastic who spread positive and energetic vibes amongst others. However, there are also a category of people who, with their sad sulked faces bring down the energy or enthusiasm of the entire group.

Consider the real-life example of Tanha Ji, who visits Jeeja Maata to invite her for his son's wedding. Maata Ji was looking at the Kondana fort from her window and a green flag was wavering over the fort. Upon seeing this, Tanha Ji realized that she was thinking of conquering the Kondana fort and he assures her that he would conquer and win the Kondana fort. Although Maata Ji insists that the fort could be captured after his son's wedding, Tanha Ji gets the task accomplished saying that the time to do anything is now.

Even Hanuman Ji performed any task that came his way with utmost enthusiasm. The Ram Prathishta Anushtaan has been given by Swami Ji to one and all to fill oneself with enthusiasm. The app is a blessing in disguise which boosts the enthusiasm the first basis to start any task or work. However, when one goes overboard with enthusiasm, it could cause hassles at work.

During Navaratri, where one prays for wealth from Shaurya Lakshmi, Vijaya Lakshmi and other forms of Lakshmi Maata, the one who is enthusiastic about work would reap the blessings. Everyone is enthusiastic about speed cars however, no one would want to drive a car without breaks. Although enthusiasm is required, one should not go overboard with the same. Hence, Driti is of utmost importance along with Utsaha.

When Hanuman Ji went to Ashoka Vatika in search of Sita Maata in Lanka, he found her in distress. Hanuman Ji had great devotion towards her and was absorbed in her motherly love. His mission was accomplished when he found Sita Maata. When Ravana arrived in Ashok Vatika, he tried all possible ways to talk out things with her and lure her with temptations. Maata Sita does not give in to any of the temptations and she responds saying Bhagavān Rama would come and rescue her. That enrages

Ravana and he responds to Sita saying he would kill her.

Hanuman Ji could have pounced on Raavan and killed him then and there. However, he focused only on the task given to him and he maintained his calm by not attacking Ravana. Had he acting from a state of extreme enthusiasm, it would have changed the course of the entire Ramayana. This is a combination of Dhriti and Utsaha and a Sathvik practices a combination of these qualities. When all these characteristics are combined in the action, in all probability, the doer would succeed. However, the Sattvik doer cannot be determinant alone in performing an action. The Sattvik doer would remain equitable towards the result of the action. Neither the Sathvik doer would swell in pride upon the successful action nor would lament in sadness for a failed action. It is the Karma which matters and not the success or failure that matters.

When the entire Vanara sena felt depressed due to the ocean that had to be crossed to reach the Lanka, Angad cites the example of Jatayu. Angad inspires the Vanara Sena by quoting Jatayu, who tried his best to save Sita Maata from Ravana having known that he could not measure upto the strength of Ravana. The last rites of Jatayu were performed by Sri Ram himself and even King Dasharath was not bestowed with the grace of his final rites being performed by Sri Ram. Angad was trying to explain that it is the effort and action that matters more than the results and the almighty would not judge one as success or failure.

When Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated, violence erupted against the Maharashtrians at the same time. In Kolhapur, there was a photo studio which was burnt during the violence. The owner of the studio said that he was left with one month of earning by the miscreants who burnt down his studio. He said that the coal which was a result of his burnt studio would help him with one month of earnings. This is how the perception of a Sattvik Karta would be and one who functions from this state would not be bogged by any events of failure or loss. To imbibe the Sathvik qualities, one should read the life history of great people like Tilak ji, Veer Savarkar, Mahatma Gandhi in order to understand the real meaning of the shlokas and to implement the same practically in all situations of life.

18.27

rāgī karmaphalaprepsuḥ(r), lubdho hiṃsātmako'śuciḥ, harṣaśokānvitaḥ(kh) kartā, rājasaḥ(ph) parikīrtitaḥ. 18.27

The doer who is full of attachment, seeks the fruit of actions and is greedy, and who is oppressive by nature and of impure conduct, and who feels joy and sorrow, has been called Rājasika.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains the traits of a doer who functions from a state of Rajo Guna. A Rajasika doer is mediocre doer who is attached to the task that is being performed. By being attached to the task as his / her own task could cause harm in the long run. Let's say one wants to visit the bank and the official who had to perform the urgent task at the bank is on leave.

Let's say the other bank official who is capable of executing the task declines citing that it is not under the purview of his roles and responsibilities as he is attached to his tasks alone. In this situation, one develops an opinion that the bank is not customer friendly which in turn affects the reputation of the entire bank. This is due to the employee who refused to be detached from his task and having to pick up a task of larger interest.

When foreign tourists visit the country and are troubled by the citizens, the reputation of the entire country goes down. Hence, one tries to be at the best behavior in national interests. An excessive attachment towards one's tasks or action could lead to a bigger damage which a Rajasik doer fails to

understand.

The term karmaphalaprepsuḥ(r) refers to the one who wants instant results for the actions being performed. During the elections, one would have observed that if a candidate is denied a ticket, the candidate does not think twice and switches to another party immediately. Instead of working for the party for few years and proving the capability of getting a ticket, the candidate expects for more and more.

The Rajasika doer would have greed for fame and success. Say performing a task for the photo appearing in newspapers is an example of this nature. The greed leads one in losing the mind and it takes away the balance or wisdom of good and bad. The person in turn becomes violent in nature. One who is focused on results would eventually become greedy and would tend to hurt others in the process of gaining more and more. The one who functions as a Rajasik doer loses the wisdom of right and wrong.

Even in medical field, one has seen the professionals' selling kidneys or other organs. The quality of greed is the sole reason which results in the tendency to hurt the other. Initially it starts out of helplessness and later turns violent. Such persons tend to become impure and corrupt. One needs to understand that it is the internal purity that is referred to here and not the external purity. Karma or action is a means to achieve the purification of the soul by engaging in Sathvik Yagya, Dana and so on.

However, this understanding is lacking in a Rajasik doer which in turn results in internal impurity. Addition to fame or success leads to loss of wisdom or ability to differentiate between right and wrong. Hence, it is popularly said "**May the good sense prevail**".

The one who functions from the Rajasik state easily gets moved by joy or sorrow. If one emerges victorious in an election, the celebration happens with pomp and glory. The Rajasik doer swells with pride when praised and gets easily affected by failures. To most extent, people come in this category.

18.28

ayuktaḥ(kh) prākṛtaḥ(s) stabdhaḥ(ś), śaṭho naiṣkṛtiko'lasaḥ, viṣādī dīrghasūtrī ca, kartā tāmāsa ucyate. 18.28

Lacking piety and self-control, uncultured, arrogant, deceitful, inclined to rob others of their livelihood, slothful, despondent and procrastinating-such a doer is called Tāmāsika.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains a Tamasik doer. If one could observe any of these traits in oneself, one needs to discard them immediately. The Tamasik doer is ayuktaḥ (kh) or undisciplined. One would not be able to focus on any tasks. In current times, the students are unable to focus and unable to study even a page from the book. The gadgets have inculcated this quality in each one of us in current times.

Consider the tribal community. The tribals lack the etiquettes to present themselves. If someone is given a diamond in its raw form (without any processing), one would not be able to value the precious stone. Even diamond, in its natural state needs to undergo processing to be able to be sold as a precious stone. Hence, just being in a natural state or uncultured state would not help and one needs to refine to become a Sathvik doer. It is very hard to convince people in Tamasik state as they like

being in a state of inaction. One would tend to obstinate when a well-wisher tries to advise them to practice Sathvik qualities. Such characteristics would be detrimental to the entire team as the focus is on harming the work more than thinking of the progress. The natural state of Tamasik people is of laziness. Our scriptures have defined laziness as the greatest enemy of oneself in this shloka -

आलस्यं हि मनुष्याणां शरीरस्थो महान् रिपुः

The king of all enemies is laziness as stated in the above shloka.

The one in Rajasik state always complain, engage in lamentation and procrastination. A complaining mind is an inferior mind. As Kabir Das Ji says,

काल करे सो आज कर, आज करे सो अब.

One should complete the actions as fast as one can. However, the current mindset is Aaj kare so kal kar, kal kare so parso, itini jaldi kya hai, jeena hai jo parso. But one fails to understand that the best time to do anything is now as no one knows which moment would be the last moment of one's life. If one is in a Rajasik state, one can still strive to be a Sattvik doer. However, if one finds oneself as a Tamasik doer, one should discard the Tamasik traits immediately. This is the message that one should imbibe from these shlokas for every action performed.

The action is driven by intellect or wisdom. For the one with appropriate or good way of thinking would perform the tasks well. Hanuman Ji is known for his intellect and wisdom and one can learn how good intellect drives good actions. The theory of multiple intellect is being explained by science in recent times. However, the scriptures explained these concepts thousands of years ago. The type of intellect is explained in the forthcoming shlokas.

18.29

**buddherbhedam(n) dhṛteścaiva, guṇatastrividham(m) śṛṇu,
procyamānamaśeṣeṇa, pṛthaktvena dhanañjaya. 18.29**

Now hear, Arjuna, the threefold division, based on the predominance of each Guṇa, of understanding (Buddhi) and firmness (Dhṛti), which I shall explain in detail, one by one.

In this shloka, Bhagavān says that Buddhi and Dhṛiti are of three types each which he explains in detail. As mentioned earlier, some shlokas are extremely important which one needs to imbibe in daily lives. It is known that knowledge is the biggest wealth as explained in the below shloka:

**न चौरहार्यं न च राजहार्यं
न भ्रातृभाज्यं न च भारकारि।
व्यये कृते वर्धत एव नित्यं
विद्याधनं सर्वधनप्रधानम्॥**

The shloka conveys that knowledge cannot be stolen by the thieves, taken away by the kings or distributed amongst siblings. The more one spends knowledge, it would increase. During Navaratri, while praying to Lakshmi Maata for wealth, one should strive to get the best kind of wealth. One would get the right knowledge only with the right intellect.

18.30

pravṛttiṃ(ñ) ca nivṛttiṃ(ñ) ca, kāryākārye bhayābhaye, bandhaṃ(m) mokṣaṃ(ñ) ca yā vetti, buddhiḥ(s) sā pārtha sāttvikī. 18.30

The intellect which correctly determines the paths of activity and renunciation, what ought to be done and what should not be done, what is fear and what is fearlessness, and what is bondage and what is liberation, that intellect is Sāttvika.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains about the actions which one should pursue and the actions from which one needs to retire. One needs to understand and differentiate between the actions that are to be performed and the actions that one should refrain from performing. One also needs to understand the distinction of Karya (action worth doing) and Akarya (actions to be refrained from). Some persons end up in addictions or undesirable habits as the intellect is inferior. Some of them succumb to peer pressure and indulge in unpleasant habits. One needs to understand which actions are worth following i.e., pravṛttiṃ(ñ) and nivṛttiṃ(ñ). Only then, one would be able to differentiate between Karma and Akarya.

One also needs to understand the difference between Bhaya and Abhaya. In some cities, there was heavy rains which lead to intense floods and some youths ventured in boats out of excitement or over-enthusiasm and ended up losing the lives. One needs to understand when to be fearful and fearless. When one speaks the truth and the truth actually pinches the other, one should refrain from hurting the other. One should refrain from tasks that demotivates the other. One should have the intellect to balance and weigh the actions to be performed. One might contemplate that Abhaya is a divine quality and now it is being explained to be fearful as well. However, one needs to understand that the best intellect is to know where to be fearful and where not to be fearful. Say committing a sin, speeding on the roads out of thrill (which puts one and the other at risk) are examples where one needs to be fearful.

One needs to understand the actions which are binding and the acts which are liberating. Say attending Vivechan sessions is an effort to uplift oneself which would put one on the path of liberation. On the contrary, if one is addicted to Netflix or social media, it is an act of binding. One who is able to differentiate between the two is of Sathvik quality and one would gain this quality with proper study of scriptures and Saṃskāras. Education supported by Sathvik Buddhi is the one which would bring success in life.

18.31

yayā dharmamadharmaṃ(ñ) ca, kāryaṃ(ñ) cākāryameva ca, ayathāvatprajānāti, buddhiḥ(s) sā pārtha rājasī. 18.31

The intellect by which man does not truly perceive what is Dharma and what is Adharma, what ought to be done and what should not be done-that intellect is Rājasika.

In this shloka, Bhagavān continues to explain about those who are confused between Dharma and Adharma or Karya and Akarya. Those whose intellect oscillate between these states are confused and often don't know how to proceed in certain directions and are gripped in dilemma. This defines Rajasik Buddhi where one is unable to find a definite direction and a proper course of action.

18.32

adharmam(n) dharmamiti yā, manyate tamasāvṛtā, sarvārthānviparītāṃśca, buddhiḥ(s) sā pārtha tāmāsī. 18.32

The intellect wrapped in ignorance, which imagines even Adharma to be Dharma, and sees all other things upside-down-that intellect is Tāmasika, Arjuna.

If one with Rajasik Buddhi is gripped by confusion and dilemma, one can still read the scriptures and reach out to a Guru to dispel the confusion and strive towards developing a Sathvik Buddhi. However, for those who function with a Tamasic intelligence have no confusion. They are deluded that Adharma is Dharma. Say killing people is Adharma and no one has the right to take the life of the other. However, for extremists, the person is of the opinion that Adharma is Dharma or the wrong is termed as right. The deluded buddhi is enveloped with ignorance. Even after being aware that addiction is harmful or smoking is harmful, one would still engage in such pleasures.

If one finds oneself with Tamasik intellect traits, one should discard the same. Even if one is in Rajasik state, one can still strive and work towards developing a Sathvik state of mind. One should consider oneself lucky and blessed to read the Gītā as one would gradually head towards the Sattvik path from Rajasik path.

Question and Answer

Rukmini Ji

Question: What is the meaning of Prakarshena ipsu.

Answer: It means to have a strong desire.

Rani Ji

Question: Which are the chapters can be recited during Navaratri?

Answer: All chapters can be recited during Navaratri. With 2 Chapters per day, one can read the entire Gītā in 9 days.

Sunanda Ji

Question: What is the meaning of yattattamasa muchate?

Answer: Yat means the one explained in the shloka. Tamasa Uchaye - which falls in the purview of Tamas. All that is explained in the shloka is called Tamas.

Shashi Ji:

Question: What is the difference between Muktosango and Anasakta

Answer: They are almost the same. There is a fine line where Asakti and sanga refers to attachment. Muktosango and Anasakta means to be free of attachment.

Atul Ji:

Question: What is Buddha Avatar in Dasha avatar and how do Hindus perceive this Avatar? As per Buddhist, there are thousands of Buddhas that take incarnation whereas in Hinduism, there seems to be only one Buddha.

Answer: This will be explained in the next session.

Question: Who has framed the Dasha Avatar?

Answer: This comes from the Puranas and scriptures.

Question: Ved Vyas Ji has not written the Puranas?

Answer: He has not created the Puranas. The knowledge was transferred orally previously, and Ved Vyas Ji has compiled the Puranas as scriptures as people of Kaliyug would not be able to grasp orally.

Question: The knowledge given by Bhagavān could be diluted or the knowledge in Puranas could be right?

Answer: Ved Vyaas Ji was an incarnation of Bhagavān Vishnu, and we are not even capable of questioning his caliber. One needs to seek the basic knowledge and then contemplate if something is diluted. When one is not a scientist, one cannot question the other scientist. One cannot question the doctor if there would be any side effects as the doctor knows his job, and one is not qualified to question the doctor during treatment. At learn Gītā, we are learning the shlokas in Moola Sanskrit and not the interpretation. Hence, we can't question the writing of Ved Vyas Ji.

Question: Why should one read the Gītā as a Hindu?

Answer: One can get the real knowledge of Gītā when one has the faith towards it. Gītā is the foundation of many concepts in modern science and many concepts are addressed in Gītā. even after reading multiple scriptures, one will come back to Gītā as it addresses all the concepts of modern-day queries.

Prabodh Ji

Question: The shlokas mentioned during the initial prayer, where could we get the audio?

Answer: It would be taught in Nyaas.

Shashikala Ji:

Question: Udarate and Uchyate - are these the same in all shlokas?

Answer: They are synonyms - Udarate (declared as) and Uchyate (called as).



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Thank you-For reading the summary

You have enjoyed this vivechan writeup! In spite of intense editing and proofreading, errors of grammar, as also of omission and commission may have crept in. We appreciate your forbearance.

Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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