

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 6: Ātma-Saṁyama-Yoga

2/4 (Ślōka 11-23), Saturday, 02 September 2023

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/bcyr7iQ4p38>

Dhyāna Yoga - UNION with The SELF

The sixth chapter of Srimad Bhagavadgītā is called **Atma-Samyam-Yoga - The yoga of self control.**

This auspicious journey of the discourse started with the ceremonial deepa prajwalaṅ by invoking the blessings of the omnipresent Śrī Bhagavān and all the great spiritual masters and offering our prayers at HIS Lotus feet to rid our minds of darkness and enlighten us to reach the path of Supreme knowledge.

Arjuna's only question to Bhagavān was:

संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शंससि।
यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम्॥5.1॥

He tells Bhagavān that he is confused as HE praises Saṁnyāsa as well as karma yoga. He asks Bhagavān to tell one course of action to follow; that which is best suited for him. Bhagavān replies both are good and lead to Nishreyas (that which is ideal); but karma yoga is better simply because anyone can easily follow it. Bhagavān further elaborates that a Saṁnyāsi and yogi may appear to be poles apart externally but both have the same intentions within.

स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रियः॥6.1॥

A Saṁnyāsi and yogi are the same as both perform their duty without any selfish desire or in expectation of the result of their actions. Only by performing karma yoga can one become yogarudha.

आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते। 6:3

Bhagavān gives a detailed description of dhyana yoga where one has to practice Ashtanga yoga:

The eight steps being:

- **Yamas** (abstinences),

- **Niyama** (observances),
- **Asana** (posture),
- **Prāṇayama** (breathing),
- **Pratyahara** (withdrawal),
- **Dharana** (concentration),
- **Dhyana** (meditation) and
- **Samādhi** (absorption).

The first four are referred to as '**Bahiranga sadana**' (external control).

Patanjali Maharaj Ji's sutra is:

स्थिरसुखमासनम्

One has to sit steady in a happy state. The control begins from '**sthula sharira**' (gross body) and progresses to '**Sukshma sharira**' (subtle body) through *yama*, *niyama*, and *asana*. Prāṇayama is then performed to control the mind and senses. Only after accomplishment of these four steps does actual meditation begin.

6.11

**śucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya, sthiramāsanamātmanah,
nātyucchritam(n) nātinīcam(ñ), cailājīnakuśottaram. 6.11**

Having firmly set his seat in a spot which is free from dirt and other impurities with the sacred Kuśa grass, deerskin and cloth spread thereon one upon the other(Kuśa below, deerskin in the middle and cloth uppermost), neither very high nor very low;

After reaching the state of yogarudha, meditating to merge with Paramātmā begins. The place chosen for meditation is very important. One cannot sit in a cinema hall and meditate! The three important aspects with respect to the place of meditation are: Swaccha, Shuddha, and Pavitra.

Dnyaneshwar Maharaj Ji says:

जो संतीं वसविला ठावो । संतोषासि सावावो ।
मना होय उत्सावो । धैर्याचा ॥६-१६५॥

It must have been occupied by saints before, so that it should make you happy, enthused and firm in your vow

अभ्यासुचि आपणयातें करी । हृदयातें अनुभवु वरी ।
ऐसी रम्यपणाची थोरी । अखंड जेथ ॥६-१६६॥

The place should be so pleasant that one should be able to practice Yoga with ease and gain spiritual experience there.

जया आड जातां पार्था । तपश्चर्या मनोरथा ।
पाखांडियाही आस्था । समूळ होय ॥६-१६७॥

Even, if a skeptic, O Pārtha, passes by that place, he should feel like doing penance at that spot.

The presence of saints makes us bold and confident. Even if a hypocrite visits such a place, he will sense that the place holds some extraordinary experience and would be enthused to meditate. One should first control the mind and senses by karma yoga, and then sit in the proper posture at a place - not too low to be troubled by insects, and not too high to be off balance. The ideal place should be

pure, clean and holy. To sit on animal skin upon Kusa grass after placing a cloth over it.

How should the posture be?

6.12

tatraikāgraṃ(m) manaḥ(kh) kṛtvā, yatacittendriyakriyāḥ, upaviśyāsane yuñjād, yogamātmaviśuddhaye. 6.12

And occupying that seat , concentrating the mind and controlling the functions of the mind and senses, he should practice Yoga for self purification.

After total control over the mind and senses; one should sit in meditation posture and not have any thoughts or allow the mind to wander. '**Pratyahara**' - where the food for the mind is only Paramātmā and nothing else. The mind thus becomes introverted and is focussed within. Just as sight is the food for the eyes, sound food for the ears, and touch food for the skin; the introverted mind forgets its nature and concentrates only on Paramātmā.

Patanjali Maharaj has enumerated the five states of the mind viz. **Kshipta** (distracted), **Mudha** (dull), **Vikshipta** (partially focused), **Ekagraha** (one-pointed), and **Niruddha** (completely controlled).

How can posture help in controlling the mind?

Posture enables the mind to get engaged with the body and then through Prāṇayama the mind is engaged with vaayu tattva. The mind is the most important aspect of control in Prāṇayama and not the nose as many believe it to be. The process of inhalation, retention of air within the lungs, and exhalation engages the mind with the breath and thus improve concentration. By performing karma yoga, we purify ourselves from within just like Prāṇayama.

Dnyaneshwar Maharaj Ji says to be focussed and not think of anything:

विषयांचा विसरु पडे । इंद्रियांची कसमस मोडे ।

मनाची घडी घडे । हृदयामार्जी ॥६-१८८॥

He will then be oblivious to the sense-objects, his senses will lose their vigour, and the mind will settle down in the heart.

6.13

ṣamaṃ(ñ) kāyaśirogrīvaṃ(n), dhārayannacalaṃ(m) sthiraḥ, saṃprekṣya nāsikāgraṃ(m) svaṃ(n), diśaścānavalokayan. 6.13

Holding the trunk, head and neck straight and steady, remaining firm and fixing the gaze on the tip of his nose, without looking in other directions.

The posture for meditation is an important aspect for life. To sit comfortably and align the head, neck and trunk in a straight line like a stick. This posture is essential to proceed further with the aspects of meditation.

In Marathi it is said how to sit while studying:

पाठ वाकली तर पाठ होत नाही

If the back is not straight rote learning is not possible.

The back should be straight and the posture important while consuming food, studying, or meditating. There should be no movement when one sits for meditation.

Where to look?

On closing the eyes sometimes, we may feel sleepy. So, Bhagavān advises us to concentrate on the point in between the brows and gazing at the tip of the nose. This way the eyes are not fully closed nor fully open. When the sight is focussed, the mind also becomes focussed.

6.14

praśāntātmā vigatabhīḥ(r), brahmacārivrate sthitaḥ, manaḥ(s) saṃyamyā maccitto, yukta āsīta matparaḥ. 6.14

Firm in the vow of complete chastity and fearlessness, keeping himself perfectly calm and with the mind held in restraint and fixed on Me, the vigilant Yogī should sit absorbed in Me.

When the concentration of the mind increases, fear vanishes. We humans are offset with various kinds of fear expressed here with a Sanskrit Subhashitha:

भोगे रोग भयं कुले चुत्पी भयं विते त्रुपालाद भयं
मौने देन्य भयं बले रिपु भयं रूपे जराया भयं
शास्त्रे वाद भयं गुणे खल भयं काये कृतांताद भयं
सर्व वस्तु भयान्वितम भुवि त्रुनाम वैराग्य मेवा भयं

Bhoge = indulgence in sensual pleasure. Roga = disease. Bhayam =fear. Kule = a dynsty. Chyuti = falling down (in status), Vitte =wealth. Nrupaalaat =from the King or the Income-tax authorities. Maane = respect, honour. Dainya = poverty. Bale = power. Ripu = enemies. Roope = beauty. Tarunyaa =youth. Shaastre = various disciplines of learning. Vaada = arguments, explanation. Gune = virtues. Khala = a wicked person. Kaaye = human body. Krutaantaat = from death. Sarvam = all. Vastu = things. Anvit = linked to. Bhuvi = this Earth. Nrunaam = people. Vairāgya = freedom from worldly desires. Aiva = really. Abhayam = without any fear.

People indulging in sensual pleasures are afraid of contracting diseases, people belonging to a prominent dynasty are afraid of losingtheir status. rich people are afraid of being taxed by the king or the Government, similarly honourable persons are afraid of being poor, powerful people are afraid of their enemies, young people are afraid of losing their beauty, learned people are afraid of arguments about their disciplines of learning, virtuous people are afraid of wicked persons, and human body from Death. In fact every thing in this World is linked in one way or other with fear, but only those persons who practise 'Vairāgya" (detachment from worldly desires) live without any fear. All things in this world are filled with fear except '**Vishnu pada Nirbhayam**'- the Lotus feet of Bhagavan.

Brahmachari is one whose mind is focussed on Paramātmā. Grihashthi (Family man) has a lot of worries. The mind has to be controlled by concentrating on Paramātmāi.

Dnyaneshwar Maharaj Ji says that the uniqueness of the mind is such that - once it gets hooked on to something then it stays there. So, when the mind is one with Paramātmā - it stays there and hence belongs to HIM. So, it is important to sit in such a place with only the thought of Paramātmā (Mathchitta) and not wanting anything other than Paramātmā (Mathpara).

6.15

yuñjannevaṃ(m) sadātmānaṃ(m), yogī niyatamānaṣaḥ, śāntiṃ(n) nirvāṇaparamāṃ(m), matsaṃsthāmadhigacchati. 6.15

Thus constantly applying his mind to Me, the Yogī of disciplined mind attains the everlasting peace, consisting of Supreme Bliss, which abides in Me.

The mind should meditate upon Paramātmā and one should have total control over the self, mind and senses; and meditate continuously.

Janardhan Swami Ji said:

**समाधानाय सौख्याय, निरोगत्वाय जीवने।
योगमेवाभ्यसेत प्राज्ञा यथाशक्ती निरंतरम्।**

One should constantly strive and meditate. It is a process like karma yoga. It doesn't end even on attaining Paramātmā. Similarly, bhakthi yoga also does not end on attaining Paramātmā.

With reference to Tukaram Maharaj Ji, it is not said that he attained Panduranga; instead, he has become Panduranga:

तुका झाला पांडुरंग

The bhajan and kirtan continues even after merging with Paramatma. Just like routine actions like eating, breathing, sleeping; meditation also should be a continuous process. By doing it one gets peace -'**Satchidananda**' (**Ultimate Bliss**).

6.16

nātyaśnatastu yogo'sti, na caikāntamanaśnataḥ, na cātisvapnaśīlasya, jāgrato naiva cārjuna. 6.16

Arjuna, this yoga is neither for him who overeats, nor for him who observes a complete fast; it is neither for him who is given to too much sleep, nor even for him who is ceaselessly awake.

Anything in excess is detrimental. A glutton who has no control overeating can never become yogarudha. On the other hand, a person in starvation also cannot become a yogarudha. There should be a balance and one should avoid extremities. We dream when we sleep. One who sleeps a lot or one who never sleeps cannot attain the state of yoga.

अति सर्वत्र वर्जयेत्

Excess of anything is bad. Some of us are attracted to Good. But the universe tries to maintain balance. So what is good for some may end up being bad for others...

6.17

yuktāhāravihārasya, yuktaceṣṭasya karmasu, yuktasvapnāvabodhasya, yogo bhavati duḥkhaḥ. 6.17

Yoga which rids one of woe, is accomplished only by him who is regulated in diet and recreation,

regulated in performing actions, and is regulated in sleep and wakefulness.

The word 'yukta' used by Bhagavān clearly means 'that which is necessary' or 'optimum.' Food for consumption is not food alone.

The sight is the food for the eyes, smell for the nose, sound for the ears, and touch for the skin - they are all food for the senses. Walking is food for the legs and giving and receiving is likened to the food for the hands.

How much of food is necessary?

Only that much which is necessary to perform our karma. There is no need to sacrifice everything. Even a workaholic cannot attain yogic state. Further, age is also a factor to be considered. A person who is active and exercises a lot had more requirement than an aged person who is sedentary. Some sleep for 8 hours, and some for 6 hours.

How do we know how much sleep is sufficient?

When the eyes open after sleeping for few hours, it means the body is well rested and hence should wake up at once and not procrastinate.

The body intake should comprise of 50% food, 25% water, and 25% air.

This will help us lead a life free of sickness and all sorrows will be destroyed by proper yoga.

6.18

yadā viniyatam(ñ) cittam, ātmanyevāvatiṣṭhate, niḥsṛhaḥ(s) sarVākāmebhyo, yukta ityucyate tadā. 6.18

When the mind which is thoroughly disciplined, gets riveted on God alone, then the person who is free from yearning for all enjoyments is said to be established in Yoga.

Dnyaneshwar Maharaj Ji says:

जो रसनेन्द्रियाचा अंकिला । कां निद्रेसी जीवें विकला ।
तो नाहीच एथ म्हणितला । अधिकारिया ॥६-३४५॥

One who is a slave to his palate or given to sleep is not considered qualified for the study of Yoga

अथवा आग्रहाचिये बांदोडी । क्षुधा तृषा कोडी ।
आहारातें तोडी । मारूनियां ॥६-३४६॥

Nor he who starves himself by suppressing his hunger and thirst nor one who deprives himself of sleep.

If thoughts are snuffed forcefully, the mind gets engaged in more thoughts and worries. One should talk only to the extent required. Then there is no need for conscious control. By diligently practising yoga things will fall into place naturally - as one gets to see Paramātmā and is oblivious to everything else and hence devoid of all desires. If one thinks of only Paramātmā and the mind is wholly engaged

in HIM, he is a yogi who has become one with Paramātmā. Such a yogi's mind is beautifully described by Bhagavān.

6.19

**yathā dīpo nivāstho, neṅgate sopamā smṛtā,
yogino yatacittasya, yuñjato yogamātmanaḥ. 6.19**

As a flame does not flicker in a windless place, such is stated to be the picture of the disciplined mind of Yogī practicing meditation on God.

The wicker of the lamp glows steadily when there is no wind. To enable this, we place a glass on the lamp so that the light is not snuffed by the wind. The lamp lit inside the garbhagriha in a temple shines steadily and there is no flickering. Such is the mind of a yogi whose mind is in Paramātmā and is unwavering.

6.20

**yatropaRāmate cittam(n), niruddham(m) yogasevayā,
yatra caivātmanātmānam(m), paśyannātmani tuṣyati. 6.20**

The state in which the Chitta (mind), subdued through the practice of Yoga, becomes completely tranquil, and in which, realizing God through subtle reasoning purified by meditation on God, the soul rejoices only in God.

This calm and peaceful state of the mind with only the thought of Paramātmā is achieved after many years and sometimes after many births. In such a '**Nirudha**' (restrained state), a yogi sees only Paramātmā and thereby his own self!! Such a yogi forgets everything - his body, education, career, and sees only Paramātmā.

This is true knowledge. Samarth Ramdas Ji says:

ऐक ज्ञानाचे लक्षण|

ज्ञान म्हणजे आत्मज्ञान|

पाहावे आपणासी आपण| या नाव ज्ञान||५६१||

The knowledge that the body is not the self is jñāna. However, seeing oneself within oneself, ie., the experience of the self within is vijñāna.

To tell is theoretically easy but to experience it is the redeeming factor which brings peace and everlasting happiness. This is the Samādhi state.

This is the '**satchidananda**' state that Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya ji experienced.

मनोबुद्ध्यहङ्कार चित्तानि नाहं

न च श्रोत्रजिह्वे न च घ्राणनेत्रे ।

न च व्योम भूमिर्न तेजो न वायुः

चिदानन्दरूपः शिवोऽहम् शिवोऽहम् ॥१॥

I am not mind, nor intellect, nor ego, nor the reflections of inner self. I am not the five senses. I am beyond that. I am not the ether, nor the earth, nor the fire, nor the wind (the five elements). I am indeed, That eternal knowing and bliss, Shiva, love and pure consciousness.

6.21

sukhamātyantikam(m) yattad, buddhigrāhyamatīndriyam, vetti yatra na caivāyam(m), sthitaścalati tattvataḥ. 6.21

Nay, in which the soul experiences the eternal and super-sensuous joy which can be intuited only through the subtle and purified intellect, and wherein established the said Yogī moves not from Truth on any account.

The yogic state of '**Satchidananda**' is the **state of Supreme bliss**.

We derive happiness through our senses. The cool and pure air makes us feel good.

Bhagavān says this is not true happiness as it is only the happiness of the intellect that can bring about everlasting bliss.

Material happiness that we seek in our ordinary lives is short lived and dependent on external factors.

A yogi on the other hand who has experienced ultimate bliss never wavers towards anything else. In fact, he is the walking talking Paramātmā who has transformed from '**Nar**' (human) to '**Narayana**' (Paramātmā). He has thus achieved the ultimate!!

6.22

yaṃ(m) labdhvā cāparam(m) lābham(m), manyate nādhikam(n) tataḥ, yasminsthito na duḥkhena, guruṇāpi vicālyate. 6.22

And having obtained which he does not reckon any other gain as greater than that, and established in which he is not shaken even by the heaviest of sorrows;

After attaining this state there is nothing more. Any amount of sorrow in his life does not waver him. In chapter 2, Arjuna asks Bhagavān; if at all is there any such person who has attained this state; who is '**Sthitaprajña**'?

Bhagavān says that such a yogi in human form attains HIM. The happiness and sorrow in his life does not affect him. The antonym of happiness is sorrow; while there is no such term for Bliss. When it rains, we get drenched. We can protect ourselves with an umbrella or raincoat.

Similarly, a yogi is protected from upheavals in life.

Bhagavadgītā is yoga Śāstra as mentioned in the pushpika:

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादेऽ

6.23

taṃ vidyād duḥkhasamyoga, viyogam(m) yogasamjñitam, sa niścayena yuktavyo, yogo'nirviṇṇacetasā. 6.23

That state called Yoga, which is free from the contact of sorrow (in the form of transmigration), should be known. Nay, this Yoga should be resolutely practiced with an unwearied mind.

This kind of yoga makes one unperturbed of sorrow. Chapter 3 explains this yoga and so does chapter 2, which deals with the quality of equality in a yogi. To bring srimad Bhagavadgītā into our lives, we have to diligently do yoga in the proper posture followed by Prāṇayama. We should do it willingly and happily and not out of compulsion or as a chore.

Śrī Govind Dev Giri Ji Maharaj's 'Trisutra':

गीता पढ़ें, पढ़ायें, जीवन में लायें

"Learn Gītā, Teach Gītā, Imbibe Gītā.

We pray to Paramātmā to give us the strength and strive to lead the path of such noble desires. The session thus ends with prayers.

Question & Answer session:

Ananth Ji

Question: What is pana and apana?

Answer: Prāṇayama should be performed diligently to attain balance else will lead to sickness. There are different types of Prāṇayama like:

- **Bhramari** Pranayama. ...
- **Kapalbhati** Pranayama. ...
- **Bhastrika** Pranayama. ...
- **Nadi Shodan** Pranayama. ...
- **Shitali** Pranayama. ...
- **Ujjayi** Pranayama. ...
- **Anulom Vilom** Pranayama. ...
- **Sheetkari** Pranayama.

All these techniques help in engaging the mind with the breath. The three different parts of one breathing cycle are **Puraka means inhalation, rechaka means exhalation, and kumbhaka refers to pausing after inhalation or exhalation (breath retention)**. It is important to know what form of Prāṇayama to do, when, and for how long. For eg. Surya nadi Prāṇayama is done in cold weather while Chandra nadi Prāṇayama in hot weather.6:13 deals with the five states of the mind:

- **Kshipta** (agitated/scattered)
- **Mudha** (dull, lethargic)
- **Vikshipta** (partially focused)
- **Ekagrah** (one-pointed)
- **Niruddha** (fully arrested).

Urmila Ji

Question: Please clarify verse 23.

Answer: The right way to do yoga is important so that one remains the same in dualities like happiness and sorrow. To follow this type of yoga one should do it willingly, happily and continuously. With respect to the horses of Arjuna's chariot - it can be likened to the senses and the mind.

Upendra Ji

Question: Meaning of '**Kootashta**.'

Answer: The word '**koot**' means the peak of a mountain. That which has no change and remains the same. One who is unaffected by the external environment.

Bimal Ji

Question: Please explain verse 22.

Answer: To practice meditation so that the mind is engaged in no other thought other than Paramātmā. After performing Prāṇayama one should focus the eyes at the tip of the nose and meditate upon Paramātmā.

Shrikant Ji

Question: Effect of Shraddha on the mind and intellect.

Answer:

श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः। 4:39

There are three types of shraddha (faith) based on the three gunas - sattva, tamas, and rajas. Scientists do not believe in shraddha.

Vinobha Bhava Ji gave an explanation of the 'bindu.' It has no length, breadth, or thickness. It is only a point in entity. If a student asks how it can exist, the teacher will tell the student to imagine. If one cannot assume then it is impossible to deduce further.

The concept of zero originated in India - without its knowledge it is impossible to reach the moon! An atom was considered the smallest particle. Later it was found to have protons, electrons, and neutrons which is invisible to the eye. Only hypothesis leads to equations. Similarly, it is with Paramātmā and Jīvātmā. One has to believe to practice yoga Śāstra and only the result can be experienced to prove that it is true.

Poonam Ji

Question: What is atma?

Answer: Atma is all pervading and everywhere in space. When it is connected with the body it is called jeevatma. On the death of the body it gets disconnected and is set free. The happiness and sorrow in one's lifetime gets accumulated on the atma.

अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते।।6.35।।

We should constantly strive and through regular practice of yoga reach Paramatma.

Gauri Ji

Question: What is concentration?

Answer: The mind is to be focussed only on Paramātmā - ekagrah.

Archana Ji

Question: What is moksha? Is there a specific time for dhyana?

Answer: Atma is not born, nor does it die. It is indestructible. Realization is to know the truth of the atma and that one is not the body and hence not the doer. Therefore, one will not have any ego resulting from 'I'.

Samarth Ramdas Ji said:

ऐक ज्ञानाचे लक्षण।

ज्ञान म्हणजे आत्मज्ञान।

पाहावे आपणासी आपण। या नाव ज्ञान।।५।६।१।।

The knowledge that the body is not the self is jnana. However, seeing oneself within oneself, ie., the

experience of the self within is vijnana.

Chapter 15 deals with **UttamaPuruṣa**, atma, Jīvātmā and Paramātmā . On realizing the true Self, one enjoys eternal bliss - Moksha and becomes 'Satchidananda.' To meditate during brahma muhurta in the morning or in the evening is good. Meditation is important while the time of day is not.



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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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