

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 17: Śraddhā-Traya-Vibhāga-Yoga

1/2 (Ślōka 1-13), Sunday, 11 August 2024

Interpreter: GĪTĀ PRAVĪṆA KAVITA VERMA

YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/t0ScS2maPg8>

## Have Faith in the Scriptures & attain Divine Traits

Chapter 17 of the Srimad Bhagavad Gītā - **Śhraddhā Traya Vibhāg Yog - The Yog of the three divisions of faith**

In the last session we had completed the sixteenth chapter. When the children were asked what is the name of the sixteenth chapter? It is surprising that many children gave the correct answer by saying **Daivāsura Sampad Vibhāg Yoga**. That is, Bhagavān has told about the two types of wealth - divine wealth and demonic wealth.

The children were also tested. They were asked who are gods and who are demons and they need to reply with hands joined in salutations. All the children did so and validated they all are indeed divine for why would a demon perform such a gesture.

Bhagavān has described twenty-six divine qualities in the first three verses of the sixteenth chapter. Everyone sang those three verses together. According to these three verses we saw that twenty-six divine qualities should be within us. We should speak the truth, should not fight with anyone, should follow non-violence, should maintain softness within ourselves, should not show off, etc.

In the last verse of chapter 16 Bhagavān said:

***tasmācchāstraṁ pramāṇaṁ te kāryākāryavyavasthitau|***

Therefore, the scripture alone is your guide in determining what should be done and what should not be done.

Therefore, Bhagavān said, O Arjuna! Believe in what is proved by the scriptures. We do not know everything, but the scriptures know everything. Whatever is written in the scriptures, told, we should believe in that. Many children attended the session wearing Tilak. Applause was given to encourage all of them. We have understood about the divine and demonic qualities.

But we do not know what we should do at which time? That is why Bhagavān said that we should do

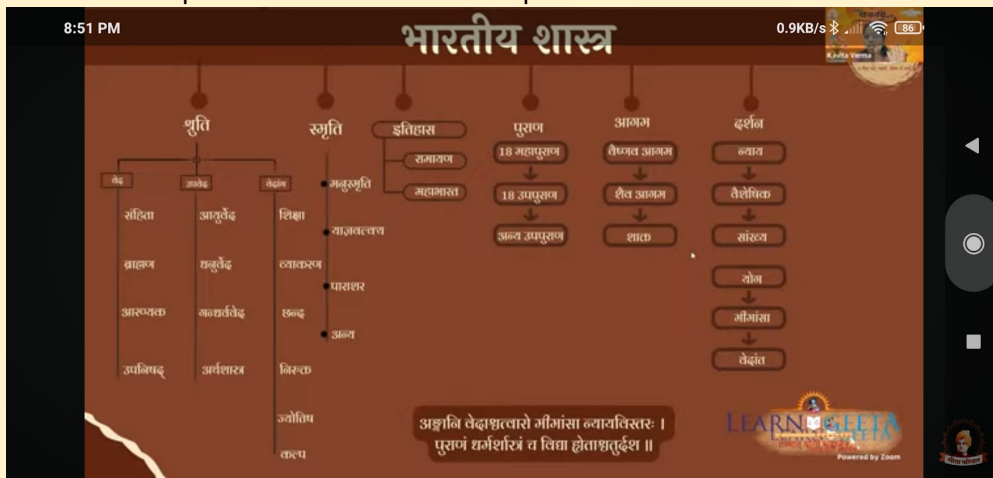
what is written in the scriptures.

So a question to the children like Arjuna, what is this scripture? How will we read the scriptures? a good thing to study in schools while studying the scriptures alongside Scriptures are not taught in schools. We are studying Gītā which is also a scripture in affect means we too are reading the scriptures thereby sharpen our intellect. Is it not a good thing that we are studying in schools as well as studying the scriptures too.

Bhagavān says:

***gītā sugītā kartavyā kimanye: śāstra vistarai:|***

This means that one who has read the Gītā does not need to read any other scripture. Because Śrī Bhagavān has given so much knowledge in the Gītā that we will become scholars by reading the Gītā. If someone asks us, we can tell that we are reading the scriptures. We have read and understood the twelfth chapter and the fifteenth chapter. We have also read the sixteenth chapter.



A chart was shared to illustrate the rich Bharatiya Śāstras. A quiz was conducted in level one of Geeta Seekho. Many questions were also asked from the seekers. The questions were related to the scriptures. Some of the main parts of Indian scriptures are Shruti, Smriti, Itihaas, Purana, Agama and Darshan. Basically we have four Vedas, Rigveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda and Samaveda. These Vedas include Samhita, Brahman, Aranyaka and Upanishad.

If someone asks us what is Śāstra, then we can tell what Śāstra is in one shloka:

***aṅgāni vedāśhṛvatvāro mīmāṃsā nyāyavīstara:|***

***purāṇaṁ dharmarśāstraṁ ca vidyā hyotāśhṛvaturdaśa||***

So this Chaturdasha Vidya is called Śāstra. Śrī Bhagavān has said that whatever is said in the Śāstra, accept it as proof. Arjuna is asking Śrī Bhagavān with a sad face, i.e. tears flowing.



In the second chapter, Sanjay has described it as if the eyes are filled with tears.

***taṁ tathā kṛpayā'viṣṭamaśrupūrṇākulekṣaṇam|  
viṣīdantamidaṁ vākyamuvāca madhusūdanaḥ||2.1||***

That is, eyes are filled with tears. When we get scolded, our eyes fill with tears. Sometimes we don't feel like doing anything, we are always afraid. In the last session we saw that some people are afraid of lizards, some are afraid of some other insects. Similarly, Arjuna is also afraid of fighting a war. We are not afraid of lizards and other insects anymore for we have read Gītā but Arjuna has not yet heard the entire Gītā which is why he is afraid to fight the war. Children study many subjects in school, some subjects are also special. Arjuna has also learnt archery. Arjuna is having some doubts and is asking Śrī Krishna to clear them.

## 17.1

**arjuna uvāca  
ye śāstravidhimutsrjya, yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ,  
teṣāṁ(n) niṣṭhā tu kā kṛṣṇa, sattvamāho rajastamaḥ. 17.1**

Arjuna said: Those, endowed with faith, who worship gods and others, disregarding the injunctions of scriptures, where do they stand, Kṛṣṇa, - in Sattva, Rajas or Tamas.

Bhagavān says, people read the scriptures but do not follow it properly. Like one does the homework during vacations halfheartedly. Its incomplete or completed but a messy job.

So, Arjuna is saying at least the scriptures are being followed. Maybe they do not do it with steadfast devotion or faith, but they do follow what a teacher says for they trust that whatever a teacher says is right will have to be right and what is wrong will have to be wrong. Arjuna asks what kind of faith or devotion do such people have? Will they be called Sattvik, Rajasi or Tamasi? Will their work be successful or not? These are the questions Arjuna posed for he also knows the chart but not completely for he did not read each point properly.

Its simple logic when one does not read everything that is to be read properly one will not know everything in a correct sense. So Arjuna is asking whether the work that is being done with devotion will it be successful? One needs to understand here that when one does not know the scriptures completely one will not be able to work in a right manner. One will find it difficult to pay special focus. Hereon Bhagavān is explaining something new to us,

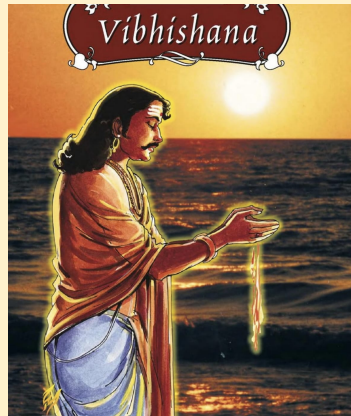
One needs to bear certain things in mind to progress in life.

- **Sattvik path:** Children following this path have good qualities. They do everything good and right in life.
- **Rajasik path:** Children following this path will have lot of attachment with things. They would be ever demanding to have something or the other. They will not give up their demands till they get fulfilled.
- **Tamasik path:** Children following this path will just laze around, keep eating or sleeping constantly.

To emphasise the topic an illustration was given:

There was Ravana, his brothers were Vibhishana and Kumbhakarna.

**How was Vibhishana?**



He was very good, **always followed good conduct.**

In contrast, **how was Kumbhakarna?**



All the children know that **Kumbhakarna used to remain in a state of sleep for six months, he loved sleeping, just kept sleeping.** Arousing the curiosity of the children, the question was asked that what did Kumbhakarna do when he woke up from sleep? The children gave the correct answer that when Kumbhakarna used to wake up, he used to keep eating and eating. In this way Kumbhakarna became Tamasik.

**Who was Rajasik?**



Ravana was Rajasik. Ravana had a golden palace.

One who keeps running after money, wealth is Rajasik. Children also start insisting that I want a video game, I want this, I want that and what not. So such children have Rajasik qualities.

The next shloka which we will read will tell who is Sattvik, who is Rajasik and who is Tamasik?

"The children will tell the truth about the kind of routine they follow. You wake up late but say that you woke up early in the morning, at four or five???? Let us find out who among the children is Ravana, who is Vibhishana and who is Kumbhakarna! So who among you is Ravana? Of course, there will be no Ravana, this is for sure."

## 17.2

**śrībhagavānuvāca  
trividhā bhavati śraddhā, dehinām(m) sā svabhāvajā,  
sāttvikī rājasī caiva, tāmasī ceti tām(m) śṛṇu. 17.2**

Śrī Bhagavān said :That untutored innate faith of men is of three kinds- Sāttvika, Rājasika and Tāmasika. Hear of it from Me.

Bhagavān says here that the innate faith is of three kinds: Sattvik, Rajasik and Tamasik.

## 17.3

**sattvānurūpā sarvasya, śraddhā bhavati bhārata,  
śraddhāmāyo'yaṁ(m) puruṣo, yo yacchraddhaḥ(s) sa eva saḥ. 17.3**

The faith of all men conforms to their mental disposition, Arjuna. Faith constitutes a man; whatever the nature of his faith, he is verily that.

Here, Bhagavān is telling what faith someone has. It is according to one's mental state. If someone has positive thoughts in his mind, then his faith will be good accordingly. If someone does not have good thoughts, then his external expression and actions will also not be good. If someone thinks good consistently, it will have the same positive result. If someone keeps a wrong thought in his mind, it will have the same result externally, whatever happens will go wrong.

If a child wakes up in the morning and starts thinking that he is not feeling good, then child will carry that mindset throughout the day.

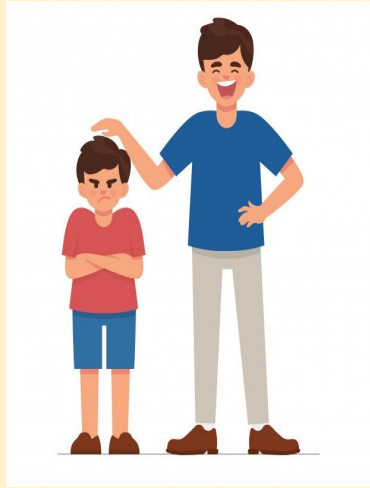


There are some children who wake up in the morning and think positive thoughts, they will think that today is a very good day, only good things will happen, then definitely they will keep doing good work throughout the day. So we always need to have positive thoughts within.





Many a times we notice the elder sibling keeps troubling the younger brother or sister just for fun. Either playing some pranks or calling names like ...you are mad, you are a donkey, you do not know anything and so on. When this happens constantly it leads to the younger brother or sister losing self-esteem, confidence and begin to underestimate themselves.



The opposite is also true. If the elder brother keeps talking good to the younger sibling and motivating with genuine positive attitude then one can see a positive outlook, great self-esteem and confidence in the younger siblings.



Bhagavān is explaining further how worship has its effect. The worship performed shows who is Sattvik, who is Rajasik and who is Tamasik?

**yajante sāttvikā devān, yakṣarakṣāṃsi rājasāḥ,  
pretānbhūtagaṇāṃścānye, yajante tāmasā janāḥ. 17.4**

Men of Sāttvika disposition worship gods; those of Rājasika temperament worship demigods and demons; while others, who are men of Tāmasika disposition, worship the spirits of dead and ghosts.

Bhagavān says, those who worship deities are Sattvik. All children must worship.



Rajasik devotees worship Yakshas and demons presented below:



Many children must have seen on TV that some people perform Yagya by saying Om Chamundaya Namah Swaha. Those who have long dreadlocks. No child has long dreadlocks, it means that all worship deities. When such Rajasik devotees are asked why they do this, they tell that they have to get some wrong deeds done, some siddhis done.

The children were asked to name their favorite deity. Some said Ganesh ji, some said Śrī Krishna, Radha-Krishna, Lakshmi mata, Bhagavān śiva etc. From this it is known that all children worship and they have their favorite deity too.



Those who are good deities such as Śrī Krishna, Śrī Ram, Lakshmi Ji, Ganesh Ji, Shiva Ji etc. All of them are good deities, so they will never do wrong to anyone. No matter how much we worship them, they are not going to do anything wrong.

People with demonic tendencies worship ghosts and spirits. Those who are extreme, worship in this way. Such people wish to harm someone. Those who want to gain some benefits in devious ways worship the ghosts and spirits.



No one should do this, otherwise Bhagavān will show us the door to hell and it will be our ticket.

## 17.5

### **aśāstravihitam(ñ) ghoram(n), tapyante ye tapo janāḥ, dambhāhaṅkārasaṃyuktāḥ(kh), kāmarāgabalanvitāḥ. 17.5**

Men who practice severe penance of an arbitrary type, not sanctioned by scriptures, and who are full of hypocrisy and egotism are obsessed with desire, attachment and pride of power;

Some people do very difficult penances. Do you know why they do this? They do not do this for peace of mind. They do so to show off how devoted they are and what difficult penances they do. Some people visit temples to display their spiritual interest. They think that seeing them visiting the temple, people will praise them as to how devoted they are.

Bhagavān does not accept such practices of displaying devotion to be praised. Some people even show off to the extent that sometimes they cut their finger or sometimes their tongue and offer the blood. Some people walk on their knees up the stairs to reach God. Some people even roll themselves on the ground to reach Bhagavān.





Bhagavān never encourages this nor accepts this for all he wants is true devotion from within. All this is not liked by HIM. Bhagavān only wants that someone should worship him from within his heart.



17.6

**karśayantaḥ(ś) śarīrasthaṁ(m), bhūtagrāmamacetasah,  
mām(ñ) caivāntaḥ(ś) śarīrasthaṁ(n), tānviddhyāsuraniścayān. 17.6**

And who emaciate the elements constituting their body as well as Me, the Supreme Spirit, dwelling in their heart- know those senseless people to have a demoniac disposition.

Bhagavān says, those people who want to pray to HIM by torturing their bodies a lot should be considered as demonic by nature.

We have been subjectd to think that demons have horns on their heads. its not so. Those who torment their bodies a lot, do wrong deeds, are not acceptable to Bhagavān, are demons. a sin by tormenting their bodies?

Who gave us this body? Its Bhagavān who bestowed it on us.

By such harmful actions we are committing wrong deeds which Bhagavān does not desire.

17.7

**āhārastvapi sarvasya, trividho bhavati priyaḥ,  
yajñastapastathā dānaṁ(n), teṣāṁ(m) bhedamimaṁ(m) śṛṇu. 17.7**

Food also, which is agreeable to different men according to their innate disposition is of three kinds. and likewise sacrifice, penance and charity too are of three kinds each; hear their distinction as follows.

In this verse Bhagavān is mentioning the types of food that one eats.

When asked who likes to eat, children will definitely say we all like to eat. The children felt very happy to hear that their Didi also likes to eat. The children were asked to name their tasty, favourite food. This will reveal who likes Sattvik, who likes Rajasik and who likes Tamasik types of food.

Food is of three types. Similarly, there are three types of yajna, daan and tapas. Bhagavān is asking

us to carefully listen to their difference.

## 17.8

**āyuh(s) sattvabalārogya, sukhaprītivivardhanāḥ,  
rasyāḥ(s) snigdhaḥ(s) sthirā hr̥dyā, āhārāḥ(s) sāt̥tvikapriyāḥ. 17.8**

Foods which promote longevity, intelligence, vigor, health, happiness and cheerfulness, and which are juicy, succulent, substantial and naturally agreeable, are liked by men of Sāttvika nature.

In this shloka Bhagavān is telling what Sattvik people like?



Food that does not make us sick and increases our lifespan. We never fall sick by eating home-cooked food. It will increase the sattva in us thereby increasing our lifespan. Our strength increases, we become healthy and our love and happiness increases.



Our food should be juicy, like fruits etc. Smooth like ghee, butter etc. which stay in our body for a long time. All dairy products etc. should be eaten. Like our grandfather and grandmother say that we ate a lot of ghee in childhood, that is why our eyes are still fine else you have to wear spectacles. This type of food is liked by Sattvik people.



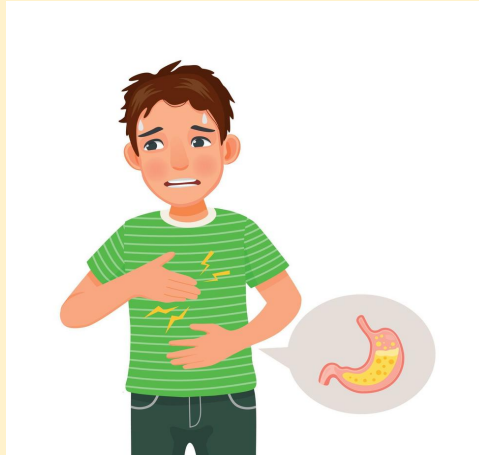
**kaṭvamlalavaṇātyuṣṇa, tīkṣṇarūkṣavidāhinaḥ,  
āhārā rājasasyeṣṭā, duḥkhaśokāmayapradāḥ. 17.9**

Foods which are bitter, sour, salty, overhot, pungent, dry and burning, and which cause suffering, grief and sickness, are dear to the Rājasika type of men.

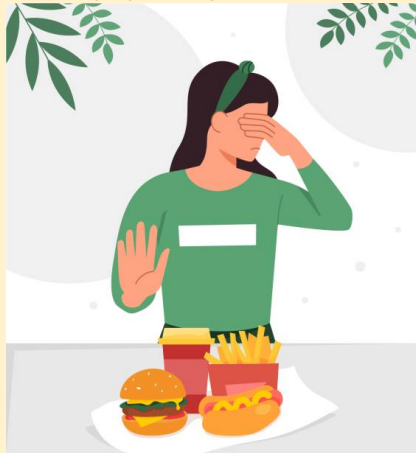
One should listen carefully to what Bhagavān has said EXTREME bitter, sour, salty and very hot. Here the word EXTREME has been used because one definitely can eat all these things but.....to what extent? Extreme means too much which leads to discomfort.

We like very spicy food, like momos, sizzlers etc., while eating them the eyes become red. It feels as if smoke is coming out of the ears. Still one keeps eating. All these food items are rajasic. By eating all this in excess, we will become more rajasic. Those who eat such food remain very sad and they also grieve.

This means that when you taste bitter, you will feel pain. You will also fall ill. Nobody likes to fall ill. By eating rajasic food, we get kidney or liver problems when we grow old or we may also get some other disease. These days we all eat a lot of burgers. Burgers have a lot of flour, very few vegetables and a little sauce. In a way, it is the food of the poor because there are very few vegetables in it. By eating such food, our body will also become poor.



Therefore, if we want to become rich physically, then we will have to give up all these things.



**yāṭayāmaṃ(ñ) gatarasaṃ(m), pūti paryuṣitaṃ(ñ) ca yat,  
ucchiṣṭamapi cāmedhyaṃ(m), bhojanaṃ(n) tāmasapriyam. 17.10**

Food which is ill-cooked or not fully ripe, insipid, putrid, stale and polluted, and which is impure too, is dear to men of a Tāmasika disposition.

If we eat the food after three hours of cooking it, it will become Tamasik. Bhagavān is indicating that the food will become stale. If we eat the earlier day's food kept in the freezer, it becomes Tamasik. The moisture from that food gets dried up. The buns used in the burger are not freshly made but are prepared days before which we eat is already turned tamasik. Food that emits pungent aroma is also Tamasik in nature. Often we happen to share a bite from the same piece of cake with many present in the gathering. If someone has some infection there definitely is a possibility for it to be transmitted to others who share the same piece of cake.

This type of food is also considered Tamasik. Therefore, if we want to become Sattvik, then we should eat the food that has been mentioned as sattvik food.

The first and foremost benefit from eating sattvik food is one would not fall sick. The other important benefit is one remains healthy also develops great strength which would enable one to perform great deeds or work. The players who win medals in Olympics eat very healthy food. In order to stay away from diseases, come first in the class or achieve any goal, it is necessary to remain healthy. It is said, **'Health is Wealth.'**

Another most important benefit one derives from eating sattvik food is one is able to gain knowledge easily for the sattvik food keeps the mind cleansed from impurities which is a prerequisite to concentrate while studying. The sattvik food would help one memorize the shlokas with ease as your mind is stable.

**17.11**

**aphalākāṅkṣibhiryajño, vidhidṛṣṭo ya ijjate,  
yaṣṭavyameveti manaḥ(s), samādhāya sa sāttvikaḥ. 17.11**

The sacrifice which is offered, as ordained by scriptural injunctions, by men who expect no return and who believe that such sacrifices must be performed, is Sāttvika in character.

Here, Bhagavān says; those who perform yajna etc. according to the method prescribed in the scriptures, are Sattvik by nature.

**17.12**

**abhisandhāya tu phalaṃ(n), dambhārthamapi caiva yat,  
ijjate bhārataśreṣṭha, taṃ(m) yajñaṃ(m) viddhi rājasam. 17.12**

That sacrifice however, which is offered for the sake of mere show or even with an eye to its fruit, know it to be Rājasika, Arjuna.

Some people think about the result before performing their duty. Would the results be as per their expectations? Such people perform with a sole intention to get some benefit from their actions. They always would like to know what is there for them to gain from the act?

For instance, if a mother asks the child to get something from the market the child first likes to know

what will he get in return for the work done. Some kids voice out to their parents that they have scored 90% so they would want some new video game or a new phone and so on. Just think for a moment, you studied well scored great marks instead of seeking your parents blessings by thanking them you demand some gift!!!

Bhagavān says such actions are of rajasik nature. On the contrary if the parents give something on their own and one thanks them then one becomes sattvik by nature.

One should make it a habit to seek blessings from their parents daily after waking up. This is a gesture to thank them for everything they do for their children. To make the session interactive and interesting, the children were asked to tell next week who wakes up in the morning and seeks blessings from their parents?



**17.13**

**vidhihīnamasṛṣṭānnaṃ(m), mantrahīnamadakṣiṇaṃ,  
śraddhāviraḥitaṃ(m) yajñaṃ(n), tāmasaṃ(m) paricakṣate. 17.13**

A sacrifice, which is not in conformity with scriptural injunctions, in which no food is offered, and no sacrificial fees are paid, which is without sacred chant of hymns and devoid of faith, is said to be Tāmasika.

People who perform Yajna without following the prescribed method in scriptures just to show off their status, power, wealth are people engulfed in Tamasik nature. These type of yajna done without chanting any mantras and other prescribed steps is termed as "**Mantraheen**."

Many times it happens that one tells the Priest to get the Yagya done, and promises to give five thousand rupees, but when the Yajna is over, one says to the priest the yajna was not done properly so will only get half the promised amount or even refusing to pay at all.

This is called **Adakshinam** i.e. Yajna done without Dakshina.

One must have faith in the scriptures and perform the yajna accordingly.

The interesting session thus concluded with the Question & Answer sessions.

**Jeevika Didi**

**Question:-** Meat is included in which type of food?

**Answer:-** According to the shloka, it has a strong smell and also causes pain to someone, so it comes



under the category of Tamasik food.

### **Madhushri Didi**

**Question:-** What is Dharma?

**Answer:-** Dharma can be defined in many ways. In simple terms, what is right, which does not cause pain to anyone, following the divine qualities mentioned in the sixteenth chapter is Dharma.

### **Taksha Bhaiya**

**Question:-** Do Sattvik people not have any dreams?

**Answer:-** Sattvik people have dreams for the welfare of all. Like Swami Ji started Geeta Parivar so that everyone can learn to read and recite Bhagavad Gītā and everyone gets benefited. Rajasik people have dreams for themselves. Like I should become rich.

### **Shivi Didi**

**Question:-** What is the meaning of the verse written below in the chart shown?

**Answer:-** The verse is as follows-

***aṅgāni vedāścatvāro mīmāṃsā nyāyavistarah|  
purāṇaṃ dharmaśāstraṃ ca vidyā hyetāścaturdaśa|***

That is, there are six Vedas, which are called parts :

- **śikṣā**
- **vyākaraṇa**
- **chanda**
- **niruka**
- **jyotiṣa**
- **kalpa**

There are Four Vedas. Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya are Śāstras. There are eighteen Mahāpurāṇa, eighteen Upapurāṇa and other Upapurāṇa. Religious scriptures like Yājñavalkya etc. are Smṛti. Thus there are fourteen types of Vidyā Śāstra.



We are sure you enjoyed reading the Vivechan write- up. Please invest three minutes of your time to provide us your feedback. Use the link below:

<https://vivechan.learngeeta.com/feedback/>

**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!**

**Har Ghar Gītā, Har Kar Gītā !**

Let's come together with the motto of Geeta Pariwar, and gift our Geeta Classes to all our Family, friends & acquaintances

<https://gift.learngeeta.com/>

---

Geeta Pariwar has taken a new initiative. Now you can watch YouTube videos and read PDFs of all the interpretation sessions conducted earlier. Please use the below link.

<https://vivechan.learngeeta.com/>

---

**Learn Geeta, Spread Geeta, Live Geeta**

**|| OM ŚRĪKṚṢṆĀRPAṆAMASTU ||**