

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 2: Sāṅkhya-Yoga

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**Interpreter: SENIOR TRAINER SOU SHRADDHA JI RAODEO**

YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/oFQoayHG-Do>

## The Intrinsic connection between Karma and the Intellect

The Vivechan session started with the customary lighting of the lamp followed by obeisance to the Gurus, Swamiji and Bhagavān Sri Krishna.

The second chapter of Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā is **Sāṅkhya Yoga - The Yoga of Analytical Knowledge**, which gives us a deep insight into the Atma-Tattva

To be able to learn the Bhagavad Gītā itself is a blessing for all of us as we come closer to fulfilling the purpose of having been born as human beings. It is a blessing as it gives us the opportunity to explore the beautiful and critical knowledge inherent in this sacred text.

This entire chapter delves upon the important principle of 'ātma jñāna' or the knowledge of the soul. Bhagavān makes us understand the concepts revolving around our identity and who we are, in order to make us appreciate that we are part of the Supreme Soul or the Parampitā, and that our soul resides in this current body as a temporary resident, changing bodies consistently upon death.

Through the elaboration HE gives, we also get a glimpse into the nature of the body and its ever changing dynamics from birth to death. Rebirth is understood as imminent for one who has departed from his body. HE speaks of the different characteristics of ātmā, mainly the ātma-swaroop. By getting to know ourselves, we also realize the salient characteristics of our soul as mentioned by Bhagavān in the 23rd shloka of this chapter:

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।

न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥ 23॥

*(Weapons cannot shred the soul, nor can fire burn it. Water cannot wet it, nor can the wind dry it.)*

Bhagavān then steers us towards the topic of Karma and continues to explain the implications and importance of abiding by one's duty. Yogeshwar points to Arjuna the importance of following our karma irrespective of the hurdles that may come our way, drawing his attention to the worldly disadvantages of

abandoning karma and how the people-both the mighty and the modest- would berate Arjuna if he abandons his duty. HE stresses on the importance of engaging in our duties, and converting our karma into karma-yoga so that we may get freedom from the vicious and painful cycle of birth and death.

In shloka 15 of chapter 8 Bhagavān has said:

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।

नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥ 15॥

*(Having attained Me, the great souls are no more subject to rebirth in this world, which is transient and full of misery, because they have attained the highest perfection)*

We are all seeking liberation from the cycle of birth and death, and hence our aim is to achieve emancipation of the soul. Bhagavān has advised us on how to get liberated from this ceaseless wheel of life. HE has waxed eloquent on the means to convert Karma to Karma yoga, laying emphasis on single-pointed devotion and determination, as explained in the shloka given below:

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।

बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥ 41॥

*(O descendent of the Kurus, the intellect of those who are on this path is resolute, and their aim is one-pointed. But the intellect of those who are irresolute is many-branched.)*

**Armed with determination, a resolute intellect and the judiciousness to follow the right steps towards liberation, one can be firmly saddled on the path of Karma yoga.**

Currently we are all entangled in the state of ‘bahushakha’, diverted from single-pointed focus as our minds, absorbed in thoughts of multi-tasks, have consequently dissipated into various directions. It is but natural that eventually we would falter in our determination.

Let us take the example of a person who wants to listen to Geeta Vivechan. No sooner does he decide to act on this intention than his mind gets inundated with numerous temptations or gets embroiled in the thoughts of the unfulfilled tasks at hand. His mind lures him with a variety of options: he can watch serials on the small screen, go to restaurants to satiate his appetite or engage himself in office work. After all, the vivechan can always be heard at night after his desires are quenched. **This oscillation of the mind and intentions will invariably result in diluting his determination.**

In the subsequent shlokas, Bhagavān describes the mind-set, behavior and qualities of those who are of irresolute mind. Such people have been aptly termed as:

अव्यवसायिनाम्

It is important to understand the intricacies of the intellect. Unless we decipher the characteristic of this intellect we cannot determine whether it is ‘niścayatmika’. This description also gives us the yardstick to assess whether we are focused in our intellect, or scattered in our minds.

## 2.42, 2.43, 2.44

**yāmimāṃ(m) puṣpitāṃ(ṁ) vācaṃ(m), pravadantyavipaścitaḥ,  
vedavādaratāḥ(ph) pārtha, nānyadastīti vādinaḥ.2.42  
kāmatmānaḥ(s) svargaparā, janmakarmaphalapradām,  
kriyāviśeṣabahulāṃ(m), bhogaiśvaryagatim(m) prati. 2.43  
bhogaiśvaryaprasaktānāṃ(n), tayāpahṛtacetasām,  
vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ(s), samādhau na vidhīyate. 2.44**

Arjuna, those who are full of worldly desires and devoted to the letter of the Vedas, who look upon heaven, as the supreme goal and argue that there is nothing beyond heaven, are unwise.

They utter flowery speech recommending many rituals of various kinds for the attainment of pleasure and power with rebirth as their fruit.

Those whose minds are carried away by such words, and who are deeply attached to pleasure and worldly power, cannot attain the determinate intellect concentrated on God.

**In shlokas 42, 43 and 44, Bhagavān gives a lucid description of the intellect of those people who are driven by desires. Whatever action they engage in, is done with the ulterior motive of acquiring some benefit for themselves. For example, If they go to a temple, say, the Tirupati Balaji temple, their mind is not fixed so much on devotion as on the large amount of prasād that they desire. The pilgrimage they undertake is laced with the hopes of getting their visa to go abroad or bringing into fruition their unfulfilled desires. Each charan of the verses indicates some aspect or the other, of such people.**

- **Vedavādaratāḥ ānyadasta īti vādinaḥ**- These people look at the Vedas from the perspective of gaining valuable bounties for themselves. Therefore, their purpose of learning the vedas, the religious texts and engaging in the advocated practices is not to acquire knowledge but to get some materialistic reward. Such people have a limited understanding and hence get attracted to those flowery words of the Vedas that encourage ostentatious rituals for elevation to the celestial abodes. They fail to see the depth behind the content of the Vedas. Such people would opt for an activity only if it begets a son for them or fulfills some desire
- **kāmatmānaḥ svargaparā**- For such people the purpose of Karma is related to the desire for achieving liberation by aiming for heaven.

Before learning Bhagavad Gītā and understanding the teachings, many would have thought that by reciting the Gītā they would go to heaven. What a misleading notion on the grounds for learning the Gītā!

The Vedas teach us to live happily; however, human beings fail to see the dual aspect of each quality. Where there is sukh, there is bound to be dukh as well. They get stuck with the sole thought of being happy, and develop hatred and intolerance towards sorrow. Their aim of studying the vedas is to get happiness. They fail to discern between the real and unreal, the perishable and nonperishable. They glorify only those portions of the Vedas that please their senses. Such people perform pompous ritualistic ceremonies in order to attain high birth, opulence, sensual pleasures and a ticket to heaven. They have been aptly referred to as **‘avipaścitaḥ’**, that is, those with less understanding, poor knowledge and ignorance.

Even while doing puja and performing Aarti, their focus is on the remunerations that each line of the prayer promises.

रुपं देहि जयं देहि यशो देहि द्विषो जहि

This line is sung with full gusto, the aim being to get health, wealth, beauty and destruction of enemies . We lose count of the times we have heard the ulteriorly-motivated devotees sing:

सुख सम्पत्ति घर आवे, कष्ट मिटे तन का ॥

Their entire range of activities is confined to the fulfillment of material desires. When one desire gets fulfilled, another raises its head and it becomes an endless cycle keeping people entangled in this vicious chakra of birth and death. In other words, they get stuck in 'Janma-karma-phala'.

People fail to understand the real meaning of life and do not realize that going to heaven is also a temporary phase as one has to come back to Mrityu Loka once the account of the good karmas gets depleted.

One can compare heaven to an exotic destination for a vacation. As long as our limit on the credit card is not exhausted, we enjoy the hospitality of the hotel. Once the balance in the card is over, our holiday comes to an end and back we are thrown into our humdrum life.

However, those who are focused on the Brahmā tattva, understand the short-lived pleasures of heaven. They do not get stuck in these worldly pleasures. They do everything for Paramātmā and are hence closer to attaining HIM and getting deliverance.

These 3 verses explain the effects of our obsession with worldly acquisitions. **Sri Krishna now inspires Arjuna to attain the highest state. Therefore, Bhagavān urges Arjuna to attain the realistic state by understanding the 'atma tattva' or the principles of the soul and the essence of Paramātmā.**

As humans when we are venturing to learn the Gītā, we are in the process of imbibing and attaining the real purpose of human life. Humans, that is those born in the Manushya yoni, are the only species capable of engaging in such a task. We have to perform Karmas which can either result in puṇya or pāpa; the virtuosity or the sins. Being born in this yoni, we can make an effort to understand the 'Brahmā tattva' and carry out our Karmas accordingly to reach and attain the Brahmā tattva. All the other creatures apart from humans are in the 'bhoga yoni', incapable of performing any deeds that can cleanse their past karmas.

Many of us hold the conviction that we should just enjoy life before it 'melts like ice cream'. We must understand the deeper meaning of life. **The materialistic world is a fleeting mirage which cannot be indelibly enjoyed.**

So engrossed are we in chasing the elusive 'rainbow' that the whole life slips by in the most futile way. Let us take the example of a person who may go to Rishikesh with the desire to bathe in the holy Ganga, but ends up roaming around and enjoying the treks, the scenic mountains and the glamour of the towns situated nearby, such as Dehradun. They end up forgetting the purpose for which the journey has been undertaken, and eventually come back without bathing in the Ganges. If we do not make an effort to understand the concept of karma and 'atma' then it is just like going to Rishikesh and coming back without accomplishing the initial purpose of bathing. **In other words, living life without getting knowledge is like going to Rishikesh without doing 'Ganga-Snaan'.**

We are all in the ocean or the Mahasagar of 'moh-maaya' or worldly illusions. **We have been given a boat in the form of this body. If we make proper use of this body, we can cross the entire 'maha sagar' and sail through the worldly entanglements** prevalent in the ocean of life. Bhagavān has said that one should get freedom from all desires. At the beginning itself HE has pointed out the jungle in which we are trapped and has elaborated on the means to get out of it.

2.45

**traiguṇyaviṣayā vedā, nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna,  
nirdvandvo nityasattvastho, niryogakṣema ātmavān. 2.45**

Arjuna, the Vedas thus deal with the evolutes of three Guṇas (modes of Prakṛti), viz., worldly enjoyments and the means of attaining such enjoyments; be thou indifferent to these enjoyments and their means, rising above pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain etc., established in the Eternal Existence (God), absolutely unconcerned about the fulfillments of wants and the preservation of what has been already attained, you be self-controlled.

The Vedas tell us how to live our life. These sacred compilations containing profound wisdom, speak of the 'triguna' or the three gunas comprising Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, which prevail the entire world leaving their ineradicable stamp on every object and every living creature.

**We should make an endeavor to come out of the clutches of these 3 Gunas and reach a state of 'niṣkāma' and 'nirdvandva' respectively, wherein we are without desires, and are able to take every event- good or bad, happy or sad- in equal measure and in the same stride.**

There are two terms mentioned in this shloka:

- **Nityasattvastho**- Being in the state of goodness
- **Niryogakṣema**- devoid of thoughts of acquisition and preservation.

Contrary to Niryogakṣema would be those who are always thinking of earning more money and worrying about how to safeguard their wealth. We should always be situated in the state of goodness and not worry about maintaining or holding on to our worldly possessions. We should emulate the qualities of an ātmavān and be firmly established in ourselves.

**Only when a person attains all these qualities, does the intellect become free from all the worries and the karma gets converted into 'karmayoga'.**

2.46

**yāvānārtha udapāne, sarvataḥ(s) saṃplutodake,  
tāvānsarveṣu vedeṣu, brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ. 2.46**

A Brāhmaṇa, who has obtained enlightenment, has as much use for all the Vedas as one who stands at the brink of a sheet of water overflowing on all sides has for a small reservoir of water.

**We are all ready for the onset of the monsoons. Before this, the scorching summer had led to heat-wave and all-pervading unquenchable thirst. There were villages where the water level had depleted to abysmal levels. At that time, the water-wells held a special place of great importance for us. However, once the rains come cascading, the wells in the villages would not be considered as important as they were during the summers.**

Similarly once the knowledge of 'Brahma tattva' is attained, would we continue to be fascinated by

anything else? Would not worldly phenomena be considered trivial and of no consequence to us? After all, in the event of floods, no one thinks of the small reservoirs.

If someone is already holding a high position, he refrains from undertaking any task which can be done by someone else down the line. Modiji is our Prime-Minister. Now, if the post of a corporator were to lie vacant, would a person of his stature be dared to be asked to fill in the position? Would that not be deprecatory for him? Likewise, the person who has attained 'Brahmā jnana' by giving up the 'triguna' of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, will not be bothered about inconsequential matters.

The question arises as to how we can get the Brahma-Jnana? A person can sit and read scriptures, but this may not be practical at times. Arjuna, for example, could not have learnt the Brahma-Jnana stationed in the middle of a battle. Parameshwar therefore gives us a simple solution. **HE says that we should perform our actions in such a way that we earn all the good karmas which lead us along the right path and pave the way for liberation.**

However, the knowledge of the path to reach this state has to be known by the person and the journey to be undertaken has to be spelt out to him.

## 2.47

**karmaṇyevādhikāraṣṭe, mā phaleṣu kadācana,  
mā karmaphalaheturbhūr, mā te saṅgo'stVākarmaṇi. 2.47**

Your right is to work only and never to the fruit thereof. Do not consider yourself to be the cause of the fruit of actions, nor let your attachment be to inaction.

This is one of the most important shlokas of the Gītā, whose meaning has been widely misinterpreted. We should implement this shloka as a holy mantra in our lives. There are four laws or chatusutri of karma yoga, as explained by Parameshwar in this shloka.

- **karmaṇi evā adhikāraṣṭe**- Eligibility to perform prescribed duties. Generally the word adhikār is translated as a right conferred upon a person. However in the Sanskrit language and especially in this holy text, the word takes on a different connotation. **The word 'Adhikar' means eligibility. We have to understand that we are eligible to do something, but we have no eligibility or control over the fruits of action.** As humans we can perform an action but we cannot control the results, nor have the eligibility to ponder over the outcome. When an action is done, there is no way that we can be denied our karma-phala. No one can deprive us of the fruits of action that have come out of our own efforts. For example, when a person writes an exam, the outcome is bound to be reflected sooner or later. The elections have just taken place, the results will have to come. A thirsty person drinks water, his thirst will inevitably be quenched whether he likes it or not. In a nutshell, once we engage in an action, the result ceases to be a matter of our right; nor do we have any control over it.

**Even Bhagavān Sri Krishna does not influence the outcome of our actions. The results are based on our own Karma.**

There is an anecdote on the time when the Gods were being troubled by a demon, and they went to Vishnuji for help. Lord Vishnu did not take any action and refused to intervene on the grounds that the demon was at present enjoying the fruits of his tapasya and meditation that he had done earlier. Till the time the fruits of his good karmas are exhausted and the balance of his good deeds reduced to a zero,

nothing can be done. Only after the effects of good karma dissolve, can Vishnuji intervene and take action to help the Gods.

- **Mā phaleṣu kadācana-** We should not be driven by desires, nor make our longings become our source of motivation, as fulfillment of desires is not in our field of control.
- **Mā karmaphalaheturbhūr** - We should not harbor any desire for the results, nor be driven by the anticipated fruits of any action. This is almost like a warning that Parameshwar gives us. It should be noted that **in no scripture whether it be the Gītā, the Mahabharata or the Ramayana, has there been any concern over the result of action.** All the scriptures only advise us to do what is right. Bhagavan Sri Krishna and Sri Ram never expressed any agitation regarding the result of their respective wars. When Sri Ram was in exile and searching for Sitaji he found Jatayu lying in a grievously injured state as the latter had fought with Ravana in a bid to free Sitaji. **Not once did Sri Ram pay any heed to the failure that Jatayu had faced while dealing with Ravana. He just observed Jatayu's noble intentions.** In fact, Sri Ram accorded Jatayu a funeral and performed his last rites that even King Dashrath was deprived of.

Thus, one should just focus on duty and not be driven by results.

Some people may form an opinion that since they do not have the eligibility to think about fruits, carrying out any activity would be a futile and purposeless exercise. This is a typical Kalyugi approach to actions. The fourth Sutra here clarifies this erroneous perception.

- **Mā te saṅgo'stvākarmaṇi-** We should not align ourselves with the attitude of akarmani, or the notion that we should not do any task. We need to avoid getting attached to NOT doing any karma. We are humans and hence we are bound to do actions, come what may. However, we should be free of attachments. Ultimately, we should transcend the ordinary boundaries of karma and convert it to the virtuous Karma Yoga.

**Each charan of this shloka is a sentence by itself, resounding with the invaluable principles of life.**

The next shloka explains how our attitude and intellect should function.

**2.48**

**yogasthaḥ(kh) kuru karmāṇi, saṅgaṃ(n) tyaktvā dhanañjaya,  
siddhyasiddhyoḥ(s) samo bhūtvā, samatvaṃ(ṽ) yoga ucyate.2.48**

Arjuna, perform your duties established in Yoga, renouncing attachment, and be even-minded in success and failure; evenness of mind is called "Yoga".

How should we be performing actions? By being Yogastha. Given below is an analysis of each term used in this shloka.

- **Yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi-**To perform duty being equipoised. 'Svastha' means being contained in self or being healthy. One who is happy within oneself is 'svastha'. Likewise, yogastha is the state in which the intellect is steady and consumed in yoga. It indicates how one should be



when performing an action.

- **Siddhyasiddhyoḥ**- In success or failure. How should one's attitude be towards the fruits of the action? In the previous shloka Bhagavān has spoken about the four sutras. How to adapt the sutras into our lives has been explained by HIM in this shloka. Bhagavan never suggests that we should abandon our actions. Gita also never says that we have to pursue the vedas. **We should just maintain a balance in life by not getting attached to our actions.** We tend to take our actions rather personally and then start expecting results. This is akin to having the feeling of ego or 'ahankar' wherein we take ourselves to be the karta. This attitude comes as a hindrance on the way to attaining 'siddhi' or accomplishments.
- **Samatvaṃ**- The attitude of equanimity. This is also related to taking success or failure in a balanced way. For example, extreme emotions came to the fore after the results of the recently held elections. This certainly is not a state of equanimity. **On the other hand, our Prime-Minister maintained his 'samatva' or balance.**

A jackfruit is sticky to the touch and hence requires a knife that has oil applied to it, so that the stickiness does not affect the knife when it is used to cut open the jackfruit. Likewise, a surgeon wears gloves to avoid contamination while performing a surgery. **Similarly, we too have to wear the gloves of detachment in order to remain unaffected by the consequences of our karmas.**

2.49

**dūreṇa hyavaraṃ(ñ) karma, buddhiyogāddhanañjaya,  
buddhau śaraṇamanviccha, kṛpaṇāḥ(ph) phalahetavaḥ. 2.49**

Action with a selfish motive is far inferior to this Yoga in the form of equanimity. Do seek refuge in this equipoise of mind, Arjuna; for poor and wretched are those who are the cause in making their actions bear fruits.

We should get refuge in Buddhi Yoga in order to convert our karma into Karma Yoga. Bhagavān states in this shloka that we should accept happiness and sorrow with the same equanimity and ensure that the intellect is not affected as this also impacts the mind. The mind which is resolute with collective wisdom and takes refuge in such an intellect, can convert the Karma into Karmayoga.

Those who are driven by desires are very helpless as they are worried about the result. Their mind always remains absorbed in thinking about the results which are in any case, not on their hands. Students worry whether they will pass or whether their efforts will yield good results. They should realize that it is their duty to just study and not to think about the outcomes.

**Only a person who takes refuge in buddhi yoga can get good results. Others who do not follow this precept can face consequences that are inferior in nature.**

2.50



**buddhiyukto jahātīha, ubhe sukṛtaduṣkṛte,  
tasmādyogāya yujyasva, yogaḥ(kh) karmasu kauśalam. 2.50**

Endowed with equanimity, one sheds in this life both good and evil. Therefor, strive for the practice of this Yoga of equanimity. Skill in action lies in the practice of this Yoga.

- **Buddhiyukto jahātīha**- one who is engaged in devotion to service with the right type of intellect

There are 2 types of actions: ‘sukṛta’ or good actions and ‘duṣkṛta’ or undesirable action

- **Ubhe sukṛtaduṣkṛte**,- Both the good and bad results. Those who are established in Buddhi yoga do not get affected by their results. A person endowed with correct intellect is unaffected like Sri Ram, who never bothered if he is being crowned a king or being sentenced to exile.
- **Yogāya yujyasva**,- To be engaged in yoga as per the karma
- **Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam**- by doing the work as per the karma that leads to Karma yoga

‘Samatva’ is the balance that is achieved by converting karma into yoga and by being equipoised in both happiness and sorrow. The freedom fighters of pre-Independent India lived by the principles taught in the Gita.

**None can serve as a better example of ‘samatva’ than Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who was one of the great freedom fighters that India has witnessed.** Tilakji had been intimidated that he would be sent to prison. After he was arrested, while the rest of the nation, especially Maharashtra, was sleepless worrying about the fate of this brave freedom fighter, Tilak ji himself was sleeping most peacefully in prison! The constable who came to wake him up was most surprised to see the serenity and calmness with which Tilak ji had taken his incarceration.

If we are confined to a narrow space for even a couple of minutes, we tend to get agitated and restless. **On the other hand, Tilak ji used his time in prison most constructively by writing a Granth on Karma yoga titled ‘Gītā Rahasya’.** Bal Gangadhar Tilak was not worried because he knew that he was doing his karma most righteously.

## 2.51

**karmajaṃ(m) buddhiyuktā hi, phalaṃ(n) tyaktvā manīṣiṇaḥ,  
janmabandhavinirmuktāḥ(ph), padaṃ(ñ) gacchantyanāmayam. 2.51**

For wise men possessing an equipoised mind, renouncing the fruit of actions and freed from the shackles of birth, attain the blissful supreme state.

- After experiencing all that has been explained and practicing buddhi yoga, a person endowed with such a sound intellect will be free from the desires and the results of action, consequently attaining freedom from the fetters of birth and death. **He is the one who attains**

## janmabandhavinirmuktāḥ.

- **Phalam tyaktvā manīṣiṇaḥ**- wise men or sages, whose strength is the jnana yoga, shun the fruits of action that have been created by desires.

Most of us are yet to reach the intellectual level of the sages. For example, when one thinks of rasgullas, one's mind gets filled with desire, and one's dreams too start to create visions of the rasgullas. As a result, one orders the desired sweets from Swiggy. **Pause for a minute to observe that it is our desires which are causing the actions.** However, if we disown the fruits of actions wholeheartedly then we will be free of desires and attain a state which is beyond this worldly realm, enabling us to reach 'Paramātmā' and the 'Brahma tattva'.

The key to understanding this is our buddhi or intellect. The power of the intellect can be illustrated through the example of a passenger taking a ride in a car to go to a particular destination. If he wants to go to Rishikesh from Hyderabad but the driver takes off in another direction towards Kanyakumari, there is little that the passenger can do. After all, the steering wheel is in the driver's hand. Wherever he wants to take, there the passenger will be driven. **Similarly, Buddhi is the driver and charioteer of our life.**

### 2.52

**yadā te mohakalilaṃ(m), buddhirvyatitariṣyati,  
tadā gantāsi nirvedaṃ(m), śrotavyasya śrutasya ca. 2.52**

When your mind will have fully crossed the mire of delusion, you will then grow indifferent to the enjoyments of this world and the next that have been heard of as well as to those that are yet to be heard of.

A common human being's intellect is fixed in slush and wet mud, that are symbolic of the desires and inclinations which bind us. Whenever a person starts any activity with good intentions, invariably some temptation takes over to lead him astray.

For example, if a person wants to sit and read the Bhagavad Gītā, his mind is likely to be lured by the temptation of watching a serial on TV, putting his intention of reading the Gītā on hold; or, for that matter, even if we possess our own vehicle, seeing the neighbor's electric car is a sufficient cue to germinate a new string of desires within us. Then, there is always the allure of going for the latest trends in fashion.

All these are the worldly temptations that distract the mind which is stuck in the quagmire of delusions. **Our intellect should be strong enough to overcome these temptations and reach a state of indifference.** Only then can we free ourselves. To attain this mental emancipation, our intellect should be 'acala' or in a steady state and not niścalā, or wavering.

### 2.53

**śrutivipratipannā te, yadā sthāsyati niścalā,  
samādhāvacalā buddhiḥ(s) tadā yogamavāpsyasi. 2.53**

When your intellect, confused by hearing conflicting statements, will rest steady and undistracted (in meditation) on God, you will then attain Yoga (Everlasting union with God).

When a person's mind remains steadfast in Divine consciousness, he can attain the state of perfect yoga or eternal union with HIM. There are two terms that we need to pay heed to, in this shloka:

- **śrutivipratipannā te, yadā sthāsyati niścalā,-** When the mind is not disturbed and is not desirous of the fruitive results.

What is the factor that corrupts our intellect? Our mind is often misled by the self-proclaimed seers and astrologists who profess to offer us quick-fix solutions to our desires. For example, they instill in us the belief that going to the temple, or performing religious services and puja would get us the desired rewards. Instead of getting swayed by such suggestions, we should keep our intellect self-contained and steady. After all, we keep idols of deities at home too, and worship them with the same fervor as we would in a temple. Yet, we nurture the notion that going to the temple would be more beneficial in terms of the fruits of worship. If we have done the actions we should not be driven by results.

- **Avapsyasi** - attain yoga. This term refers to a self realized mind. Listening to the words of wisdom spoken by Ishwar, Arjuna's mind gets gradually more settled and less restless. He is now curious to learn how a person with sound intellect and buddhi behaves.

2.54

**arjuna uvāca**  
**sthitaprajñasya kā bhāṣā, samādhisthasya keśava,**  
**sthitadhīḥ(kh) kiṃ(m) prabhāseta, kimāsīta vrajeta kim. 2.54**

Arjuna said:

Kṛṣṇa, what are the characteristics of a God-realized soul, stable of mind and established in Samādhi (perfect tranquility of mind)? How does the man of stable mind speak, how does he sit, how does he walk?

Arjuna wants to know what would be the description of one who is situated in Divine consciousness? How would such an enlightened person talk, sit and walk? There are two terms used in this shloka that need elaboration:

- **Sthitaprajñasya-** To have a steady intellect. This is a word coined by Arjuna when he wanted to understand how to recognize a person who is established in the Self, how the person would speak, walk, sit, and what would be his language of communication. Bhagavān has described the nature of one with a steady intellect. If someone wants an ideal son the desire is always to have a son like Sri Ram. When a child is cute and naughty, he is compared to Kanha or Baal-Krishna. Similarly, If a child is brave he would be likened to the valiant śivaji. These famous names exemplify the cardinal traits that characterize each of these mighty luminaries, and represent the ideal qualities that we would desire for our children. In the same vein, the term 'Sthitaprajñasya' epitomizes the qualities of a person who is immersed in Divine Awareness.
- **samādhisthasya** - A person in trance. Here the word 'Samādhi' does not imply that a person is sitting in perpetual meditation with eyes closed. In the context of this chapter, the word denotes a fixed intellect.

The subsequent shlokas, which would be explained in the next session, give a beautiful description of one who would qualify as a Sthitaprajñasya. We should engage in a daily perusal of these shlokas to strengthen our base as Gītā sadhaks.

**The Vivechan was followed by the Question and Answer session:**

**Q & A**

**Narayan Appacharji:**

**Question: Shloka 49 refers to buddhau śaraṇamanviccha. If one takes refuge in knowledge and wisdom what exactly does it mean? is it that one gets wisdom only after getting knowledge? In the battlefield Arjuna is asked to acquire the knowledge. Did he not have the knowledge before?**

**Answer:** This is in reference to the jnana yoga. Bhagavān mentions this term after talking about 'atma jnana'. HE says he will speak about jnana. In sloka 39 of this chapter HE has said:

एषा तेऽभिहिता साङ्ख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां शृणु ।  
बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥ 39॥

***(Hitherto, I have explained to you Sāṅkhya Yog, or analytic knowledge regarding the nature of the soul. Now listen, O Parth, as I reveal Buddhi Yog, or the Yog of Intellect. When you work with such understanding, you will be freed from the bondage of karma)***

After getting knowledge, it is important to know how to separate the knowledge and intellect. They merge into the same element. These words have been used interchangeably. It is known as 'jnana yukta'.

Where Arjuna is concerned, his intellect was clouded. If he had the knowledge, he would not be so disillusioned. Bhagavān gave him the knowledge to get rid of Arjuna's confusion. All these points of knowledge come from our scriptures such as the Vedantas, Shad Darshani and the six schools of Philosophy from our ancient texts. Bhagavān touches upon all these important points to dispel Arjuna's predicament. HE is basically awakening the knowledge which exists in a latent state in Arjuna.

**Sivakambikaji**

**Question: In the 2nd chapter we hear so much about atma. Does the word soul translate as atman? Upon the demise of a person, everyone says, 'May the soul rest in peace'. How do the two words relate to each other?**

**Answer:** There are many words which cannot be translated literally from Sanskrit. For example, the word 'atma' also approximately translates to soul. However, our scriptures refer to the soul as one which will NOT rest in peace. Western Society thinks that the soul dies with body; yet, they also say that the soul departs after death. There is thus a contradiction in the western narrative which is not clear and which cannot be related to our own philosophical interpretation. While explaining in English we refer to 'atma' as a part of 'Paramātmā', which resides within us. Saying 'Aum Shanti' and 'Atma ko sadgati praapt ho' may be more relevant for a person who has departed from this world, as his 'atma' is setting on a new journey. When we express too much sorrow for the departed one, the soul may get affected as it is connected to the living through emotions. Hence, the words 'Aum shanti' are more appropriate to pave the way for the soul's sadgati.

**Vijaya Singh ji**

**Question: 'Rebirth' is a concept that we are made to believe since childhood. Should we believe and accept it? Should we adopt this concept in life to know about good or bad karma?**

**Answer:** If Bhagavān has said it, then we have to accept it. It is up to us whether we want to believe it or not. Not believing in the concepts mentioned in the Gītā would not lead to any disadvantage. However, it would not lead to any advantage either. Gītā gives a lot of options for persons who might be skeptical about accepting its main precepts. In Sāṃkhya yoga for example, Bhagavān has spoken about 'atma jnana' and has then added further the following lines:

अथ चेतत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।  
ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ३३॥

***(If however, you refuse to fight this righteous war, abandoning your social duty and reputation, you will certainly incur sin)***

Our scriptures do not insist on any stringent path. One can follow Bhakti yoga exclusively or immerse oneself solely in jnana yoga . Alternatively, one may practice only Karma yoga. HE has said that even by following only Karma yoga, one can nevertheless achieve the ultimate goal of liberation

**Prāṇav Pancholiji**

**Question: What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom? Knowledge is important, but then what is the role of wisdom?**

**Answer:** Knowledge guides us towards factual information while wisdom guides us towards the right direction. Wisdom gives us the ability to sift what is right from what is wrong. Using the power of decision-making prudently is yet another aspect of wisdom.

**The session was concluded with a beautiful rendition of the Hanuman Chalisa.**



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**Jai Shri Krishna!**

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar – Creative Writing Department

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