

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 18: Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/CEugzrv3HIM>

Experience the Bliss by Surrendering the Fruits of Actions when performing the Prescribed Duties

Chapter 18 of Srimad Bhagavad Gītā : Mokṣha Sanyās Yog - The Yog of renunciation and surrender.

The session begins with prayer.

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।
गुरुः साक्षात् परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्री गुरवे नमः ॥

कृष्णाय वासुदेवाय हरये परमात्मने ।
प्रणतः क्लेशनाशाय गोविन्दाय नमो नमः ॥

रत्नाकराधौतपदां हिमालय किरीटिनीम् ।
ब्रह्मराजर्षिरत्नाढ्यां वन्दे भारतमातरम् ॥

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

अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीम्- अष्टादशाध्यायिनीम् अम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्- गीते भवद्वेषिणीम् ॥

Chapter 18 is the summary or the synopsis of the entire Srimad Bhagavad Gītā. Dyaneshwar Maharaj has referred to this chapter as Kalashadhyay. If the Srimad Bhagavad Gītā is perceived or could be compared to a temple, the Kalash of the temple can be compared to this chapter. Chapter 12 could be compared to the alter of the temple, Chapter 15 could be considered to the deity's idol installed inside the altar and this current chapter 18 could be compared to the Kalash of the temple (a finial, generally in the form of metal or stone spire, used to top the domes of Hindu temples). It is believed that even if one is unable to visit a temple, one would receive the same grace even by gazing at the Kalash of the temple.

The Chapter 1 of the Gītā describes Arjuna's state of mind on the battlefield when he was gripped by anxiety and delusion to fight his kinsman. Bhagavān then starts to impart the divine knowledge of Gītā from Chapter 2 onwards and HE expounds on Karma Yog, Gyana Yog, Bhakti Yog and Atma Samyama Yog. The crux of the entire Gītā culminates by Chapter 15 and Bhagavān then explains few key concepts in Chapter 16 (the traits of a saintly and demoniac persons) and Chapter 17 (The three divisions of Faith or Shraddha that one could follow). Arjuna experiences divine bliss upon hearing the Gītā.

Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj ji said:

वत्स धालयाही वरी । धेनू न वचावी दुरी ।
अनन्य प्रीतीची परी । ऐसी आहे ॥ ७८ ॥

When a cow has satisfied her calf she does not wander away; this is the nature of true affection.

तेणें काजेवीणही बोलावें । तें देखीलें तरी पाहावें ।
भोगितां चाड दुणावे । पढियंतयाठायीं ॥ ७९ ॥

Similarly, men long for the loved one to speak even without cause, and enjoy looking at each other again and again, increasing their delight.

Dnyaneshwar Maharaj says that like how a calf desires to stay by the side of the mother cow even after consuming the milk from the mother cow, Arjuna desires to hear more from Bhagavān even after the conversation of Gītā and this is a sign of true love towards the Divine. This Chapter begins with Arjuna asking a question on distinction between Sanyas and Tyaag, which would be explained by Bhagavān in detail in the forthcoming shlokas.

18.1

arjuna uvāca
sannyāsasya mahābāho, tattvamicchāmi veditum,
tyāgasya ca hr̥ṣīkeśa, pr̥thakkeśiniṣūdana. 18.1

Arjuna said:

O mighty-armed Śrī Kṛṣṇa, O inner controller of all, O Slayer of Keśi, I wish to know severally the truth of Samnyāsa as also of Tyāga.

This chapter begins with this shloka where Arjuna wishes to understand the nature of sanyās and the nature of tyāg. He wishes to understand the distinction between the two terms.

Arjuna also refers to Bhagavān as:

mahā-bāho - "the mighty armed one";

Hrishikesh, meaning "master of the senses" and

keśhi-niṣhūdana - "the slayer of the Keshi demon."

The term "**nyās**" in *sanyāsa* refers to **renunciation** and "**tyāg**" also refers to renunciation. Bhagavān explains the difference between *sanyāsa* and *tyāg* in the next shloka.

18.2

śrībhagavānuvāca
kāmyānām(ñ) karmaṇām(ñ) nyāsaṃ(m), sannyāsaṃ(ñ) kavayo viduḥ,
sarVākarmaphalatyāgaṃ(m), prāhustyāgaṃ(m) vicakṣaṇāḥ. 18.2

Śrī Bhagavān said :

Some sages understand Samnyāsa as the giving up of all actions motivated by desire; and the wise declare that Tyāga consists in relinquishing the fruit of all actions.

In this shloka, Bhagavān puts forth the perspective of two categories of people - Kavayaḥ (the learned one) and Vichakṣaṇāḥ (the wise one). A Kavi is considered to be a learned one in Sanskrit.

As they say:

जो न देखे रवि वह देखे कवि

A learned one can see even that which the Sun cannot see.

Let's understand the term kāmya karma. It refers to the actions which lead to fulfilment of desires - say acquiring wealth, property, status, desire for children etc. Bhagavān explains that the learned one considers sanyās as the renunciation of works. Those who renounce karmas or actions for material enjoyment and enter the renounced order by relinquishing kāmya karma (works related to acquisition of wealth, prestige, status, property, etc.).

Bhagavān now explains that as per the wise people, the term tyāg refers to the renunciation of fruits of all actions. This implies not relinquishing the prescribed Vedic duties, rather renouncing the desires for enjoying their fruits. Therefore, relinquishing the attachment to the fruits of actions is tyāg. In a nutshell, relinquishing the actions leading to fulfilment of desire is what the learned see as sanyās and relinquishing the fruits of all actions is what the wise perceive to be tyāg.

18.3

tyājyaṃ(n) doṣavadityeke, karma prāhurmanīṣiṇaḥ,
yajñadānatapaḥkarma, na tyājyamiti cāpare. 18.3

Some wise men declare that all actions contain a measure of evil, and are, therefore, worth giving up; while others say that acts of sacrifice, charity and penance are not to be shunned.

In this shloka, Bhagavān continues to explain the perspective of the learned ones and the wise ones. The learned ones are of the opinion that all actions or Karmas should be given up as they are motivated by desires.

However, the wise ones are of the opinion that prescribed Vedic activities (acts of sacrifice, charity and penance) should never be renounced or given up.

18.4

niścayaṃ(m) śṛṇu me tatra, tyāge bharatasattama,
tyāgo hi puruṣavyāghra, trividhaḥ(s) samprakīrtitaḥ. 18.4

Of Samnyāsa and Tyāga, first hear My conclusion on the subject of renunciation (Tyāga), Arjuna; for renunciation, O tiger among men, has been declared to be of three kinds-Sāttvika, Rājasika and Tāmasika.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains HIS view or verdict on this topic of **Sanyāsa** and **Tyāga**.

Bhagavān addresses Arjuna as:

Bharatasattama - The best amongst the Bharatas and

Puruṣhavyāghra - the superior amongst men.

Bhagavān mentions that there are three kinds of renunciation or Tyāga. HE expounds on this topic in the forthcoming shlokas.

18.5

**yajñadānatapaḥkarma, na tyājyaṃ(n) kāryameva tat,
yajño dānaṃ(n) tapaścaiva, pāvanāni manīṣiṇām. 18.5**

Acts of sacrifice, charity and penance are not worth giving up; they must be performed. For sacrifice, charity and penance-all these are purifiers to the wise men.

There have been misconceptions about the Mahabharat and Srimad Bhagavad Gītā. It is believed that by keeping the Mahabharat in one's proximity, it would induce chaos or conflict within the surrounding. However, the Mahabharat is a scripture which is a sign of victory. Keeping this scripture at home or in surrounding environment would bring victory. Similarly, there has been a misconception that the presence of Gītā in one's home would lead the children of the house to take up monkhood. However, Arjuna did not take up Saṃnyāsa after listening to the entire divine conversation of the Gītā.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains the actions of **Yajña** (sacrifice), **dāna** (charity), and **tapa** (penance) should never be renounced as it aids in elevating oneself to higher states of consciousness and purify one's mind. Yajña could be performed in groups for the welfare of the society, whereas dāna symbolizes sharing or charity and one believes that whatever one has acquired is due to the grace of the divine and the support provided by the society.

Jagadguru Adi Shankarachary in Viveka Chudamani said:

चित्तस्य शुद्धये कर्म न तु वस्तूपलब्धये॥

Work leads to purification of the mind, not to perception of the Reality.

Everything in the creation is interdependent and hence human being is a social animal. So, human life runs on this interdependence. According to one's nature, one should fulfill that duty, assuming that he is the nityayagya.

Charity and austerities are deeds that a person does for his personal advancement. These deeds are to be done by the individual alone.

Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya says -

दानं संविभागः।

Charity means sharing. What we think is ours, we should take some part of it and give it to others in need.

This is because what we get does not belong to us alone but to the whole creation. It is given to us as a gift from HIM. We get it with the help of someone in the society. So, it is not ours alone (vvesti) but

belongs to the whole creation (Srishti) and Parameshthi (the Supreme) also contribute to it. We have debt towards HIM, debt to parents, debt to sages and debt to society, we need to get rid of those debts. We need to share it in order to free ourselves from the debts received from others. We can donate what we have to give with a sense of duty in many ways such as donation of money, donation of knowledge, donation of blood, donation of labor, donation of time.

Our asceticism is what we do to our body for the fulfillment of our duty, for our advancement. This penance should also never be abandoned.

Āśrama is a system of stages of life discussed in scriptures or texts of the ancient and medieval eras.

The four asramas are:

- **Brahmācharya** (student),
- **Gṛhastha** (householder),
- **Vanaprastha** (forest dweller), and
- **Samnyāsa** (renunciate).

Which action a person should do when is determined according to his state of life i.e. according to his ashram. The period of his celibacy is the period of his exchange, so during this period he should receive all the knowledge from the Gurus as well as nurture from the birth givers.

In the stage of Gṛhastha (householder), one believes to repay or return in the form of sharing or charity for what one has received from others (say imparting knowledge, allocating time for charity or seva, blood donation, etc., as duty or charity).

Duties should be done for all. Further duties change in Vanaprasthashram. Then earning money and knowledge is not a priority. In this way specific karmas like varnas and ashrams are to be done, they are appointed karmas.

The path of Samnyāsa (renunciate) is not recommended for one and all as it suits only the elevated souls who are detached from the desires of the material world.

18.6

**etānyapi tu karmāṇi, saṅgaṃ(n) tyaktvā phalāni ca,
kartavyānīti me pārtha, niścitaṃ(m) matamuttamam. 18.6**

Hence these acts of sacrifice, charity and penance, and all other acts of duty too, must be performed without attachment and expectation of reward : this is My well-considered and supreme verdict, Arjuna.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that the acts of Yajña (sacrifice), dāna (charity), and tapa (penance) and other prescribed duties must be performed without attachment and expectation for rewards. The tendency of the human mind is to question and expect results for every action. Consider the example of reading the Gītā. The learner often questions what he/she would get in return or the benefits upon reading the Gītā. The tendency of the mind is to expect results or benefits for every action. If an action is a prescribed duty, then one should go ahead and perform the action without thinking about the results.

A mother was once explaining to her child that upon sowing a seed and watering it regularly, the seed would eventually grow into a huge tree. After a span of two days, the child questions the mother that even after watering the seed every hour, it has not grown into a tree yet. Similarly, the human mind is

always entangled in thoughts and expectations about the fruits of actions. Bhagavān declares that it is HIS final supreme verdict that these actions or activities must be performed without attachment and expectation for rewards. HE now explains the three kinds of renunciation in the forthcoming shlokas.

18.7

niyatasya tu sannyāsaḥ(kh), karmaṇo nopapadyate, mohāttasya parityāgaḥ(s), tāmasaḥ(ph) parikīrtitaḥ. 18.7

(Prohibited acts and those that are motivated by desire should, no doubt, be given up). But it is not advisable to abandon a prescribed duty. Such abandonment out of ignorance has been declared as Tāmasika.

The material energy or Prakṛti has three modes - Sattva (mode of goodness), Rajas (mode of passion) and Tamas (mode of ignorance). Tyaga is also under the influence of the three modes of Prakṛti. In this shloka, Bhagavān explains the Tamasika nature of Tyaga.

There are two categories of Karma:

- **Vihita** Karma and
- **Nihita** Karma.

If this is compared to mathematical terms, *Vihita* Karma is the set and *Nihita* Karma can be seen as the subset. *Vihita* Karma refers to the actions which benefits oneself. For example, in the stage of Brahmācharya (student), engaging in the process of learning or studies is *Vihita* Karma or the prescribed duty and mastering a particular stream - say medicine, engineering, commerce, arts, etc., is termed as *Nihita* Karma.

Performing the prescribed duty by being within the line of Dharma is defined as *Puruṣārthas* - the goals or aim of human life.

The four *puruṣārthas* are:

- **Dharma** (righteousness, moral values),
- **Artha** (prosperity, economic values),
- **Kama** (pleasure, love, psychological values) and
- **Moksha** (liberation, spiritual values, self-actualization).

For a *Gṛhastha* (householder), the prescribed duty or the *Vihita* Karma is to take care of the needs of the family. To achieve this, one might engage in agriculture, business or any other profession, which is classified as *Nihita* Karma.

Arjuna is a *Kṣatriya* and warrior by nature, which is his true Dharma. However, Arjuna wanted to give up on fighting the war and wanted to take up *Saṁnyāsa* which was against his prescribed duty as a warrior. Bhagavān explains that giving up on prescribed duty in the name of renunciation is said to be in the mode of ignorance (Tamasika Tyaga). Such deluded renunciation (i.e., giving up on prescribed duties) is said to be in the mode of ignorance (Tamasika).

Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj ji says:

नातरी आंधराचेनि रोखें । जैसीं डोळां रोविजती नखें ।
तैसा कर्मद्वेषें अशेखें । कर्मचि सांडी ॥ १७८ ॥

Avoiding prescribed duties from a hatred of activity would be like tearing out one's eyes because one is angry with darkness.

18.8

**duḥkhamityeva yatkarma, kāyakleśabhayāttyajet,
sa kṛtvā rājasam(n) tyāgam(n), naiva tyāgaphalam(m) labhet. 18.8**

Should anyone give up his duties for fear of physical strain, thinking that all actions are verily painful-practising such Rājasika form of renunciation, he does not reap the fruit of renunciation.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that giving up or abandoning the prescribed duties because they feel troublesome or cause bodily discomfort is renunciation in the mode of passion (Rajasika Tyaag). If one has to choose between two actions, one will prefer the shortcut route or give up on the troublesome action, even if it happens to be the prescribed or obligatory action. Such renunciation is never beneficial. By running away from the prescribed duty with an intention to avoid pain is Rajasika Tyaag. One must realize that running away does not set one free, but to experience or discharging the action sets one free.

Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj ji says:

अथवा स्वाधिकारु बुझे । आपले विहितही सुजे ।
परी करितया उमजे । निबरपणा ॥ १८४ ॥

Or he knows what his prescribed duty is like Ashrama dharma and the duty he is told also dawns on him, but he gets tired of the trouble of doing it.

Dyaneshwar Maharaj explains the nature of Rajasika Tyaag with an example of a person who is aware about his prescribed duties and rights. However, he abandons the prescribed duties due to his laziness or to avoid discomfort or burden of any kind.

18.9

**kāryamityeva yatkarma, niyataṁ(ñ) kriyate'rjuna
saṅgam(n) tyaktvā phalam(ñ) caiva, sa tyāgaḥ(s) sāttviko mataḥ. 18.9**

A prescribed duty which is performed simply because it has to be performed, giving up attachment and fruit, that alone has been recognized as the Sāttvika form of renunciation.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that when the prescribed actions are performed by relinquishing attachment to any reward or fruits of action, it is considered renunciation in the nature of goodness (Sattvika Tyaga). When one performs the prescribed duties with this mindset, one would experience true happiness.

Consider an example where one encounters a visually challenged person. Helping the visually challenged person to cross the road or to reach a destination is an obligatory or prescribed duty of every citizen. However, if one performs this action with a desire of being clicked by a camera or to upload the act of helping the other on social media, it is not qualified as Sattvika tyaga.

Bengali patriotic song written by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore in 1905 goes like this:

जोदि तोर डाक शुने केउ ना आसे
तोबे एकला चलो रे।

एकला चलो, एकला चलो, एकला चलो रे!
जोदि केउ कोथा ना कोय, ओरे, ओरे, ओ भागा,
यदि सबाई थाके मुख फिराय, सबाई करे भय-
तबे परान खुले
ओ, तुई मुख फूटे तोर मनेर कथा एकला बोलो रे!

यदि सबाई फिरे जाय, ओरे, ओरे, ओ अभागा,
यदि गहन पथे जाबार काले केउ फिरे न जाय-
तबे पथेर काँटा
ओ, तुई रक्तमाला चरण तले एकला दलो रे!

यदि आलो ना घरे, ओरे, ओरे, ओ अभागा-
यदि झड़ बादले आधार राते दुयार देय धरे-
तबे वज्रानले
आपन बुकेर पांजर ज्वालिये नये एकला ज्वलो रे!

If they answer not to thy call walk alone,
If they are afraid and cower mutely facing the wall,
O thou unlucky one, open thy mind and speak out alone.

If they turn away, and desert you when crossing the wilderness,
O thou unlucky one, trample the thorns under thy tread,
and along the blood-lined track travel alone.

If they do not hold up the light when the night is troubled with storm,
O thou unlucky one, with the thunder flame of pain ignite thy own heart
and let it burn alone.

Come what may, one needs to perform the prescribed duties with/without the support of the other or even if the other turns against oneself.

Consider the example of Hanuman Ji in Ramayan. He was not designated as a minister, king or commander. However, he performed his prescribed duties selflessly as a service to Bhagavān Śrī Ram. Although he was the crux of the entire Ramayan, he is known for his humbleness.

In the Mahabharat, Bhagavān Śrī Krishna performed all the prescribed duty that came along his way. HE has discharged duties of a cowherd, charioteer, advisor, peacemaker, so on and so forth. During the war, the charioteer had to nurse the wounds of the horses and also discharge duties for their cleanliness. Bhagavān Śrī Krishna has performed every obligatory and prescribed duty that came HIS way, and HE then imparted the wisdom to discharge the prescribed duty in the Gītā. HE practiced and then preached.

Similarly, Swamy Ji also practices what he preaches and hence, one is able to connect with his teachings.

18.10

**na dvestyakuśalaṃ(ñ) karma, kuśale nānuṣajjate,
tyāgī sattvasamāviṣṭo, medhāvī chinnaśayaḥ. 18.10**

He who has neither aversion for action which is leading to bondage (□□□□□) nor attachment to that which is conducive to blessedness (□□□□□)- imbued with the quality of goodness, he has all his doubts resolved, is intelligent and a man of true renunciation.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that those who neither avoid the unfavorable actions or works nor seek work because it is favorable are persons of true renunciation. They are as they are endowed with the quality of the mode of goodness (Sattva). Such persons do not contemplate on the how achievable or cumbersome the task would turn out to be. They do not have a mindset of picking favorable tasks or tasks towards which they have an inclination over the difficult or disagreeable tasks. They perform their duty under all conditions, without feeling elated when the results are favorable or feeling dejected when gripped by challenges. Such persons do not hesitate to perform the duties that come their way even if they lack the expertise or the skill to execute the tasks.

Consider the example of a student. During the process of learning various subjects, it is certain that many concepts would be hard to grasp or difficult to comprehend. However, it is the prescribed duty to make an attempt to learn the prescribed syllabus. It is not advised for a student to pick only easy and simple topics as per his/her inclination by excluding the difficult concepts of the syllabus. Similarly, those with the mode of goodness would perform their duty under all conditions by maintaining equanimity towards the outcome of the action.

One can take inspiration from Bhagavān Śrī Krishna HIMSELF who has performed the role of a cowherd, a charioteer who was responsible for nursing and grooming the horses, who had to clear the path by removing the rubbles for the chariot to pass by, the role of a king, advisor or the supreme divine himself imparting the divine knowledge of Gītā based on the need of the hour.

Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharj ji says:

तरी स्वाधिकाराचेनि नांवें । जें वांटिया आलें स्वभावं ।
तें आचरे विधिगौरवें । शृंगारोनि ॥ २०० ॥

A man who has the quality of goodness performs actions that have fallen naturally to his lot, in accordance with his own capacity carries them out with due respect [for the scriptures].

18.11

**na hi dehabhṛtā śakyaṃ(n), tyaktuṃ(ñ) karmāṇyaśeṣataḥ,
yastu karmaphalatyaḡī, sa tyāgītyabhidhīyate. 18.11**

Since all actions cannot be given up in their entirety by anyone possessing a body, he alone who renounces the fruit of actions is called a man of renunciation.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains the quality of a Tyagi. It is impossible for an embodied soul to entirely renounce all the actions. One would engage in eating food, drinking water or involuntary act of breathing. This is explained in the below shloka from Chapter 3:

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥ ५॥

There is no one who can remain without action even for a moment. Indeed, all beings are compelled to act by their qualities born of material nature (the three guṇas).

Complete inactivity is impossible for an embodied soul. One cannot remain in a state of inactivity even for a moment (as there are voluntary or involuntary actions by the body that are unavoidable), since the body-mind-intellect mechanism is under the influence of the three guṇas (sattva, rajas, and tamas) to perform work in the world. Bhagavān explains that those who relinquish the fruits of their actions are said to be truly renounced. Such a person is said to be a Sattvika Tyagi as he is detached towards the fruits of actions. One needs to understand that one would definitely get the fruits of actions, and this is explained in the next shloka.

18.12

**aniṣṭamiṣṭam(m) miśram(ñ) ca, trividham(ñ) karmaṇaḥ(ph) phalam,
bhavatyatyāginām(m) pretya, na tu sannyāsinām(ñ) kvacit. 18.12**

Agreeable, disagreeable and mixed-threefold, indeed, is the fruit that accrues after death from the actions of the unrenouncing. But there is none whatsoever for those who have renounced.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains the three-fold fruits of actions for a person who desires for the results of actions. The three-fold fruits of actions are pleasant, unpleasant, and mixed. One might reap pleasant fruits for virtuous actions; unpleasant fruits for non-virtuous actions or the results might be even a mixture of both. If one desires to reap the fruits of actions, one would be entitled to the results of actions. The results (pleasant, unpleasant or mixture of both) might be bestowed in this life or in the next life. The result would be bestowed depending on the karmic laws. One would be entangled in the cycle of birth and death until one reaps the results of one's actions. This is applicable for the one who is attached towards the fruits of actions.

As stated in the below shloka from Chapter 6:

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।

स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्यथाक्रियः ॥ १॥

Those who perform prescribed duties without desiring the results of their actions are actual sanyāsīs (renunciates) and yogis, not those who have merely ceased performing sacrifices or abandoned bodily activities.

For those who renounce the fruits of their actions, the three-fold fruits of actions do not apply. The external acts of asceticism do not make anyone either a sanyāsī, tyāgi or a yogi. Those who can renounce the fruits of their actions, by offering them to the divine, are the true renunciants. Hence, the internal state of a sanyāsī and a tyāgi are one and the same. Bhagavān now expounds on the concept of Karma that is performed from the mode of goodness, mode of passion and mode of ignorance, along with other characteristics in the forthcoming shlokas which would be discussed in the next session.

The session ends with prayer and Hanuman Chalisa.

Question and Answer

Chinmay Ji

Question: Which chapter is supreme amongst all the chapters of the Gītā? Say Chapter 1 explains only the midset of Arjuna and the Gītā starts from Chapter 2.

Answer: It is the same Ganga River which flows from Gangotri, Haridwar, Varanasi, Gangasagar, so on and so forth. If one has to learn the Gītā, one cannot ignore chapter 1 (where the supreme divine does not speak until chapter 2. An elevated soul like Adi Shankaracharya has considered Gītā from Chapter 2. However, for an unenlightened soul, one needs to understand the background with Chapter 1.

Question: Comparison with the other is leading to conflict on personal front. Kindly advise.

Answer: The main Puruṣārtha is Dharma which should not be compromised. One needs to refrain from comparing oneself with the other as comparison is endless. Desire is an unending state of mind.

Sunanda Ji

Question: It feels good to recite Gītā but not able to learn the shlokas by heart.

Answer: One needs to keep trying constantly and the spiritual evolution continues in the next birth itself. Moksha does not imply that one does not come back again to this world after death. It is an experience of realizing that one is the soul and not the physical body.

मेरे सर पर रख दो भगवन, अपने ये दोनों हाथ,
देना हो तो दीजिये, जनम-जनम का साथ ॥

O' Supreme put these two hands of yours on my head,
if you want to give then give, support in every birth.

Sudha Ji

Question: How to differentiate from a right action and wrong action?

Answer: If one is absorbed in the Divine while performing the action (without any expectations or desires on the results), then the action automatically becomes the right action.

As mentioned in the below shloka from chapter 17:

ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः ।
ब्रह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिताः पुरा ॥ 23॥

The words “Om Tat Sat” have been declared as symbolic representations of the Supreme Absolute Truth, from the beginning of creation. One can begin the actions with “Om Tat Sat” and dedicate all actions to the Divine.

Jaya Ji

Question: Giving up on a role due to limitations on skill would be a sin?

Answer: One could engage in actions based on one's ability, health, age or strength.

Brundaban Ji

Question: How can Karma be performed without a purpose?

Answer: For a householder, the actions are performed with purpose (say providing good education to children). This purpose becomes a prescribed duty upon performing which, it becomes a yagna. Hence, it should not be given up. The mantra of the Gītā is "Duty First".

Santosh Ji

Question: Who is not entitled to not to read the Gītā?

Answer: Everyone is entitled and eligible to read the Gītā (irrespective of caste, creed, gender, social status etc.) One who desires to read the Gītā is eligible to read the same and one who refrains to learn the wisdom or imbibe the wisdom can refrain from reading the Gītā.

Rashmi Ji

Question: Gītā is a dialogue between Arjuna and Bhagavān, however Ved Vyaas Ji has written the scripture. Kindly clarify.

Answer: Gītā is the divine words spoken by the supreme divine himself. Ved Vyaas Ji has classified the same into 18 chapters for the common man to comprehend.

Sadhana Ji

Question: How to perform karmas post retired life?

Answer: In Vanaraprastha stage, one should refrain from interfering in the lives of grown-up children, advise them as and when needed and engage in devotion or seva if possible.

Shaila Ji

Question: Does the soul have the memory of the body it gives up at the time of death and the new body?

Answer: Atma tattva absorbs on the frequency of the Saṁskāras of the previous life. However, the embodied soul is unable to recall the memories of the past life due to the quality of Vismaran. The Saṁskāras and knowledge acquired in the previous births are carried forward to the next birth. The child prodigy (in recalling Gītā, music or any field) is an example of this concept.



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

Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar – Creative Writing Department

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