

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 16: Daivāsura-Sampad-Vibhāga-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/eerEct4V550>

Exploring the Divine and Demoniatic Qualities - A Deep Dive into Bhagavad Gītā's Teachings on Daivī & āsurī Traits

Chapter 16 of the Srimad Bhagavad Gītā is **Daivāsura Sampad Vibhāga Yoga - The Divine and the Demoniatic qualities**.

The session began with the prayer and customary lighting of the lamp.

By the immense grace of the Divine, we have been blessed with the opportunity to immerse ourselves in the teachings of the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, a scripture that brings meaning and purpose to our lives while guiding us toward the ultimate welfare of human existence. Whether this opportunity has arisen due to the merit of good deeds performed in this life, the virtuous actions of past births, the blessings of our ancestors, or the grace of a saint at some point in our journey, it is undoubtedly a rare moment of spiritual awakening—a chance to engage deeply with the divine teachings of the Gītā.

In previous session, we discussed the 26 divine qualities mentioned in the first three shlokas. The checklist provided by Bhagavān Śrī Krishna is incredibly significant. Bhagavān Śrī Krishna's style as an orator in the Bhagavad Gītā is unique. While most other spiritual teachers and orators in the world focus heavily on prescriptive instructions - "do this, don't do that" - **Bhagavān Śrī Krishna takes a different approach. Rather than emphasizing what one should or shouldn't do, He encourages us to examine the direction in which our current actions are taking us.**

He provides various checklists throughout the Gītā:

- If you call yourself a devotee (**bhakt**), do you possess the 39 qualities of a devotee mentioned in Chapter 12?
- If you consider yourself divine (**daivī**), do you embody the 26 divine qualities we discussed?
- If you think of yourself as wise (**gyani**), do you match the characteristics of the wise described in Chapter 13?

Bhagavān has provided these checklists throughout the Gītā for self-examination, not for judging

others. However, our mind tends to work differently - when we learn about divine qualities, we look for their absence in others, and when we learn about demonic qualities (asuri gun), we search for them in others, saying "Yes, this person has this negative quality..." We're reluctant to search for these negative qualities within ourselves. Bhagavān says this is the wrong approach. These lists are meant for self-evaluation - to identify where we lack in divine qualities and where we possess demonic traits.

To improve ourselves, we must perfect our spiritual practice (sadhana). Whether you perform puja, chanting, meditation, or follow Karma Yoga, Gyana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Dhyana Yoga, or any other path - Bhagavān Śrī Krishna says the specific path doesn't matter. It's like traveling from Mumbai to Delhi - whether you go by flight, train, bus, car, or on foot, Delhi remains the same destination. Similarly, the Divine that you reach through any spiritual path remains the same.

There's a beautiful Sufi saying: One Sufi asked another, "How many paths are there to reach the Divine?" The answer was, "As many as there are particles of dust on earth." Bhagavān Śrī Krishna in the Bhagavad Gītā isn't concerned with the path you choose; He's concerned with reaching the destination. What matters isn't how long you worship, how many malas you complete, how much you chant or meditate - what matters is how much these practices transform you from within. That's why He provided the checklist of 26 divine qualities - as a measure of this inner transformation.

**abhayaṁ sattva-saṁśuddhir jñāna-yoga-vyavasthitiḥ
dānaṁ damaśḥ cha yajñaśḥ cha svādhyāyas tapa ārjavam
ahimsā satyam akrodhas tyāgaḥ śhāntir apaiśhunam
dayā bhūteṣhv aloluptvaṁ mārdaṁ hrīr achāpalam
tejaḥ kṣamā dhṛitiḥ śhaucham adroho nāti-mānitā
bhavanti sampadaṁ daivīm abhijātasya bhārata**

Bhagavān explains that regardless of your chosen spiritual path or practices, what truly matters is whether the 26 divine qualities are manifesting in your life. Are you developing truthfulness (satya)? Has non-violence (**ahimsa**) become part of your nature? And ahimsa extends beyond just abstaining from meat - it encompasses not hurting anyone's feelings or being the cause of anyone's pain. Bhagavān asks us to examine qualities like **akrodh** (freedom from anger) - have you truly overcome anger, or does it still control your actions?

Consider **abhay** (fearlessness) - has true fearlessness entered your life, or do you still live in fear? Some people, when questioned about their fears, admit they don't know exactly what they fear - it's just a constant anxiety about the unknown, a fear of uncertainty.

The divine qualities continue with **daan** (charity) - have you developed a natural inclination to give?

Damash (self-control) - have you gained control over your senses? Hrīr (shame) is particularly significant - do you feel genuine shame when you make mistakes? Our common problem is that we often don't accept our mistakes, always finding excuses: "it happened because of this or that." Bhagavān firmly says no! A divine nature requires feeling shame when we err. Has tejaḥ (vigor) entered your life, bringing a certain radiance to your being?

Bhagavān then addresses **Kṣamā** - forgiveness - can you truly forgive someone who acts against your wishes, causes you harm, or makes you angry? True forgiveness isn't about declaring "I won't talk to them" or maintaining a distance. It's about genuinely forgiving and forgetting. Real forgiveness is when someone mentions their past mistake and you genuinely have to ask "What mistake?" - because you've completely forgotten it.

The qualities continue with **śhaucham** (purity) - is there purity in your life?

Adroho (absence of hatred) is profound - others may consider you their enemy, but do you consider anyone your enemy? Can you honestly say there's no one whom you can't meet, talk to, visit, or welcome into your home? That's what it means to be free from hatred.

Finally, there's **natimanita** (absence of pride) - letting go of pride in wealth, knowledge, intelligence, or achievements. Pride in anything - beauty, wisdom, having memorized the Gītā, making good decisions - Bhagavān says all this must be abandoned to become truly divine.

Bhagavān has elaborated on these 26 divine qualities, and in the next few verses, He will briefly describe the demonic qualities (asuri gun) before expanding on them further. These qualities serve as a mirror for self-reflection and transformation, showing how the Gītā's teachings are practical and transformative, focusing not just on external practices but on the inner qualities that mark true spiritual progress.

16.4

**dambho darpo'bhimānaśca, krodhaḥ(ph) pārūṣyameva ca,
ajñānaṁ(ñ) cābhijātasya, pārtha sampadamāsurīm 16.4**

Hypocrisy, arrogance, pride and anger, sternness and ignorance too - these are the marks of him, who is born with demoniac properties.

Bhagavān Śrī Krishna tells Arjuna about the qualities that characterize those born with demoniac properties - hypocrisy (**dambhah**), arrogance (**darpah**), conceit (**abhimanah**), anger (**krodhaḥ**), harshness (**parushyam**), and ignorance (**ajnanam**). Though dambhah, darpah, and abhimanah might appear similar, they have distinct meanings.

Abhimanah is pride in oneself - "I am intelligent, I am beautiful, I am this, I am that" - whenever 'I' comes into the picture. Darpah relates to pride in possessions - "my wife, my children, my business, my big car, my big house." Dambhah is different - it's showing off what belongs to neither 'I' nor 'mine'.

Bhagavān gives examples of **dambhah**: Like posting photos with someone else's Ferrari on Facebook, and when asked when you bought it, responding with just a smiley. Or pretending to know the Gītā verses by moving your lips during recitation when you don't actually know them. Or extending your usual 10-minute prayer to half an hour when guests arrive. **Dambhah** is pretending to be what you're not. So while abhimanah is pride in self, darpah is pride in possessions, and dambhah is pretense about things you don't even possess.

Then Bhagavān speaks about anger (krodhaḥ), which has a unique characteristic. Among the five main mental vices - **Kama** (lust), **krodhaḥ** (anger), **Lobha** (greed), **Moha** (attachment), and **Matsarya** (envy), with laziness being the sixth - anger is unique. While the other four can arise independently, anger is dependent. You won't suddenly become angry while sitting quietly, but you can experience desire, greed, attachment, or ego. Anger comes only when one of these four is hurt or threatened.

Therefore, to control anger, one must find its origin. Does it come from unfulfilled desires? From excessive ego? From greed? From too much attachment? Until we identify this basic fuel that ignites

anger, controlling it isn't possible. Simply counting to ten or taking deep breaths won't stop anger from coming - you need to shut down its engine. The most common cause of anger is when people don't accept our views or don't act according to our wishes, even when we think we're right. This stems from our desire to have everyone agree with us. No other person can make us angry - it's our expectations and emotions that cause anger. To address anger, we must address these underlying expectations we've created in our minds. Fix this, and the problem disappears.

Let's understand a story: Once Śrī Krishna, Balaram, and Satyaki were together. Balaram was known for his quick temper. One day, Balaram had gotten into an unnecessary argument with someone. Bhagavān Śrī Krishna, being younger, wondered how to counsel his elder brother. He knew that directly trying to explain might lead to another argument. So Śrī Krishna, being the master of divine play (*leela*), devised a plan.

He suggested to his brother, "Let's go for a night out." Balaram asked where, and Śrī Krishna replied, "There's a beautiful pond in the nearby forest. We'll spend the evening there, sleep there at night, and take some food along. No servants - just us three. We'll relax, talk, and enjoy ourselves. It's been long since we spent time alone together." Balaram agreed.

They went in the evening, had dinner, and as night fell, it was time to rest. Being in the forest, Balaram suggested they take turns keeping watch against wild animals. Śrī Krishna agreed but said, "I'll sleep first and take the last watch since I'm very sleepy." Balaram took the first watch while Satyaki and Śrī Krishna slept.

During his watch, Balaram noticed a mysterious figure moving in the darkness. As he approached it, the small creature seemed to taunt him, moving closer then jumping away. Every time Balaram shouted, the creature grew larger. He chased it for about a kilometer, and to his amazement, what started as a tiny being had grown significantly larger. It was a strange, greenish figure that kept growing. When it finally stopped, Balaram tried to strike it, but with each blow, the creature doubled in size. After two hours of fighting, Balaram was exhausted, disheveled, having lost his crown, necklaces, and proper appearance.

Not wanting to lose face, Balaram, when his watch ended, quickly fixed his appearance and woke Satyaki without mentioning the incident. Satyaki then encountered the same creature and experienced a similar ordeal. Both warriors, unable to defeat the mysterious being, were mystified by Śrī Krishna's fresh and unruffled appearance after his watch.

Finally, when questioned, Śrī Krishna lifted his pitambari to reveal a small blue figure tied within. He explained, "This is not a creature - this is anger itself. Anger is such a flaw that the more attention you give it, the more time you spend fighting it, the larger it grows. I neither chased it nor challenged it. I simply observed it peacefully. When I didn't react, it came closer, and when I remained calm, it became docile enough for me to catch and contain it."

The moral: The only way to deal with anger is not to fight it. Ignore it, and it comes under your control. The more you engage with it, the more it overpowers and destroys you. Both Balaram and Satyaki understood this profound lesson.

This story beautifully illustrates the Gītā's teaching about managing anger through detachment and observation rather than confrontation.

Usually, domestic quarrels start over trivial matters. Once there was a couple who fought daily. The neighbors were used to hearing them. One Sunday, which was a holiday, the husband didn't have to

go to office. Normally, their fights would end when the husband left for work. But today, since it was Sunday, the fight that began at 7 AM continued through past 12 noon. A neighbor couldn't bear it anymore and thought, "This has gone too far. Let me intervene before they hurt each other and it becomes a police case requiring FIR."

The neighbor knocked on their door. When it opened, he mentioned the loud noise. The husband complained about being fed up, and immediately the wife shouted from inside, "What do you mean you're fed up? Ask me how I've tolerated this man for 10 years!" The poor neighbor who came to mediate found himself in the middle of their argument. After listening to both sides for a while, he asked, "Just tell me what started this fight?" Both became serious, trying to remember, but couldn't recall what initiated the fight six hours ago. The husband exclaimed, "How strange of you to ask - we've been fighting for 6 hours, how can we remember how it started?"

This is the truth about **krodhaḥ** - anger - we forget where it began as it escalates beyond recognition. Usually, the initial cause is small - a minor insult, a small hurt, a trivial offense. But the more we talk about it, think about it, tell others about it, spend time on it, and hold onto it in our minds, the larger it grows. Therefore, anger should be handled like Śrī Krishna did - observe it calmly, smile at it, and tie it up in your bundle. If you give it space in your mind and spend more time on it, it only grows larger. And it doesn't harm others as much as it harms ourselves. Think about it - has our anger ever really harmed others? It only harms us. We become disturbed, our blood pressure rises, our health suffers, our sleep is disturbed, while others remain unaffected.

Pāruṣyameva ca (harshness) - Some people have hearts that don't melt. They feel no pain even when causing pain to others. This harshness extends to animals, environment, and humans. A divine nature feels pain at others' suffering, while a demonic nature says, "They deserved it, this should have happened to them." When the Kedarnath disaster happened, help came from across the country, but one prominent person said something unforgettable: "Why did you bring truckloads of supplies? These people deserved this fate - they were drinking alcohol by the Ganges." I wondered, how can we judge people who don't have food to eat, clothes to wear, or a roof over their heads, and justify their suffering because they drank alcohol?

Ajñānam (ignorance) - The most ignorant person doesn't know they are ignorant. Thinking ourselves wise is itself ignorance. One philosopher said, "The more I studied, the more I realized how much I don't know."

These are all demoniac qualities.

16.5

**daivī sampadvimokṣāya, nibandhāyāsuri matā,
mā śucaḥ(s) saṃpadaṃ(n) daivīm, abhijāto'si pāṇḍava 16.5**

The divine endowment has been recognized as conducive to liberation, and the demoniac one as leading to bondage. Grieve not, Arjuna, for you are born with the divine propensities.

The divine qualities lead to liberation, while the demoniac qualities lead to bondage. But do not grieve, O Arjuna (son of Pandu), for you are born with divine qualities. Bhagavān is telling Arjuna that he already possesses these divine qualities and need not worry. He is naturally equipped with them.

16.6

**dvau bhūtasargau loke'smin, daiva āsura eva ca,
daivo vistaraśaḥ(ph) prokta, āsuraṃ(m) pārtha me śrṇu 16.6**

There are only two types of men in this world, Arjuna, the one possessing a divine nature and the other possessing a demoniac disposition. Of these, the type possessing divine nature has been dealt with at length; now hear in detail from Me about the type possessing demoniac disposition.

Bhagavān says there are only two types of beings in this creation - those with divine nature and those with demoniac nature. He has already explained the divine nature in detail, and now He will explain the demoniac nature to Arjuna. This verse essentially lays out that there are fundamental dos and don'ts - two distinct paths of living.

16.7

**pravṛttiṃ(ñ) ca nivṛttiṃ(ñ) ca, janā na vidurāsurāḥ,
na śaucaṃ(n) nāpi cācāro, na satyaṃ(n) teṣu vidyate 16.7**

Men possessing a demoniac disposition know not what right activity is, and what right abstinence from activity is. Hence they possess neither purity (external or internal) nor good conduct nor even truthfulness.

Those with demoniac nature do not understand what actions to do (**pravṛtti**) and what actions to refrain from (**nivṛtti**). They possess neither purity, nor proper conduct, nor truthfulness. The verse explains that such people cannot distinguish between right and wrong actions.

Often, we too fall into this trap - doing something and later regretting it, saying things we shouldn't have. In such moments, we are operating from demoniac nature. When this happens, we fail to accept the absolute truth and instead create our own manipulated version of truth. A common trait of those with demoniac nature is their claim that they "cannot tolerate lies" - ironically, those who make such claims often have no understanding of truth, as their concept of truth is entirely manipulated to suit their perspective.

16.8

**asatyamapraṭiṣṭhaṃ(n) te, jagadāhuraniśvaram,
aparaspasambhūtaṃ(ñ), kimanyatkāmahaitukam 16.8**

Men of demoniac disposition say this world is without any foundation, absolutely unreal and Godless, brought forth by mutual union of the male and female and hence conceived in lust; what else than this?

Those of demoniac nature say that the universe is without truth (**asatyam**), without moral foundation (**apraṭiṣṭham**), without a God (**aniśvaram**), and born from mere material union (**aparaspas**). They believe the world is created only for sense gratification (**kāma-haitukam**). They refuse to accept God's existence, believing instead in theories like the Big Bang as the sole cause of creation. They think only in terms of material pleasure and deny any higher purpose.

16.9

etāṃ(n) dṛṣṭimavaṣṭabhya, naṣṭātmāno'lpabuddhayaḥ, prabhavantyugrakarmāṇaḥ, kṣayāya jagato'hitāḥ 16.9

Clinging to this false view, these slow - witted men of vile disposition and terrible deeds, are enemies of mankind, bent on destruction of the world.

Holding these false views, these misguided souls of small intelligence and cruel actions become enemies of the world, bent on its destruction. The verse explains that extremists, terrorists, and destructive elements in society emerge from such thinking. They work only towards destruction, having no concern for anyone's welfare. Such people, with their limited understanding, cause harm to both themselves and the world

16.10

kāmamāśritya duṣpūraṃ(n), dambhamānamadānvitāḥ, mohādgrhītvāsadgrāhān, pravartante'śucivratāḥ 16.10

Cherishing insatiable desires and embracing false doctrines through ignorance, these men of impure conduct move in this world, full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance.

The verse describes those who harbor insatiable desires and, through ignorance, embrace false doctrines. These people, filled with hypocrisy, pride, and arrogance, engage in impure practices.

Let's understand this concept through a profound story by Tolstoy (whom Gandhi greatly admired, even naming his South African ashram after him).

A peasant farmer, dissatisfied with his small plot of land, meets a holy man. Despite having enough to live on, the farmer expresses his desire for endless land. The holy man, after trying to counsel him about the futility of endless desires, directs him to Siberia where land is freely available.

The farmer travels to Siberia and meets the village chief who makes him an extraordinary offer: he can have as much land as he can walk around in one day, from sunrise to sunset. The only condition is that he must return to his starting point by sunset.

- Consumed by greed, the farmer:
- Prepares the night before, making food and water arrangements
- Starts at sunrise, running to cover maximum distance
- Skips food and water to save time
- Upon seeing a lake, decides to circle it for extra fertile land
- Throws away his food and water to run faster
- Eventually becomes exhausted and dehydrated
- Dies just at the village boundary, unable to complete the circle

We can relate this story to our modern lives - **how we too are constantly running after desires, saying "just this last thing and I'll be happy," but that "last thing" never comes.** We keep making promises to ourselves that "this is the last wish," but there's always another desire waiting. Like the farmer, we risk destroying our lives in pursuit of endless wants.

The story powerfully illustrates the verse's warning about insatiable desires (**duṣpūraṃ**) and how they lead to one's downfall. Just as the farmer needed only enough land to live comfortably but was destroyed by his greed, we too often fall into the trap of endless material pursuits, forgetting what's truly important in life.

This shows how material desires, when unchecked, can lead to spiritual and physical destruction, perfectly exemplifying the demoniac qualities (**āsurī sampat**) described in this chapter of the Gītā.

16.11

**cintāmaparimeyāṃ(ñ) ca, pralayāntāmupāśritāḥ,
kāmapabhogaparamā, etāvaditi niścītāḥ 16.11**

Cherishing insatiable desires and embracing false doctrines through ignorance, these men of impure conduct move in this world, full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance.

They remain bound by endless anxieties until death, seeing sensual gratification as their highest aim. They are convinced that this alone is what life is about.

16.12

**āśāpāśāśatairbaddhāḥ(kh), kāmakrodhaparāyaṇāḥ,
ihante kāmabhogārtham, anyāyenārthasañcayān 16.12**

Held in bondage by hundreds of ties of expectation and wholly giving themselves up to lust and anger, they strive to amass by unfair means hoards of money and other objects for the enjoyment of sensuous pleasures.

Bound by hundreds of shackles of desire, completely given to lust and anger, they strive to amass wealth through unjust means for the satisfaction of their sensual pleasures.

Even a single unfulfilled desire can consume one's life, yet humans carry hundreds of such desires. The continuous chain of desires we experience throughout life:

- During studies: "If I just get this rank..."
- Then: "If I just get into this college..."
- Then: "If I just get this kind of marriage..."
- Then: "If I just get this job..."
- Then: "If my children just study well..."
- Then: "If my children just get married well..."

This chain never ends. Desire (kaamna) when fulfilled becomes craving (vasna), and cravings are never truly satisfied. All our sorrows and wrongdoings stem from these desires. Even physical ailments like blood pressure, diabetes, and hypertension often arise from the stress of unfulfilled expectations and hopes.

**क्यों कल्पना खुशी की, खुशी से ज़्यादा खुशी देती है?
क्यों सामने की खुशी, मुट्ठी भर रेत की तरह फिसल जाती है?**

We often miss the small joys present before us while chasing larger anticipated pleasures. The more pleasure one seeks, the more likely they are to resort to wrong means to achieve it. The pursuit keeps escalating - from wanting 1 lakh to 10 lakh, to 1 crore, to 10 crores, and so on without end.

The sages say that true happiness comes only when one cuts off the rope of endless desires. We fail to see that even when we achieve what we desperately wanted, it doesn't bring lasting happiness - it only gives birth to new desires, leaving us in an endless cycle of wanting more.

A beautiful Bhajan was shared:

सीताराम सीताराम सीताराम कहिये,
जाहि विधि रखे राम ताहि विधि रहिये॥

मुख में हो राम नाम राम सेवा हाथ में, तू अकेला नहीं प्यारे राम तूरे साथ में
विधि का विधान जान हानि लाभ सहिये, जाहि विधि रखे राम ताहि विधि रहिये ॥1॥

किया अभिमान तो फिर मान नहीं पायेगा, होगा प्यारे वही जो श्रीरामजी को भायेगा
फल की आशा त्याग सुभ काम करते रहिये, जाहि विधि रखे राम ताहि विधि रहिये ॥2॥

जिंदगी की डोर सौंप हाथ दीनानाथ के, महलो में रखे चाहे झोपड़ी में वास दे
धन्यवाद निर्विवाद राम-राम कहिये, जाहि विधि रखे राम ताहि विधि रहिये ॥3॥

आशा एक रामजी से दूजी आशा छोड़ दे, नाता एक रामजी से दूजा नाता तोड़ दे
साधू संग राम रंग अंग अंग रंगिये, काम रस त्याग प्यारे राम रस पगिये ॥4॥

सीताराम सीताराम सीताराम कहिये, जाहि विधि रखे राम ताहि विधि रहिये ॥

Until spirituality enters life, life remains incomplete. In Chapter 12, Bhagavān said "**santuṣṭo yena kenachit**" - be satisfied with whatever you have. One who cannot be content with what they have won't find contentment in anything. People make excuses: "Once this happens, I'll devote myself to God," "Once I turn 50, I'll study the Gītā," "Once my children settle down..." But such people never actually begin their spiritual journey. If you want to start, start now - otherwise, you never will.

16.13

**idamadya mayā labdham, imaṃ(m) prāpsyē manoratham,
idamastīdamapi me, bhaviṣyati punardhanam 16.13**

They say to themselves, "This much has been secured by me today and now I shall realize this ambition. So much wealth is already with me and yet again this shall be mine".

They think: "This much I have gained today, and I shall fulfill this desire next. This much wealth is mine, and more will be mine in the future."

16.14

**asau mayā hataḥ(ś) śatruḥ(r), haniṣyē cāparānapi,
īśvaro'hamahaṃ(m) bhogī, siddho'haṃ(m) balavānsukhī 16.14**

"That enemy has been slain by me and I shall kill those others too. I am the Lord of all, and enjoyer of all power. I am endowed with all occult powers, and am mighty and happy."

"I have destroyed this enemy and shall destroy others too. I am Bhagavān of all, I am the enjoyer. I am perfect, powerful, and happy." When desires get fulfilled, some become so arrogant that they consider themselves God. Thus, both unfulfilled desires (leading to despair) and fulfilled desires (leading to ego) can lead to destruction.

16.15

**āḍhyo'bhijanavānasmi, ko'nyosti sadṛśo mayā,
yakṣye dāsyāmi modiṣya, ityajñānavimohitāḥ 16.15**

"I am wealthy and own a large family; who else is equal to me? I will sacrifice to Gods, will give alms, I will make merry."

"I am wealthy and from a noble family. Who else is equal to me? I shall perform sacrifices, give charity, and enjoy myself." The characters like Duryodhana and Karna are examples of such pride.

16.16

**anekacittavibhrāntā, mohajālasamāvṛtāḥ,
prasaktāḥ(kh) kāmabhogeṣu, patanti narake'śucau 16.16**

Thus deluded by ignorance, enveloped in the mesh of delusion and addicted to the enjoyment of sensuous pleasures, their mind bewildered by numerous thoughts, these men of devilish disposition fall into the foulest hell.

Bewildered by many fancies, trapped in the net of delusion, addicted to sensual pleasures, such people fall into an impure hell. Even pride in one's spiritual qualities (rajas and sattva) can ultimately lead to downfall. Those whose desires remain unfulfilled die of despair, while those whose desires are fulfilled die from the pride that pushes them into darkness (tamas).

The overall message emphasizes how both fulfilled and unfulfilled desires can lead to spiritual destruction - unfulfilled desires through despair and fulfilled desires through pride and ego. The verses warn against the endless cycle of wanting more and the spiritual dangers of excessive pride in one's achievements, whether material or spiritual.

16.17

**ātmasaṁbhāvitāḥ(s) stabdhā, dhanamānamadānvitāḥ,
yajante nāmayajñaiste, dambhenāvidhipūrVākam 16.17**

Intoxicated by wealth and honour, those self-conceited and haughty men perform sacrifices only in name for ostentation, without following the sacred rituals.

Today, there are many such hypocritical practices. While it was acceptable when people used to distribute blankets and food, nowadays they've even started distributing laptops for show. While we're not criticizing properly conducted Ganesh Puja and Durga Puja at respectable places, thousands of pandals are set up where there's no knowledge of proper scriptural methods.

The idols aren't consecrated with proper mantras, no qualified priest performs the worship. They play vulgar film songs and young people dance inappropriately. No scripture prescribes such methods for invoking deities. They put up their own photos larger than Bhagavān Ganesh's image, perform their own aarti, and do everything themselves without proper knowledge. All these activities are done merely for name and fame, using religious events as an excuse while actually seeking self-promotion. These are all non-scriptural acts and pure hypocrisy.

16.18

**ahaṅkāraṁ(m) balaṁ(n) darpaṁ(ñ), kāmaṁ(ñ) krodhaṁ(ñ) ca saṁśritāḥ,
māmātmaparadeheṣu, pradviṣanto'bhyasūyakāḥ 16.18**

Given over to egotism, brute force, arrogance, lust and anger etc., and calumniating others, they despise Me (the in-dweller), dwelling in their own bodies, as in those of others.

Such people, consumed by ego, physical strength, pride, desire, and anger, become critics of others. When they themselves do something, it's acceptable, but when others do the same thing, they criticize it. You'll find many people saying things like "There is no God, we humans have created all these concepts. This is heaven, this is hell - who has seen what happens after death?" They preach that instead of performing traditional shraddha (ancestral rites) by feeding Brahmins, it's better to distribute food to the poor and orphans. However, if you observe their actions, you'll find they never actually distribute food in orphanages during shraddha days. It's easy to abandon sacred duties, but difficult to perform them properly.

16.19

**tānaḥaṁ(n) dviṣataḥ(kh) krūrān, saṁsāreṣu narādhamān,
kṣipāmyajasRāmaśubhān, āsurīṣveva yoniṣu 16.19**

Those haters, sinful, cruel and vilest among men, I cast again and again into demoniacal wombs in this world.

Bhagavān says to Arjuna, "Don't worry, I punish all these hypocrites who violate the divine laws by casting them repeatedly into the lowest forms of birth." The text gives an example of a creature called *saand* (bull), whose oil is considered very powerful. People break its spine and boil it repeatedly - it's so powerful that it doesn't die from boiling, and each time it's boiled, oil is extracted. This oil sells for lakhs of rupees per kilo. But consider who must have been born as such a bull - it's these types of sinners who are forced into such demonic births by divine law.

16.20

**āsurīm(ṽ) yonimāpannā, mūḍhā janmani janmani,
māmaprāpyaiva kaunteya, tato yāntyadhamām(ñ) gatim.16.20**

Failing to reach Me, Arjuna, those stupid persons are born life after life in demoniac wombs and then verily sink down to a still lower plane.

These foolish people, unable to reach the Divine, are born repeatedly in demonic forms of life, and then fall into even more degraded states, meaning they end up in the darkest of hells.

16.21

**trividhaṁ(n) narakasyedaṁ(n), dvāraṁ(n) nāśanamātmanaḥ,
kāmaḥ(kh) krodhastathā lobhaḥ(s), tasmādetattrayaṁ(n) tyajet 16.21**

Desire, anger and greed - these triple gates of hell, bring about the downfall of the soul. Therefore, one must shun all these three.

This is a very important verse, and misunderstanding it can lead to confusion. Bhagavān says these three - desire, anger, and greed - are the gates to hell that destroy the soul by leading it to

degradation. Now, if we think superficially, we might conclude we're all destined for hell since we all have desires, anger, and greed. However, the saints and great souls explain this differently. They say there's nothing wrong with righteous desires - desires should be just and proper. It's the overwhelming force of desire, anger, and greed that destroys us. Those who cannot control these forces face destruction.

There's nothing wrong with earning wealth justly and spending it righteously. But when desire becomes overwhelming, people do things like selling their kidneys to buy iPhones (as seen in news reports), or try to seize their brother's land, or plot others' downfall even if it brings no benefit to themselves. The force of desire, anger, and greed is dangerous. Just like in Śrī Krishna's story about Balaram, when these forces aren't controlled, they grow stronger. When we can't bear their force, they lead to our destruction.

16.22

**etairvimuktaḥ(kh) kaunteya, tamodvāraistribhirnaraḥ,
ācaratyaātmanaḥ(ś) śreyaḥ(s), tato yāti parāṁ(ñ) gatim 16.22**

Freed from these three gates of hell, man works for his own salvation and thereby attains the Supreme goal ie. God.

When a person is freed from these three gates to hell, they can work for their own welfare and achieve the supreme state - reaching the Divine. Until we control desire, anger, and greed, we cannot progress. Greed and attachment are similar - attachment is to people (like son, wife, friend, parents), while greed is for objects. The ancestral house, for instance, can inspire both greed and attachment ("I won't sell my ancestral property" - attachment; "This house where my parents lived" - emotional attachment).

The intensity of all these three is dangerous when it becomes overwhelming. Normal anger is fine - like disciplining children or subordinates - but if while angry you can't even smile or complete a sentence, if your eyes turn red and your heart rate increases, then anger has taken control of you. When you ride anger, it's an ornament, but when anger rides you, it becomes destructive. Use these emotions, but don't let them control you.

16.23

**yaḥ(ś) śāstravidhimutsṛjya, vartate kāmakārataḥ,
na sa siddhimavāpnoti, na sukhaṁ(n) na parāṁ(ñ) gatim 16.23**

Discarding the injunctions of the scriptures, he who acts in an arbitrary way according to his own sweet will, such a person neither attains occult powers, nor the supreme goal, nor even happiness.

One who discards the scriptural injunctions and acts according to their own whims and desires attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme goal.

This is as relevant today as it was 5,300 years ago. It criticizes modern tendencies where people:

- Make arbitrary decisions about religious practices
- Create their own interpretations without proper understanding
- Make claims on social media in the name of sacred texts without actually reading them
- Fall for quick-fix spiritual solutions like "instant kundalini awakening"
- Buy into false claims about sacred items (like rudraksha beads supposedly empowered by "36

years of penance")

- Follow self-proclaimed gurus who promise easy solutions
- Accept random practices without scriptural basis

16.24

**tasmācchāstram(m) pramāṇam(n) te, kāryākāryavyavasthitau,
Jñātvā śāstravidhānoktaṁ(ñ), karma kartumihārhasi 16.24**

Therefore, the scripture alone is your guide in determining what should be done and what should not be done. Knowing this, you ought to perform only such action as is ordained by the scriptures.

Scripture should be the ultimate authority in determining right from wrong. If there's a conflict between an individual's opinion and scripture, one should follow scripture. People often choose convenience over scriptural guidance. One should follow those saints and teachers who align with and encourage following scriptural injunctions. Don't fall for those who offer easy shortcuts or stray from scriptural teachings. True enlightened souls are those who follow and teach according to scripture

For those who might not be able to read scriptures directly, they should:

- Follow their family traditions that are rooted in scripture
- Follow the guidance of learned scholars who understand and teach according to scripture
- Be wary of modern interpretations that contradict scriptural wisdom
- Understand that spiritual progress comes through proper adherence to scriptural principles, not through shortcuts or personal interpretations

Question and Answers

Q: In this chapter, the description of divine qualities (Daivi Sampatti) ends in just three verses, while the description of demonic qualities (Asuri Sampatti) takes 17 verses. Is there a specific reason or message behind this imbalance?

A: Bhagavān has highlighted divine qualities concisely because He certifies Arjuna as already possessing divine qualities. In contrast, Bhagavān elaborates on demonic qualities to warn against their dangers, as people often engage in wrong actions disguised as virtuous ones. Additionally, divine qualities are detailed in 26 traits, whereas demonic traits are not enumerated in such depth. Bhagavān emphasizes demonic traits because many people use good appearances to justify bad deeds.

GauriShankar ji

Q: Can good deeds (Punya) reduce or cancel out bad deeds (Paap), like a bank account where deposits and withdrawals determine the balance?

A: It depends on the type of deeds:

- Mild Karma (Madhyam Prarabdha): Can be nullified by good deeds or atonement (Prayaschit).
- Intense Karma (Teevra Prarabdha): Must be experienced and cannot be nullified by good deeds alone.

For unknown or unintended mistakes, atonement through good deeds can suffice. However, deliberate sins require equivalent or greater atonement, as prescribed by a spiritual guide (Guru).

Q: If we should align our actions with scriptures (Shastra), how can someone who cannot study them know what is scripturally correct?

A: Traditions and teachings passed down by ancestors generally align with scriptures. For deeper understanding or improvement, one can listen to saints or read epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. They provide foundational knowledge of scriptures in an accessible way.

Q: What is the meaning of the verse where it says, "**Aneka Chitta Vibhranta**"?

A: This phrase refers to people whose desires lead them into confusion and delusion. Trapped in a "web of illusion," they justify wrong actions with flawed logic, often for personal gain. For example, wealthy people may exploit the poor and rationalize it by claiming they are helping prevent misuse of money. This mindset grows with attachment and selfishness, further entangling such individuals in ignorance.

Devendra ji

Q: In this chapter, it is said that lust (kama), anger (krodha), and greed (lobha) are the three gates to hell. Does kama here mean desires or lust in the sense of physical cravings?

A: Kama here refers to desires in general, not just physical lust. Physical lust is a subset of desires, but the term encompasses all kinds of desires that can lead to harmful consequences if left unchecked.

Vikas ji

Q: Regarding the first verse of this chapter, which mentions charity (daan), is it okay to give charity to anyone? I've heard that the effects of charity can impact the giver as well.

A: The type of charity depends on the intent and understanding behind it:

- Charity given after careful consideration of desh (place), kaal (time), and patra (recipient) is considered sattvic (pure).
- Charity given impulsively without such consideration is rajasik (driven by passion) and still brings good results, though not as elevated.
- Charity knowingly given to someone for misuse (e.g., buying alcohol) is tamasik (dark), which may lead to negative outcomes.

If charity is given unknowingly and misused, it does not harm the giver. The focus should be on cultivating a compassionate attitude without overthinking potential misuse by the recipient.

Q: Is it true that if we give charity to someone suffering, such as a disabled person, we extend their suffering, and the consequences affect us?

A: No, that is completely false. Bhagavān emphasizes compassion and helping those in need. Charity is about alleviating suffering, not prolonging it. Focusing on helping others reflects the virtue of compassion (karuna). Any idea suggesting otherwise is baseless.

Q: With so many divine qualities mentioned, how can we focus on improving ourselves, especially if we feel we lack many of them?

A: Each of the 26 divine qualities exists within us to some degree. Focus on strengthening the ones you already possess, even if they are at a low level. Gradually work on areas of deficiency. For example:

- If you score 1/10 in a quality, aim for 5/10.
- If you are at 10/10, aim for 15/10.

The key is consistent effort without being harsh or fanatical. Practice introspection, repeated reading of the Gītā, and self-correction over time.

Q: Besides reading the Gītā, how can we purify our minds and progress spiritually?

A: Mind purification requires disciplined action. The Gītā suggests:

- Practicing truthfulness (**satya**)
- Non-violence (**ahimsa**)
- Charity (**daan**)
- Performing sacrifices (**yagna**)
- Helping others selflessly

Avoid wrong actions and work on incorporating the 26 divine qualities into your daily life slowly and steadily. Purification is a gradual process, dependent on sincerity and regular practice.

Q: Is there a contradiction in the Gītā? On one hand, it says to follow scriptures (**Śāstra vidhi**), and on the other hand, it states that devotion with simple offerings like leaves, flowers, or fruits (**patram pushpam phalam**) is enough. Which one should we follow?

A: There is no contradiction. The emphasis is on devotion (bhakti) and sincerity.

- When acting in the material world, follow Śāstra vidhi (scriptural guidelines).
- In personal worship, Bhagavān accepts simple offerings made with genuine devotion. Both aspects are complementary, not contradictory.

Q: Is there a way to access a structured course on the Upanishads or participate in a gathering to connect with like-minded individuals?

A: Currently, there are no structured Upanishad courses, but organizations like Chinmaya Mission and RamaŚrī Krishna Mission provide excellent resources and lectures by traditional scholars. For gatherings, Geeta Maitri Milan programs are conducted across cities. You can organize such a program in your city to connect with others and meet spiritual leaders.

The sessions concluded with prayers and chanting of Hanuman Chalisa.

**om tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu
brahmavidyāyām(ŷ) yogaśāstre śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṁvāde
daivāsurasampadvibhāgayogo nāma ṣoḍaśo'dhyāyaḥ.**



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:

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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!

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