

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 8: Akṣara-Brahma-Yoga

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Interpreter: GĪTĀ VIŚĀRAD ŚRĪ DR. ASHU GOYAL JI

YouTube Link: https://youtu.be/nkyNi_eUL6o

Paths to Eternal Liberation: Cultivating the Right Consciousness through Lifelong Devotion

Chapter 8 of Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā - Akṣhara Brahma Yoga: The Yoga of the Indestructible Brahman

Today's session began with a prayer, the lighting of the lamp, the recitation of the Hanuman Chalisa, and Guru Vandana. By the boundless and auspicious grace of Śrī Bhagavān, we have been blessed with the opportunity to make our lives meaningful and purposeful. This blessing has guided us to engage deeply in the study, reflection, and recitation of the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā—learning its profound teachings, understanding its essence, and incorporating its wisdom into our lives.

Through Śrī Bhagavān's immense grace, we find ourselves on this sacred journey of spiritual growth, seeking to uplift and fulfill our lives. Whether this blessing comes from the merits of our actions in this life, the good deeds of past lives, or the compassionate gaze of a saintly soul, it is through this divine grace that we have been drawn to the study and contemplation of the Bhagavad Gītā's eternal wisdom.

The saints and mahatmas have declared that no scripture exists for the welfare of humankind quite like the Bhagavad Gītā. This truth has been proclaimed for the past 5,300 years. We have now reached the fourth level of our study of the Gītā, which can be likened to the sacred pilgrimage of Char Dham. Some among us may be on their second, third, or even fourth journey through this study.

At first glance, this chapter may seem not only challenging but at times tedious. However, through the grace of the saints, as our understanding deepens, we realize that this chapter is filled with immense treasures of wisdom, waiting to be uncovered.

We have covered up to verse 8.14, and we will begin today's session with verse 8.15.

8.15

māmupetya punarjanma, duḥkhālayamaśāśvatam, nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ(s), saṁsiddhiṁ(m) paramāṁ(ñ) gatāḥ. 8.15

Great souls, who have attained the highest perfection, having come to Me, are no more subject to transitory rebirth, which is the abode of sorrow, and transient by nature.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān reveals the ultimate goal of human life—liberation from the cycle of birth and death. When a soul attains supreme spiritual perfection and unites with the Divine, it is freed from the endless cycle of samsāra (worldly existence), which is inherently filled with suffering and impermanence. This liberation from the cycle of rebirth leads to eternal peace and the cessation of all worldly pain.

- **māmupetya**: Attaining Śrī Bhagavān—achieving the highest state of realization where the soul merges with the Divine and transcends the limitations of worldly life.
- **punarjanma**: Refers to the cycle of rebirth, the repeated return to material existence, which binds the soul to samsāra.
- **duḥkhālayaṁ aśāśvatam**: Bhagavān describes the material world as an "abode of sorrow" (duḥkhālaya) and "impermanent" (aśāśvata), emphasizing that even the greatest pleasures in life are fleeting and inevitably lead to suffering.
- **mahātmānaḥ**: Refers to great souls who have transcended ego and material desires, dedicating themselves entirely to spiritual endeavors and devotion to God.
- **saṁsiddhiṁ paramāṁ gatāḥ**: These souls have reached the highest state of perfection and liberation, free from the cycle of rebirth and its associated suffering.

Why Seek Liberation?

Why should one strive for spiritual liberation from the cycle of birth and death? For many people who enjoy favorable living conditions, the comforts of life may conceal the underlying truths of suffering and impermanence. As long as life feels pleasant, there may seem to be little reason to seek liberation from samsāra. However, the "hammer of life"—its inevitable sorrows, trials, and fleeting joys—eventually leads one to realize that worldly pleasures are temporary and ultimately unsatisfying. Through hardship, we come to understand the deeper suffering that pervades existence, prompting us to search for a higher, more enduring purpose.

Devotion Beyond Liberation

Yet, some extraordinary devotees, even after understanding the inherent suffering of life, remain unconcerned with liberation. Their love for the Divine is so pure that they willingly accept multiple lifetimes as long as they can remain in service to God. This sentiment is beautifully expressed by Bharat Ji in his prayer to Śrī Rāma:

अर्थ धर्म न काम रचि, गति न चाहो निर्वाण।

जनम जनम रति राम पद, यह वरदान दो दान॥

I have no desire for wealth, righteousness, or worldly pleasure, nor do I seek liberation (nirvāṇa). May I be born again and again with devotion at the feet of Śrī Rāma—this is the only boon I ask.

This reflects the mindset of an evolved devotee for whom the ultimate goal is not liberation from rebirth but continuous devotion and service to the Divine. Such devotees are unconcerned with worldly suffering or pleasures; their focus is entirely on remaining immersed in the love of God. For them, liberation is not about escaping life's sorrows but about staying forever close to the Divine, regardless of how many lifetimes they are born into.

The Nature of Worldly Life

Śrī Bhagavān describes samsāra as "**duḥkhālayaṃ**"—an abode of sorrow. The temporary pleasures of life are overshadowed by the lasting sorrows that pervade existence. People often chase happiness in external objects—houses, wealth, cars, status, and relationships—believing that attaining these things will bring lasting contentment. But does it truly happen?

In the United States, one of the wealthiest nations materially, depression rates are among the highest. Despite abundant resources and access to luxuries, people are still deeply unhappy, revealing that true happiness does not lie in material acquisitions. In fact, the happiness derived from worldly possessions eventually transforms into sorrow.

As Guru Nanak Dev Ji says:

नानक दुखिया सब संसार।
कोटे चढ़कर देखिए, घर-घर लगी आग।।

When we ask someone how they are, they often respond, "Everything is fine, by God's grace." But if you sit with them for a while, their hidden struggles emerge. Whether it's family conflicts, health problems, or financial stress, the reality of life's sorrows becomes apparent. This shows that no matter how outwardly pleasant life may seem, suffering is inherent in worldly existence.

Bhagavān Buddha's Teachings on Suffering

Bhagavan Buddha's teachings revolve entirely around the nature and causes of suffering. Interestingly, Buddha never spoke of God; Buddhism, therefore, is often seen as an atheistic philosophy. Buddha's four main teachings, known as the Four Noble Truths, are:

1. **Suffering (Dukkha)**
2. **The cause of suffering (Samudaya)**
3. **The cessation of suffering (Nirodha)**
4. **The path to the cessation of suffering (Magga)**

The path to eliminate suffering is through the Eightfold Path, which includes:

1. Right Understanding (**Samyak Drishti**)
2. Right Thought (**Samyak Sankalpa**)
3. Right Speech (**Samyak Vak**)
4. Right Action (**Samyak Karma**)
5. Right Livelihood (**Samyak Jeevika**)
6. Right Effort (**Samyak Vyayama**)
7. Right Mindfulness (**Samyak Smriti**)
8. Right Concentration (Samyak Samādhi)

The essence of this philosophy is echoed in the Bhagavad Gita, where Bhagavan says: "**Equanimity is yoga.**"

Kabir's View on Suffering

Saint Kabir points to four major causes of suffering:

गरीबी छोटा दुःख है, कर्ज दुःख महान।
शरीर रोग इससे बड़ा, कलह दुःखों की खान।।

Kabir speaks of four types of suffering: poverty, debt, illness, and conflict. Poverty and illness are often seen as consequences of past karma, whereas debt and conflict are results of present actions and can be

avoided. While poverty and illness may be beyond our control, debt and conflict arise from our current choices and behaviors.

In India, society is still somewhat protected from the "EMI culture" that has entrapped much of the West. Seth Ji Goenka frequently advised against taking loans, as living and dying in debt is one of the greatest sources of human suffering. Paying off debt as quickly as possible is a practical way to reduce suffering.

Conflict, another source of misery, often arises from ego—thinking "I am right" and expecting others to agree. However, by humbling oneself, conflict can be resolved. Bhagavan teaches that true relief from suffering comes not from engaging in worldly disputes but from transcending the cycle of birth and death.

Key Insights

1. **Liberation from Rebirth:** True freedom is attained when one merges with the Divine, escaping the endless cycle of birth, death, and the inherent suffering of material life.
2. **The Nature of Worldly Life:** The material world, though alluring, is ultimately an abode of sorrow and impermanence. Liberation offers the only true and lasting escape.
3. **Spiritual Perfection:** Mahātmās, those who have attained the highest state of spiritual realization, live free from ego and material attachment and are no longer bound by the cycle of suffering.

Śrī Bhagavān underscores the importance of striving for liberation by emphasizing the inherent suffering of material life. Once a soul attains union with the Divine and reaches the highest state of spiritual perfection, it transcends the cycle of birth and death and is no longer subject to the pain and impermanence of the material world. True liberation is the attainment of eternal peace, beyond the sorrows of worldly existence. By recognizing the fleeting nature of worldly pleasures and the inevitability of suffering, we are guided toward the pursuit of lasting spiritual fulfillment.

8.16

**ābrahmabhuvanālokāḥ(ph), punarāvartino'rjuna,
māmupetya tu kaunteya, punarjanma na vidyate. 8.16**

Arjuna, all the worlds from Brahmaloka (the heavenly realm of the Creator, Brahma) downwards are liable to birth and rebirth. But, O son of Kuntī, on attaining Me there is no rebirth (For, while I am beyond Time, regions like Brahmaloka, being conditioned by time, are transitory).

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān conveys a profound truth about the impermanence of all material realms, even those as exalted as Brahmaloka, the abode of Brahma. These celestial realms, despite offering extended lifespans and immense pleasures, are still under the domain of time and are part of the cycle of birth and rebirth. Only through union with Śrī Bhagavān can one transcend this cycle and attain eternal liberation, free from the constraints of samsāra (worldly existence).

- **ābrahmabhuvanālokāḥ:** This phrase refers to all realms, from Brahmaloka (the highest celestial plane) to the lowest. These realms, though diverse in nature, are all part of the material world and thus subject to the cycle of birth and death.
- **punarāvartino'rjuna:** "Subject to rebirth" indicates that even if one reaches high realms like Brahmaloka, they are not exempt from the cycle of samsāra. Once their accumulated karma is exhausted, they return to the cycle of birth and death.
- **māmupetya tu kaunteya:** Śrī Bhagavān assures Arjuna that those who attain Him through devotion and wisdom are liberated from the cycle of rebirth. Union with Bhagavān grants eternal freedom from samsāra.

- **punarjanma na vidyate**: This phrase emphasizes that for those who attain the Divine, there is no rebirth. Liberation (mokṣa) is a state beyond time, characterized by eternal peace and freedom from worldly existence.

The 14 Lokas (Realms): Higher Lokas (Urdhva Lokas):

1. **Satya-loka (Brahma-loka)** – The realm of Brahma and spiritually advanced souls.
2. **Tapa-loka** – The abode of great sages engaged in deep meditation.
3. **Jana-loka** – The realm of saints and rishis.
4. **Mahar-loka** – The dwelling of advanced yogis and rishis.
5. **Swar-loka** – The heavenly realm of the gods (Devas) and those who have accumulated good karma.
6. **Bhuvan-loka** – The realm of semi-divine beings.
7. **Bhu-loka (Earth)** – The world of humans and all other living beings.

Lower Lokas (Adho Lokas):

1. **Atala-loka** – The realm of Daityas (demons) and lower beings.
2. **Vitala-loka** – The realm of Hara-Bhava (a form of Śiva) and demonic beings.
3. **Sutala-loka** – The realm of Mahabali, a virtuous asura king.
4. **Talatala-loka** – The abode of Mayasura, the architect of the demons.
5. **Mahatala-loka** – The dwelling of serpent beings (Nagas).
6. **Rasatala-loka** – The realm of powerful Daityas and Danavas (demons).
7. **Patala-loka** – The realm of Nagas, ruled by Vasuki, the serpent king.

While the duration of existence in these higher and lower lokas is much longer than that of Bhu-loka (Earth), they too are temporary. Once the merits or lifespan of beings in these realms is exhausted, they must return to Bhu-loka, also known as *Mrutyu-loka*—the realm of death. No realm offers permanent residence; they are all subject to the cosmic cycle of creation and dissolution.

Impermanence of All Lokas:

As reflected in the timeless truth:

आगमापायिनो नित्याः

Āgamāpāyino nityāḥ

That which comes must go.

This eternal law applies to all realms and beings. Whether one resides in a high celestial realm or a lower one, the cycle of life and death is inevitable. Everything that is born must eventually pass away. This cycle of arrival and departure encompasses all beings, making liberation the only means to escape from this eternal loop.

The Story of the Grieving Mother:

A well-known episode from the life of Bhagavān Buddha illustrates the inescapability of death and the impermanence of all things. One day, a grieving mother came to Bhagavān Buddha, holding the lifeless body of her eight-year-old son. Consumed by sorrow, she pleaded with Bhagavān, demanding that He bring her son back to life, refusing to accept any teachings or explanations.

She said, "I know you are Bhagavān, and you can revive my son. Don't give me advice—I just want my son back."

Buddha's disciples tried to reason with her, explaining that it was impossible, but she refused to listen.

Bhagavān Buddha, after listening quietly for a while, said, "You are right, mother. I can bring your son back to life." The disciples were shocked, wondering if Buddha was truly going to perform such a miracle.

Buddha then told her, "Go to the village and bring me a handful of rice from five households where no one has ever died. Then, I will bring your son back."

The mother, filled with hope, left her son's body and hurried to the village, convinced she could find such households. She went from house to house all day but by evening, she realized that in every home, someone had died. Exhausted, she returned to Buddha, understanding the truth He had tried to convey.

Crying, she said, "I couldn't find a single house where death hasn't occurred."

Buddha gently replied, "This is the nature of life, mother. No one can escape death. The cycle of birth and death continues. Some leave sooner, others later, but everyone must go. This entire world is a cycle of repetition."

Key Insights:

1. **Impermanence of Material and Celestial Realms:** Even the highest realms like Brahmaloka are temporary. While they offer long life and great pleasure, they are still subject to time and rebirth.
2. **Supreme Liberation:** True liberation is achieved only through union with Śrī Bhagavān. This transcendence from all realms leads to mokṣa, a state beyond time, death, and rebirth.
3. **Eternal Freedom through Devotion:** The path to freedom from samsāra lies in devotion and surrender to Śrī Bhagavān. Only by realizing the Supreme can one break free from the cycle of life and death.

Śrī Bhagavān reminds Arjuna that no matter how high a soul may ascend in the cosmic hierarchy, including realms like Brahmaloka, they remain bound by the limitations of material existence. These realms, though offering great pleasures and longevity, are still transitory and subject to the laws of time and karma. Only through unwavering devotion to Bhagavān can one transcend this cycle of birth and death and attain eternal liberation, free from the bondage of rebirth. The ultimate goal is to rise beyond all material and celestial planes and unite with the Divine, where eternal peace and liberation await.

8.17

**sahasrayugaparyantam, aharyadbrahmaṇo viduḥ,
rātriṁ(m) yugasahasrāntāṁ(n), te'horātravido janāḥ. 8.17**

Those Yogis, who know from realization Brahma's day as covering a thousand Mahayugas, and so his night as extending to another thousand Mahayugas, know the reality about Time.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān reveals the vast scale of cosmic time as it relates to Brahma's lifespan. A single day of Brahma, which represents an entire cycle of creation, spans one thousand Mahayugas, and his night, the period of cosmic dissolution, also extends over another thousand Mahayugas. Each Mahayuga consists of four Yugas—Satya, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali Yuga—further emphasizing the immense duration of these cycles.

However, even such a long lifespan, which from our earthly perspective appears nearly eternal, is ultimately finite. Śrī Bhagavān is explaining this to Arjuna to show the impermanence of all material realms, even those as exalted as *Brahmaloka*, and to guide Arjuna beyond attachment to these transient realities.

- **sahasrayugaparyantam**: Refers to the span of one thousand Mahayugas, illustrating the vastness of time beyond human comprehension.
- **aharyadbrahmaṇo viduḥ**: Those who understand the duration of Brahma's day grasp the cyclical nature of creation, which is not a one-time event but part of an infinite process.
- **rātriṃ yugasahasrāntām**: Brahma's night is equally vast, during which the universe dissolves into the unmanifest, awaiting the next cycle of creation.
- **te'horātravido janāḥ**: The enlightened, such as Yogis, are aware of these grand cosmic cycles and understand that even *Brahmaloka* is temporary and subject to the laws of time.

Cosmic Time Measurement:

Bhagavān provides Arjuna with a deep understanding of the structure of time, starting from the smallest units and building up to vast cosmic cycles. Time is intricately linked to the very fabric of the universe, including matter and energy.

- **Three anus** (molecules) form **one trasarenu** (proton, neutron, electron).
- **Three trasarenus** make **one truti** (the smallest unit of time).
- **Ten trutis** form **one praan**.
- **Ten praans** make **one ved**.

The *ved* is considered a basic unit of time, and ancient observatories were known as *Vedshalas* due to their focus on precise cosmic measurements.

- **Three veds** form **one lav**.
- **Three lavs** make **one nimisha** (the time it takes to blink).
- **Three nimishas** form **one kshana** (equivalent to one second).
- **Five kshanas** make **one kāṣṭhā**.
- **Fifteen kāṣṭhās** make **one daṇḍa**.
- **Two daṇḍas** make **one muhūrta** (48 minutes), and **there are 30 muhūrtas in a day**.

In this way, 15 days and 15 nights form one *paksha* (fortnight), and two *pakshas* make one month. A month for humans is equivalent to one day for the ancestors (*pitṛs*). Two months make one *ṛtu* (season), and three *ṛtus* form one *ayana* (either *Uttarayana* or *Dakshinayana*). Two *ayan*as make one year, which is equal to one day for the gods. The gods are awake during *Uttarayana* and asleep during *Dakshinayana*.

- **Kali Yuga** (the current age) lasts 432,000 human years.
- **Dvapara Yuga** spans 864,000 years.
- **Treta Yuga** lasts 1,296,000 years.
- **Satya Yuga** stretches over 1,728,000 years.

Together, these four Yugas—*Satya Yuga*, *Treta Yuga*, *Dvapara Yuga*, and *Kali Yuga*—form one *Maha Yuga*, which lasts 4,320,000 years.

- **Seventy-two Maha Yugas** make up **one Manvantara**, the lifespan of one Manu.
- **Fourteen Manvantaras** occur in **one day of Brahmā**.
- **Fourteen Manvantaras together** form **one Kalpa**, which **constitutes a full cycle of creation and dissolution**.

When Brahmā awakens, he creates the universe, and when he sleeps, the universe dissolves into the unmanifest. This process of dissolution is known as *Kalpaksaya* or *Pralaya*.

Perception of Time in Brahmāloka:

While the time in *Brahmaloka* seems immeasurably vast from the perspective of *Bhu-loka* (Earth), time is

experienced differently within each realm. Just as in modern physics, where time can appear to move faster or slower depending on one's reference point, the beings in *Brahmaloka* may perceive time as passing much more swiftly than it appears to those on Earth. Despite the longevity of *Brahmaloka*, it is still impermanent in the grand scheme of cosmic cycles.

Śrī Bhagavān emphasizes that while it might seem desirable to reside in *Brahmaloka* due to its higher pleasures and extended lifespan, it is still subject to dissolution. The wise understand that seeking residence in any material realm, even the highest, is still a pursuit of impermanence.

Key Insights:

1. **Cosmic Time Scale:** This verse emphasizes the vast scale of cosmic time, reminding us that even the highest realms like *Brahmaloka* are governed by time and are ultimately impermanent.
2. **Cyclic Nature of Creation:** Creation and dissolution follow a cyclical pattern. Brahma's day represents the active manifestation of the universe, and his night signifies the dissolution into the unmanifest state, repeating endlessly.
3. **Perception of Time in Different Realms:** Time is perceived differently across realms. While from *Bhu-loka*, Brahma's lifespan seems eternal, from within *Brahmaloka*, time may pass much faster. This reminds us that all material realms, regardless of their perceived longevity, are still transient.
4. **Wisdom of Yogis:** Yogis and enlightened beings understand that even the most exalted realms, including *Brahmaloka*, are temporary and subject to time. They aim not for temporary pleasures in celestial realms but for eternal liberation (*moksha*), which transcends the cycles of birth and death.

Through this verse, Śrī Bhagavān highlights the impermanence of even the most exalted realms, such as *Brahmaloka*, encouraging Arjuna—and all seekers—to transcend attachment to the material world. Time, though experienced differently in various realms, governs all of creation. True liberation (*moksha*) lies beyond these cycles of creation and dissolution, offering eternal union with the Divine, free from the constraints of time and *samsāra*.

8.18

**avyaktādvyaḥkṛtayaḥ(s) sarvāḥ(ph), prabhavantyāharāgame,
rātryāgame praliyante, tatraivāvyaktasañjñake. 8.18**

All embodied beings emanate from the Unmanifest (i.e., Brahma's subtle body) at the coming of the cosmic day; at the cosmic nightfall they merge into the same subtle body of Brahma, known as the Unmanifest.

Śrī Bhagavān reveals the profound cycle of creation and dissolution. All beings and the material universe emerge from the unmanifest state at the beginning of Brahma's day, and at the end of his day, they return to this unmanifest state. This reflects the impermanence of the manifest world, where everything continually alternates between creation and dissolution.

Key Points:

- **avyaktādvyaḥkṛtayaḥ:** All beings manifest from the unmanifest state at the beginning of Brahma's day.
- **rātryāgame praliyante:** As Brahma's night approaches, everything dissolves back into the unmanifest state.

- **tatraivāvyakta-samjñake:** The unmanifest is timeless, holding within it the potential for future creation, until the next cosmic cycle begins.

Four Forms:

1. Manifest (Vyakta):

The perceivable world of forms and objects.

Goswami Tulsidas says:

गो गोचर जहँ लगि मन जाई। सो सब माया जानेहु भाई।।

Whatever can be perceived by the mind is all *maya*, an illusion.

2. Unmanifest (Avyakta):

The subtle, imperceptible reality beyond comprehension. The mind itself belongs to the unmanifest, though it interacts with the manifest.

Example: Like participants in a Zoom meeting who are not physically present but appear manifest on the screen.

3. अव्यक्तसंज्ञक

Avyakta-Samjñaka:

The subtle state that remains after Brahma's dissolution, when all creation returns to dormancy.

4. Sanatan Avyakta Akshar:

The eternal, indestructible unmanifest reality, which persists even when everything else dissolves. This is the supreme eternal truth.

Pralayas (Dissolutions):

The scriptures describe four kinds of cosmic dissolutions (*pralayas*):

1. **Nitya Pralaya:** The daily dissolution, akin to sleep, where our conscious experience ceases temporarily.
2. **Atyantika Pralaya:** The complete dissolution that happens at the end of Brahma's lifespan.
3. **Naimittika Pralaya:** Occurs during Brahma's night, when the universe dissolves into the unmanifest.
4. **Prakrita Pralaya:** The great dissolution at the end of Brahma's 100-year lifespan, when the entire cosmos is absorbed into the unmanifest state.

Bhakti and Gyan (Devotion and Knowledge):

Śrī Bhagavān indicates that this unmanifest reality can be accessed through both *Gyan Marg* (the path of knowledge) and *Bhakti Marg* (the path of devotion). The Gyan Marg focuses on realizing the eternal unmanifest Brahman:

एको ब्रह्म द्वितीयो नास्ति

There is only one Brahman, no second.

Meanwhile, the Bhakti path emphasizes complete surrender and devotion to the Divine, as expressed in:

मेरे तो गिरिधर गोपाल, दूसरा न कोई

For me, there is none but Krishna.

In the **Bhagavatam**, Śrī Krishna is not worshipped for His material form but for His eternal, divine essence:

सच्चिदानंद रूपाय विश्वोत्पत्त्यादिहेतवे! तापत्रय विनाशाय श्री कृष्णाय वयं नमः!

We bow to Śrī Krishna, whose blissful form is the cause of creation, sustenance, and dissolution, and who destroys all suffering.

Spiritual Realization:

In the *Ashtavakra Gita*, King Janaka exemplifies the realization of self-identity with the Divine when he says:

मेरा मुझको नमस्कार

I bow to myself, symbolizing the realization that the self and the Divine are one and the same.

Key Insight:

This verse highlights the transient nature of the material universe and the eternal cycle of creation and dissolution. It urges seekers to transcend the impermanent world and focus on the eternal truth, the unmanifest state that remains beyond these cycles. By understanding this, one can detach from worldly attachments and move closer to liberation (*moksha*), where the soul merges with the eternal, unchanging Divine.

8.19

**bhūtagrāmaḥ(s) sa evāyaṁ(m), bhūtvā bhūtvā praliyate,
rātryāgame'vaśaḥ(ph) pārtha, prabhavatyaharāgame. 8.19**

Arjuna, this multitude of beings, being born again and again, is dissolved under compulsion of its nature at the coming of the cosmic night and rises again at the commencement of cosmic day.

Śrī Bhagavān highlights the repetitive nature of creation and dissolution in the universe. All beings are trapped in this endless cycle, constantly manifesting at the beginning of Brahma's day and dissolving at its end. This cycle, driven by time, continues without their control, reflecting the helplessness of all living entities in the face of cosmic forces.

- **bhūtagrāmaḥ sa evāyaṁ**: The multitude of beings are repeatedly born and reborn during the cosmic day.
- **rātryāgame'vaśaḥ pārtha**: At the arrival of Brahma's night, they dissolve, powerless to escape the cycle.
- **prabhavatyaharāgame**: When the next cosmic day begins, they manifest again, continuing the cycle.

Key Insight:

This verse emphasizes the futility of attachment to the material world. Beings are bound to the continuous cycle of birth and death, unable to escape unless they transcend through liberation (*moksha*). By recognizing this repetitive cycle, seekers are encouraged to strive for spiritual freedom, moving beyond the limitations of physical existence and the endless loop of *samsāra*.

8.20

**parastasmāttu bhāvo'nyo-'vyakto'vyaktātsanātanah,
yaḥ(s) sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu, naśyatsu na vinaśyati. 8.20**

Far beyond even this unmanifest, there is yet another unmanifest Existence, that Supreme Divine Person, who does not perish even though all beings perish.

Śrī Bhagavān introduces a profound truth: beyond both the manifest and unmanifest worlds of the material universe lies an eternal, imperishable reality—Brahman. While the material world cycles through creation and dissolution, this supreme unmanifest reality is untouched by such changes. It is the eternal essence that remains constant when all living beings perish.

- **parastasmāt tu bhāvaḥ anyah:** Beyond the familiar manifest and unmanifest world, there is another, superior reality.
- **avyaktaḥ avyaktāt sanātanaḥ:** This higher unmanifest is eternal, distinct from the temporary unmanifest associated with material dissolution.
- **sarveṣu bhūteṣu naśyatsu na vinaśyati:** Even when all beings are destroyed in the cycle of cosmic dissolution, this supreme reality remains unchanging and eternal.

Key Insight:

This verse contrasts the transient nature of the material world with the eternal nature of Brahman, the ultimate reality. Realizing this higher truth leads one toward liberation (*moksha*), freeing the soul from the cycles of birth and death. It reminds us that while the physical world perishes, the supreme unmanifest is beyond all destruction and remains the eternal source.

8.21

**avyakto'kṣara ityuktaḥ(s), tamāhuḥ(ph) paramām(ñ) gatim,
yaṁ(m) prāpya na nivartante, taddhāma paRāmaṁ(m) mama. 8.21**

The same unmanifest which has been spoken of as the Indestructible, is also called the supreme goal; that again is My supreme Abode, attaining which they return not to this mortal world.

Śrī Bhagavān describes the unmanifest, indestructible reality as the highest spiritual goal. This eternal state, once attained, liberates the soul from the cycle of birth and death. The supreme unmanifest is beyond the material world and transcends time, representing Śrī Bhagavān's eternal abode, where souls find everlasting peace.

Key Points:

- **avyaktaḥ akṣaraḥ ityuktaḥ:** The unmanifest is described as indestructible and beyond material change.
- **tam āhuḥ paramām gatim:** It is the ultimate goal of all spiritual seekers.
- **yaṁ prāpya na nivartante:** Attaining this state ensures liberation from the cycle of samsāra (rebirth).
- **tad dhāma paramaṁ mama:** This supreme abode belongs to Śrī Bhagavān, offering eternal liberation.

Insight:

Śrī Bhagavān emphasizes that the unmanifest reality is eternal and beyond the temporary cycles of creation and dissolution. While the material world continuously moves between the manifest and unmanifest states, this supreme reality is beyond such transitions. Attaining it brings the soul out of the cycle of rebirth and into eternal union with the Divine.

Liberation:

This verse highlights the importance of transcending the impermanent material world. Liberation is achieved by realizing and reaching Bhagavān's eternal, indestructible state, freeing the soul from the limitations of time and samsāra.

Swami Ramtirtha's bhajan:

लिया जो करवट तो होश आया कि राम मुझमें, मैं राम में

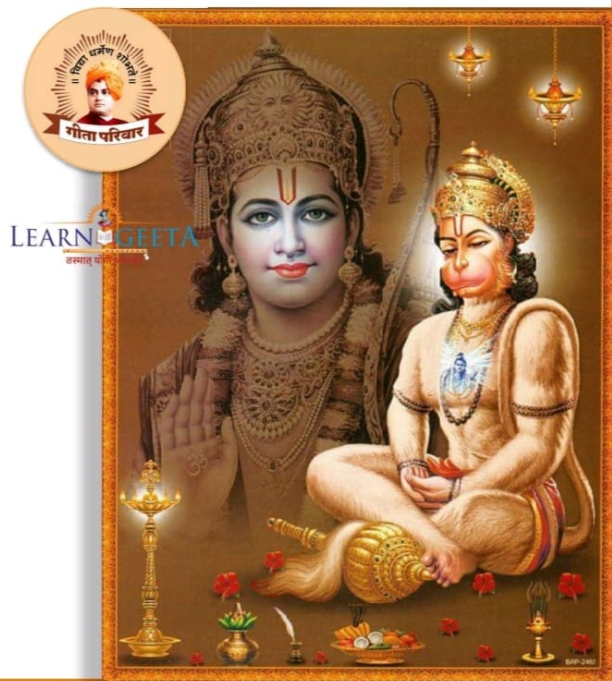
लिया जो करवट तो होश आया, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ॥

यह जिस्म कश्ती, है राम दरिया, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ ॥
यह सैर क्या है अजब तमाशा, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ ॥
बगैर सूरत अजब है जलवा, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ ॥
मुरक्कये -हुस्नो इश्क हूँ मैं, मुझीमें नाजो नियाज सब है
हूँ अपनी सूरत पै शैदा, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ ॥1॥

जमाना आईना राम का है, हर एक सूरत से वह है पैदा
जो चश्मे हक की खुली तो देखा, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ ॥2॥

वह मुझसे हर रंग में मिला है, कि गुल से बू भी कभी जुड़ा है
हुबाबो दरिया का है तमाशा, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ ॥3॥

सबब बताऊँ मैं वज्द का क्या, है क्या जो दरपर्दा देखता हूँ
सदा यह हर साज से है पैदा, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ ॥4॥



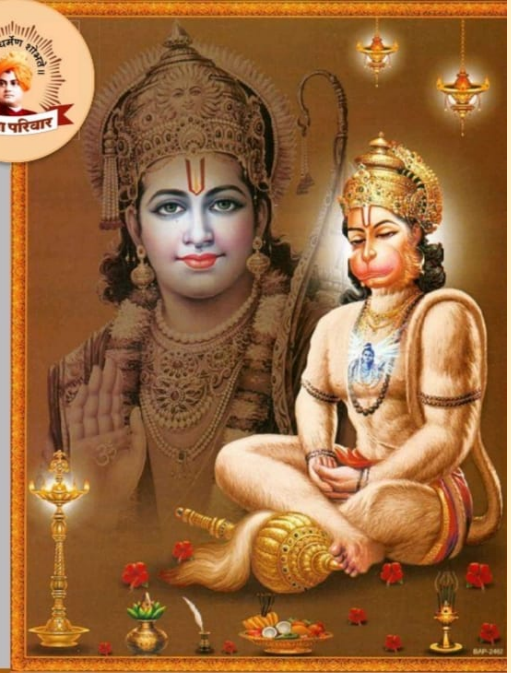
बसा है मेरे दिल में वह दिलबर, है आईने में खुद आईना-गर
अजब तहय्युर हुआ यह कैसा, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ ॥5॥

मुकाम पूछो तो लामकाँ था, न राम ही था न मैं वहाँ था
लिया जो करवट तो होश आया कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ ॥6॥

अलल तवातुर है पाक जलवा, कि दिल बना तुरे-वर्के सीना
तड़प के दिल यूँ पुकार उठा है, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ ॥7॥

जहाज़ दरिया में और दरिया जहाज़ में भी तो देखीय आ
यह जिस्म किशती है राम दरिया, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ ॥8॥

लिया जो करवट तो होश आया, कि राम मुझमें मैं राम में हूँ॥



1. **Liya jo karvat to hosh aaya, ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
2. *(When I turned, I suddenly realized that Ram is within me, and I am within Ram.)*
3. **Yeh jisam kehti hai Ram dariya, ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
(This body says it is like an ocean where Ram resides; Ram is in me, and I am in Ram.)
4. **Yeh sair kya hai ajab tamasha, ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
(This journey is a wondrous spectacle, for Ram is within me, and I am within Ram.)
5. **Kabile surat ajab se jalwa, ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
(There is a strange magnificence in this reflection, that Ram is within me, and I am within Ram.)
6. **Mujhko pucho - husno ishq hoon main, mujh mein naazo niyaaz sab hai**
(Ask me, I am the beauty of love itself, filled with both pride and humility.)
7. **Hoon apni surat pe shida, ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
(I am enamored by my own form, realizing Ram is in me, and I am in Ram.)
8. **Zamana aaina Ram ka hai, har ek surat se woh hai peda**
(The world is a mirror of Ram, and through every form, He is revealed.)
9. **Jo chashme haq ki khuli to dekha, ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
(When the eyes of truth opened, I saw that Ram is in me, and I am in Ram.)

10. **Woh mujhse har rang mein mila hai, ki gul se boo bhi kabhi juda hai?**
(He meets me in every color, like fragrance cannot be separated from the flower.)
11. **Hababo dariya ka hai tamasha, ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
(This world is like bubbles on the ocean's surface, a spectacle, as Ram is in me, and I am in Ram.)
12. **Sabka bataoon mein wajd ka kya, hai kya jo darparda dekhta hoon**
(What can I say of this ecstatic state? What I see beyond the veil is profound.)
13. **Sada yeh har saaz se hai paida, ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
(This constant music of life emerges from every instrument, as Ram is in me, and I am in Ram.)
14. **Basa hai mere dil mein woh dilbar, hai aine mein khud aaina-gar**
(That beloved resides in my heart, the creator who reveals Himself in the mirror.)
15. **Ajab tajruba hua yeh kaisa, ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
(This strange experience has occurred to me, that Ram is within me, and I am in Ram.)
16. **Mukaam pucho toh la-makaan tha, na Ram hi tha na main wahan tha**
(If you ask about the place, it was beyond space, where neither Ram nor I existed.)
17. **Liya jo karvat to hosh aaya ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
(When I turned, I became aware that Ram is within me, and I am within Ram.)
18. **Alag tabatur hai paak jalwa, ki dil bana ture-warq seena**
(There is a unique radiance of purity, as the heart turns into a pure white page.)
19. **Tapak ke dil yun pukaar utha hai, ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
(My heart suddenly cries out that Ram is within me, and I am within Ram.)
20. **Jahaaz dariya mein aur dariya jahaaz mein bhi to dekhiya**
(The ship is in the ocean, and the ocean is within the ship—both are interconnected.)
21. **Yeh jisam kishti hai Ram dariya, ki Ram mujh mein, main Ram mein hoon**
(This body is the boat, and Ram is the ocean; Ram is in me, and I am in Ram.)

The poem eloquently captures a profound spiritual awakening, reflecting the speaker's realization of oneness with the Divine (Bhagavān Ram). It describes an inner journey of self-discovery that leads to the awakening of a timeless truth: Ram is both within and beyond, encompassing all aspects of existence. The speaker's realization is conveyed through vivid metaphors, such as the body as a mirror or a boat and Ram as the boundless ocean, symbolizing the inseparable bond between the individual soul and the Divine presence. The poem transcends the physical, delving deep into the metaphysical, where the manifest (vyakta) and the unmanifest (avyakta) merge into one eternal reality.

The imagery of the ship within the ocean and the ocean within the ship exemplifies the unity of the finite and the infinite, demonstrating how the two are intrinsically connected and transform into each other. This profound realization — that the *vyakta* (the manifest) and *avyakta* (the unmanifest) are one — is the gateway to spiritual liberation. As soon as one grasps this oneness, the limitations of duality dissolve, leading to *moksha* (liberation). The poem evokes the cosmic cycle where Brahma, the creator, brings the universe into being from the *avyakta*, the primordial unmanifest. When one awakens to the understanding that the manifest world is simply a reflection of the unmanifest, they transcend worldly illusion and enter a state of divine unity with the Absolute.

Thus, the poem not only explores the personal realization of oneness with Bhagavan Ram but also reflects the deeper universal truth of creation, transformation, and liberation, offering a path to spiritual enlightenment.

8.22

**puruṣaḥ(s) sa paraḥ(ph) pārtha, bhaktyā labhyastvananyayā,
yasyāntaḥsthāni bhūtāni, yena sarvamiḍaṁ(n) tatam. 8.22**

Arjuna, that eternal unmanifest supreme Puruṣa in whom all beings reside and by whom all this is pervaded, is attainable only through exclusive Devotion.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān describes the nature of the Supreme Puruṣa and the path to attaining Him. The Supreme Puruṣa is the eternal, unmanifest, all-pervading reality that forms the essence of the entire universe. Śrī Bhagavān emphasizes that the only way to reach this supreme state is through *ananyayā bhakti*—exclusive and unwavering devotion.

- **puruṣaḥ sa paraḥ pārtha:** Refers to the Supreme Puruṣa, the highest eternal being who transcends time, space, and matter. This Puruṣa represents the ultimate divine reality, beyond all limitations of the material world.
- **bhaktyā labhyastvananyayā:** The Supreme can only be realized through exclusive devotion (*ananyayā bhakti*), where the seeker's heart and mind are entirely focused on the Divine, without attachment to any other goal or distraction. This highlights the necessity of single-minded dedication in spiritual practice.
- **yasyāntaḥsthāni bhūtāni:** All beings exist within this Supreme Puruṣa, underscoring the idea that all of creation is held within the Divine, emphasizing the interconnectedness between all living entities and the divine essence.
- **yena sarvamiḍaṁ tatam:** The Supreme Puruṣa pervades everything in the universe, meaning that the Divine presence is not limited to a particular space but is immanent in all life and matter, sustaining the cosmos and beyond.

Key Insights:

1. **Supreme Attainable Through Devotion:** The verse stresses that the Supreme Divine can only be realized through *ananyayā bhakti*—wholehearted and exclusive devotion to Bhagavān. It is not

through intellectual knowledge or rituals alone, but through pure, undivided love and surrender that one can reach the Supreme.

2. **Divine Omnipresence and Interconnectedness:** The Supreme Puruṣa is the source and sustainer of all beings. Everything that exists, both living and non-living, resides within Him. This reveals the omnipresent nature of the Divine, showing that the universe is a manifestation of the Supreme.
3. **Path of Devotion as the Most Direct Route:** Śrī Bhagavān advocates the path of devotion as the most direct and effective way to transcend the cycle of birth and death. By cultivating unwavering devotion, a devotee can experience union with the Supreme, thereby achieving liberation from the material world.

This verse underscores the crucial importance of *ananyayā bhakti*—exclusive and undivided devotion—as the sole means to realize the Supreme Puruṣa. It highlights the omnipresent nature of Bhagavān, who pervades the entire universe, and the interconnectedness of all beings within this Divine essence. The path of devotion, marked by surrender and single-minded focus on the Divine, is presented as the highest path to attaining liberation and union with the eternal, all-pervading Supreme.

8.23

**yatra kāle tvanāvṛttim, āvṛttim(ñ) caiva yoginaḥ,
prayātā yānti taṁ(ñ) kālaṁ(m), Vākṣyāmi bharatarṣabha. 8.23**

Arjuna, I shall now tell you the time (path) departing when Yogis do not return, and also the time (path) departing when they do return.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān introduces Arjuna to the cosmic principles governing the soul's journey after death, explaining the two distinct paths that determine whether a soul is liberated or returns to the cycle of rebirth. These paths symbolize the timing, consciousness, and spiritual state of a Yogi at the time of death, which are crucial in determining the soul's fate.

- **yatra kāle tvanāvṛttim:** This refers to the "time" or "state" that leads to non-return, where the Yogi, at the moment of death, departs from the material world and does not come back to the cycle of birth and death. This is the path of liberation, where the soul attains freedom from samsāra (the cycle of rebirth).
- **āvṛttim caiva:** This refers to the "path of return," where, due to incomplete spiritual realization or residual attachments, the soul returns to the cycle of birth and death, continuing its journey through different lifetimes.
- **yoginaḥ prayātā:** Yogis, those who have disciplined their minds and engaged in spiritual practice, are prepared for the journey that follows death. Their spiritual state at the time of departure determines which path they will take—liberation or rebirth.
- **Vākṣyāmi bharatarṣabha:** Śrī Bhagavān addresses Arjuna as "Bharatarṣabha" (best of the Bharatas), recognizing his nobility and readiness to receive this knowledge. Bhagavān promises to

explain these two paths in detail, helping Arjuna understand the deeper truths of life, death, and the soul's ultimate journey.

Key Insights:

1. **Path of No Return (Liberation):** There is a path of non-return for those who have attained full spiritual realization. Departing at the right moment, with a mind free from attachments, ensures liberation, meaning the soul is freed from the cycle of birth and death.
2. **Path of Return (Rebirth):** Some souls, even after spiritual practice, may return to the cycle of rebirth. This can happen if they depart with lingering attachments, unfulfilled desires, or incomplete spiritual development.
3. **Importance of Time and Consciousness:** Śrī Bhagavān highlights the importance of both timing and the mental state at the time of death. These factors are crucial in determining whether the soul will return to the material world or attain liberation. Death is not merely an end, but a significant moment in the soul's spiritual journey.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān begins to reveal the cosmic laws governing the soul's journey after death. He explains that the state of consciousness and the timing of departure are critical in determining whether the soul will return to the cycle of rebirth or attain permanent liberation. Bhagavān's subsequent explanations will delve into these two paths in greater detail, offering Arjuna (and the reader) a deeper understanding of life, death, and the path to liberation. This knowledge is essential for recognizing the significance of spiritual practice and preparation for the moment of death.

8.24

**agnirjyotirahaḥ(ś) śuklaḥ(ś), ṣaṇmāsā uttarāyaṇam,
tatra prayātā gacchanti, brahma brahmavido janāḥ. 8.24**

(Of the two paths) the one is that in which, are stationed the all-effulgent fire-god and the deities presiding over daylight, the bright fortnight, and the six months of the northward course of the sun respectively; proceeding along it after death, Yogīs who have known Brahma, being successively by the above gods, finally reach Brahma.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān explains the *path of light* (Archirādi Mārga), one of the two possible routes a soul can take after leaving the body. This path, illuminated by divine elements such as fire, daylight, the bright half of the lunar cycle, and the six-month period of the sun's northward journey (Uttarāyaṇa), is reserved for enlightened souls who have realized the Supreme Brahma. Those who take this path are liberated from the cycle of birth and death, reaching the ultimate state of union with Brahma.

- **agnirjyotirahaḥ śuklaḥ:** These elements—fire, light, day, and the bright fortnight—represent purity, knowledge, and spiritual clarity. Each is associated with guiding the soul along this divine, illuminated path that leads toward Brahma.
- **ṣaṇmāsā uttarāyaṇam:** Uttarāyaṇa refers to the six-month period when the sun moves northward, starting from Makar Sankranti (mid-January). This phase is considered highly auspicious for spiritual

advancement, and passing away during this time is believed to significantly ease the soul's journey toward liberation.

- **tatra prayātā gacchanti brahma:** Those who depart during this sacred time, having attained realization of Brahma, travel along the path of light and are led to the Supreme Brahma. These souls do not return to the cycle of rebirth, signifying their liberation from samsāra.
- **brahmavido janāḥ:** Refers to enlightened individuals who have attained the knowledge of Brahma, transcending material existence and the bonds of karma. These realized souls are no longer subject to the limitations of the cycle of birth and death.

Key Insights:

1. **Path of Light (Archirādi Mārga):** The verse introduces the *path of light*, a sacred journey undertaken by souls who have realized Brahma. Guided by the elements of light—fire, day, and the sun's northern course—this path symbolizes the soul's ascension toward liberation, free from the bondage of rebirth.
2. **Significance of Uttarāyaṇa:** Uttarāyaṇa, the six-month period when the sun moves northward, is considered especially auspicious for spiritual seekers. Departing from the physical body during this time is seen as favorable, facilitating the soul's smooth transition to higher spiritual realms and ensuring a direct path toward the Divine.
3. **Attaining Brahma:** Souls who have realized Brahma and traverse this illuminated path do not return to the material world. Instead, they attain Brahmaloka or even merge directly with the Supreme Brahma, permanently transcending the cycle of birth and death, and achieving eternal liberation.

This verse underscores the spiritual importance of timing and the state of consciousness at the moment of death. For those who have dedicated themselves to the realization of Brahma, passing away during the auspicious period of Uttarāyaṇa allows them to follow the *path of light*, leading directly to Brahma and liberation from the cycle of rebirth. The verse highlights that the combination of divine timing and unwavering devotion culminates in the ultimate freedom from material existence, offering the soul eternal union with the Supreme.

8.25

**dhūmo rātristatā kṛṣṇaḥ(ṣ), ṣaṇmāsā dakṣiṇāyanam,
tatra cāndRāmasaṃ(ñ) jyotir, yogī prāpya nivartate. 8.25**

The other path is that wherein are stationed the gods presiding over smoke, night, the dark fortnight, and the six months of the southward course of the sun; the Yogi (devoted to action with an interested motive) taking to this path after death is led by the above gods, one after another, and attaining the lustre of the moon (and enjoying the fruit of his meritorious deeds in heaven) returns to this mortal world.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān describes the *Path of Smoke* or *Southern Path* (Dakṣiṇāyana Mārga),

contrasting it with the previously mentioned *Path of Light*. This path is for souls who have accumulated good deeds but remain bound by worldly desires. While they may attain temporary rewards, they eventually return to the cycle of rebirth, unlike those who attain liberation through the *Path of Light*. The verse highlights the transient nature of worldly rewards and the importance of transcending material attachments for complete spiritual liberation.

- **dhūmo rātristatā kṛṣṇaḥ:** These terms refer to the deities governing smoke, night, and darkness, symbolizing ignorance, material attachment, and spiritual obscurity. The presence of these elements on the *Path of Smoke* indicates a journey rooted in worldly desires and incomplete spiritual realization.
- **ṣaṇmāsā dakṣiṇāyanam:** This refers to the six-month period when the sun moves southward, from mid-July to mid-January (Dakṣiṇāyana). Unlike Uttarāyaṇa, the period of spiritual progress, Dakṣiṇāyana is associated with material pursuits and is considered less favorable for attaining liberation. Souls who depart during this time follow the path toward temporary, rather than eternal, rewards.
- **tatra cāndrāmasaṃ jyotir:** Those who follow this path reach the *Cāndrāmasaṃ Jyotir*, or the lunar realm, where they enjoy the fruits of their meritorious deeds. However, this realm is temporary, and the soul must eventually return to the material world.
- **yogī prāpya nivartate:** After enjoying the rewards in the lunar realm, the Yogi must return to Earth, as their spiritual journey is incomplete. Bound by attachments, they remain within the cycle of saṃsāra (birth and rebirth), unable to break free from the material world.

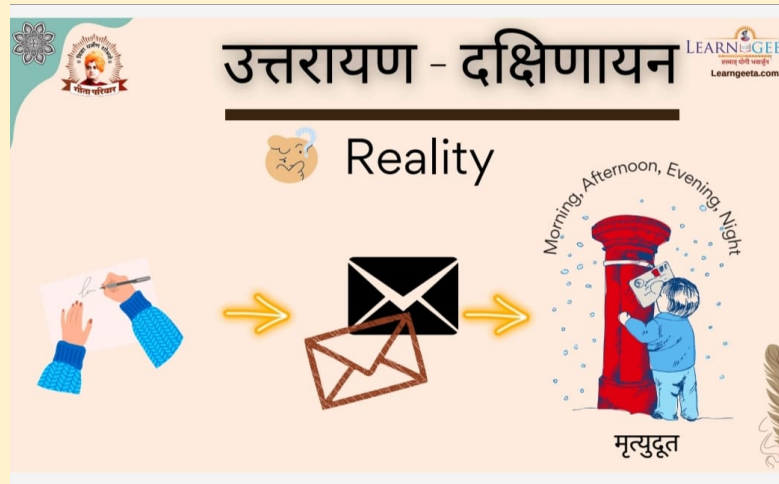
Key Insights:

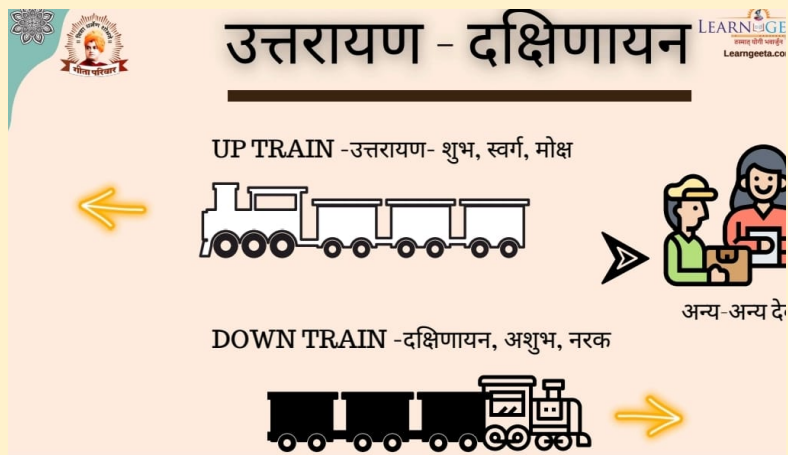
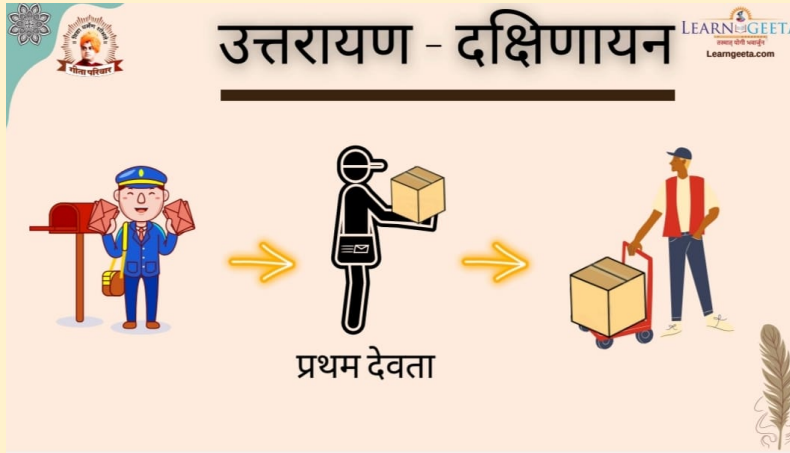
1. **Path of Return (Dakṣiṇāyana Mārga):** Unlike the *Path of Light*, which leads to eternal liberation, the *Path of Smoke* brings the soul back to the material realm after enjoying temporary rewards. It reflects a journey marked by worldly attachments and incomplete spiritual progress.
2. **Temporary Nature of Rewards:** The souls on this path are rewarded with a temporary stay in the lunar realm, but this is not the ultimate destination. The rewards are fleeting, and the soul remains bound to the cycle of rebirth due to unresolved desires and incomplete detachment from the material world.
3. **Worldly Attachments and Their Consequences:** Those who follow the *Path of Smoke* may have performed virtuous deeds, but their motivations are often rooted in worldly desires and personal gain. This attachment prevents them from attaining complete liberation, emphasizing the importance of selfless action and spiritual detachment.


This verse highlights the impermanence of material rewards and underscores the importance of transcending worldly attachments for true spiritual liberation. The *Path of Smoke* leads the soul back into the cycle of birth and death, illustrating that the ultimate goal is not temporary pleasure, but eternal freedom through the *Path of Light*.

An ancient analogy can be drawn to the postal system, where letters could be dropped into a mailbox at


any time, but the postman would collect them at a designated hour. Similarly, while death may occur at any moment, the soul's transition is governed by divine timing. The deities guide the soul, sorting it based on its karmic condition and directing it either to the *Uttarāyaṇa path* (leading to liberation) or the *Dakṣiṇāyana path* (leading to rebirth).









उत्तरायण - दक्षिणायन



शुक्ल पक्ष




→ **3 गतियाँ** →



→ **2 गतियाँ** →

कृष्ण पक्ष




ॐ स्वर्ग

ॐ नरक


ॐ अपवर्ग

ॐ स्वर्ग


ॐ नरक




उत्तरायण - दक्षिणायन



UP TRAIN - उत्तरायण - शुभ, स्वर्ग, मोक्ष






→ ज्योतिर्मय अग्नि अभिमानी देवता


→ उत्तरायण के अभिमानी देवता

→ शुक्ल पक्ष के अभिमानी देवता


→ दिन के अभिमानी देवता




उत्तरायण - दक्षिणायन



DOWN TRAIN - दक्षिणायन, अशुभ, नरक





→ दक्षिणायन के अभिमानी देवता

→ कृष्ण पक्ष के अभिमानी देवता

→ रात्रि के अभिमानी देवता

















This process takes time, and traditionally, it is believed that the soul's transition can take up to a year. This is why rituals such as *śānti karma* are performed for the deceased over the course of a year, helping to facilitate the soul's peaceful journey into its next stage of existence.

8.26

śuklakṛṣṇe gatī hyete, jagataḥ(ś) śāśvate mate, ekayā yātyanāvṛttim, anyayāvartate punaḥ. 8.26

For these two paths of the world, the bright and the dark, are considered to be eternal. Proceeding by one of them, one reaches the supreme state from which there is no return; and proceeding by the other, one returns to the mortal world, i.e., becomes subject to birth and death once more.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān presents two distinct cosmic paths that souls can take after death: one leading to liberation and the other leading back to the cycle of rebirth. Both paths are integral to the eternal cosmic order, reflecting the choices and spiritual progress of the soul based on its actions, devotion, and karma.

- **śuklakṛṣṇe gatī hyete:** Refers to the "path of light" (śukla) and the "path of darkness" (kṛṣṇa). The *path of light* is for those who have cultivated spiritual wisdom and devotion, leading to liberation, while the *path of darkness* brings the soul back into the cycle of rebirth.
- **jagataḥ śāśvate mate:** These two paths are eternal and have been part of the universal order since time immemorial, ensuring the continuity of the cycle of birth, death, rebirth, and liberation. They are the framework through which the soul's journey progresses based on its spiritual evolution.
- **ekayā yātyanāvṛttim:** By following the *path of light*, the soul achieves liberation (*mokṣa*), reaching a state of non-return. This is the ultimate freedom from samsāra, the cycle of birth and death, where the soul merges with the Divine.
- **anyayā avartate punaḥ:** By following the *path of darkness*, the soul returns to the mortal world, continuing the cycle of samsāra due to unfinished karmas, desires, and incomplete spiritual progress. This path is for those who are still attached to material existence.

Key Insights:

1. **Two Eternal Paths:** The verse explains the eternal nature of these two paths—light and dark—symbolizing the two outcomes of a soul's journey based on its spiritual readiness and karma. Both paths are inherent to the cosmic order and determine whether the soul attains liberation or remains bound to material existence.
2. **Path of Light and Liberation:** The *path of light* leads to *mokṣa* (liberation), allowing the soul to unite with the Divine and transcend the limitations of samsāra. This path is followed by those who have devoted themselves to spiritual practice and Divine remembrance.
3. **Path of Darkness and Rebirth:** The *path of darkness* brings the soul back to the world of birth and death, subjecting it to rebirth. Souls on this path remain within samsāra, driven by worldly

attachments, unfulfilled desires, and incomplete spiritual progress.

This verse emphasizes the importance of living a spiritually aligned life, with the goal of liberation through devotion and detachment from worldly desires. By following the *path of light*, one can transcend the cycle of birth and death and attain union with the Divine. Conversely, attachment to material pleasures and desires leads the soul down the *path of darkness*, where it remains bound to samsāra. The verse highlights the significance of conscious choices in spiritual evolution, encouraging seekers to aspire for the ultimate goal of liberation.

8.27

naite sṛtī pārtha jānan, yogī muhyati kaścana, tasmātsarveṣu kāleṣu, yogayukto bhavārjuna. 8.27

Knowing thus the secret of these two paths, O son of Kunti, no Yogī gets deluded. Therefore, Arjuna, at all times be steadfast in Yoga in the form of equanimity (i.e., strive constantly for My realization).

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān brings clarity to Arjuna by summarizing the significance of the two eternal paths—the *Path of Light*, leading to liberation, and the *Path of Darkness*, leading to rebirth. He encourages Arjuna to maintain steadfastness in his spiritual practice, reminding him that an understanding of these paths guards against delusion and confusion. Bhagavān further emphasizes the importance of continuous engagement in Yoga to ensure unwavering focus on the ultimate goal of liberation.

- **naite sṛtī pārtha jānan, yogī muhyati kaścana:** Bhagavān assures Arjuna that a Yogī who truly understands these two cosmic paths—the one that liberates and the one that binds to rebirth—will not fall into delusion. This understanding allows the Yogī to stay centered on the pursuit of liberation, unaffected by the distractions and temptations of the material world.
- **tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu yogayukto bhavārjuna:** Bhagavān urges Arjuna to remain continuously connected to Yoga, which means sustaining a disciplined and unwavering commitment to spiritual practices. Regardless of external circumstances, one should strive to cultivate inner balance and devotion, keeping the mind focused on the Divine at all times. Through this steadfast practice, a seeker strengthens their alignment with the path of liberation.

Key Insights:

1. **Clarity Prevents Delusion:** Understanding the distinction between the two eternal paths—the *Path of Light* that leads to liberation and the *Path of Darkness* that leads to rebirth—prevents a Yogī from becoming confused or lost. This knowledge empowers the seeker to stay focused on their spiritual journey without being distracted by the transient nature of the material world.
2. **Steadfastness in Yoga:** Bhagavān highlights the importance of continuous, unwavering engagement in Yoga. A sustained practice of Yoga ensures that the seeker remains aligned with their spiritual goals, building the discipline and clarity needed to achieve liberation. Yoga, here, is not just physical postures but the union of the mind and spirit with the Divine.
3. **Equanimity and Focus:** Bhagavān encourages Arjuna to cultivate equanimity in all situations. By

practicing mental balance and composure, the seeker becomes resilient to the ups and downs of life, maintaining a calm and focused mind. This inner stability is crucial for achieving spiritual progress and remaining steadfast on the path to liberation.

This verse reinforces the need for consistent and dedicated spiritual practice. By understanding the two cosmic paths—one leading to rebirth and the other to liberation—a Yogī is empowered to remain free from delusion and worldly distractions. Bhagavān urges Arjuna to stay committed to Yoga at all times, emphasizing the importance of equanimity and devotion. By maintaining this steady focus, the seeker remains aligned with the path of liberation, overcoming delusion and ultimately realizing the Divine. Through unwavering engagement in Yoga, one can transcend the cycles of birth and death, achieving eternal union with the Supreme.

8.28

**vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu caiva,
dāneṣu yatpuṇyaphalaṃ(m) pradiṣṭam,
atyeti tatsarvamidaṃ(m) veditvā,
yogī paraṃ(m) sthānamupaiti cādyam. 8.28**

The Yogi, realizing this profound truth, doubtless transcends all the rewards enumerated for the study of the Vedas as well as for performance of sacrifices, austerities and charities and attains the supreme and primal state.

In this concluding verse of Chapter 8, Śrī Bhagavān highlights the ultimate path of the Yogi, who transcends the temporary rewards associated with Vedic rituals, sacrifices, austerities, and charitable acts. While these actions lead to meritorious results, they remain within the realm of the material world and are finite. In contrast, the Yogi, through deeper realization and unwavering devotion, attains the supreme state of liberation—Mokṣa, which is eternal and far beyond the temporary gains of worldly acts.

- **vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu caiva:** This refers to the various virtuous paths prescribed in the Vedas, including rituals (Yajña), austerities (Tapas), and charitable deeds (Dāna), which bring about meritorious rewards for the soul. These are recommended for individuals who seek righteousness and wish to accrue good karma.
- **dāneṣu yat puṇya-phalaṃ pradiṣṭam:** While actions such as sacrifices, charity, and austerities lead to merit (puṇya-phala), these rewards, though virtuous, are still finite and bound to the material plane. They do not provide permanent liberation but instead lead to temporary spiritual advancement or rewards in future births.
- **atyeti tat sarvam idaṃ veditvā:** The Yogi, having understood the deeper truths of existence and the nature of ultimate reality as taught in the Bhagavad Gītā, transcends these finite rewards. They realize that true liberation lies beyond the accumulation of merit.
- **yogī paraṃ sthānam upaiti cādyam:** Through steadfast devotion, discipline, and self-realization, the Yogi transcends worldly rewards and attains the *paraṃ sthānam*—the supreme, eternal abode of liberation (Mokṣa), where the soul is freed from the cycle of birth and death and merges with the Divine.

Key Insights:

1. **Transcending Meritorious Actions:** While actions such as sacrifices, charity, and austerities bring virtue and merit, they are inherently limited in their scope. These acts serve to purify and uplift the soul, but they do not lead to the ultimate goal of liberation. The Yogi, however, surpasses these finite gains by seeking a higher spiritual realization.
2. **The Yogi's Path:** The Yogi, who internalizes the teachings of the Bhagavad Gītā and realizes the true nature of existence, attains a state beyond worldly rewards. This journey leads to the supreme, eternal abode—*Mokṣa*—which is far superior to any temporary results obtained through material actions.
3. **Eternal Liberation:** The ultimate achievement is liberation, where the soul is no longer bound by the cycle of birth and death. This is the supreme destination of the Yogi who has devoted themselves entirely to the path of spiritual wisdom and union with the Divine.

This verse brings Chapter 8 to a powerful conclusion, emphasizing that while meritorious deeds like sacrifices, charity, and austerities hold value, they are not the final destination. The Yogi, through unwavering devotion and realization of the eternal truth, transcends these limited rewards and attains the supreme, eternal state of liberation. It is a reminder that true spiritual success is not found in temporary merits but in the complete liberation of the soul.

The session concluded with a heartfelt *Hari Sharanam* kirtan and a vibrant Question and Answer session, deepening the participants' understanding of Bhagavān's teachings.

Question and Answer Session:

Bajarang Ji

Q: *Realization (bodh) seems to be the key to attaining peace. How can one achieve this realization?*

A: True realization and lasting peace cannot be achieved as long as we are attached to worldly desires. Efforts like studying the Bhagavad Gītā, practicing spiritual disciplines, and engaging in meditation can offer temporary peace, but they are not enough for deep, enduring tranquility. The key is to rise above desires (*kāmanā* and *vāsanā*), which bind us to the material world. Good deeds may offer glimpses of peace, but to experience lasting realization, one must move beyond material aspirations. Consistent spiritual practices, such as Gītā recitation, *nām jap* (chanting the Divine Name), and *sādhanā* (spiritual discipline), can bring about these moments of clarity, gradually leading to true realization and inner peace. The more we detach from worldly cravings and immerse ourselves in spiritual devotion, the closer we get to experiencing lasting peace.

Prashant Ji

Q: *Is the Uttarāyaṇa-Dakṣiṇāyaṇa system relevant for those who follow the path of Bhakti (devotion)?*

A: Yes, the Uttarāyaṇa-Dakṣiṇāyaṇa system applies universally to all spiritual seekers, including those on the path of *Bhakti Mārga* (devotion). This cosmic system, managed by various deities (*devatās*), oversees the soul's journey after death, determining its next destination based on accumulated *karma* and spiritual practices. Whether one follows the path of devotion (*bhakti*), knowledge (*jnāna*), or any other form of spiritual pursuit, this divine framework remains applicable. Ultimately, the state of one's heart, the intentions behind their actions, and their *karma* guide the soul to the appropriate destination. For devotees, their devotion and surrender to the Divine guide them within this system, ensuring they reach

their destined spiritual outcome.

Kiran Ji

Q: *In today's world, many people pass away in hospitals, often on life support or in unconscious states. How can they focus on Paramātmā (the Supreme Being) in such a condition?*

A: It is true that in hospitals, especially with patients on ventilators or life support, it can seem challenging for the person to focus consciously on Paramātmā. However, even in such conditions, the *bhāva* (inner disposition or state of mind) that one has cultivated throughout life plays a vital role at the moment of death. The subconscious mind, deeply influenced by a lifetime of spiritual practice, continues to operate, guiding the soul's final journey (*gati*). Although a hospital environment may not seem ideal for spiritual focus, creating a sacred atmosphere can still assist. When possible, ensuring the presence of spiritual elements—such as placing the patient on *Gangājī's* sand, keeping a *tulsi* plant nearby, placing an image of their *iṣṭa-devatā* (chosen deity) in front, and chanting *Hari-Nām*—can elevate the soul's subconscious connection to the Divine. These measures help create a peaceful, spiritually charged environment that can guide the soul towards an auspicious next birth or liberation, even if the patient is not consciously aware at that moment.

The session concluded with a heartfelt *Hari Sharanam* kirtan offering deep insights and expanding the participants' understanding of Bhagavān's timeless teachings in the Bhagavad Gītā.

Om tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām(m) yogaśāstre śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṁvāde akṣarabrahmayogo nāma aṣṭamo'dhyāyaḥ

Thus, in the Upaniṣad sung by the Lord, the Science of Brahma, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, ends the eighth chapter entitled "The Yoga of the Indestructible Brahma."



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Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar – Creative Writing Department

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