

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 18: Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/n-uh7eHhU00>

The Path to Liberation: Acting Without Attachment

The 18th chapter of the **Bhagavad Gītā**, titled **Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga**—the Yoga of Liberation through Renunciation—guides us toward the ultimate spiritual freedom through a profound understanding of the nature of renunciation. The session commenced with the auspicious lighting of the traditional lamp, symbolizing the unwavering flame of Dharma, which illuminates the path of righteousness and dispels the darkness of ignorance. This light purifies the **Antaḥkaraṇa** (inner consciousness) with the wisdom needed to overcome illusion, setting us on the journey of spiritual clarity. Following this, salutations were offered to **Bhagavān** and the **Guru**, invoking their divine blessings for guidance.

In the previous session, we explored the various types of karma: **Nishiddha Karma** (forbidden actions), **Vihita Karma** (prescribed actions), **Niyat Karma** (obligatory duties), **Kāmya Karma** (desire-driven actions), and **Prāyaścitta Karma** (atonement actions). **Śrī Bhagavān** clearly advises the renunciation of **Nishiddha** and **Kāmya Karma**, emphasizing that these types of actions obstruct spiritual growth. The chapter began with Arjuna seeking clarity on the distinction between **Tyāga** (renunciation of action) and **Sannyāsa** (renunciation of worldly life). These terms are often used interchangeably, leading to confusion. However, there is a subtle yet significant difference.

Tyāga, as explained by Bhagavān, exists in two forms: the renunciation of material objects and the renunciation of actions. For instance, when someone says, "I will not drink tea," this could either mean the renunciation of the act of drinking tea or the renunciation of the desire to drink tea. The first is the **tyāga of matter**, while the second is the **tyāga of action** (or desire). Renouncing the object (tea) does not guarantee the renunciation of the underlying desire. **Śrī Bhagavān** takes us further by emphasizing the importance of renouncing the **fruits of action** rather than just the action or object.

Often, out of laziness, people tend to avoid their **Niyat Karma** (obligatory duties), justifying it with misinterpreted verses like

मन चंगा तो कठौती में गंगा

If the mind is pure, the Ganges is present even in a small bowl.

This profound verse, spoken by **Saint Ravidas**, is frequently taken out of context to excuse negligence of one's responsibilities.

The story behind this verse offers deep insights. **Saint Ravidas**, a cobbler by profession, was approached by a man in a hurry to bathe in the Ganges. Ravidas, while repairing the man's shoes, humbly requested him to offer a coin to the Ganges on his behalf. Upon offering the coin, the man witnessed a miraculous hand emerging from the waters, accepting the offering and gifting a celestial bracelet for Ravidas. Tempted by the bracelet, the man brought it to the king, who desired a second one to form a pair. Unable to fulfill the king's request, the man returned to Ravidas, confessing the entire story. Ravidas, ever compassionate, declared, "If my mind is pure, the Ganges will manifest in this wooden bowl." To everyone's amazement, a hand appeared from the bowl, offering another bracelet, thus saving the man's life.

The moral of this story is clear: such miracles occur only for the pure-hearted, like **Saint Ravidas** or revered saints such as **Swami Govind Giri Ji Maharaj**. For ordinary people, worldly duties must be performed diligently; the Ganges will not flow into a bowl simply because we invoke the verse.

Śrī Bhagavān firmly advises against performing **Nishiddha** and **Kāmya Karma**, but he does not advocate for the renunciation of **Niyat Karma**. As stated in verse 18.2, **kāmyānāṃ karmaṇāṃ nyāsaṃ**, renunciation applies only to actions driven by personal desires, not to duties that uphold Dharma.

During the Vivechan session, someone once inquired, "What about performing **mental worship (Mānasik Pūjā)**?" This question often stems from a desire to avoid the physical effort of regular worship. But one must ask: would that person be content with a **mental meal** instead of a real one? Certainly not! While we are quick to substitute worship with its mental equivalent, masking our lethargy, we wouldn't do the same with our physical needs. This delusion (**mudhata**) leads us to avoid our **Niyat Karma** (obligatory duties), excusing it under the pretense of spirituality.

18.7

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

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

Śrī Bhagavān explains the consequences of abandoning prescribed duties due to ignorance, categorizing it as Tāmasika renunciation.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

- **niyatasya tu sannyāsaḥ karmaṇo nopapadyate**: Renunciation of prescribed duties is not appropriate,
- **mohāttasya parityāgaḥ**: when done out of ignorance or delusion,
- **tāmasaḥ parikīrtitaḥ**: such renunciation is declared as Tāmasika (of the nature of darkness or ignorance).

In this verse, Bhagavān emphasizes the following key principles:

1. **Inappropriateness of Abandoning Prescribed Duties (Niyatasya Sannyāsaḥ):**

Bhagavān clearly states that it is improper to renounce duties that are prescribed by Dharma. These

duties form the foundation of one's responsibilities in life, ensuring both personal and societal balance. Abandoning them is a failure to meet one's obligations and hinders the path to spiritual progress.

2. Renunciation out of Ignorance (Mohāt Parityāgaḥ):

Renouncing duties out of ignorance or delusion reveals a lack of understanding. Such renunciation stems from confusion, not from a true insight into spiritual principles. It reflects a misguided notion that giving up action itself leads to liberation, whereas the true renunciation lies in detaching oneself from the desire for results, not from the duties themselves.

3. Tāmasika Renunciation (Tāmasaḥ Parikīrtitaḥ):

This form of renunciation is classified as **Tāmasika**, associated with ignorance, inertia, and darkness. When one abandons duties out of confusion or laziness, it leads to spiritual stagnation rather than growth. **Tāmasika renunciation** arises from a flawed understanding of Dharma and keeps the individual bound in ignorance, hindering progress on the spiritual path.

In this verse, Bhagavān highlights the dangers of abandoning duties without discernment. Renunciation, while central to spiritual practice, must be undertaken with wisdom and clarity. Simply giving up actions due to confusion or laziness results in missed opportunities for personal and spiritual growth.

This teaching is crucial in the context of **Karma Yoga**, where performing one's duties without attachment to outcomes is encouraged. True renunciation involves detaching from the fruits of actions, not from the actions themselves. Bhagavān's guidance here helps seekers understand the difference between meaningful renunciation and misguided withdrawal from life's responsibilities.

18.8

**duḥkhamityeva yatkarma, kāyakleśabhayātyajet,
sa kṛtvā rājasam(n) tyāgaṁ(n), naiva tyāgaphalaṁ(m) labhet. 18.8**

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

Śrī Bhagavān addresses the consequences of abandoning duties due to fear of hardship, categorizing it as **Rājasika renunciation**.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

- **duḥkhamityeva yatkarma**: When one perceives that a duty or action is painful,
- **kāyakleśabhayātyajet**: and abandons it out of fear of physical discomfort or strain,
- **sa kṛtvā rājasam tyāgaṁ**: such renunciation is considered **Rājasika**, driven by passion and attachment,
- **naiva tyāgaphalaṁ labhet**: and one does not attain the true fruits of renunciation.

Bhagavān highlights three key insights in this verse:

1. Fear of Physical Strain (Kāyakleśabhayāt):

When a person gives up their prescribed duties because of the fear of physical discomfort, pain, or strain, it reveals a **Rājasic** mindset. Instead of embracing the challenges and responsibilities

inherent in life, the individual seeks to avoid hardship, prioritizing comfort over duty. This mindset reflects an attachment to the body and its comforts rather than a commitment to fulfilling one's obligations according to Dharma.

2. **Rājasika Renunciation (Rājasam Tyāgam):**

Renunciation that stems from the fear of suffering is categorized as **Rājasika**, which is characterized by passion, self-centeredness, and attachment to ease. This form of renunciation does not come from wisdom or a desire for spiritual progress, but from an aversion to discomfort. Such renunciation is incomplete and lacks the depth required for true spiritual advancement because it is rooted in attachment to bodily pleasures and a desire to escape difficulty.

3. **Lack of Fruitful Results (Naiva Tyāgaphalam Labhet):**

Bhagavān makes it clear that **Rājasika renunciation** does not yield the true fruits of renunciation. When the motivation behind giving up actions is based on personal convenience or fear, it fails to bring the spiritual benefits associated with genuine renunciation. True renunciation requires selflessness and detachment from both the action and its outcomes, not merely avoiding action due to fear of discomfort.

Bhagavān's teaching in this verse emphasizes that **real renunciation** is not about avoiding difficulties or challenges. Rather, it is about understanding the nature of one's duties and performing them with a spirit of detachment, even when they bring discomfort. Renunciation that arises from fear of hardship is rooted in **ego** and attachment, and as a result, it does not lead to spiritual growth.

This is especially important in the practice of **Karma Yoga**, where one is encouraged to perform their duties without attachment to ease or comfort. True renunciation involves transcending personal desires and comforts, not abandoning one's responsibilities. Bhagavān uses this verse to caution against the limitations of **Rājasika renunciation**, urging the seeker to pursue a more selfless, detached, and spiritually mature approach.

The inclination to avoid discomfort, termed as **Kāyagleśa** or **Kāya Prem** (attachment to bodily comfort), manifests when individuals prioritize their physical ease above their spiritual or social obligations. For instance, during a **havan** (sacrificial fire ritual), some people may request the priest to expedite the ritual because the smoke causes discomfort to their eyes. Similarly, many consider a place unsuitable for living or hosting events if it lacks air conditioning or other modern conveniences. Such people, driven by their attachment to physical comfort, exhibit a **Rājasic** tendency that holds them back from fully committing to spiritual progress. Their inclination towards ease limits their ability to grow spiritually, as they remain attached to the body and its needs.

An example illustrating the opposite of this mindset is **Professor Shivnarayan Ji** from Kanpur, who was deeply influenced by **Mahatma Gandhi Ji**. Known for his strict adherence to Gandhian principles, he would punish himself with a stick if his students made mistakes, believing that their errors reflected flaws in his teaching. He even undertook the difficult vow of **Aswad** (Taste Vow), a vow followed by **Param Śraddhye Shree Sethji Jaydayal Ji Goyanka** and **Mahatma Gandhi Ji**. This vow entails that one does not eat a dish a second time if it was particularly enjoyed, thus eating only for the body's sustenance and not for pleasure. Such a vow is extraordinarily challenging, as most people eat for taste. Many of us indulge in our favorite dishes even after a meal is over, simply because we enjoy them.

Renunciation of action solely to avoid bodily discomfort, termed **Rājoguni Tyāga**, is exactly what Bhagavān warns against in this verse. He emphasizes that abandoning one's obligatory duties to escape physical strain is not true renunciation. True renunciation is about rising above these bodily concerns and fulfilling one's responsibilities with dedication, regardless of the personal hardships involved.

**kāryamityeva yatkarma, niyataṃ(ñ) kriyate'rjuna
saṅgaṃ(n) tyaktvā phalaṃ(ñ) caiva, sa tyāgaḥ(s) sāttviko mataḥ. 18.9**

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

Śrī Bhagavān, in this verse, outlines the nature of **Sāttvika renunciation**, where duties are performed with detachment, motivated purely by a sense of obligation and responsibility.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

- **kāryamityeva yatkarma**: A duty is performed simply because it is the right thing to do,
- **niyataṃ kriyate'rjuna**: consistently, as prescribed by Dharma, O Arjuna,
- **saṅgaṃ tyaktvā phalaṃ caiva**: giving up attachment and desire for the outcome,
- **sa tyāgaḥ sāttviko mataḥ**: such renunciation is regarded as **Sāttvika** (of the mode of goodness).

In this verse, Bhagavān emphasizes the following key insights:

1. Duty for Duty's Sake (Kāryamityeva Yatkarma):

Bhagavān underscores that true renunciation involves performing one's prescribed duties without being driven by personal gain or selfish motives. The action is undertaken solely because it is the right thing to do, in accordance with Dharma. This mindset of performing actions out of duty, not desire, aligns with the **Sāttvika** nature, where the motivation is pure and free from any external attachments.

2. Detachment from Results (Saṅgaṃ Tyaktvā Phalaṃ Caiva):

A defining feature of **Sāttvika renunciation** is the absence of attachment to both the actions and their fruits. The **Sāttvika** individual performs their duties without expecting rewards or recognition. Their focus is on fulfilling their responsibility, not on what it may yield. This kind of detachment reflects a deep spiritual maturity, where one's fulfillment comes from doing the duty itself rather than from its outcomes. The action is self-contained, without the ego seeking gratification from the result.

3. Consistency and Discipline (Niyataṃ Kriyate):

Sāttvika renunciation also involves performing duties with unwavering consistency and discipline, adhering to what Dharma prescribes. This disciplined approach reflects a harmonious nature, rooted in a deep understanding of one's role and responsibilities in life. The consistent practice of these duties reinforces the individual's connection to the path of Dharma and enables steady spiritual progress.

To practice true renunciation, one must take pleasure in performing their obligatory duties (**Niyat karma**) without attaching their happiness to the results. A good way to self-assess is to reflect on whether the joy stems from doing the duty itself or from anticipating its outcome. If the focus is on the result, it reflects a **Rājasika** mindset. In contrast, finding joy in simply fulfilling one's responsibilities—regardless of the outcome—indicates a **Sāttvika** disposition.

A relevant dialogue from the **Mahābhārata** illustrates this concept. In a conversation between **Draupadi**

and **Yudhiṣṭhira**, Yudhiṣṭhira explains, “Draupadi, one must adhere to Dharma not with the intention of gaining happiness or avoiding discomfort but because it is inherently necessary to follow Dharma.” Actions will always bear fruit—whether favorable or unfavorable—but true renunciation lies in detaching from the anticipation of desirable outcomes. Even virtuous desires, such as wanting to serve the poor or perform charity, can be tainted by ego. To avoid this, one must focus on the action itself, not on any recognition or self-satisfaction derived from it.

Bhagavān's teaching in this verse highlights the essence of true renunciation: performing actions with a pure heart, free from attachment to ego and results. **Sāttvika** renunciation is not about giving up one's duties but about approaching them with the right mindset—where the action itself is paramount, and the fruits of that action are secondary. This concept lies at the core of **Karma Yoga**, where one performs their duties selflessly, without being swayed by the allure of success or the fear of failure. By cultivating a **Sāttvika** mindset, one can transcend the dualities of life—such as pleasure and pain, success and failure—and move closer to spiritual liberation.

A simple self-reflection can help determine the mindset behind our actions. If performing an obligatory duty leaves us dissatisfied or unhappy, it indicates that the action was carried out with a **Rājasika** mindset, not a **Sāttvika** one. Some actions may outwardly seem virtuous, such as performing charity or working for a noble cause, but if they are done for personal gain—be it fame, recognition, or status—they do not align with **Sāttvika** principles. For instance, someone distributing blankets to the poor may initially be driven by genuine compassion, but if the fame from that act leads them to repeat it year after year for the sake of recognition, the action is no longer **Sāttvika**.

In spiritual organizations, like **Geeta Pariwar**, even service can become a source of attachment. If a volunteer (sevi) feels unhappy when their service is paused or reassigned, it indicates an attachment to the service itself rather than a focus on serving selflessly. True **Sāttvika** renunciation involves remaining unaffected by whether or not one continues in a particular role. Service must not become a means to gain ego-satisfaction but should remain aligned with the principles of selfless action.

Ultimately, to reach the highest levels of spiritual evolution, actions must be performed with ease and without attachment. A well-known chant encapsulates this sentiment:

सीता राम सीता राम, सीताराम कहिये। जाहि विधि राखे राम, ताहि विधि रहिये।

Sita Ram Sita Ram, chant the names of Sita and Ram. Accept whatever situation Shri Ram places you in.

Give your best in performing **Niyat Karma**, without slacking, but also accept it gracefully if there comes a time to take a break. Recognize this too as the will of the divine. **Śrī Bhagavān** will elaborate further on transcending the three **Gunās** (qualities) in the next verse.

18.10

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

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

In this verse, **Śrī Bhagavān** describes the qualities of a true renunciant, one who neither shuns difficult actions nor clings to favorable ones. Such a person, grounded in **Sattva**, gains wisdom and clarity by being detached from both favorable and unfavorable actions.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

- **na dvestyakuśalaṃ karma**: He does not despise difficult or inauspicious actions,
- **kuśale nānuṣajjate**: nor does he become attached to auspicious or favorable actions,
- **tyāgī sattvasamāviṣṭo**: such a renunciant is absorbed in **Sattva** (goodness),
- **medhāvī chinnaśayaḥ**: and is wise, with all doubts dispelled.

Bhagavān emphasizes three key insights in this verse:

1. **Equanimity Towards All Actions (Na Dvestyakuśalaṃ, Kuśale Nānuṣajjate):**

A true renunciant maintains balance in all actions, whether difficult or favorable. He neither rejects challenging tasks nor clings to those that are easy or pleasant. This mental equilibrium reflects a profound understanding of the transient nature of all actions and their results. A person grounded in **Sattva** sees every action as part of their duty, not influenced by personal preferences or discomfort. This detachment ensures that the renunciant performs their responsibilities with neither aversion nor attachment.

Many people, in their pursuit of perfection, become overly concerned with performing only the tasks they find favorable, showing attachment to **Kuśala Karma**. **Śrī Bhagavān** advises against this attachment, emphasizing that renunciation requires a balanced approach to all tasks—whether pleasant or not. True renunciation does not favor one over the other but remains steady in all circumstances.

2. **Imbued with Sattva (Tyāgī Sattvasamāviṣṭo):**

A renunciant who is deeply absorbed in **Sattva** performs duties with a calm and clear mind, free from the disturbances of **Rajas** (passion) and **Tamas** (ignorance). **Sattva** is the quality that brings purity, clarity, and wisdom. When one is rooted in this state, they act without personal motives, without seeking reward or avoiding discomfort. This **Sāttvika** state ensures that actions are done selflessly, driven purely by duty and Dharma, and not by ego, desires, or fears.

3. **Wisdom and Clarity (Medhāvī Chinnaśayaḥ):**

A **Sāttvika** renunciant is wise (**medhāvī**) and free from doubts (**chinnaśayaḥ**). This clarity of thought and decisiveness arise from detachment from the fruits of actions. Since such a person is not driven by the desire for outcomes, they are free from the inner conflicts caused by expectations. Wisdom comes from this deep understanding of one's duty, performed with detachment and a sense of inner peace. The result is a life of action free from confusion, doubt, or hesitation.

Shri Hanuman Ji embodies the qualities of such a renunciant. During the discussion about who could cross the ocean to reach Lanka, others voiced their capabilities, but Hanuman Ji remained silent, even though he was the most capable. He waited until **Jambavan** reminded him of his immense strength. Angad mentioned:

अंगद कहुं जौं मैं परा, जिय संदेह कछु प्रीति निहारा।

जामवंत कहुं तुम्ह सब लायक, पति यह सिमी सब कर नायक।

Angad said: "If I go as a messenger to Ravana's court, there might be doubts about my intentions, and they may not perceive it as an act of friendship."

Jambavan then acknowledged Hanuman Ji's unique qualifications: "You are all capable and worthy, but Hanuman is the best candidate for this task, as he is a true leader and servant of Lord Ram."

Jambavan, seeing Hanuman Ji's quiet demeanor, approached him and said:

कहइ रीछपति सुनु हनुमाना। का चुप साधि रहेहु बलवाना॥
पवन तनय बल पवन समाना। बुधि बिबेक बिग्यान निधाना॥

"Listen, Hanuman! Why are you sitting quietly, O mighty one? You are the son of the wind god, and your strength equals that of the wind. You are a treasure of wisdom, intellect, and knowledge."

He continued:

कवन सो काज कठिन जग माहीं। जो नहिं होइ तात तुम्ह पाहीं॥

"What task is there in this world, O dear one, that cannot be accomplished by you?"

On hearing this, Hanuman Ji, who had quietly refrained from boasting, finally revealed his immense power when needed:

राम काज लागि तव अवतारा। सुनतहिं भयउ पर्वताकारा॥

"You have incarnated to fulfill the tasks of Shri Ram." Hearing these words, Hanuman assumed a massive form, ready for action:

कनक बर्ण तन तेज बिराजा। मानहुँ अपर गिरिन्ह कर राजा॥
सिंहनाद करि बारहिं बारा। लघु रूप धरि सागर पारा॥

His body shone with a golden hue, resembling a king of mountains. Roaring like a lion, he assumed a small form and leapt across the ocean.

This wisdom and humility of Hanuman Ji reflect the essence of **Sattva**. He never sought praise for his abilities and acted only when called upon. Similarly, when **Indrajit** fired the **Brahmāstra**, Hanuman Ji, though immune to it, voluntarily submitted out of respect for Brahma. This level of humility and self-control defines the true renunciant, who acts only in alignment with Dharma, free from ego.

Sant Kabir captures this effortless state of wisdom and devotion in his full composition about **Sahaj Samadhi** (the effortless state of meditation):

साधो सहज समाधि भली
साई ते मिलन भयो जा दिन ते सुरत न अंत चली


आँख न मूँदूँ कान न रूँधूँ काया कष्ट न धारूँ
खुले नैन मैं हँस-हँस देखूँ सुंदर रूप निहारूँ ॥1॥ साधो

कहूँ सो नाम, सुनूँ सो सुमिरन, जो कछु करूँ सो पूजा
गृह उद्यान एक सम देखूँ भाव मिटाऊँ दूजा ॥2॥ साधो

जहँ-जहँ जाऊँ सोई परिक्रमा जो कछु करूँ सो सेवा
जब सोऊँ तब करूँ दण्डवत, पूजूँ और न देवा ॥3॥ साधो

शब्द निरंतर मनुआ राता, मलिन वचन का त्यागी
बैठत-उठत कबहुँ न बिसरै, ऐसी तारी लागी ॥4॥ साधो

कहै 'कबीर' यह उनमुनि रहनी सो परगट कर गाई
सुख-दुख के इक परे परम सुख, तेहि में रहा समाई ॥5॥ साधो



LEARN THE GEETA
तत्त्वज्ञान योगी भक्तपुरी
Dr. Ashu Goyal

"O Seeker, the effortless state of meditation is the best.
Ever since I met the Divine, my awareness has not strayed.
I do not close my eyes, nor block my ears, nor do I inflict suffering on my body.
With open eyes, I gaze and smile, admiring the beautiful form of the Divine.
What I speak is His Name, what I hear is His remembrance.
Whatever I do is worship, all my actions are offerings.
I view the house and the garden equally, having erased all duality from my heart.
Wherever I go, that becomes my sacred circumambulation; whatever I do is service.
When I sleep, it is as if I am offering obeisance, and I do not worship any other deity.
My mind is continuously absorbed in the eternal Word (shabd), I have abandoned impure speech.
Whether sitting or standing, I never forget the Divine—such is the devotion that grips me.
Kabir says: This is the way of the awakened, I have openly declared it.
Being beyond both pleasure and pain, I have merged in the supreme bliss."

Kabir's verse expresses how the highest form of meditation is effortless, where every action becomes an expression of devotion. There is no need for external rituals, as every moment is filled with divine awareness. Kabir's description aligns with **Sattva**, where the seeker merges into the blissful state of constant divine remembrance, free from dualities.

A similar state was achieved by **Lala Ji Maharaj**, a revered Sufi saint. Once, he visited his Guru's home late due to heavy rain, but upon seeing his Guru in deep **Unmani** meditation, Lala Ji quietly returned without disturbing him. His Guru later praised him for understanding that during the **Unmani** state, one is so absorbed in the divine that even external interactions are distractions.

The following verse beautifully expresses the **Unmani** state:

जब दिल को नींद आती है और रूह होती है गाफिल,
तब मैं ही अकेला होता हूँ उस यार की महफ़िल में।

"When the heart drifts into sleep and the soul becomes unaware,
It is in that moment I find myself alone in the divine's sacred presence."

This deep connection to the divine is what **Śrī Bhagavān** speaks of in this verse—where the renunciant transcends attachment to pleasant and unpleasant actions and enters a state of constant divine absorption.

In this verse, **Śrī Bhagavān** emphasizes the importance of cultivating detachment and equanimity in **Karma Yoga**. By transcending likes and dislikes, attachment and aversion, the renunciant attains clarity, wisdom, and inner peace. Such equanimity is essential for spiritual growth and the dissolution of doubts.

This teaching calls us to approach our duties with sincerity and focus, but without attachment to outcomes. It invites us to cultivate a mindset where we perform actions as offerings, with a heart free from ego and desires. By doing so, we can navigate life's challenges with wisdom and grace, finding inner clarity and peace.

18.11

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

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

Śrī Bhagavān emphasizes the practicality of renunciation, stating that while complete renunciation of actions is impossible for those who possess a body, true renunciation lies in giving up the attachment to the fruits of actions.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

- **na hi dehabhṛtā śakyaṃ karmāṇyaśeṣataḥ**: It is impossible for one who possesses a body to renounce all actions completely,
- **yastu karmaphalatyāgī**: but one who renounces the fruits of actions,
- **sa tyāgītyabhidhīyate**: is indeed recognized as a true renunciant.

Śrī Bhagavān provides three important insights in this verse:

1. **Inescapable Nature of Action (Na Hi Dehabhṛtā Śakyaṃ)**: As long as one has a body, actions are inevitable. The body is the medium through which actions are carried out, whether they are basic actions for survival or duties that need to be fulfilled. Bhagavān acknowledges the fact that one cannot completely abstain from all actions while living in the physical world. It is impossible to stop engaging with life because the body naturally requires some level of interaction with the world. Therefore, the idea of renouncing all actions is impractical for someone living in the material world.
2. **True Renunciation (Karmaphalatyāgī)**: Bhagavān defines real renunciation as giving up the attachment to the results of actions, not the actions themselves. The true renunciant performs their duties without expectation of rewards or outcomes. This aligns with the core teachings of **Karma Yoga**, where the focus is on the action itself, not on what the action might yield. By renouncing the fruits of action, one remains balanced, unattached to success or failure, joy or sorrow. This type of renunciation is achievable because it is based on an internal shift in attitude, rather than an external withdrawal from life's activities.
3. **Recognition of the Renunciant (Sa Tyāgītyabhidhīyate)**: Bhagavān clarifies that the individual who renounces the attachment to the fruits of actions is the one truly worthy of being called a renunciant. This form of renunciation is practical, allowing one to continue fulfilling responsibilities and duties without becoming entangled in the outcomes. Such a renunciant leads a life of service, commitment, and involvement, while maintaining a state of inner detachment.

This verse also dispels the common misconception that renunciation means withdrawing from worldly activities altogether. Śrī Bhagavān's teaching is both realistic and profound, guiding the seeker to a balanced approach to life. He emphasizes that one should not stop performing duties, but instead, let go of the anxiety and attachment related to the results of those duties.

For seekers in the modern world, where it is not feasible to abandon responsibilities and worldly commitments, this teaching is especially relevant. Bhagavān offers a path where one can be actively engaged in life while simultaneously experiencing inner peace and detachment. By focusing on the process of action rather than the outcome, one can achieve a deeper sense of fulfillment and contentment, even amidst the demands of daily life.

In our own lives, this verse invites us to embrace our responsibilities—whether in work, relationships, or personal growth—without becoming overly concerned about the outcomes. By doing our best without attachment to the result, we cultivate a sense of peace and reduce the stress and anxiety that often come from worrying about things beyond our control. This shift in perspective leads to a deeper understanding of contentment, allowing us to live with purpose and fulfillment.

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

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

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān explains the different kinds of results that arise from actions, drawing a contrast between the experiences of those who are attached to the fruits of their actions and those who have renounced such attachments.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

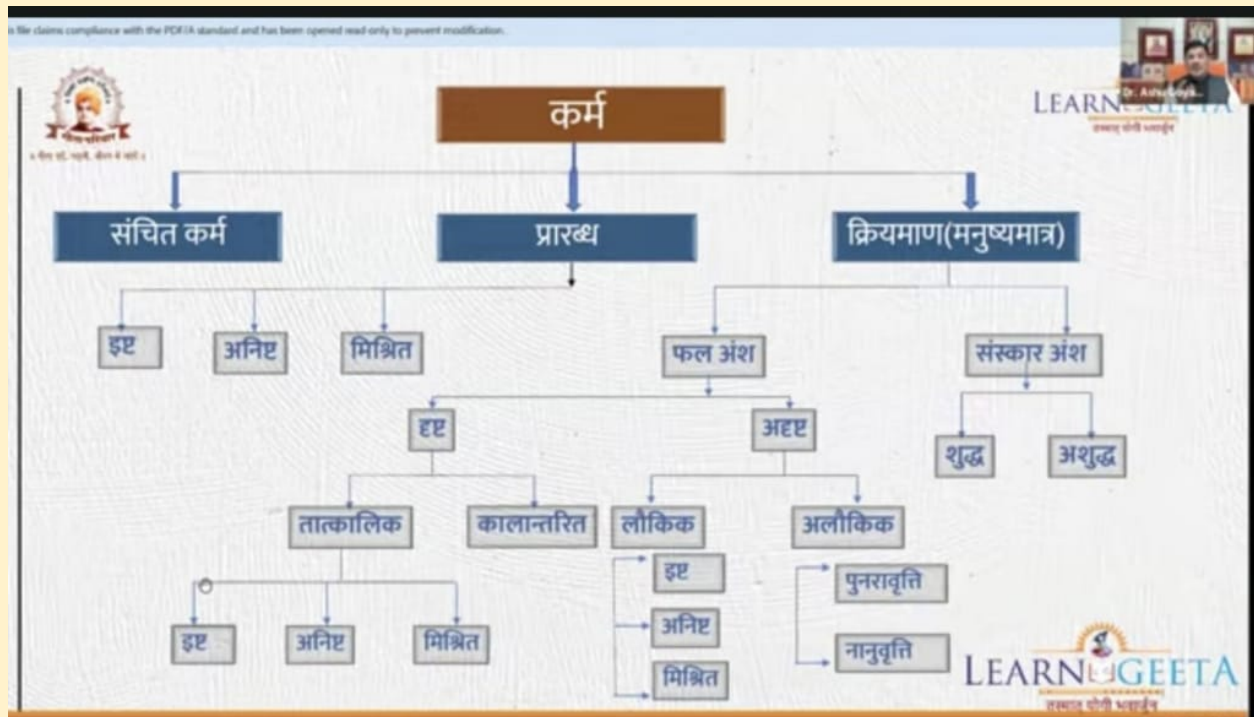
- **aniṣṭamiṣṭam miśram ca, trividham karmaṇaḥ phalam:** The fruits of actions are threefold—unpleasant, pleasant, and mixed.
- **bhavatyatyāginām pretya:** These results come to those who remain attached to the fruits of their actions, even after death.
- **na tu sannyāsinām kvacit:** However, for those who have renounced attachment to the fruits of their actions, no such results exist.

Bhagavān begins by describing the three types of results that come from actions—pleasant (desirable), unpleasant (undesirable), and mixed (a combination of both). These outcomes are inevitable for those who are attached to the results of their actions. The type of outcome one experiences is shaped by the nature of the action performed and the intention behind it.

For those who are **unrenounced**, meaning they remain attached to the results of their actions, these fruits will continue to manifest even after death. Such individuals, driven by expectations and desires, remain bound to the cycle of karma. The fruits of their actions follow them beyond this life, continuing their entanglement in **samsara**, the cycle of birth and rebirth. This attachment to outcomes keeps them trapped in the ongoing cycle of cause and effect, tied to the results of their previous deeds.

On the other hand, **those who have renounced the attachment to the fruits of their actions**, the true **sannyāsins**, experience no such consequences. Having freed themselves from the desire for specific results, they break free from the cycle of karma. Such renunciants are no longer bound by the reactions to their actions, as their focus is purely on performing duties without attachment. By surrendering the fruits of their actions, they achieve freedom from the bondage of karma and transcend the material plane.

To understand this more deeply, we can examine **karma** in its threefold nature:



1. **Sanchit Karma** (accumulated karma): These are the karmas accumulated from all past lives, which remain stored until they bear fruit. This reservoir of karmas affects future births, creating the conditions one experiences across lifetimes.
2. **Prarabdha Karma** (destined karma): This refers to the portion of accumulated karma that has already begun to bear fruit in this current life. Prarabdha karma is responsible for the life circumstances we experience—both pleasant and unpleasant—that cannot be avoided in this lifetime.
3. **Kriyaman Karma** (current karma): These are the actions we perform in the present, shaping our future experiences. The results of **Kriyaman Karma** may manifest immediately or accumulate to affect future lifetimes.

Prarabdha Karma manifests in three forms—pleasant, unpleasant, and mixed. For example, the opportunity to study the Bhagavad Gītā in this lifetime is a manifestation of pleasant prarabdha. Conversely, the loss of a loved one is an example of unpleasant prarabdha. Mixed prarabdha presents situations that may feel pleasant at times and unpleasant at others.

Kriyaman Karma, the actions performed in the present, also has two parts: the **visible results** (those that manifest in this life) and the **mental impressions** (samskaras), which affect our tendencies and preferences. These impressions further shape our future actions and the results we experience.

The results of **Kriyaman Karma** are either **perceptible** (visible) or **imperceptible** (unseen). The perceptible results—whether desirable, undesirable, or mixed—are those that we experience in the present. The imperceptible results manifest over time and may be either **laukik** (worldly) or **alaukik** (spiritual or supernatural). Laukik results pertain to worldly experiences like wealth or suffering, while alaukik results relate to spiritual progress or setbacks.

For those attached to their actions and the outcomes, the cycle of **karma** continues, creating more entanglements and results that persist across lifetimes. However, those who renounce the attachment to

these outcomes break free from this cycle, transcending karma's influence.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān stresses the importance of **detachment** in the practice of **Karma Yoga**. The path to liberation does not require abandoning action altogether, but rather letting go of the desire for results. By focusing on the action itself, without concern for the outcome, one can rise above the dualities of success and failure, pleasure and pain, and progress toward spiritual freedom.

This teaching is particularly significant in everyday life, where individuals often become fixated on the results of their efforts. In modern society, the constant pursuit of rewards and avoidance of undesirable outcomes creates stress and anxiety. **Bhagavān's guidance encourages a shift in focus**—emphasizing the importance of performing actions with sincerity while letting go of attachment to their results.

By adopting this mindset, one can approach life with a sense of inner peace and fulfillment, regardless of external circumstances. This verse teaches us that by relinquishing attachment to outcomes, we reduce suffering and cultivate a sense of trust in the divine order. In practical terms, it invites us to perform our duties and responsibilities with full dedication, while consciously letting go of the desire for specific results. This detachment allows us to experience peace and contentment, no matter the outcomes, bringing us closer to spiritual liberation and freeing us from the cycle of karma.

18.13

**pañcaitāni mahābāho, kāraṇāni nibodha me,
sāṅkhye kṛtānte proktāni, siddhaye sarVākarmaṇām. 18.13**

In the branch of learning known as Sāṅkhya, which prescribes means for neutralizing all actions, the five factors have been mentioned as contributory to the accomplishment of all actions; know them all from Me, Arjuna.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān introduces the concept of five fundamental factors that contribute to the successful performance of all actions, as explained in Sāṅkhya philosophy. He emphasizes the importance of understanding these five factors to gain deeper insight into how actions are accomplished.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

- **pañcaitāni mahābāho, kāraṇāni nibodha me:** O mighty-armed Arjuna, know from Me these five causes.
- **sāṅkhye kṛtānte proktāni, siddhaye sarVākarmaṇām:** They are described in Sāṅkhya as necessary for the fulfillment of all actions.

Śrī Bhagavān begins by preparing Arjuna to grasp these five essential causes that are involved in the performance of any action. These factors, according to **Sāṅkhya philosophy**, are not just individual or isolated but work in concert to bring about the completion of any action. Sāṅkhya, one of the six classical schools of Indian philosophy, provides a systematic analysis of reality, distinguishing between **Purusha** (consciousness) and **Prakriti** (matter), and emphasizes how various forces interact to produce outcomes. Bhagavān uses this philosophy to offer Arjuna a more comprehensive view of how actions are performed.

Bhagavān explains that these five causes are crucial to understanding the mechanics behind any action, whether it is mundane or spiritual. He underscores that the performance and accomplishment of any action do not depend on a single factor but on a combination of several elements that work together. This explanation helps Arjuna—and the reader—realize that no action is entirely independent or self-contained.

Understanding these five causes gives insight into the role of **doership**. Bhagavān emphasizes that one must look beyond the personal sense of agency, recognizing that actions are influenced by many factors that lie beyond an individual's control. This understanding paves the way for cultivating **humility** and **detachment**, two key qualities in the practice of **Karma Yoga**.

By introducing the concept of multiple causes behind actions, Bhagavān highlights that personal effort, while important, is only one part of the larger picture. Actions are shaped by a variety of internal and external factors, which include not just personal will and intent but also broader cosmic laws and conditions. Acknowledging this complexity helps one become more grounded and accepting, performing actions with focus while remaining detached from the outcomes.

This teaching encourages practitioners of **Karma Yoga** to adopt a balanced approach to life. While personal effort is necessary, understanding the influence of external factors allows for greater flexibility and reduces attachment to results. Recognizing that actions are not solely dependent on individual will fosters inner peace, as one becomes less anxious about controlling outcomes.

A beautiful story illustrates the importance of understanding action and its consequences. A Guru nearing the end of his life wanted to choose a successor among his two disciples. To test their wisdom, he gave them three valuable coins and asked them to spend one coin on something useful in this world, one on something useful in the afterlife, and one on something that is neither useful here nor there.

The first disciple used one coin for his own food, saying it was useful in this world. He donated the second coin to Sadhus, calling it useful in the afterlife, and returned the third coin to the Guru, saying it was neither useful here nor there.

The second disciple gave food to a thousand Sadhus with one coin, saying it was useful in the afterlife. He dropped another coin into the river, saying it was neither useful here nor there. Lastly, he spent the third coin on his own food, saying it was useful in this world. The Guru chose the second disciple as his successor, as he had correctly understood how to make use of the coins in the context of life and action.

This story demonstrates how understanding the nuances of action—what is useful in this world, the next, and what frees one from the cycle of life and death—is crucial for wisdom. The deeper wisdom of how to act and detach oneself from the fruits of action, as taught in the **Bhagavad Gītā**, leads to liberation.

This verse also serves as a reminder that all actions, no matter how significant or trivial, are shaped by multiple factors. It reveals that the sense of personal doership is an illusion, as actions are not solely dependent on individual effort. This realization leads to the understanding that success and failure are not entirely in our control, and accepting this helps one live with more wisdom and equanimity.

In conclusion, by understanding the five factors mentioned in **Sāṅkhya**, one can approach life's actions with a broader perspective. This wisdom helps cultivate a balanced, detached approach to work, where personal effort is applied with sincerity, but without attachment to results. This leads to greater harmony in life and moves one closer to spiritual liberation.

18.14

**adhiṣṭhānaṃ(n) tathā kartā, karaṇaṃ(ñ) ca pṛthagvidham,
vividhāśca pṛthakceṣṭā, daivaṃ(ñ) caivātra pañcamam. 18.14**

The following are the factors operating towards the accomplishment of actions, viz., the body and the doer, the organs of different kinds and the different functions of manifold kinds; and the fifth is Daiva, latencies of past actions.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān elaborates on the five essential factors that work together to perform and complete any action. He identifies these components and explains their roles in bringing about the desired outcomes in life.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

- **adhiṣṭhānaṃ tathā kartā**: The body (adhiṣṭhāna) and the doer (kartā).
- **karaṇaṃ ca prthagvidham**: The various instruments (karaṇa), like the senses.
- **vividhāśca prthakceṣṭā**: The different functions or efforts (ceṣṭā) involved in the action.
- **daivaṃ caivātra pañcamam**: And finally, the divine will or fate (daiva) as the fifth factor.

Bhagavān outlines the five factors necessary for any action:

1. **The Body (Adhiṣṭhāna)**: The physical body is the field in which all actions occur. It serves as the vehicle through which the doer interacts with the world, performs actions, and experiences the results. Another meaning of **adhiṣṭhāna** is the objective or intention behind the action. The same action may yield different results depending on the objective. For example, if the intention is to help someone, the outcome will differ from that of a selfish or deceptive act, even if the physical action appears similar.
2. **The Doer (Kartā)**: The doer is the individual or the conscious agent who initiates and performs the action. It is the entity that claims the act, saying, "I am doing this." The doer's will and determination are crucial for any action to take place, regardless of how noble the objective may be.
3. **The Instruments (Karaṇa)**: These are the organs and tools employed in the execution of the action. **Karaṇa** refers to the 14 key components: the **manas** (mind), **buddhi** (intellect), **chitta** (subconscious), and **ahamkara** (ego), along with the five **jnanendriyas** (sense organs: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin) and the five **karmendriyas** (organs of action: speech, hands, feet, excretory, and reproductive organs). Additionally, tools such as spectacles or technology also fall under **karaṇa**, as they assist the senses in carrying out their functions.
4. **The Efforts or Functions (Ceṣṭā)**: These refer to the various mental and physical efforts involved in performing an action. Whether it is the willpower, focus, or physical activity required, all these contribute to the successful completion of an action. Without effort, no action can be completed, regardless of the tools or intentions available.
5. **Divine Will or Fate (Daiva)**: **Daiva** refers to divine intervention, fate, or the unseen forces that influence the outcome of actions. This includes the effects of past karma or cosmic influences that are beyond human control. While human effort plays a significant role, **daiva** reminds us that not everything is in our hands. Circumstances like health crises or external challenges often demonstrate how divine will or fate can impact our actions, even if we exert our best efforts.

Bhagavān's teaching in this verse is that no action is the result of a single cause. Every action is the culmination of multiple factors working together. This understanding leads to a more holistic view of life and action, recognizing the importance of each component—body, doer, tools, effort, and divine will—in shaping outcomes.

An important lesson here is that while **daiva** or fate plays a role, human effort can influence and even reduce the effects of fate. By increasing our efforts and making conscious use of our instruments (senses,

mind, etc.), we can positively shape the outcomes of our actions. This is particularly relevant when faced with challenges or unfavorable circumstances—our efforts can compensate for and sometimes change the course of destiny.

For example, in Ayurveda, consuming honey with hot water is advised against for those who wish to build the body, as it can have adverse effects. However, for someone trying to lose weight, this same combination can be useful. This illustrates how the objective and circumstances behind an action (here, the use of honey) can influence its outcome.

On a practical level, this verse teaches us to approach our actions with humility. While we can make efforts and use the tools at our disposal, we must also recognize the influence of divine will. This acceptance helps us maintain a balanced mindset when facing both success and failure. It also encourages us to focus on our efforts rather than becoming overly attached to the results.

In daily life, this teaching encourages mindfulness in action. Whether we are performing duties at work, in relationships, or in spiritual practices, we should recognize the various components at play. We should strive to use our instruments effectively, make the best efforts, and align our actions with dharma (righteousness), all while accepting that some factors remain beyond our control.

Ultimately, Bhagavān's lesson here fosters a sense of detachment from the results of actions, helping us perform our duties with greater wisdom and grace. It reminds us that while we have control over our actions and efforts, the final outcomes are influenced by a complex interplay of forces, including divine will.

By understanding and respecting these factors, we can navigate life with more ease and contribute positively to our spiritual growth, trusting in both our efforts and the divine plan.

18.15

śarīravāñmanobhīryat, karma prārabhate naraḥ, nyāyyaṃ(m) vā viparītaṃ(m) vā, pañcaite tasya hetavaḥ. 18.15

These five are the contributory causes of whatever actions, prescribed or prohibited, man performs with the mind, speech and body.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān explains the five essential factors behind every action a person undertakes. Whether actions are in accordance with dharma (righteousness) or opposed to it, they are all influenced by these five factors.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

- **śarīravāñmanobhīryat:** Actions are initiated through the body (śarīra), speech (vāñ), or mind (manas).
- **karma prārabhate naraḥ:** Whatever actions a person performs, they fall into these categories.
- **nyāyyaṃ vā viparītaṃ vā:** Actions may be just (nyāyya) or unjust (viparīta), aligned with dharma or against it.
- **pañcaite tasya hetavaḥ:** These five causes are always present behind every action.

Bhagavān emphasizes several key insights in this verse:

1. **The Instruments of Action (Body, Speech, and Mind):** All actions are performed through three

key instruments: the body (physical actions), speech (verbal actions), and mind (mental actions). Whether we act through physical effort, express ourselves through words, or generate thoughts and intentions, all these actions are governed by the same underlying principles. Each instrument plays a vital role in shaping how we interact with the world and carry out our duties.

2. **Types of Actions—Righteous or Unrighteous:** Bhagavān highlights that human actions can be either righteous or unrighteous, depending on whether they align with dharma. **Nyāyya** refers to actions that uphold moral and ethical principles, while **Viparīta** refers to actions that violate those principles. Recognizing this distinction is essential for understanding the ethical nature of our actions.
3. **The Five Causes Behind Every Action:** Regardless of the type of action—whether virtuous or not—five factors always play a role in its execution. These include the body (adhiṣṭhāna), the doer (kartā), the instruments of action (karaṇa), the effort (ceṣṭā), and divine will or fate (daiva). Together, these factors determine the outcome of any action, emphasizing that actions are never the result of a single cause.

This verse illustrates the complexity of human actions, showing that they are shaped by a combination of physical, verbal, and mental efforts, as well as external influences. Bhagavān teaches that understanding the multiple causes behind our actions is crucial for evaluating their impact and consequences. He invites us to reflect on whether our actions align with dharma and to become more aware of the factors influencing our behavior.

On a practical level, this verse encourages us to be mindful of our actions—whether physical, verbal, or mental. We are reminded to carefully evaluate the righteousness of our actions, taking into account the five contributory factors. Recognizing that our actions are influenced by these causes helps us act with greater clarity, making informed and ethical choices in our daily lives.

This awareness fosters a sense of responsibility, as we realize that while we can control our efforts and intentions, the outcome is shaped by a variety of forces. It also encourages humility, as we recognize that not all results are within our control. By cultivating this understanding, we can reduce attachment to outcomes and focus on performing our duties with sincerity and dedication, aligned with higher spiritual principles.

In essence, Bhagavān's teaching in this verse emphasizes the importance of recognizing the complexity of actions and their causes. By understanding how the body, mind, speech, effort, and divine will interact, we can navigate life with greater wisdom, acting in harmony with dharma and contributing to a more peaceful and fulfilling existence.

18.16

**tatraivaṃ(m) sati kartāram, ātmānaṃ(ñ) kevalaṃ(n) tu yaḥ,
paśyatyakṛtabuddhitvān, na sa paśyati durmatih. 18.16**

Notwithstanding this, however, he who, having an impure mind, regards the absolute, taintless Self alone as the doer, that man of perverse understanding does not view aright.

Śrī Bhagavān emphasizes the misunderstanding that arises when one mistakenly identifies the pure Self as the doer of actions. This misperception, stemming from ignorance and lack of clarity, leads to a flawed understanding of reality.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

- **tatraivaṃ sati kartāram**: Despite the explanation of the five factors behind all actions,
- **ātmānaṃ kevalaṃ tu yaḥ**: the one who believes the pure Self alone to be the doer,
- **paśyatyakṛtabuddhitvān**: due to lack of wisdom and an impure intellect,
- **na sa paśyati durmatīḥ**: does not truly see and is led astray by distorted understanding.

In this verse, Bhagavān conveys three important insights:

1. **Misidentifying the Self as the Doer (ātmānaṃ kevalaṃ kartāram)**: Bhagavān warns against the error of attributing actions to the Self, which is by nature untainted and beyond action. The Self is immutable and free from the activities of the body and mind. When one, out of ignorance, assumes the Self to be responsible for action, they are making a fundamental error in understanding their true nature.
2. **Lack of Discrimination (akṛtabuddhitvān)**: This mistaken belief arises from an undeveloped or impure intellect, which cannot clearly distinguish between the Self and the ego. The Self is a witness, unchanging and unaffected by the actions of the body or mind, while the ego is involved in action. A person with impure understanding fails to grasp this distinction and, as a result, misinterprets the nature of the Self.
3. **Perverse Understanding (durmatīḥ)**: Bhagavān describes this misunderstanding as arising from "durmatīḥ"—a distorted or deluded mind. This faulty perception leads one to view the Self, which is free from action, as the doer. Such an error binds the individual to the consequences of actions, preventing them from realizing the true, liberated state of the Self.

Bhagavān's teaching is crucial for spiritual seekers who are striving to understand the true nature of the Self. The Self, in its pure essence, is neither the doer of actions nor affected by them. It is the ego, the mind, and the body, driven by the forces of nature (the **gunas**), that engage in actions. When one mistakes the Self for the ego and attributes doership to it, they remain bound by the cycle of **karma**.

This distinction between the Self and the ego is a key aspect of **spiritual wisdom** (viveka). Recognizing that the Self is the non-doer allows one to detach from the fruits of action and realize the higher truth of existence. Bhagavān's teaching here is a reminder that the journey toward liberation requires a clear and purified understanding of the Self, free from the ego's attachment to action.

In practical terms, this verse urges us to develop a **detached perspective** on doership. By understanding that the Self is merely the witness, we can free ourselves from the burden of actions and their consequences. This detachment does not mean inaction but rather the realization that actions belong to the body-mind complex, while the Self remains pure and unaffected.

To cultivate this understanding, one must practice **self-inquiry** and mindfulness, recognizing that the ego, not the Self, is involved in worldly actions. By doing so, we can transcend the illusion of doership and move closer to the realization of our true nature.

In daily life, this teaching encourages us to observe our actions without identifying with them. Instead of thinking "I am doing this," we can remind ourselves that actions are performed by the body and mind, while the Self remains the observer. This shift in perspective can lead to greater **inner peace**, reducing stress and anxiety over the outcomes of actions.

Ultimately, Bhagavān's guidance helps us see beyond the superficial appearance of doership, allowing us to experience the **freedom** of knowing the Self as pure consciousness, beyond action and beyond the

cycle of karma. This realization is a key step toward spiritual liberation (moksha), freeing us from the delusions that keep us bound to worldly existence.

18.17

**yasya nāhaṅkṛto bhāvo, buddhiryasya na lipyate,
hatvāpi sa imāṃlokān, na hanti na nibadhyate. 18.17**

He whose mind is free from the sense of doership, and whose reason is not affected by worldly objects and activities, does not really kill, even having killed all these people, nor does any sin accrue to him.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān reveals the profound state of action without attachment, describing the freedom achieved by a person who has transcended the ego and the sense of doership. Such an individual performs actions, even difficult ones like killing in battle, but remains untouched by their consequences.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

- **yasya nāhaṅkṛto bhāvo:** He who has no sense of ego or personal doership.
- **buddhiryasya na lipyate:** Whose intellect remains unattached and unaffected by actions or their outcomes.
- **hatvāpi sa imāṃlokān:** Even if such a person kills these people (in battle), they remain untainted.
- **na hanti na nibadhyate:** They neither truly kill nor are bound by the consequences of the action.

Bhagavān presents profound insights on the nature of action and non-attachment:

1. **Freedom from Ego (nāhaṅkṛto bhāvo):** The verse stresses the importance of eliminating the false identification with the ego—the belief that "I am the doer." When a person is free from this ego-driven notion of doership, they realize that actions are performed by the body-mind complex, while the true Self remains an uninvolved witness. This liberation from the ego ensures that actions do not bind the individual.
2. **Purity of Intellect (buddhiryasya na lipyate):** Bhagavān explains that a person whose intellect is unattached to the fruits of actions remains pure and unaffected. The intellect, when free from attachment to results, prevents the mind from becoming entangled in desires or the consequences of actions. Such detachment allows the individual to act with clarity and wisdom, without being swayed by personal gain or loss.
3. **Non-violence in Action (hatvāpi sa imāṃlokān):** Even if a person in this state performs an act as extreme as killing in battle, they are not considered to have sinned. This is because their actions are free from personal desires or selfish motives—they act out of a sense of duty and higher purpose. Bhagavān reassures Arjuna that by fighting with a detached and purified mind, he will not incur any sin, even though the action itself might seem violent.
4. **Transcendence of Karma (na hanti na nibadhyate):** Despite performing actions that could typically be seen as sinful or harmful, such a person is not bound by karma. This is the essence of

Karma Yoga—acting without attachment to the results. When one acts from a state of detachment, realizing that the true Self is not the doer, their actions do not create future karma, thereby freeing them from the cycle of cause and effect.

This teaching is vital for spiritual seekers, as it highlights the importance of transcending ego and cultivating non-attachment in action. By doing so, one can engage fully in the world without being bound by the consequences of their deeds. Bhagavān's assurance to Arjuna is a reminder that it is not the act itself, but the **mindset and intention** behind the action that determines whether it binds or liberates.

In our daily lives, this teaching encourages us to approach our duties with detachment and selflessness. Instead of acting from a place of ego or concern over the outcome, we are guided to focus on the purity and sincerity of our actions. By doing so, we reduce the anxiety and stress that often accompany a results-oriented mindset, and we cultivate inner peace.

This verse also teaches us to see our actions as part of a larger divine plan, where the **Self** remains ever free and untouched by worldly actions. Recognizing this truth allows us to act with greater confidence and serenity, knowing that we are not ultimately responsible for the results of our actions. This understanding of action without attachment is a key to spiritual liberation, as it helps us break free from the cycle of karma and realize our true, eternal nature.

By internalizing these teachings, we can engage in life's responsibilities without fear or attachment, performing our duties with clarity and focus while remaining detached from their results. This approach leads to a more peaceful and harmonious life, and ultimately, it brings us closer to the realization of our highest Self.

18.18

**jñānaṃ(jñ) jñeyaṃ(m) parijñātā, trividhā karmacodanā,
karaṇaṃ(ñ) karma karteti, trividhaḥ(kh) karmasaṅgrahaḥ. 18.18**

The Knower, knowledge and the object of knowledge-these three motivate action. Even so, the doer, the organs and activity-these are the three constituents of action.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān delves into the foundational elements that motivate and constitute all actions, offering a profound understanding of the dynamics of karma (action).

Śrī Bhagavān said:

- **jñānaṃ jñeyaṃ parijñātā:** Knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the knower (the subject) are the three motivators of action.
- **trividhā karmacodanā:** These three elements together inspire action.
- **karaṇaṃ karma karteti:** The instruments (senses), the action itself, and the doer (the one who performs the action).
- **trividhaḥ karmasaṅgrahaḥ:** These three components form the basis of any action.

Bhagavān highlights two distinct triads that define the process of action:

1. The Triad of Motivation (jñānaṃ, jñeyaṃ, parijñātā):

- **Jñānaṃ (Knowledge):** This refers to the awareness or understanding one possesses. It is the intellectual comprehension that guides actions.

- **Jñeyam (Object of Knowledge):** This is the goal or object that one seeks to know or attain. It represents the purpose or aim behind the action.
- **Parijñātā (Knower):** The conscious individual who possesses the knowledge and strives to achieve the object of that knowledge. The knower is the subject who initiates action.

These three—knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the knower—together create the motivation for any action. Without these, there would be no impetus to act, as they form the driving force behind all endeavors.

2. The Triad of Action (karaṇam, karma, kartā):

- **Karaṇam (Instruments):** The senses or tools that facilitate action. These include the body's faculties and external means used to carry out an action.
- **Karma (Action):** The actual task or deed performed, manifesting the intent created by the triad of motivation.
- **Kartā (Doer):** The agent or individual who performs the action, using the instruments to accomplish the task.

These three—doer, instruments, and action—form the complete process of any activity. Together, they cover the spectrum of how an action is conceived, initiated, and completed.

Śrī Bhagavān's teaching in this verse provides a clear breakdown of karma, showing how actions are driven by a combination of knowledge, the object of that knowledge, and the one who seeks to apply it. Similarly, the actual performance of the action involves the doer, the means through which the action is performed, and the action itself. This holistic understanding helps clarify the complex process of karma and encourages mindful action.

In our daily lives, we can apply this wisdom by becoming more conscious of the motivations behind our actions. By reflecting on the knowledge we possess, the goals we aim to achieve, and our role as the doer, we ensure that our actions align with our higher purpose. Understanding the role of our senses and tools in facilitating actions also helps us refine our approach, leading to more meaningful and harmonious outcomes.

This comprehensive view of karma encourages us to approach our duties with greater clarity and intention, making our actions more effective and spiritually aligned. Bhagavān's guidance reminds us that true mastery of action lies in understanding the interplay of these components and acting with discernment and awareness.

Ganesh Chaturthi Reflection:

On the auspicious day of **Ganesh Chaturthi**, we conclude our study by offering prayers to Śrī Ganesh, the remover of obstacles and the embodiment of intellect.

भावानी शंकरौ वन्दे श्रद्धा विश्वास रूपिणौ।
याभ्यां विना न पश्यन्ति सिद्धाः स्वान्तःस्थमीश्वरम्॥

"I bow to Bhavani (Parvati) and Shankara (Shiva), who are the embodiments of faith (Shraddha) and trust (Vishvas). Without their blessings, even the most accomplished beings (siddhas) cannot perceive the divine Lord residing within themselves."

Śrī Ganesh is always worshiped first in any ceremony as He represents the wisdom that clears obstacles from our path. Known as the deity of intellect, His large ears signify that a wise person listens more and speaks less. His ears also filter out unnecessary distractions, allowing only the essential to remain. As the

saying goes,

सार सार को गहि रहे, थोथा देय उड़ाय।

Hold on to the essence, discard the useless.

With four hands, Śrī Ganesh carries important symbols:

- **Ankush (goad):** Representing control over the mind.
- **Modak:** Symbolizing joy and the sweetness of life.
- **Rope:** Used to restrain the mind when control is not sufficient, representing discipline.
- **Ved (Knowledge):** Signifying that knowledge must be applied, not just learned.

By worshipping Śrī Ganesh today, we seek His blessings to merge our intellect with the teachings of the Bhagavad Gītā, so that we may overcome obstacles in our spiritual journey.

गजाननं भूतगणादि सेवितं, कपित्थजम्बूफलसार भक्षितम्।
उमासुतं शोकविनाशकारणं, नमामि विघ्नेश्वर पादपङ्कजम्॥

I bow to the lotus feet of Śrī Vighneshwara (Ganesh ji), who is served by divine beings and enjoys the essence of wood apple and rose apple fruits. He is the son of Uma ji (Goddess Parvati) and the cause of the destruction of sorrows.

Question and Answer Session:

1. Ajita Kumar Misro

Q: What is the difference between **Daivi Guna Sampada** and **Pradnya**?

A: As the **Daivi Guna Sampada** (divine qualities) grow and strengthen, they lead to the awakening of **Pradnya** (wisdom).

2. Didi Ji (Galaxy M33 5G)

Q: My sister, after starting the Bhagavad Gītā's L1 to L3 classes, was diagnosed with cancer. Despite her illness, she continued to attend classes and chant "Hare Ram, Hare Krishna, He Yogeshwar" until her passing on **Putrada Ekadashi**. She had a premonition of her departure, saying a week before, "I have to leave on Gyaras (Ekadashi)." Could she attain liberation?

A: Without a doubt, your sister was a virtuous and blessed soul. Her dedication to reading the Gītā, even amidst the suffering of cancer, shows that her **Pragya** (awakened wisdom) was active. Her ability to sense the day of her passing and her unwavering devotion to Bhagavān until the end indicate that she was truly on the path to deliverance. Such virtuous souls attain the blessings of Bhagavān. We can learn much from her devotion and strength.



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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!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar – Creative Writing Department

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|| OM ŚRĪKṚṢṆĀRPAṆAMASTU ||