

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 18: Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga

5/6 (Ślōka 46-56), Saturday, 28 September 2024

Interpreter: SENIOR TRAINER SOU SHRADDHA JI RAODEO

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## Better to do one's own dharma imperfectly, rather than perfectly do another's dharma

Chapter 18 of Bhagavad Gītā is **Mokṣha Sanyāsa Yoga: The Yoga of Perfection of Renunciation and Surrender**.

The session began with lighting of the divine lamp and prayers.

The 18th chapter of the Srimad Bhagavad Gītā encapsulates the essence of the entire Gītā. This chapter begins by Arjuna enquiring from Bhagavān on the distinction between the terms sanyās (renunciation of actions) and tyāga (renunciation of desires), as both come from the root words that mean “to abandon”. Bhagavān elaborates on the true nature of these practices, emphasizing the renunciation of non-divine aspects within oneself by abandoning tendencies, urges, impulses, and motives that are not aligned with the divine. Bhagavān clarifies that one should never relinquish the act of sacrifice, charity, and penance as they help in the purification of the inner state, by which one can elevate to higher states of consciousness in the path of spiritual journey.

Additionally, the chapter categorizes personalities based on their dominant **Gunās** (qualities) — *Sattvic* (pure), *Rajasic* (passionate), and *Tamasic* (ignorant) — and discusses how these qualities influence individuals' capacity for sacrifice, wisdom, actions, fortitude, and happiness. By understanding and transcending these *Gunās*, one can achieve *Moksha* and attain freedom from the bondage of mundane existence.

Bhagavān has expounded on the three-fold divisions of Karma or the action, the doer or the performer of action, knowledge, intellect, determination or resolve and then happiness, based on the three modes of nature or *Prakṛti* - i.e., *Sattva* (mode of goodness), *Rajas* (mode of passion) and *Tamas* (mode of ignorance). HE expounds on each of these entities that are influenced by the three modes of nature. The motive behind every action is to seek happiness. Everyone desires to be happy, and through their actions they seek fulfillment, joy or contentment. However, actions of each person differ and are distinct. Hence, the results that is a derivative of the action also differ. Since the action, the

doer of action, the intellect and determination have a three-fold classification based on the three modes of *Prakṛti*, the derived happiness from the action is also of three types based on the three modes of nature.

After expounding on the characteristics at an individual level, HE then explains the four categories or sections of the society based on the true nature. Bhagavān has classified the society into four categories (*Brahmānas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras*), all of which form the four pillars of the society. To reiterate, HE does not declare any one of them as superior or inferior. The caste-based division/discrimination/untouchability etc., got created by people with the passage of time due to the incorrect understanding of the scriptures or for political gains.

Bhagavān now explains that **the biggest accomplishment of human life is the state of oneness with the divine**. HE says that by fulfilling the duties (born from the innate qualities), human beings can attain perfection, which ultimately puts them on the path of liberation. HE explains this further in the forthcoming shlokas.

**18.46**

**yataḥ(ph) pravṛttirbhūtānām(m), yena sarvamidam(n) tatam,  
sVākarmaṇā tamabhyarcya, siddhiṁ(m) vindati mānavaḥ. 18.46**

From whom all beings come into being and by whom the whole universe is pervaded, by worshipping Him through the performance of his own natural duties, man attains the highest perfection.

Before we deep dive into this shloka, let's revisit the previous shloka as stated below:

**sve sve karmaṇy abhirataḥ sansiddhiṁ labhate naraḥ  
sva-karma-nirataḥ siddhiṁ yathā vindati tach chhṛiṇu (18.45)**

Bhagavān explains that by fulfilling their duties which are aligned to their innate qualities, the embodied souls can attain perfection. The term **Swa-dharma** refers to the prescribed duties which is based upon one's true nature or innate qualities. Thus, by discharging the same dutifully, it leads to the purification and growth of the embodied soul.

The term **abhirataḥ** refers to fulfilling one's own action with devotion. The one who is devoted in discharging one's prescribed action with utmost devotion or sincerity would attain perfection. The term **siddhi** here does not refer to any spiritual or magical powers. It refers to the ability to free oneself from the attachment towards desires, which ultimately leads one towards perfection and attain the state of union with the Supreme Divine. Bhagavān now explains how one can become perfect by discharging one's prescribed duties.

**Sage Jajali and the butcher Dharmavyad:**

Jajali, an ascetic, performed intense penance by remaining motionless for many years to the extent that birds built nests in his matted hair. As a result of his penance, he attained many siddhis (spiritual abilities). As Swamy Govind Dev Giri Ji Maharaj explains, even by chanting a mantra for a specified time, one can attain great benefits.

Since Jajali had attained the many siddhis, he believed that he was extremely virtuous. While he was contemplating that his siddhis made him extremely virtuous, he heard a heavenly/celestial voice (*Akashvaani*) proclaim that a butcher by name Dharmavyad has attained far more superior siddhis than him. Jajali was taken aback to hear that a mundane butcher has attained more superior siddhis.

He set out to meet the butcher to understand how he elevated to a far more superior state than him. Jajali then visited Dharmavyad at his shop. The butcher requested him to wait so that he could attend to his customers and then reveal the secret to his siddhis. He later took Jajali to his humble abode. Jajali expressed his desire of understanding how he attained the siddhis.

Dharmavyad explained that he sold meat for a living but never consumed it himself. He also explained that looking after his parents was his prescribed duty and by abiding to his *Svadharmā*, he elevated to a righteous man and attained the siddhis. He did his duty to which he was born. He sold meat and earned a living and was devoted to caring for his aged parents. He pointed out that Jajali neglected his parents in order to become virtuous by engaging in penance. Jajali was greatly struck by the devotion with which Dharmavyad served his parents. He took his lessons from the butcher on aligning to *Svadharmā* and understood that by discharging one's prescribed duties, one can attain perfection. He then began to tend to his parents' duty, which he had rather neglected before.

The moral of this tale from the Shanti parva of Mahabharat is that the seeker can attain perfection by the honest pursuit of whatever calling falls to the seeker's lot in life, and that it is really worship of the Supreme Divine who created and pervades all.

The occupation may be the one to which the seeker is born to in society, or it may have been embraced by the seeker due to life circumstances, or the seeker may have adopted the same by his/her choice. But what really matters is the spirit of sincerity and faithfulness with which the seeker does his life's work. When the occupation or the prescribed duty is discharged sincerely and faithfully, it leads to perfection which puts the seeker on the path to attain liberation. **By discharging the prescribed duties with utmost dedication and devotion, the seeker can attain the divine by attaining liberation.**

Bhagavān now explains in this shloka on how one can become perfect by discharging one's prescribed duties. Swamy Govind Dev Giri Ji Maharaj says that the entire first line of this shloka describes the definition of the Supreme Divine. The first line of this shloka implies that the whole cosmic creation and all the living entities emanate from the Supreme Divine. HE is the all-pervading almighty who is present in every entity of this cosmic creation. Irrespective of whether one is born to the family of a specific Varna (Brahmāna, Kshatriya, Vaishya or Shudra) or a section of the society, one has been put to a position in life (say a teacher, a student, an employer, an employee etc.) as per HIS divine will or plan. Therefore, if one can simply perform one's *Svadharmā* in accordance with one's nature and position in life, one would be aligning to HIS divine plan for one's own purification. When the prescribed duties are discharged from a state of devotional consciousness, the work itself becomes a form of worship.

Dyaneshwar ji Mouli has explained this with an example of a flower offered to the Supreme Divine. At the time of pooja or worship, one automatically offers the best flower available to the Divine (say betel leaves to Bhagavān Shiv or red hibiscus for Ganeshji). In the same manner, if one can perform the prescribed duties to the best of one's ability, it would be the purest form of worship to the Divine which would put one on the path of liberation.

Bhagavān explains in this shloka that by performing one's natural occupation, one worships the Supreme Divine and by discharging the prescribed work from this state of consciousness, a person easily attains perfection. As they say - **Work is Worship** and even the tiniest work is a flower placed at the feet of the almighty.

**śreyānsvadharmo viguṇaḥ(ph), paradharmātsvanuṣṭhitāt,  
svabhāvaniyataṁ(ñ) karma, kurvannāpnoti kilbiṣam. 18.47**

Better is one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than the duty of another well-performed; for, performing the duty ordained by his own nature, man does not incur sin.

Before diving deep into this shloka, let's understand the element of comparison that arises when one discharges the prescribed duties. The housemaid compares herself with the homemaker of the house (where she is employed) and looks down upon her own prescribed duties. In the same manner, the homemaker looks down upon her duty by appreciating a working woman for her financial independence and a working woman envies a homemaker for not being able to dedicate the required time to the family.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that it is better to do one's own dharma, even though imperfectly, than to do another's dharma, even though perfectly. By doing one's innate duties, a person does not incur sin. As explained in the previous shloka, everyone has a purpose as per the Supreme Divine will and based on their position in life, the prescribed duties need to be executed. If one abandons the duties thinking them to be defective and take up another's duties (which are unsuitable for one's nature), one struggles to execute them as it is not aligned to one's own innate nature.

Consider the example of neem leaves. Its innate nature is bitter by virtue of which, several medicinal properties are derived from the same. If the neem leaf compared itself with Tulsi leaf and embraced its properties (which is not true to its innate nature), the neem leaf would lose its unique utility.

Consider another example of an aquarium. Milk is more expensive than water and ghee is more expensive than a liter of milk. However, milk or ghee cannot replace the water in the aquarium. In the same manner, by aligning to one's innate nature or *Svadharmā*, one can attain perfection. As they say - Everyone has a role to play and the best role you can play is to "**Be yourself**". By aligning to one's innate nature and duties, it is easy to flow with the current of the universe and the Divine will and attain perfection, instead of embracing self-destruction (or incurring a sin) by flowing against the current of the universe.

**18.48**

**sahajaṁ(ñ) karma kaunteya, sadoṣamapi na tyajet,  
sarvārambhā hi doṣeṇa, dhūmenāgnirivāvṛtāḥ. 18.48**

Therefore, Arjuna, one should not relinquish one's innate duty, even though it has a measure of evil; for all undertakings are beset by some evil, as is the fire covered by smoke.

Bhagavān continues to explain that even if one sees defects in one's prescribed actions, one should not recoil from the same. Bhagavān uses the analogy of the smoke engulfing the fire. Like how the fire is naturally enveloped by smoke, the actions are also engulfed by defects.

But, by aligning to the *Svadharmā* and discharging the actions, one can overcome the defects. If one refrains from abandoning the work that is best suited to one's nature, even if it has defects in it, and continues to embrace the same with sincerity and devotion, one eventually aligns to the prescribed work. In due course, one develops detachment towards the fruits of Karma (which is the path of Karma Yoga) and eventually puts one on the path to liberation.

On the contrary, if one abandons or recoils from the prescribed works and adopts *paradharma* (prescribed duties of the other), one is entangled in desires and is unable to attain perfection, by the

result of which, one is entangled in the cycle of birth and death. **By being true to one's innate role and by dispensing the prescribed actions (aligning to one's propensity), one is on the path to attain liberation.**

18.49

**asaktabuddhiḥ(s) sarvatra, jitātmā vigataspr̥haḥ,  
naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ(m) paramāṃ(m), sannyāsenādhigacchati. 18.49**

He whose intellect is unattached everywhere, whose thirst for enjoyment has altogether disappeared and who has subdued his mind, reaches through Sāṅkhyayoga (the path of Knowledge) the consummation of actionlessness.

People having contentment are blessed with right kind of intellect, **the intellect of detachment**, and that leads to "**Naishkarmya Siddhi**". Bhagavān has discussed the same in this shloka. By continuously doing good actions in the right way, gradually the person develops good amount of detachment. What he gets ultimately is "**Sarvatra Asakta Buddhi**"- the kind of vision which our saints had. The person does the task diligently, with devotion. There is a sense of equanimity among all the creatures with who the person interacts with. For example, in business, he will have the same level of respect towards a poor customer as well as towards a rich one. A teacher will treat all her students equally. The person does not differentiate anyone based on caliber, background etc.

The advantages of having a sense of equanimity towards everyone are:

- The person will be able to control his own thoughts in a better way. Having won over himself (**jitātmā**), he has some level of self-realization.
- He will have complete control over his senses. All his desires have fled (**vigataspr̥haḥ**). He is not affected on seeing delicious food; marketing gimmicks like offers, sale etc. does not make him buy unnecessarily. **spr̥haḥ** here means touch; meaning thereby that the touch of such things does not affect such people.
- Temptations from the surroundings will not detach or deter him from his duty.
- He will have a very good vision of everything around him.
- He attains the state of **naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ**, like the sun and the trees. , The Sun continues to rise and set every day, unaffected by the working of the world. The trees too do not keep an account of the number of fruits they produce. They just do their task with perfection and with a sense of non-doership or attachment. Similarly, the **person does everything without the ego of having done anything**.
- He becomes a **Siddha Puruṣa** through renunciation (**sannyāsenādhigacchati**). His work in itself has become a type of meditation or penance. The person is ready to attain the **Brahma Tattva**.

There is a flow to reach **naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ**:

- Do your Karma
- Turn the karma into Karma Yoga
- Through perfection of above one is able to reach **naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ**
- Following some more processes, that person attains **Brahma Tattva**.

That is the ultimate Moksha which Sri Krishna is telling further.

18.50

**siddhiṃ(m) prāpto yathā brahma, tathāpnoti nibodha me,  
samāsenaiḥ kaunteya, niṣṭhā jñānasya yā parā. 18.50**

Arjuna, know from Me only briefly the process through which man having attained actionlessness, which is the highest consummation of Jñānayoga (the path of Knowledge), reaches Brahma.

Śrī Krishna briefs about the process that a person undergoes between attainment of *naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ* and Brahma Tattva (**siddhiṃ(m) prāpto yathā brahma**). HE says that *naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ* and devotion take the person to the **highest order of knowledge (niṣṭhā jñānasya yā parā)**. The whole purpose of a person doing actions is to achieve a "pious state of mind", which would ultimately lead him to a journey of self-realization.

Once the person has attained ***naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ***, how does he attain the Brahma tattva? What is the eternal state of knowledge?

These are also mentioned in the 6th Chapter (*Atma SamnyāsaYoga*). But here Śrī Krishna puts it in a different way. HE is giving them as characteristics of "**Siddha Puruṣa**", the one who has attained *naiṣkarmyasiddhi*. By mentioning their characteristics, HE is telling us how we can reach that stage. HE describes the first set of characteristics in the following shloka.

**18.51**

**buddhyā viśuddhayā yukto, dhṛtyātmānaṃ(n) niyamya ca,  
śabdādīnviṣayāṃstyaktvā, rāga dveṣau vyudasya ca. 18.51**

Endowed with a pure intellect and partaking of a light, Sāttvika and regulated diet, living in a lonely and undefiled place, having rejected sound and other objects of sense,

The *Siddha Puruṣa* is endowed with:

- **buddhyā viśuddhayā yukto** - pure intellect
- **dhṛtyātmānaṃ niyamya ca** - pure firmness of action,
- **śabdādīnviṣayāṃstyaktvā** - is able to control all his sense organs. Usually, very small things deter us from whatever we are doing. We come into contact with some stimulus and easily lose focus. Like for example, we pick up our phone for making a call but get distracted by the notifications, and forget why we picked up the phone. We are weak in controlling our senses, and quickly succumb to temptations. On the other hand, a Siddha Puruṣa is able to control himself properly and has complete control over his sense organs. Few examples of people who have not reached this stage:
  - Music starts playing one gets carried away and starts dancing
  - On knowing about some good sale, immediately one feels like shopping
  - On listening to some people gossiping, the person too starts to gossip
- **rāga dveṣau vyudasya ca** - is above the state of *rāga* (severe attachment) and *dveṣa* (hatred). Excessive attachment or hatred instigates people to deviate from their goals or do something which is not right.

One can reach this stage, just by introspecting one's small actions, and use it as a guide to measure the distance he has to go in order to reach the stage.

**18.52**



**viviktasevī laghvāśī, yatavākkāyamānasah,  
dhyānayogaparo nityam(m), vairāgyam(m) samupāśritaḥ. 18.52**

having controlled the mind, speech and body by restraining the mind and senses through firmness of a Sāttvika type, taking a resolute stand on dispassion, after having completely got rid of attraction and aversion and remaining ever devoted to the Yoga of meditation,

Further more, the siddha Puruṣa will have the following characteristics:

- **viviktasevī** : a natural liking towards places of solitude where he can contemplate / meditate.
- **laghvāśī**: a very small appetite. The appetite is not just related to eating, but extends to other appetite like seeing, speaking, hearing etc. For example, while listening one has to be very careful, and should judge if the matter that is being listened to would take him to the right path, or just a gossip which should not be entertained. The person should never forget the target.
- **yatavākkāyamānasah** - his speech, sense organs, mind, and body are subdued.
- **dhyānayogaparo nityam** - he is always in a state of mediation / concentration. When a person is not influenced by temptations, and his appetite is very less for all other subjects, naturally the person moves to a state of Dhyana Yoga.
- **vairāgyam samupāśritaḥ** - he takes refuge in *Vairāgya* (dispassion). Attaining this means getting hold of the key to the ultimate destination. **From the state of controlling, the person has come to a state of dispassion.** For example, he does not get tempted by sales or offers; Delicious food does not entice him in over-indulgence.

The aim of Learning Gītā is

**गीता पढ़ें, पढ़ाएं, जीवन में लाएं ॥**

We should not stop with 'Learn Gītā' or 'teach Gītā' but should extend to 'live Gītā'. In order to make 'live Gītā' a reality, one must make it a habit to contemplate about one's own actions and life, whenever such important shlokas appear.

**18.53**

**ahaṅkāraṁ(m) balaṁ(n) darpaṁ(ñ), kāmaṁ(ñ) krodhaṁ(m) parigrahaṁ,  
vimucya nirmamaḥ(ś) śānto, brahmabhūyāya kalpate. 18.53**

having given up egotism, violence, arrogance, lust, anger and luxuries, devoid of the feeling of meum and tranquil of heart-such a man becomes qualified for oneness with Brahma, who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss.

In the previous sloka Śrī *Krishna Paramātmā* spoke about dispassion. It is not easy for a *sadhaka* to obtain dispassion. Several factors like attraction and aversion of the senses towards their objects, restrain the *sadhaka* from abandoning the passions of life. HE explains that one has to avoid and abandon the following in order to realise the supreme reality.

1. **Ahamkara** - state of ego, or 'me-ness' where the person 'I' is important. If a sadhak talks of 'me','my' all the time, he is considered egoistic
2. **Balam** - forcing or pushing some one to do a task without his acceptance
3. **Darpan** - arrogance
4. **Kama** - desires
5. **Krodha** - anger

*Kama and Krodha* are interrelated. If one wants to control anger, then he should restrain the *kama*. *Sri Krishna Paramātmā* talks about '*parigraha*' ie., control & leave the bad things. We should be attentive such that we do not accumulate or hold materialistic items of the world.

*Bhagavān* tells *Arjuna* to immediately abandon or suppress (*Vimucya*) the above qualities to attain a state of peace. Once ego is renounced, lust for power and prestige dissolve. This followed by constant engagement of the mind in transcendence, the yogi/ sant attains tranquility and gets free from the bonds of desire, anger, and greed. Such a yogi attains realization of the Absolute Truth as *Brahman*. The mind can be compared to the river Ganges which rushes down with great force from the Himalayas till it reaches the sea; once it merges with the sea, it becomes calm & tranquil.

How do we attain this state of peacefulness - ***Brahmā sthithi***?

When we stop acquiring materialistic things and abandon the above explained characters, and engage in *dhyana*, *tapah*, *dana*, *punya karma* etc., we attain the natural eternal state of peace.

**18.54**

**brahmabhūtaḥ(ph) prasannātmā, na śocati na kāṅkṣati,  
śamaḥ(s) sarveṣu bhūteṣu, madbhaktiṃ(m) labhate parām. 18.54**

Established in identity with *Brahma* (who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss solidified), and cheerful in mind, the *Sāṅkhyayogī* no longer grieves nor craves for anything. The same to all beings, such a *Yogī* attains supreme devotion to Me.

*Krishna Paramātmā* explains about the yogi who attains the *Brahmā sthiti*. A person who is eternally happy, has no desires left, never laments and observes no grief, reaches this peaceful state. Such a person is able to see equanimity and peace every where and in every person including himself. That yogi will find god every where. This is called the '*Param bhakti*' ie., the highest order of *Bhakti*.

*Sant Tukaram*, *Gyaneshwar ji maharaj* and other saints who were ***Artha, jigyasu and arthardhi*** were able to visualise *Vithala Bhagavān* in every one. They experienced *Brahmā sthithi* and peaceful state of life. There was no grief experienced by them. Such *yogis* will attain the '*jyanothhara bhakti*', the highest level of knowledge.

**18.55**

**bhaktyā māmabhijānāti, yāvānyaścāsmi tattvataḥ,  
tato mām(n) tattvato jñātvā, viśate tadanantaram. 18.55**

Through that supreme devotion he comes to know Me in reality, what and who I am; and thereby knowing Me truly, he forthwith merges into My being.

*Shree Krishna* stated in the previous sloka that on becoming situated in transcendental knowledge one develops devotion. Now HE says that only through devotion can one come to know God's personality. The *jñānī* has no realization of the personal form of God. For example, *Yoshada mata* finds *Krishna Paramātmā* as a small kid who can hold the *Govardhana parvata*. *Gopikas* has seen him as killer of *putana*, *kalingi* and *makhan chor*. *Maturavasis* identify him as the killer of *Kamsa* and as the *maha Puruṣa*.

As a *sadhaka's* *Sāadhanā* grows, his understanding of the manifestation of the *Paramātmā* also grows. It is love that opens the door to the impossible and makes way for the inaccessible. *Śrī Krishna*



states here that the mystery of God's form, virtues, pastimes, abode, and associates can only be comprehended through unalloyed devotion. The devotees understand God because they possess the eyes of love. We meet many people in our daily life but only if we spend some time with them we will be able to understand them better. Say for example, a couple before marriage can only relate to the other by their achievements in life or academic progress, activity, etc. Only after marriage and close proximity, will they be able to understand each other better.

*Paramātmā* says that those who understand themselves will be able to understand HIM very well in totality and once they know HIM completely, they become equal to HIM. Such *bhakta* becomes equal to god and gets united with HIM. *Sant Tukaram Ji maharaj* used to see *Vithala Bhagavān* every where , in vegetables, people etc., as he is united in the *Paramātmā*.

**18.56**

**sarVākarmāṇyapi sadā, kurvāṇo madvyapāśrayaḥ,  
matprasādādavāpnoti, śāśvataṁ(m) padamavyayam. 18.56**

The Karmayogī, however, who depends on Me, attains by My grace the eternal, imperishable state, even though performing all actions.

Through *bhakti*, the devotees enter into full awareness of *Paramātmā*. Equipped with it, they see everything in its connection with God. They see their body, mind, and intellect as HIS energies, and their material possessions as HIS property. They see all living beings as parts and parcels of *Paramātmā*. In that divine consciousness, they do not give up work, rather they renounce the pride of being the doers and enjoyers of work. They see all work as devotional service to the Supreme, and they depend upon him for its performance.

*Bhagavān* says once the devotee attains HIM and get united with HIM, they attain HIM even while doing their own actions . A devotee need not leave his work and body to attain the *Paramātmā*. The sadhaka will reach a state of indestructible/eternal state by the grace of *Bhagavān Śrī Krishna*.

In the next session, we will be covering the fruits of attaining the *Brahmā Sthithi*. We will discuss in detail about taking refuge in *bhakti* and the fruits obtained by doing the action with full devotion. By doing so we will attain the highest order of *param bhakti* , *Brahmā jnana* and the eternal state of supreme consciousness.

**Question and Answer Session:**

**Rabindranath Panda Ji:**

**Q:** What Svadharma should a retired person follow? Will it be *Saguna* or *viguna*?

**A:** As a retired employee, the rich experience obtained over the years can be shared to the children in the family. If you are active you can help the needy in the society through your experience, can work in senior citizen groups and become useful to the society. If you are able to share money , that can also be done to the needy in the society. Incase you are unable to decide what *svadharma* is to be followed, take refuge in *Paramātmā* and pray for showing you the right path so that you spend the rest of the life in good cause and lead a purposeful life. Don't worry about the *saguna* and *viguna* part because *Paramātmā* takes care of it. Just do the duty entrusted upon you with devotion and attention.

**Anita Ji:**

**Q:** I have been able to overcome some of my negative emotions but after some days of practice due to household botherations and health issues, I am getting frustated and showing off my anger? How to

control it?

**A:** As You have started reading and learning *Gītā* you are stepping up the stairs of the spiritual journey. It is not possible to control all negative emotions in one go. The change in our temperament and attitude happens slowly and step by step. We cannot completely control the behaviour of others in the house or the servants and cannot change their behaviour as we want. Expecting such changes is nothing less than a desire. So as the desires (*kama*) crop up, it leads to Anger (*Krodha*) thus leading to the situation mentioned. Only by continuous *Sādhana*, we can control our behaviour. It does not happen overnight. We need to pray to *Paramātmā* to help us overcome such desires that lead to frustration and anger.

**Kanchan Ji:**

**Q:** Which task has to be taken up as *Svadharmā*, the one which is got by birth or that we achieve through our skill?

**A:** *Svadharmā* is the task entrusted upon by choice. If a lady is a housewife, she has to take care of all the household work. If a lady chooses some other profession in addition to being house wife, then she has to do both of them by balancing her time, energy and patience. As per the stage of life, we have a set of prescribed responsibilities that we need to fulfill. Doing those prescribed responsibilities in addition to the task chosen by us together becomes our *svadharmā*.

**Rajkumari Ji:**

**Q:** Please explain the difference between the *Atma* and *Prāṇa*?

**A:** There is subtle difference between the two. *Atma* becomes *Prāṇa* when jeevatma gets in touch with the *Prakṛti*. *Atma* tatva is not felt. It is the reflection of the *Brahmā* within ourselves. *Prāṇa* can be connected with supreme through *Atma*.

**Q:** How is eating Leafy vegetables different from eating animals? Is it not *himsa* because plants also have life?

**A:** As per our *sashtra*, it is allowed to eat leafy vegetables as per the requirement. It is not considered sin because the leafy vegetables degenerate by themselves after some time if not used by humans or animals. So anyhow they are going to die but by providing food to the other living creatures they are getting the *punyakarma*. Same is the case with fruits because the fruits are consumed at ripening only and if they remain on the tree after ripening, they either fall off and rot or become heavy to the tree which takes its own course. Whereas in case of animals, they are killed before eating, i.e., their life is taken away immaturely. This will cause sin to the consumer.

**Lingraj Ji:**

**Q:** What is the meaning of "*Rathi*"?

**A:** *Rathi* means 'Magna'..being indulged in, being involved in. *Karya rathi* means one who is involved in his work. Similarly *Karma rathi* means one who is involved in his karma. so on goes for *jnan rathi* and *bhakti rathi*...

**Radha Ji:**

**Q:** I am a veterenary doctor. I treat animals but after the duty hours i am finding it difficult to attend to them causing me immense dissatisfaction & guilt. How can I balance such situation?

**A:** There is no escape from work. If the *svadharmā* calls for such work hours then we have to attend to it. Balancing of home and duty has to be done such that neither of the *dharma* is effected. Moving

closer to work place such that you can attend to the work could help. If the physical strength is needed, then we must do all those needed to improve our physical strength and for improving our mental strength we need to pray *Paramātmā* to help us in accomplishing the tasks. By being sincere and honest, HE will definitely guide us in such a way that we can complete all our tasks with complete satisfaction and fulfilment.

**Sooren Ji:**

**Q:** In chapter 11, 53rd *sloka*, *Paramātmā* says *yajna, dana, tapah* are not needed to know HIM in totality. In contrast, HE stresses in chapter 18, 5th shloka, to follow all those to know HIM. Can you please explain and clear this confusion?

**A:** *Paramātmā* is talking about the persons who attained highest level of devotion. For those people it is not necessary to follow the *yajna, dana and tapah* because they are already in the *parambhakti* state. But for a normal *sadhaka* who has just begun his spiritual journey it is not the case, For eg, a kid who wants to become a doctor should study 1-12 classes, give board exams in 12th, pass the entrance exam and go for studying medicine. It is a step by step procedure. Similary for realising god we need to follow the *Yajna, Dana and Tapah* processes and then after successful spiritual enlightenment, we may attain liberation with the grace of the God. It is called the *ananya bhakti*. Unless all these stages are passed, realisation /liberation is not possible.



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**Jai Shri Krishna!**

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar – Creative Writing Department

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