

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 4: Jñāna-Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/ubH01uUGLuw>

The Journey from Karma Yoga to Jñāna Karma Sanyāsa Yoga

The fourth chapter of Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā is **Jñāna Karma Sanyāsa Yoga** - The Yoga of Knowledge and the Disciplines of Action.

The session commenced with lighting of the lamp followed by prayers to the revered Guru Param Pujya Swamiji Shri Govind Dev Giri Ji Maharaj and Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

We are in the midst of a beautiful chapter that is extremely relevant to us. It is the usual practice amongst us to invest mindfully and in the best possible way, all the rewards that we consider worthy. For us, the most precious and worthy reward is the human body and the ability to understand the holy Gītā. Hence, the best investment we can make with these precious bounties is to use them in such a way that we reap the benefits in the next life as well. The purpose of this present life should be to ensure that we accrue maximum balance of good deeds for our subsequent births.

We need to lead our lives in such a way that we do not translate our karmas into paapa or punya. In the previous sessions we have seen that our karmas are not divine as they accrue sins and virtues in whatever we do, consequently making us subject to **karmaphalas**. In order to free ourselves from this cycle of repetitive reaping of past actions, we should ensure that our actions remain free from the twin repercussions of transgression as well as moral uprightness.

The third chapter reveals that Karma Yoga, if substantiated with the right knowledge, can lead us to Jñāna Karma Sanyāsa Yoga. To put it concisely, **Karma yoga is the first step towards attainment of Sanyāsa**. Knowledge perceived in the correct perspective can enable one to become an ideal Karma yogi. In one of the earlier shlokas, Sri Krishna has said:

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥ 17॥

(You must understand the nature of all three—recommended action, wrong action, and inaction. The truth

about these is profound and difficult to understand.)

The word **Akarma** refers to actions that are performed without attachment to the results, merely for the pleasure of God. They neither have any karmic reactions nor do they entangle the soul.

The sages are examples of such persons who perform actions that are not followed by any karmic reactions. Such sages have been referred to as **paṇḍitaṃ** in the next shloka, in which Sri Krishna, in HIS characteristic comprehensible and lucid way, explains the attributes of such **buddhimān manuṣyeṣu**, or the wise among all men.

4.19

**yasya sarve samārambhāḥ(kh), kāmasaṅkalpavarjitāḥ,
jñānāgnidagdhakarmāṇaṃ(n), tamāhuḥ(ph) paṇḍitaṃ(m) budhāḥ. 4.19**

Even the wise call him a sage, whose undertakings are all free from desire and Sankalpa (thoughts of the world) and whose actions are burnt up by the fire of wisdom.

In the previous sessions, we have seen how Sri Bhagavān explains the concepts of Karma, akarma and seeing Akarma in karma. This last stage of seeing akarma in karma occurs when work gets done without the feeling that we are doing anything. Look at the Sun God, without whom the dawn of the day and eventual dusk would not be possible. Yet, irrespective of its crucial role in the existence of the Universe, the Sun God remains unfazed and unaffected by everything around, even though the work is being done by its celestial Grace. Parameshwar explains that a person who wishes to attain this kind of siddhi, is able to understand these two situations of karma and akarma.

We also need to focus on the word '**Pashyet**' which indicates not just the ability to see but also the potential to actually experience a phenomenon. When we attend the vivechan sessions, it is important to contemplate on the knowledge imparted and also experience it by bringing these valuable lessons to our lives.

The word **samārambhāḥ** means an important task or an undertaking. Wise is the person who begins all his tasks with the attitude of **kāma-saṅkalpa-varjitāḥ**, that is, devoid of desire and the cognitive frameworks of the mind which keep us trapped in such longings. The word **kāma** means desire while **saṅkalpa** is the comment that the mind makes. It is the mental framework that forms the root of all desires.

There is a popular phrase in Sanskrit:

काम जानामि ते मूलं संकल्पात् काम जायसे

(O desire, I know thy root; thou art born of the wish)

Sankalpa is the comment that the mind makes. It is the voice that tells us 'what a beautiful car it is' when we see a vehicle, and that leads to the desire for owning that car. Similarly, a child says that he wants to be a doctor or a cricketer, depending on what his mind has set for him. It is therefore the sankalpa that turns into desire. Sankalpa and desire come into the picture when we want objects for our personal and ulterior motives or our subjective gratification. It is to be noted that having desires is not wrong. After all, our freedom fighters harboured the desire to free the country from the yoke of foreign rule, and this desire became their noble purpose or dhyey in life. However, desire and sankalp for personal gains does not by any means fulfill the criteria of Karma Yoga. Any temptation for the sake of individual inclinations leads us away from this path of Karma Yoga. True knowledge lies in the astuteness to perceive the futility of nurturing such personal desires and the ability to give up these selfish motives and adopt

aspirations that benefit society as a whole. In such a case we can say that the concerned person's intellect is soaked in knowledge.

A beautiful string of words used by Sri Krishna alludes to the concept of **jñānāgnidagdhakarmāṇaṃ**, a term which can best be understood by the illustration of a seed and a tree. When we sow a seed and water it lovingly, it sprouts a plant. The same seed, if roasted, would not yield a plant. Sri Krishna explains that our karmas are like seeds. Whatever we do will inevitably result in paapa or punya, for which we will have to face consequences. However, if our karmas are roasted in knowledge and supported by divine wisdom, then our karmas would be free of sins or virtues attached to the actions. To put it precisely, our actions would be **kāma-saṅkalpa-varjitāḥ**, leading to the burning of all the consequent reactions in the fire of divine knowledge, or what Sri Krishna terms **jñānāgnidagdhakarmāṇaṃ**.

This is the kind of knowledge that gives one an understanding of the **ātman** and **Paramātmā** and qualifies such a person to be called a **paṇḍitaṃ**. The word **pandit** comes from the word **panda buddhi**, which refers to the mind that is equipped with this highest level of spiritual knowledge. Hence we see that the word pandit conveys a deep meaning in the Sanskrit language. This is the kind of knowledge that helps us overcome the cycle of birth and death. This is the reason why this karma becomes **jñānā-based karma** and its principles give the chapter its title, **Jñāna Karma Sanyāsa Yoga**.

This kind of knowledge is easy for those who have attained a high level of spiritual progress. However, what about ordinary mortals like us? Can we ever hope to attain and live this kind of wisdom? In the next few shlokas Paramātmā explains some important characteristics of the **Jñāna Karma Sanyāsa Yogis**.

4.20

**tyaktvā karmaphalāsaṅgaṃ(n), nityatrpto nirāśrayaḥ,
karmaṇyabhipravṛtto'pi, naiva kiñcitkaroti saḥ. 4.20**

He, who, having totally given up attachment to actions and their fruit, no longer depends on anything in the world, and is ever content, does nothing at all, though fully engaged in action.

In this shloka, Ishwar uses the words **tyaktvā karmaphalāsaṅgaṃ(n)** to denote giving up of attachment to the fruits of all actions-something that we ordinary mortals find very difficult to resist. Whenever we cook for the family, do we not expect compliments from the family members? When we perform an act of charity and donate for any cause, do we not become despondent when our names do not figure in the list of distinguished donors and when the camera fails to capture us in our acts of benevolence? **Bhagavān lays emphasis on the need to abandon this tendency for self-glorification.**

When we are in the mental state of **āsaṅgaṃ** or devoid of attachment, we develop the feeling of being **nityatrpto** or perpetually satisfied.

Parents often bring up their children with the expectation that they will be looked after by their children when they become old. **However, bringing up children without any personal aspirations will bring infinite peace and happiness.**

For most of us, happiness is dependent on our children, our larger family or our neighbors. Moreover, we gauge an event or an object in terms of its material utility. An example close to us would involve the **Bal Sanskar kendras** run by Geeta Pariwar. Often parents ask what their children would gain if they are made to attend these classes. If we leave this temptation of looking into the incentives behind our actions, **we would experience contentment and a warm sense of nirāśrayaḥ**, that is, desisting dependence on others. Such a person may be busy doing an activity, and yet would do nothing. Our freedom fighters for example, had to undergo indescribable torture in the course of their struggle during the movement against the oppressive ruling regime. Yet, they were not worried about the consequences and were willing

to face the hangman's noose, firm in the resolve that they would continue fighting in their next birth too. **This courageous spirit in them was infused because of their attitude of detachment to the results of their actions.** This detached mindset ensured that their karmas were not binding them. **Because they worked for the sake of their country, they knew that their selfless action would not make them incur any sin.**

4.21

**nirāśīryatacittātmā, tyaktasarvaparigrahaḥ,
śārīraṃ(ñ) kevalaṃ(ñ) karma, kurvannāpnoti kilbiṣam. 4.21**

Having subdued his mind and body, and having given up all objects of enjoyment, free from craving, he who performs sheer bodily action, does not incur sin.

The word **nirāśīr** means not being bound by hopes and desires, or being free from expectations. The words **yata cittātmā** indicate a self-controlled person who prioritizes his subconscious mind over his conscious worldly interactions.

Free from expectations and the sense of ownership, with the mind and intellect fully controlled, such self-controlled people incur no sin even though performing actions by their body. Equipped with the highest level of spiritual knowledge and wisdom, these people perform the act of **tyaktasarvaparigrahaḥ**, that is, they abandon completely the sense of ownership for their possessions or even actions. The word **parigrah** means accumulating or hoarding objects. We collect cars or furniture for our personal use. Unfortunately, we also accumulate karmas in the process, as we tend to hold on to past actions. We should take a page out of the lives of the illustrious men who have in the past given up all **parigraha**.

Let us take the example of Sant Eknath Maharaj, a scion of a well-to-do family who, instead of hoarding his possessions, shared them freely with those in distress during the times of famine, floods or droughts. **Such saintly people may be making use of their physical bodies as instruments for their work. However, they do not incur any sins due to their lack of attachment towards their personal aspirations.** The same is the case with our freedom fighters. They are truly **mukta** or free from all fear. For such detached people, Sri Krishna predicts **kurvannāpnoti kilbiṣam**, that is, they would be performing actions without incurring any sins.

Swamiji often says that the characteristics of great luminaries like Krishna who is renowned for HIS greatness, or Sri Ram revered for his pleasant demeanor and Shivaji, a patriot who is no less than a **devansh**, serve as beacons of light for us to follow. **When we look at them and read about their qualities, we start looking upon them as our guiding force in life.** At least we come to know which direction in life we have to take. Some might want to follow the path of devotion trodden by devotees like Meera bai or Sant Tukaram; others would want to absorb divine knowledge as possessed by luminaries like Sant Dnyaneshwar. In the next few shlokas Sri Krishna explains the characteristics and qualities of such great people so that it becomes easy for us to follow their path.

4.22

**yadṛcchālābhasantuṣṭo, dvandvātīto vimatsaraḥ,
śamaḥ(s) siddhāvasiddhau ca, kṛtvāpi na nibadhyate. 4.22**

The Karmayogī, who is contented with whatever is got unsought, is free from jealousy and has transcended all pairs of opposites like joy and grief, and is balanced in success and failure, is not

bound by his action.

The words **yadṛcchā lābha santuṣṭo** point towards a state of contentment with whatever comes our way. However, we humans are not really prone to this kind of blissful fulfillment. Whenever we perform any action, we start expecting feedback and praise for our efforts. If we cook for our family, we expect raving compliments; if our students do well in the examinations, we eagerly await recognition and accolades. There is an element of competition that creeps into our attitude, leading to the feeling of **matsarah** or envy.

There is a very common tendency in all of us: when our friend does poorly in an examination, we feel unhappy. However, if our friend does better than us then the unhappiness increases! Similarly, if a neighbor buys a better car, we feel vexed. This human tendency of envy is called matsarah.

One cannot help but marvel at the keen insight and analysis of human nature as given in the Gitā.

We need to go beyond these illusory dualities of happiness and sorrow. We are so completely ensconced in our comfort zones that we cannot even tolerate the heat of the summer or the chill of the winter. Ishwar expects us to go beyond these pairs of opposites and maintain samatva or stability of mind in the contrary situations of happiness and sorrow. Only if we are situated in equanimity will we be able to maintain the same demeanor and grace, whether we encounter **maan** or **apmaan**. This equipoise will come only gradually but surely, and we will subsequently become **dvandvātīta** and **vimatsarah**, that is, free of duality and envy, the very factors that cause depletion of noble qualities in us. The other set of dualities mentioned in this shloka are **siddha** and **asiddha** or success and failure, which we need to surpass. **Having an edge over the dualities will ensure that we are not bound by actions.**

There is a common query amongst devotees as to how we can get liberation from these binding factors. **We must remember that it is not the actions per se but our tendency to hold on to the actions that constrains us.** We are at present learning the principles of **Jñāna Karma Sanyāsa** wherein we will come to realize the significance of maintaining **samatva** which will free us of the binding effects of our actions. We should pay heed to Ishwar's description of the sages who are content with whatever gain comes of its own accord; **free from envy, they are beyond the dualities of life. Being equipoised in success and failure, they are not bound by their actions, even while performing all kinds of activities.**

4.23

**gatasaṅgasya muktasya, jñānāvasthitacetasaḥ,
yajñāyācarataḥ(kh) karma, ṣamagraṃ(m) praviliyate. 4.23**

All his actions get dissolved entirely, who is free from attachment and has no identification with the body and free from the feeling of mine, whose mind is established in the knowledge of Self and who works merely for the sake of sacrifice.

The words **gatasaṅgasya muktasya** indicate the state of liberation which comes if one is free of material attachments. **Such a person, who is devoid of attachments and who is established in knowledge, is easily able to become mukta or emancipated and unfettered by worldly ties.**

Is it really possible to be free of such attachments? We may well ponder over its infeasibility! However, we have to just look at the great luminaries not just from the era of Satyug, but also of Kaliyug, who have left indelible imprints in the sands of time through their selfless actions. When Lokmanya Balgangadhar Tilak

was arrested for the second time, his followers cried at the uncertainty of his situation. Balgangadhar ji however, took this incarceration as an opportunity to further expand his knowledge on the Manu smriti and the Vedas. His famous treatise on the Gitā titled Gitā Rahasya, was written in prison! He told his followers not to lament over his imprisonment as he could accomplish a lot while in jail. His calm demeanor can be attributed to the fact that his intellect was firmly established in knowledge. The term **jnyaanavasthitachetasaha** can truly be applied to Tilak ji.

The works of such great figures tantamount to the performance of a Yajna-a favorite term of the Gitā. **A person who performs actions in the spirit of yajna, attains liberation.** The words **ṣamagram(m) praviliyate** imply that **the entire karma of such people gets dissolved in the Universe which comprises the Brahmā tattva**, and they merge in the **Parampitā Paramātmā**. This is analogous to the manner in which salt dissolves in water and it becomes impossible to detect its presence.

The vision that Sri Krishna is trying to bring up in the next shloka is that of Srishti being nothing but Brahma tattva.

4.24

**brahmārpaṇam(m) brahma haviḥ(r), brahmāgnau brahmaṇā hutam,
brahmaiva tena gantavyam(m), brahma karma samādhinā. 4.24**

Brahman is the oblation; Brahman is the melted butter (ghee); by Brahman is the oblation poured into the fire of Brahman; Brahman verily shall be reached by him who always sees Brahman in action.

Brahmā signifies the Divine power. **Once we are on the path of Karma yoga and adopt an attitude of detachment, we realize that everything that we do is for the Universe.** A yajña is basically a way of doing a task. In order to understand the significance of working for the Universe, we need to understand the cycle of **Vyashti, Samashti, Srishti and Parameshti**.

The terms **Samashti** and **Vyashti** are explained in the Purana as representing two aspects of creation. **Samashti** signifies the unmanifest or collective aspect embodying the broader, universal element, while **Vyashti** denotes the manifest or individual aspect, focusing on the distinct, personal element.

The personal aspect that is **Vyashti** impacts the social existence or **Samashti**, and together they exert a profound influence on the entire **Srishti**. **This Srishti is ultimately a manifestation of Parameshti which is the Supreme Reality and the source of all existence.** This cycle of existence is beneficial for the entire Brahmānd.

We should ensure that this cycle of existence is kept intact as only then would our actions be considered a yajña. **We need to develop a sense of duty and gratitude towards the Universe, and endeavor to return in some measure what we have received from the Creation. This attitude embodies the true spirit of a yajña.** Just like we offer āhuti to the fire during a havan, similarly a karma should be in the spirit of sacrifice in a yajña.

When we perform a puja, that act of praying becomes our **yajña karma**. The instrument of yajña is also an extension of Brahmā . To Whom we offer our yajña is once again the Brahmā Tattva. The agni in which we empty the oblations is as much the Brahmā Tattva as the person who offers the yajña . The main point to comprehend is that everything is ultimately a manifestation of the Divine.

To sum up, for those who are completely absorbed in God-consciousness, **the oblation is Brahmān, the ladle with which it is offered is Brahmān, the act of offering is Brahmān, and the sacrificial fire is also Brahmān. Such persons, who view everything as Brahmā, easily attain Him.** This is the

reason why Ishwar expects us to adopt a mindset wherein we start feeling that everything we offer as yajña, is actually a part of Brahmā tattva.

In the next few shlokas HE takes us through the different types of yajñas.

4.25

**daivamevāpare yajñam(m), yoginah(ph) paryupāsate,
brahmāgnāvapare yajñam(m), yajñenaivopajuhvati. 4.25**

Other Yogīs duly offer sacrifice only in the form of worship to gods, while others perform sacrifice by offering the self by the Self itself in the fire of Brahma.

Having explained the Brahmātattva, Bhagavān goes on to elaborate on the different ways of performing yajñas. A yoginah is a spiritual practitioner who performs the yajña. Some yoginah perform yajñas with the aim of pleasing the Daivam or the celestial Gods. There are others however, who understand the significance of the Brahmā tattva and worship it through Brahmā yajña or through the path of knowledge. In this Brahmā-roopi agni, such yoginahs perform different kinds of yajñas, which have been mentioned in the subsequent shlokas.

4.26

**śrotrādīnīndriyāṇyanye, samyamāgniṣu juhvati,
śabdādīnviṣayānanya, indriyāgniṣu juhvati. 4.26**

Others offer as sacrifice their senses of hearing etc into the fires of self-discipline. Other Yogis, again, offer sound and other objects of perception into the fires of the senses.

There are some who offer hearing and other senses in the sacrificial fire of restraint. Still others offer sound and other objects of the senses as sacrifice in the fire of the senses. We are all equipped with different kinds of sense organs that serve as instruments aiding action. **Sant Dnyaneshwar ji had said that our karma is like a yajña and puja.** While performing a yajña, we offer the best items to the sacrificial fire or **agni**. In the same vein, when we do this kind of **yajña**, we utilize our sense organs to stoke the fire of self-control.

The shloka starts with the word **śrotrādīn** which means, the ears and the other sense organs that require control and restraint for this kind of yajña to bear fruition.

We would notice that **agni** or fire has been used to allude to all the different kinds of sacrifices, as it is through the sacrificial fire that the **āhuti** or offering reaches the divine. Hence we see a mention of **samyamāgni** and **indriyāgni**. Agni is that which takes us ahead in spiritual life; **śabdā**

or sound vibration is the subject of ears, **drishya** or sight is the subject of eyes, while **vaani** is the subject or vishaya of our speech. In this way, whatever we speak, see, hear, eat and touch, assume the role of different subjects of the respective sense organs.

It is through the restraint of the sense organs that one can control the interaction between the external stimuli and the sense objects. Restraint of the sense organs is hence a yajña which involves sacrifice that we make through our sense organs.

4.27

**sarvāṇīndriyakarmāṇi, prāṇakarmāṇi cāpare,
ātmasaṃyamamayogāgnau, juhvati jñānadīpīte. 4.27**

Others sacrifice all the functions of their senses and the functions of the vital airs (Prāṇa) into the fire of Yoga in the shape of self-control, kindled by wisdom.

There are some who, inspired by knowledge, offer the functions of all their senses and their life energy in the fire of the controlled mind.

First we have to control the sense organs through restraint, and gradually we will be able to control the sense organs through breath or prāṇa, which will eventually lead to **ātmasaṃyam** or self-regulation. Only a knowledgeable person would be able to do this kind of yajña . Once we have all our organs under control, we can do the other yajñas which have been mentioned in the subsequent shlokas.

4.28

**dravyayajñāstapoyajñā, yogayajñāstathāpare,
svādhyāyajñānayajñāśca, yatayaḥ(s) saṃśītavratāḥ. 4.28**

Some perform sacrifice with material possessions; some offer sacrifice in the shape of austerities; others sacrifice through the practice of Yoga; while some striving souls, observing austere vows, perform sacrifice in the shape of wisdom through the study of sacred texts.

Some offer their wealth as sacrifice, while others offer severe austerities as sacrifice. Some practice the eightfold path of yogic practices, and yet others study the scriptures and cultivate knowledge as sacrifice, while observing strict vows.

Dravya yajñā is done by virtue of donations. Our Swamiji has been actively engaged with Maharshi Ved Vyas Pratishthan in carrying out intensive social work . **He has initiated more than 35 Gurukuls across the length and breadth of our country, including places like Kashmir and Manipur.** Donations are regularly given for this worthy cause. **Offering charity as a sacrifice for a noble cause is an example of dravya yajñā.**

Tapo yajñā involves restraint of the sense organs. During Ekadashi, some people observe silence while others refrain from eating. Yet another kind of yajñā is the **Yoga yajñā** which requires practice of **Ashtanga Yoga**. Then comes the **svādhyā yajñā**, which involves self study. The word **svādhyāya**, if broken into two parts **svā** and **adhyāya**, explains the implication of self study. This kind of yajñā encompasses **Jñāna yajñā** which includes directing of the sense organs towards study and analysis of the scriptures or texts like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. **Yati** refers to those persons who practice self-restraint to complete these yajñās. The word **saṃśīta vratāḥ** alludes to the great and rigid **vratāḥ** that such persons observe. **When we attend the Gitā classes, we too discipline our senses and undergo some kind of tapah to observe certain rigid principles.** The effort that we put in, can be considered as part of **saṃśīta vratāḥ**. In the next shloka, Yogeshwar takes us through other important types of yajñās.

4.29

**apāne juhvati prāṇam(m), prāṇe'pānam(n) tathāpare,
prāṇāpānagatī ruddhvā, prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇāḥ. 4.29**

Others offer as sacrifice the outgoing breath in the incoming, and the incoming in the outgoing, restraining the course of the outgoing and the incoming breaths, solely absorbed in the restraint of the breath.

There are others who offer as sacrifice, the outgoing breath in the incoming breath; while some offer the incoming breath into the outgoing breath. Some arduously practice prāṇāyāma and restrain the incoming and outgoing breaths, purely absorbed in the regulation of the life-energy. **We need to take cognizance of the fact that prāṇāyāma is considered a sacred yajnā.** This important yajnā is very important as its regular practice infuses grace and better competence in the other yajnās like the Jnāna and Yog yajnās.

Prāṇāyāma yajnā comprises two processes: **Rechak** or inhalation whereby the incoming breath provides energy to the outgoing breath, and **Poorak** or exhalation whereby the outgoing breath meets the incoming breath. **This is the place or point where we control the two processes of breathing in and breathing out, as seen in various practices such as Kapālbhāti and Kumbhaka.** People who practice the control of breath are referred to as **prāṇāyāma-parāyaṇāḥ.**

4.30

**apare niyatāhārāḥ(ph), prāṇānprāṇeṣu juhvati,
sarve'pyete yajñavido, yajñakṣapitakalmaṣāḥ. 4.30**

Other Yogīs offer the act of exhalation into that of inhalation; even so, others the act of inhalation into that of exhalation. There are still others given to the practice of Prāṇāyāma (breath- control), who, having regulated their diet and controlled the processes of exhalation and inhalation both, pour their vital airs into the vital airs themselves. All these have their sins consumed away by sacrifice and understand the meaning of sacrificial worship.

Continuing with HIS explanation of the other kinds of yajñas, Sri Krishna says that there are yet others who curtail their food intake and offer the breath into the life-energy as sacrifice. **All these knowers of sacrifice are cleansed of their impurities as a result of such performances.**

In this shloka, Yogeshwar lays stress on the **āhārāḥ** that we consume. Here, the word **āhārāḥ** is not limited to mere consumption of food, but is extended to all the external temptations that our sense organs encounter on a daily basis. **We need to regulate what we eat, what we hear and what we speak.** Of course, inhalation and exhalation of breath is equally important. All these yajñas are conducted by those who understand the basic principles behind these sacrificial rituals. They have been aptly referred to as **yajñavido** or the knower of the yajñas, who are purified of all their sins through their practices. The term **yajñakṣapitakalmaṣāḥ** indicates that **being cleansed by the performance of such sacrifices, the yajñavido becomes free from all impurities and sins that he may have accrued in the past.**

We too need to strive in this direction and **convert our karmas into yajñas** by following the appropriate steps mentioned by Parameshwar. We all know the superficial benefits of practicing Prāṇāyāma such as getting a facial glow. Swamiji further elaborates on the *sukshma* details of this practice by likening the body to a machine. An oft-used vehicle gets congested and clogged due to the accumulation of carbon. It needs to be cleaned from time to time. Similarly, **our body, which is no less than a machine, gets tainted by dirt in the form of cholesterol and other toxic substances. Prāṇāyāma cleanses the body of these venomous factors.** Hence, regular practice of the various **yajnās** would provide a deep cleansing of our bodies, our thoughts and our entire system.

The discourse was followed by a question-answer session:

Q & A.

Mukund Nathan ji

Q. Please explain the concept of Brahmārpaṇam.

Ans: when we do any yajnā, we make use of agni. The yajnā involves the one to whom the sacrifice is being offered, and also the one who is offering the sacrifice. Sri Krsihna says that all the sāmagri being offered, the agni which acts as a conduit between the offerings and the Universe, and the participant of the yajñās, are all part of the great Brahmā tattva. In fact, what we eat is also a part of the Brahmā tattva. In the Bāl Sanskār kendras, this shloka is used as a ‘bhojan mantra’.

Abhijith ji

Q. Can you please explain the third charana of the 26th Shloka, and the concept of restraint that you mentioned before you moved on to the 27th Shloka?

Ans: Shloka 26 gives a more detailed account of the sense organs. In the next shloka also we see how the entire set of sense organs gets controlled through regulation of breath. You will notice that when you get angry, the breath comes out faster. This is because our Prāna is controlled by our indriyās. Did you know that during chess tournaments the heartbeat of the players is measured to see the level of their breath and prāna? These tests validate the words of the Gitā on the impact of the sense organs on our breath. Practice of prānāyāma and restraint of the sense organs lead to ātmasanyam yoga. However, all these benefits are possible only when our minds are backed by knowledge.

Sravanthiji ji

Q. If we practice prānāyāma, will our sins go away? What is the relation between sins and prānāyāma?

Ans: Prānāyāma brings our actions and our senses under our control. Let us give the example of carrots, which if consumed on a daily basis, would lead to better eyesight. Similarly, prānāyāma has the potential to control our karmas. We must remember that the holy Gitā is ultimately a shāstra of anubhuti or a science of experience.

Ravi singh ji

Q. Whereas in the Geeta Pariwar, the shlokas 29, 30 and 31 comprise four charanas each, the ISKON have shifted the verses to include three lines in shloka 29. I want to know the reason for the shift in the lines. Which version should we follow?

Ans: You should read the shlokas the way you have been taught in the Geeta pariwar. The other organizations may have categorized the lines based on the proximity and similarity in the meaning of the shlokas. However, we should read the Gitā without disturbing the grammatical base, as taught in our own classes.

The evening concluded with a rendition of the Hanuman Chalisa.



We are sure you enjoyed reading the Vivechan write- up. Please invest three minutes of your time to provide us your feedback. Use the link below:

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Thank you-For reading the summary

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

Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar – Creative Writing Department

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