

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 15: Puruṣottama-Yoga

2/2 (Ślōka 6-20), Sunday, 17 August 2025

Interpreter: GĪTĀ PRAVĪṆA JYOTI JI SHUKLA

YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/TH0vUZQXxc8>

The glorious Bhagavan who gives his light and shows the path of good deeds for the soul to carry to subsequent life

The 15th Chapter of Bhagavād-Gītā is also called **Puruṣottama Yoga - The Yoga of the Supreme Being.**

The session started with the auspicious lighting of lamp and prayer to the almighty.

vasudevasutaṁ devaṁ kaṁsa-cāṇūra-mardanam; devakī-paramānandaṁ kṛṣṇaṁ vande jagadgurum

I worship Lord Kṛṣṇa, Who is the spiritual master of the universe, Who is the son of Vasudeva, Who is the Lord, Who killed Kamsa and Canura, and Who is the bliss of Devaki.

The session commenced with a question and Answer task for participants.

Yesterday, we celebrated Krishna Janmashtami, and during the session, participants were asked questions about the birth of Bhagavan Sri Krishna

Question 1: In which prison was Bhagavan Sri Krishna born?

- Ayodhya
- Dwaraka
- Mathura
- Brindavan

Answer: 65% said **Mathura**, which is the correct answer.

Question 2: What are the name of Bhagavān Sri Krishna's parents?

- Ram and Sita.

- Vasudev and Devaki
- Nand and Yashoda
- Dasarath and Kausalya

Answer: 84% correctly replied as **Vasudeva and Devaki.**

The one who brought HIM up however was Nandbaba and Yashoda

Question 3: Which mountain did Sri Krishna with his small finger?

- Kailash
- Govardhan
- Himalaya
- Vindhyachal

Answer: 100% correctly replied as **Govardhan mountain.**

Question 4: Where did Sri Krishna spend his childhood?

- Ayodhya
- Gokul
- Mathura
- Dwaraka

Answer: 77% gave the correct answer as **Gokul.**

In the first part of the 15th chapter, Bhagavān explained the structure of this world using the analogy of an upside-down tree. Though the concept can be a bit challenging, we should strive to understand it as much as possible and incorporate its wisdom into our lives.

Further, Bhagavān explained about HIS divine powers and the effects of the good deeds and sins in this life which may impact our next life.

- These actions are the ones that affect the type of birth that we may have in the next life where we may be born as a cat or a dog or an insect or even as a human being.
- Hence, based on the actions that we undertake in this life the destiny of our next birth is decided.
- Sins arising from undesirable actions do not contribute to attaining a good next life.
- If we perform good deeds, we may be born as human beings.
- If we do even more good deeds, we may even be born with divine powers.
- Once we get divine powers, we may be equivalent to the Demi gods like the Indra dev, Agni dev and many others.
- If we want to be reborn as a demi god, we have to do as many good deeds as possible and even may have to do penance.

As of now, we should concentrate on not doing bad deeds like lying, troubling others, cheating, thinking ill of others. We should not also indulge in any such undesirable actions in our life. Our endeavour should be to get a good life in our next birth.

15.6

na tadbhāsayate sūryo, na śasāñko na pāvākaḥ, yadgatvā na nivartante, taddhāma paRāmaṃ(m) mama. 15.6

Neither the sun nor the moon nor fire can illumine that supreme self-effulgent state, attaining which they never return to this world; that is My supreme abode.

Further, Bhagavān spoke about HIMSELF and described HIS glories. HE said that the brightness and light of the SUN, the MOON and the FIRE is because of HIS powers and are not inherently present in them.

Arjuna was Bhagavān's dearest friend, and by studying the Gītā, practicing its teachings, and incorporating them into our lives, we too can strive to become close to Him.

In school, if we wish to be a teacher's favourite, we study well, score good marks, and display good behaviour. Similarly, in the 12th chapter, we learnt about the 39 virtuous qualities that we should cultivate.

If we wish to be Bhagavān's favourite, we should sincerely strive to follow the teachings of the Gītā in our daily life.

15.7

mamaivāṃśo jīvaloke, jīvabhūtaḥ(s) sanātanaḥ, manaḥ(ṣ) ṣaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi, prakṛtisthāni karṣati. 15.7

The eternal Jīvātmā in this body is a fragment of My own Self; and it is that alone which draws around itself the mind and the five senses, which abide in Prakṛti.

In all of creation, HE is an integral part.

The souls in all living beings are '**sanātana**', meaning eternal, without beginning or end. (The opposite is '**purātana**', meaning very old.)

Question 5: Is the birth date of the body or the soul? Does anyone feel it is of the soul and not the body?

Most participants replied that the birth date is of the body.

Since the soul has no beginning or end, the birth date belongs to the body. The soul enters the body and connects with the senses at birth.

Our soul is therefore considered sanātana, as it never ends and remains forever. Our birth date pertains to the body, not the soul

Question 6: Which are the five organs of sense?

Answer: The five sense organs are Eyes, Nose, Tongue, Ears, and Skin.

The soul attracts the senses and assumes they belong to it. This leads to desires and attachments, giving

rise to the sense of ownership, saying “my bag, my laptop, my phone,” and so on.

If the senses are focused solely on Bhagavān, the feeling of attachment does not arise.

15.8

**śarīraṃ(ṽ) yadavāpnoti, yaccāpyutkrāmatīśvaraḥ,
gṛhītvaitāni samyāti, vāyurgandhānivāśayāt.15.8**

Even as the wind wafts scents from their seat, so, too, the Jīvātmā, which is the controller of the body etc., taking the mind and the senses from the body which it leaves behind, forthwith migrates to the body which it acquires.

The soul moves from one body to another in the cycle of birth and death.

To understand the connection between the soul and the senses, consider this example:

In a garden, many flowering plants release a pleasant scent. Even when we move away, the scent lingers in the air and reaches us. If the air did not carry the fragrance, we would not experience it once we leave the garden.

Similarly, the soul carries the effects of our actions within it.

Example: A young child of 7 or 8 memorises the entire Gītā. Most children cannot do this, but some can. Why?

This happens because when the Gītā is chanted and memorised in one life, it leaves an impression in the soul. When the soul enters a new body, it carries this learning forward. In the same way, all good deeds accumulate in the soul and are carried into the next birth. Likewise, bad deeds also leave an impact carried by the soul.

Therefore, we must always perform good deeds so that the soul accumulates positive actions to take into the next life. Every activity, studying, speaking, sitting, or working, if performed with involvement, leaves an impression within us.

What do we learn?

This teaching emphasises the importance of performing good deeds and consciously cultivating positive actions. When we are born again, the learning and impressions from past lives, like studying the Gītā, can help us learn faster and with greater ease.

15.9

**śrotraṃ(ñ) cakṣuḥ(s) sparśanaṃ(ñ) ca, rasanaṃ(ñ) ghrāṇameva ca,
adhiṣṭhāya manaścāyaṃ(ṽ), viṣayānupasevate.15.9**

It is while dwelling in the sense of hearing, touch, taste and smell, as well as in the mind, that this Jīvātmā enjoys the objects of senses.

The soul is inherently supported by the mind.

The mind’s nature is such that it easily gets distracted, shifting its focus between sleep, study, work,

or other activities that arise. Meanwhile, the soul observes and perceives all these actions.

What happens when the mind wanders?

For example, when the eyes see an object, it is because the mind desires to see it.

- In a classroom, the teacher may be teaching and writing on the blackboard. While the eyes are fixed on the board and the ears are tuned to listen, the mind may still wander elsewhere. As a result, neither the words spoken nor the content written on the board is registered in the mind.
- Sometimes, teachers notice whether a student is concentrating by observing emptiness in their gaze.
- A few students may not understand the lesson at all because their minds are preoccupied with unrelated thoughts, such as TV shows, games, or other distractions.
- There are also instances when a book is open before the eyes, and words are being read, yet the mind does not focus on the reading.
- Even during Vivechan sessions, participants sit in front of laptops or phones to listen and learn. While all participants are visible on the screen, understanding occurs only when the mind actively perceives and registers the explanations of the slokas.
- Similarly, attendees may see the speaker but focus on the tilak on their forehead or the background on the screen, because the mind directs what the eyes notice.
- At times, even with open eyes, we may fail to notice someone passing by if the mind is elsewhere.

Action required:

True understanding and learning occur only when the senses and soul work together, supported by the mind. Only then can observation and comprehension happen effectively.

Parents often advise children to concentrate and keep their minds focused while studying. **It is essential for the mind to be fully present in the action being performed. The mind must support the senses to perceive the environment properly and maintain focus on the task at hand.**

Question 7: What is the name of the 15th Chapter?

- Purushotham
- Bhakti,
- Karma yoga
- Sankhya yoga

Answer: 86% have given the correct answer as **Purushotham Yoga.**

15.10

**utkrāmantam(m) sthitaṃ(ṁ) vāpi, bhuñjānaṃ(ṁ) vā guṇānvitam,
vimūḍhā nānupaśyanti, paśyanti jñānacakṣuṣaḥ.15.10**

The ignorant know not the soul departing from, of dwelling in the body, or enjoying the objects of senses, i.e., even when it is connected with the three Guṇas; only those endowed with the eyes of wisdom are able to realize it.

Many people study science and pursue higher education in the Science stream, but only a few become true inventors.

When and how do some scientists invent?

Only those who possess the “*Jnana Chakshu*”—the wisdom eye with divine vision, can achieve the extraordinary feat of invention.

Arjuna was one such individual, truly accomplished in every respect. To cultivate qualities like Arjuna, one must immerse oneself in worship, satsang, bhajans, and other virtuous practices. Through continuous effort and disciplined practice, it is possible to attain the level of a sage with divine insight and knowledge. However, reaching this state is not easy and requires significant time and dedication.

How was Arjuna the best archer?

Focus on goals and action:

Once, Dronacharya gave a task to his students. A bird was placed on a distant tree, and the students were asked to aim and hit the eye of the bird to test their archery skills. He then asked each student what they saw when they aimed.

Some students noticed the tree, the mountain behind, or the river; a few saw the bird in the tree. When asked, Arjuna replied that he could see only the eye of the bird, his target. His vision was completely focused, without distraction from anything around it.

This extraordinary level of concentration is what gave Arjuna the Jnana Chakshu, the eye of wisdom, and allowed him to achieve divine powers.

Similarly, if we learn the Gītā and engage in good activities, our knowledge will also improve gradually.

15.11

**yatanto yoginaścainaṃ(m), paśyantyātmanyavasthitam,
yatanto'pyakṛtātmāno, nainaṃ(m) paśyantyacetasaḥ. 15.11**

Striving Yogīs too are able to realise this Self enshrined in their heart. The ignorant, however, whose heart has not been purified, know not this Self in spite of their best endeavours.

Everyone desires to become like Arjuna, but not all succeed. The main obstacle to success lies in the lack of mind control and in harbouring negative thoughts, such as hatred or jealousy towards others.

If we truly wish to be like Arjuna, we must first learn and understand the teachings of the Gītā. The first step on this path is to cleanse the mind by removing all bad thoughts. Without this inner cleansing, we cannot improve our behaviour or walk the path of righteousness. Negative thoughts should be discarded from the mind just as we throw away trash.

In the session, *Akshita ji, Ayansh ji, Madura ji, Mudrika ji, Vani ji, Pallavi ji*, and many others raised their hands, expressing their resolve to follow this advice and remove bad thoughts from their minds.

15.12

**yadādityagataṃ(n) tejo, jagadbhāsayate'khilam,
yaccandRāmasi yaccāgnau, tattejo viddhi māmakam. 15.12**

The radiance in the sun that illumines the entire world, and that which shines in the moon and that which shines in the fire too, know that radiance to be Mine.

Bhagavān spoke about His powers, radiance, and brilliance, and explained how we can benefit from them. To truly take advantage of this, we must first be aware of the divine brilliance of Bhagavān Sri Krishna. Without this awareness, we cannot learn from Him or receive the benefit of His divinity.

To help us understand His glory, Bhagavān explained that the dazzle and energy pervading in the **Sun, the Moon, and Agni (Fire)** are not their own, but derived from Him.

Importantly, Bhagavān did not speak of His qualities out of pride. Rather, He revealed them so that we may recognise Him and draw closer to His truth.

It is similar to how a person is introduced to an audience: their achievements are highlighted, not to boast, but to show the depth of their knowledge and inspire confidence in others to follow them.

Question 8: According to science, what is the main source of light?

- Moon
- Star
- Sun
- Fire

Answer: 93% gave the correct answer as **SUN**

15.13

**gāmāviśya ca bhūtāni, dhārayāmyahamojasā,
puṣṇāmi cauṣadhīḥ(s) sarvāḥ(s), somo bhūtvā rasātmakaḥ. 15.13**

And permeating the soil, it is I who support all creatures by My vital energy, and becoming the sapful moon, I nourish all plants.

The Earth rotates on its axis, and while living on it, we perform countless activities like sleeping, walking, sitting, studying, eating, and so on. Behind all these actions lies the divine power of Bhagavān. It is He who assures that the energy needed for every activity is provided. Even the soothing energy of the Moon, which sustains and nourishes life on earth, is a reflection of His power. Thus, all living beings are ultimately protected, sustained, and guided by HIM

15.14

**ahaṃ(ṽ) vaiśvānaro bhūtvā, prāṇināṃ(n) dehamāśritaḥ,
prāṇāpānasamāyuktaḥ(ph), pacāmyannaṃ(ñ) caturvidham.15.14**

Taking the form of fire, as Vaiśvānara, lodged in the body of all creatures and united with the Prāṇa (exhalation) and Apāna (inhalation) breaths, it is I who digest and assimilate the four kinds of food.

Question 9: How many types of Fire are documented?

- 2 types
- 3 types
- 4 types
- 5 types

Answer:

- 63% answered as 2 types
- 19% answered as 3 types
- 5% answered as 4 types
- 13% answered as 5 types

There are mainly three types of Fire based on where they occur.

- **Vaishvanara** - The fire within the stomach that digests food, sustaining life.
- **Badhvanan** - The submarine fire that rages beneath the oceans, balancing waters.
- **Davanan** - The wildfire that blazes in forests, consuming everything in its path.

At times, parents mention the fire in our belly. This is actually the digestive fire, and Bhagavān says that even the simple act of digestion is not ours, but is powered by His divine energy within us.

The four types of food are also digested by HIS powers. The four types of food mentioned in the Mahabharata are:

- **Bhakṣya** : Food that is eaten by chewing.
- **Lehya** : Food meant for licking.
- **Coṣya** : Food intended to be sucked, similar to extracting juice.
- **Peya** : Food in liquid form, meant for drinking.

15.15

**sarvasya cāhaṃ(m) hṛdi sanniviṣṭo,
mattaḥ(s) smṛtirjñānamapohanaṃ(ñ) ca,
vedaiśca sarvairahameva vedyo,
vedāntakṛdvedavideva cāham. 15.15**

It is I who remain seated in the heart of all creatures as the inner controller of all; and it is I who am the source of memory, knowledge and ratiocinative faculty. Again, I am the only object worth knowing through the Vedas; I alone am the origin of Vedānta and the knower of the Vedas too.

Bhagavān said: *He resides in the heart of every living being.*

- **Source of Knowledge:** All knowledge, whether it is science, mathematics, or any other field, arises because of Him.
- **Memory & Forgetfulness:** The ability to remember, whether it is the time we ate, what we spoke, or even our nature (forgiving or unforgiving), comes from Him. At the same time, the power to forget is also given by Him.
 - If this power to forget were absent, we would constantly recall all our past lives. That would lead to great confusion and conflict regarding our relationships, families, and

places of belonging.

- Forgetfulness is also a gift that allows us to leave behind unpleasant experiences and move forward peacefully in life.
- **The Vedas:** Whatever is revealed in the Vedas and scriptures originates from Him. Therefore, we must remember Him at all times, keeping Him in our minds constantly in whatever we do.

The four Vedas are:

- Ṛig Veda
- Sāma Veda
- Yajur Veda
- Atharva Veda

15.16

**dvāvimau puruṣau loke, kṣaraścākṣara eva ca,
kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni, kūṭastho'kṣara ucyate. 15.16**

The perishable and the imperishable too-- these are the two kinds of Puruṣas in this world. Of these, the bodies of all beings are spoken of as the perishable; while the Jīvātmā or the embodied soul is called imperishable.

HE is known as **Puruṣottama - the Supreme Being**.

HE is supreme and beyond comparison, standing above both categories: **the kṣara (perishable) and the akṣara (imperishable)**. The body belongs to the kṣara category because it can be destroyed, while the soul is akṣara, as it is eternal and indestructible. Yet, Bhagavān is higher than both, because HE is the source, sustainer, and controller of both matter and spirit. Hence, **HE alone is the Puruṣottama - the Supreme Being**.

15.17

**uttamaḥ(ph) puruṣastvanyaḥ(ph), paramātmetyudāhṛtaḥ,
yo lokatrayamāviśya, bibhartavyaya īśvaraḥ. 15.17**

Yet, the Supreme Person is other than these, who, having encompassed all the three worlds, upholds and maintains all, and has been spoken of as the imperishable Lord and the Supreme Spirit.

Bhagavān has given a detailed revelation of His cosmic form in the 11th chapter. Through the **Viśvarūpa Darśana**, He shows that He alone is the **Puruṣottama - the Supreme Being**, who is the sustainer of this world and the entire universe. In this form, all beings, all elements of creation, and even time itself are seen as emanating from Him and resting in Him.

15.18

**yasmātkṣarāmatīto'ham, akṣarādapi cottamaḥ,
ato'smi loke vede ca, prathitaḥ(ph) puruṣottamaḥ. 15.18**

Since I am wholly beyond the perishable world of matter and Kṣetra, and am superior even to the imperishable soul, Jīvātmā, hence I am known as the Puruṣottama, the Supreme Self, in the world as

well as in the Vedas.

In this entire world, and all the Vedas - Ṛig, Yajur, Sāma, and Atharva, He is glorified as the **Puruṣottama**, for He is beyond both **kṣara (the perishable body and material world) and akṣara (the imperishable soul)**. Being above worldly attachment and limitation, He alone is the Supreme Being.

15.19

**yo māmevamasammūḍho, jānāti puruṣottamam,
sa sarvavidbhajati mām(m), sarvabhāvena bhārata. 15.19**

Arjuna, the wise man who thus realizes Me as the Supreme Person--knowing all, he constantly worships Me (the all-pervading Lord) with his whole being.

The one who is not deluded by ignorance recognises Him as **Puruṣottama**. Such a devotee worships Him with steadfast faith and remains immersed in His smaraṇa, japa, and bhajan at all times.

However, there are some who, due to ignorance, fail to recognise Him. They question His presence and deny His reality, revealing their lack of true understanding.

15.20

**iti guhyatamaṃ(m) śāstram, idamuktaṃ(m) mayānagha,
etadbuddhvā buddhimānsyāt, kṛtakṛtyaśca bhārata. 15.20**

Arjuna, this most esoteric teaching has thus been imparted by Me; grasping it in essence man becomes wise and his mission in life is accomplished.

Bhagavān declared that the knowledge revealed here is the supreme secret, the most confidential wisdom. Since Arjuna is addressed as **anagha**—one free from sin, Bhagavān chose to share this profound truth with him. The one who understands this teaching attains the highest knowledge.

Even if it feels difficult to grasp at once, by reflecting upon it step by step, gradually the truth begins to unfold. With patience and sincerity, one can also become enlightened in due course. By following the righteous path as advised by Bhagavān, one is assured of a noble life and auspicious progress, even in future births.

Thus concludes the teaching of Puruṣottama Yoga, the sacred dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, which unveils the glory of the Supreme Person beyond kṣara and akṣara.

Question 10: Who all will want to become a Human being in the next life?

- I want to be a human
- I do not want to be a human
- I want to be a different species

Answers:

- 87% want to be human beings
- 13% said they want to be a different species

Even those who want to be born as a different species should continue to perform good deeds and follow the path of goodness.

Question and Answers

Dhanushya

Question: How was Bhagavān able to convey so much knowledge to Arjuna in such a short span of time? Some say that Bhagavān stopped time to deliver the Gītā.

Answer: If one chants the entire Bhagavad Gītā at a speedy pace, it takes about an hour. Bhagavān, with His divine power and clarity, could easily speak it within about 45 minutes. Moreover, the battlefield of Kurukṣetra was vast, and while Bhagavān was instructing Arjuna, the other warriors were engaged in arranging their formations, preparing for combat, or waiting for the conch to be blown. This created the impression that time itself had paused. In truth, it was Bhagavān's mastery of expression and the divine intensity of the moment that allowed such profound wisdom to be revealed in what appeared to be a short span of time.

Madhura ji

Question: When Bhagavān declares that He is the one who gives light to the Sun and the Moon, does it not sound like pride?

Answer: Not at all. Bhagavān's words are never spoken out of pride or ego, because He is beyond such qualities. When He says that He is the source of the light of the Sun, the Moon, and all beings, it is not self-praise but revelation. Just as a teacher points out the truth for the benefit of the student, Bhagavān explains these facts only to help us understand His supreme nature and recognise Him as the ultimate source of all energy, life, and existence.

Bani ji

Question: If Bhagavān is the one giving light, why is the night dark?

Answer: Bhagavān provides light both during the day and the night. In the day, He gives it through the Sun; in the night, through the Moon and stars. When the Moon is absent or hidden, we experience darkness. Even then, whatever light we do see, whether from the Moon, stars, or fire, is still His gift. Without His arrangement, there would only be total darkness everywhere.

Avani ji

Question: How did Arjuna become a friend of Bhagavān?

Answer: Arjuna was pure-hearted, sinless, fearless, and free from hatred or malice. Because of his noble qualities and good conduct, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was pleased with him and accepted him as a close friend. They were also related by family ties, since Arjuna's mother, Kuntī Devī, was the sister of Vasudeva, the father of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus, they were cousins, and from childhood itself they developed a bond of affection that grew into deep friendship.

The discourse concluded with a prārthanā offering at the padakamala (lotus feet) of Śrī Hari, followed by the recitation of the **Hanumān Chalisa**

**om tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām(ṁ)
yogaśāstre śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṁvāde puruṣottamayogo nāma
pañcadaśo'dhyāyaḥ.**



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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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