

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 18: Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga

5/6 (Ślōka 45-58), Saturday, 16 August 2025

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/Vwj4POB0oM0>

## The Path to attain Naiṣkarmya Siddhi

The **18th chapter** of Bhagavad Gītā is **Mokṣha Sanyāsa Yoga - Yoga of Perfection of Renunciation and Surrender.**

The evening began with the lighting of the lamp and prayers offered unto the holy feet of Mā Shāradā and our Guru Param Pujya Swami Shri Govind Dev Giri Ji Maharaj .

Today being Janmashtami, we should make an endeavor to lead a Gitāmaya life. We have seen so far, the important principles of Karma. There are many inspirational quotes for ordinary mortals like us who are engaged in our daily karmas. For example, there is a Marathi phrase which advocates treating Karma as worship:

**कर्मेशू भजावा**

Treating Karma as an act of worship is mentioned in the Gītā, and has also been voiced by Sant Dnyaneshwar. By following this path, our life will then be transformed. Today being Krishna Janmashtami, we should realize that the biggest blessing we have received is that we can learn so much from HIM. **Sri Krishna is Karma-yoga personified.** In chapter 3 HE has said,

**न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।**

**नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥ 22॥**

*(There is no duty for Me to do in all the three worlds, O Parth, nor do I have anything to gain or attain. Yet, I am engaged in prescribed duties.)*

There is nothing HE has to achieve in this life, yet **HE has selflessly shown us how to live life ideally, devoid of all ego. We can learn discipline from HIM and also learn how to convert karma to Karma yoga.**

Swamiji shares in his **Krishna neeti Pravachans** that though Sri Krishna was no less than a king, yet HE

was the first to get up in the household and complete HIS dhyān instead of waiting for the ladies of the house to wake up and attend to HIS chores. Whenever the thought of indulging in our preferred actions plague us, we should recall HIS high level of discipline along with detachment. For example, HIS childhood image is that of a person with a murali or flute, which was very dear to HIM. However, when HE left Brajbhoomi to set right the wrongs being committed by unrighteous despots, HE completely gave up his flute. Moreover, HE was deeply attached to Gokul and its people; nevertheless **HE never abandoned HIS karma or even took a break from the tasks that HE had set for HIMSELF**. This is what we have to look at, and learn important lessons from HIS life.

We should take a sankalp to listen to the Bhagavad Katha on this auspicious day of Janmashtami.

As seen in the previous sessions, Yogeshwar has set different parameters of karma, both extrinsic as well as intrinsic like buddhi and dhriti. Following these parameters can lead to happiness or parama sukha. We have also learnt about karma at the individual and societal levels. **The subsequent shlokas deal with the importance of staying steadfast on this path of Karma Yoga.**

**18.45**

**sve sve karmaṇyabhirataḥ(s), saṃsiddhiṃ(m) labhate naraḥ,  
svākarmaṇirataḥ(s) siddhiṃ(m), yathā vindati tacchṛṇu. 18.45**

Keenly devoted to his own natural duty, man attains the highest perfection in the form of Godrealization. Hear the mode of performance whereby the man engaged in his inborn duty reaches that highest consummation.

Paramātmā has reiterated time and again that we should always be dedicatedly working towards the direction of our own karma. The word used here is **karmaṇyabhirataḥ** which means, devotion to one's own duty.

Many of us work in offices and expect rewards or remunerations for our efforts. **However, our dedication should be towards our work devoid of any attachment to the karma-phala**. We have to understand that our entire work has to be done with complete focus, as an act of worship. As a result we can get **svākarmaṇirataḥ siddhiṃ**. Siddhi is a special kind of perfection we can attain while doing our work.

Often people wonder if they should stop doing puja when their own work is considered so important. We need to understand that sadhana and karma are not separate; these should not be considered different. Do we not simultaneously eat while doing our work? Or for that matter, we start breathing automatically as soon as we are born. **Do we stop this vital act of survival to create a separate time-slot for work? Similarly, we should be equally dedicated to both sadhana and work as both are one and the same thing.**

Paramātmā wants us to understand that our daily activities are very much a part of our sadhana. **HE will HIMSELF bless us with siddhi if we engage in both, our work and our daily Sādhanā with equal fervor**. We have to ensure that HE is happy with us.

Then again, many of us wonder if just being engaged in prayers is enough to incur HIS blessings. Let us take an example of two workers employed in the same office. While one worker spends his time flattering his boss at the same time shirking from his designated duties, another employee spends his time constructively in his work without playing sycophant to the higher authorities. Which of these employees would be preferable in the work-place? Merely indulging in prayers without paying attention to the work at hand is similar to the case of the first worker who waxes eloquent, but has little to show for work.

Hence we have to give our full devotion to whatever work we do in our respective roles, be it as a mother, a doctor or an engineer. **Only then will we get the siddhi**, which is a special boon we get from HIM.

To sum up, this shloka emphasizes that **by fulfilling our duties born of our innate qualities, we can attain perfection.**

**18.46**

**yataḥ(ph) pravṛttirbhūtānām(m), yena sarvamidaṁ(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.

The first two terms used in this shloka provide us with a complete definition of Yogeshwar. The words **yataḥ pravṛttirbhūtānām** indicates that HE is the one from whom all creatures originate; HE is present everywhere.

Parameshwar has not just created the world but has ensured that we keep on evolving. **HE tells us that we have to worship HIM through our deeds or our duties.**

The auspicious occasion of Janmashtami happens to coincide with Dnyaneshwar Maharaj's Jayanti, and that's why he is considered to be an incarnation of Bhagavān Vishnu as mentioned in the phrase given below:

**ज्ञानेशो भगवान विष्णु.**

To Sant Dnyaneshwar goes the credit of writing a treatise titled Dnyaneshwari, which contains a beautiful line:

**तया सर्वात्मका ईश्वरा । स्वकर्मकुसुमांची वीरा तया सर्वात्मका ईश्वरा । स्वकर्म कुसुमांची वीरा । पूजा केली होय अपारा.**

*(The Omnipotent Ishwar is present everywhere. We offer worship to HIM through flowers in the form of our karmas)*

When we do puja and offer flowers to Parameshwar, **we should also offer our own Karmas to HIM.** Just like we choose the best flowers to offer unto HIS holy feet, similarly we should offer our Karmas unto HIM.

Once we realize that we are doing all the work for HIM and offer our karmas humbly to HIM, we qualify for **siddhiṁ(m) vindati mānavaḥ.**

When we perform puja with our karmas, we get **vairāgya-siddhi** as *prasād-*. **This is the state in which we become perfect in our work and incur neither paapa nor punya, that is, neither sin nor any merit.**

However, we often tend to fall into the dilemma wherein we neglect our own work and start viewing the other tasks as more interesting and lucrative. Sri Krishna resolves this predicament for us in the next shloka.

**18.47**

**śreyānsvadharmo viguṇaḥ(ph), paradharmātsvanuṣṭhitāt,  
svabhāvaniyataṃ(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.

It is a fact that all work undertaken on Planet Earth has both merits and demerits. **After all, every coin has two sides. Demerits notwithstanding, we should continue to do our work because, however much perfection we get in carrying out another person's duty, it would still be considered inferior as compared to our own designated work.**

We humans have an unwanted tendency to compare what we have got, with that of others. For example, if two children receive prasāda at the temple, instead of relishing what they have got, they will look at the size and quantum of prasāda that the other persons have received.

The situation is no different for adults. Instead of focusing on our duty, we look at the work others have been assigned, and then feel envious or dissatisfied. **This proclivity towards weighing the odds of responsibilities we have been given against those of others becomes the root cause of our misery.**

We need to understand that even if our responsibilities come with a set of demerits, **these are nonetheless superior**; Carrying out responsibilities meant for others- albeit with perfection, does not in any way surpass the glory and virtue that is attached to our own work; nor would we get the same rewards that we would have enjoyed had we just concentrated on the duties assigned to us. **We need to always keep in mind that whatever duty has come to our share on account of our nature, will accrue for us the highest benefit. Moreover, the flaws in the work will not incur any sin.**

Arjuna had been feeling despondent over the thought that he would be killing his kith and kin; however, Bhagavān assured him that since he was merely engaged in his own prescribed duties, Arjuna would not incur any sin. Let us take a mundane example of a fish in a pond or in an aquarium. It thrives in water; but if we were to assume that milk, being more valuable than water, should be used to fill the aquarium, the fish will alas, meet its end! **We should hence develop faith in our own duty and pursue it diligently.** A student for example, should be studying as the pursuit of sound education is his highest duty and a doctor should be treating his patients with complete dedication, instead of pining for an engineer's job.

**18.48**

**sahajaṃ(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.

The suffix 'ja' attached to the word saha means 'born with'. The term **Sahajaṃ** denotes a natural inclination that we are born with; and in accordance to our nature, the karma assigned to us indicates the purpose earmarked for us. Even if the work is laced with flaws, it should never be abandoned.

Sometimes, while doing the same kind of work, a sense of ennui and weariness sets in as we start feeling restless doing the same work day in and day out. **We should nevertheless, continue to do our assigned work instead of trying to settle for supposedly greener pastures.**

The question that arises is, **how to put into practice this precious pearl of wisdom?** Our Pujya Swamiji Shri Govind Dev Giri Ji Maharaj says that to translate this wisdom into our lives, **we need to discard the habit of seeing flaws in our duties.** Even if we have to treat our patients, or sit in the shop for hours or do housework, we should cease finding blemishes and imperfections in our work. Only then will we be able to bring this shloka into fruitful practice.

Sri Krishna has given the example of fire in the third chapter:

धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथादर्शो मलेन च ।

यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥ 38॥

*(Just as a fire is covered by smoke, a mirror is masked by dust, and an embryo is concealed by the womb, similarly one's knowledge gets shrouded by desire.)*

In this shloka too, Parameshwar has mentioned **sarvārambhā hi doṣeṇa, dhūmenāgnirivāvṛtāḥ**. Just like fire carries the taint of smoke, similarly our work too will be intertwined with some dosha or the other. **Yet, we need to continue with our allocated duties.**

We have to take a page from the lives of **eminent devotees like Dnyaneshwar Maharaj, Meerabai and Sant Eknath ji to draw inspiration from the sheer grit and determination they have shown towards the pursuit of their holy path in the face of extreme adversities.** Their determination and single-minded devotion were the reasons they achieved Siddhi in their lifetime. Following our duty will embark us on the steady path of success. The rewards we get by engaging in our prescribed work has been explained in the next shloka.

18.49

**asaktabuddhiḥ(s) sarvatra, jitātmā vigatasprahaḥ,  
naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ(m) paramāṃ(m), sannyāsenādhighacchati. 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.

**Asaktabuddhiḥ or unattached intellect** is the first reward we get if we follow our own duty, while harboring indifference towards the **karma-phala**. Our mind is then no longer plagued by unwanted thoughts. This calm state of mind ultimately leads to **naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ paramāṃ**, a state wherein even if we do not do anything, the work continues to follow its own course.

**The sun is an ideal example of naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ paramāṃ.** Without making any visible effort, the sun rises and sets thereby sustaining the entire Srishti with its benevolence, its presence and its aura.

The example of Sri Krishna HIMSELF is right before us, as **HE is the very epitome and personification of naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ!**

In the third chapter, Yogeshwar has said:

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।

नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥ 22॥

(There is no duty for Me to do in all the three worlds, O Partha, nor do I have anything to gain or attain. Yet, I am engaged in prescribed duties.)

**Truly, HE does not need to do anything, yet HE does HIS work, unconcerned about the accolades or censure.** We need to realize that if the work assigned to us is done in this same spirit as shown by Parameshwar, we would be free of all **paapa and punya**. There are some people who travel great distances to reach their work-place. In case an employee works diligently and manages to complete in a shorter span his allocated task- which would otherwise have taken a longer time, the quality of his work is nonetheless unaffected. This is similar to the case of the saints who attain perfection in their work and reach the state of siddhi. **It should be kept in mind that this siddhi comes only with renunciation or asakta buddhi.**

Parents work selflessly to cater to the needs of their children, without any expectations. In a similar vein, we too should work altruistically and amiably without nurturing any expectations from our duty. This attitude of diligence towards duty and apathy towards reward, will gradually decrease our desires and keep us firmly perched on the path of Karma-Yoga.

## 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.

The entire purpose of learning the Gitā is to attain **chitta-shuddhi**- a clean mind and a pure soul, that harbors no attachment to the rewards of work in this material world. **We need to realize that attachment and desire are the very reasons for our rebirth.** By doing **nishkām karma**, we obtain **chitta shuddhi**, which ultimately leads to **naiṣkarmyasiddhi**.

However, we also need to pay heed to the fact that this goal of **naiṣkarmyasiddhi** cannot be achieved in merely one life-time. **Dnyaneshwar Maharaj himself says that he took lakhs of birth, following the principles of dharmacharan and living life by Vedic principles as per dharma, before attaining the wisdom to write his treatise, 'Dnyaneshwari'.** After many life-times of sincere practice, we too can gradually reach the state of **ātma-bodh** and become enlightened due to this divine knowledge.

The enlightened saints who have existed in the past had no regret when the time came for them to leave this material world. **They were in fact, joyous at leaving their bodies as they knew that life is not a destination but a means to achieve a higher purpose.**

We too should realize that birth on planet Earth is just a journey towards a greater goal, that is, knowledge of the self or **Jnāna Nishthā** and **Jnānasya Parā**. "**Jnāna Nishthā**" signifies the steadfastness and deep understanding of spiritual knowledge, while "**Jnāna Parā**" points towards the ultimate goal of attaining this knowledge. Together, these terms highlight the journey of spiritual progress through intellectual inquiry and the subsequent establishment in that wisdom. In fact, the highest knowledge encompasses an understanding of who we really are. Once this knowledge dawns, we realize that this **naiṣkarmyasiddhi** brings us closer to grasping the essence of **Brahmā tattva**

It is only after we have followed the principles of Karma Yoga, undergone **chitta-shuddhi** and attained the state of **naiṣkarmyasiddhi**, that we can realize **ātma sanyam Yoga**. Consequently, the curtain between the **sharira** or body and the **ātma** wears thin and we gradually attain enlightenment. **It is then that we get the highest knowledge of Brahmā-tattva and become Siddha-Purush.**

In the sixth chapter on Ātma-Saṁyama-Yoga, we come across two terms:

## योगारूढ and योगी

**Yogārūḍh** is the state when we are desiring to reach the level of permanent siddhi. Continuing on this path leads to the goal of attaining **siddhi** and **Brahmā Jnāna**.

In the subsequent three shlokas, Sri Krishna provides us with a list of the characteristics of a **siddha-prurush**. This list is like a litmus test for us as it gives us complete guidance on exactly where we want to reach, and how effective our efforts have been so far. **The characteristics mentioned in these shlokas serve as a benchmark for us to accomplish further success.** We often say,

गीता को जीवन में लाना है.

The next few shlokas will lead us on this path wherein we incorporate the wisdom of the Gitā in our lives.

### 18.51

**buddhyā viśuddhayā yukto, dhṛtyātmānaṁ(n) niyamyā ca,  
śabdādīnviṣayāṁstyaktvā, 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,

All the qualities mentioned in these next few shlokas add a depth to our personality, and make us **Brahmā jnāni**. After all, these virtues are the ones attained by a **naiṣkarmya siddha purush**, leading him towards **ātma-bodh**.

The first quality mentioned by Yogeshwar is **buddhyā viśuddhayā**, that is, a purified intellect free from desires, envy, malice and selfishness. How often has it happened that we start feeling envious when we see others dressing in expensive clothes or living a lavish life-style? These temptations inundate the mind with desires; **however, a siddha purush who has viśuddha buddhi, remains unaffected by the lure of the material world.**

**A person with viśuddha intellect does not discriminate amongst the various creations of the Divine.** We have to introspect on our own attitudes to see how far we have to go on this path towards attaining a pure intellect. For example, we love to pet a cute looking dog, but abhor the sight of lizards and cockroaches, which we consider inferior. **Our intellect is full of malice that makes us unable to see the One Cosmic power residing in every creature.** For that matter, we rush to make friends or revere those who have been very successful in their careers, while treating our maids or those we consider below our social standing, with disdain and contempt.

**This tendency of discriminating and isolating the diverse creations of the Divine on the basis of their color, shape or attributes should be discarded.** Moreover, those with a pure intellect are full of positive dhṛiti which helps them control their minds in the face of temptations. On the other hand, we ordinary mortals tend to yield easily to our impulses and temptations. For example, we watch fancy advertisements and those alluring discounts, which lead to undiminished desires. **We should have the fortitude or dhṛiti to control our urges**-be it when we eat, or when we speak. This shloka mentions the term **śabdādīnviṣayāṁstyaktvā**, which implies sounds and other objects of sensory experience, which need to be abandoned. We spend our entire lives enjoying these sensory and hedonistic experiences, whereas these same pleasures would leave a perfect sādhak unmoved and unaffected.

When we fast during Ekadashi or Janmashtami, we try to control our hunger. **The matter of controlling**

**an urge only comes in when there is a desire. It is only because we have desires that we curb them. However, there is no question of control if there is no desire or interest at all!** When Parameshwar mentions *śabdādīnviṣayāṁstyaktvā*, HE implies that we should discard all temptations and be free of *rāga* and *dveṣa*, or severe attachment and hatred. These negative emotions ultimately serve no purpose except that they further weigh down our already accumulated karmas. We should hold a neutral perspective, just like a mirror that merely reflects sights but does not absorb them. Our mind is like a sponge. Even a little quantity of water can be easily absorbed in the sponge. Similarly, the various worldly temptations get absorbed in our minds. **Instead of a sponge our mind should be like a mirror, objective and unaffected by the sensory objects.**

18.52

**viviktasevī laghvāśī, yatavākkāyamānaḥ,  
dhyānayogaparo nityaṁ(m), vairāgyaṁ(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,

A *siddha purush* relishes solitude, eats lightly, controls body, mind and speech, and is ever engaged in meditation and practice of dispassion. It is often said,

एकांत सबसे बड़ा तीर्थ है.

Most of us have been to places of pilgrimage like Rishikesh and Badrinath to soak in the bliss of Divinity. **However, it is undoubtedly a fact that solitude gives us a peaceful mind and serves as the best teertha.**

It is a pity that in today's day and age, however much we want, **we cannot live in solitude because of our complete dependence on cell-phones**, which give us constant companionship. Our Swamiji refers to this modern gadget as '*Karana Pisaach*'. We might be purportedly in solitude and silence, yet we remain connected to the world. **A viviktasevī enjoys staying alone, in the true sense of the word.** The word *laghvāśī* refers to a light-eater who has a modest appetite. **Gurudev Ranade was an ideal example of a laghvāśī, as he had lived without food for fourteen years!** When asked how he could live without food, he replied **that there are other sources of energy** besides food which he had the ability to tap to his advantage. Of course ordinary mortals like us would not be able to access these other sources of energy. Gurudev Ranade on the other hand, was a Siddha purush and a Yogi.

**Āhār or food is not taken only from the mouth. What we see and hear can also be considered fodder for the eyes and ears respectively.** We should be careful what we see and hear. For example, we should try to see Bhagavān in every creation and listen to holy discourses or bhajans to purify our sense-organs. Additionally, we should be mindful of what we speak as our words reflect the state and quality of our minds.

In the seventeenth chapter Yogeshwar has mentioned the kinds of tapah that entail the body, speech and mind or

शरीरवाङ्मनो

Bhagavān has also made a mention of dhyāna through which we can control our body, speech and mind. It is only through regulation of these afore-mentioned faculties, that we can experience an expansion of our thought-process and reach a state of refinement in our thoughts, denoted by the term given below.

## वैचारिक परिपक्वता

When we read the sacred scriptures like the Gitā or listen to the enlightening discourses, we increase our ability to engage in Swādhyāya Tapah and focus our mind on Parampitā. **Concentrating and contemplating on HIM is the actual essence of Dhyāna.** Patanjali Muni defines meditation as follows:

### प्रत्ययैकतानता ध्यानम्

(The unbroken flow of similar mental modifications is called Dhyana)

We should understand that meditation does not mean concentrating on any light. It just means, focusing our entire attention on Bhagavān. **When we are able to do this kind of dhyāna, automatically our mind and body come under our control, and we reach the stage of vairāgyam** or a constant state of detachment.

### 18.53

**ahaṅkāraṃ(m) balaṃ(n) darpaṃ(ñ), kāmaṃ(ñ) krodhaṃ(m) parigrahaṃ,  
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.

Free from egocentrism, violence, arrogance or *darpa*, desire, possessiveness and situated in tranquility, such a person becomes fit for union with Brahma.

This shloka says that **we should have no egotism, nor indulge in an unnecessary show of power, haughtiness, excessive yearning, and anger. We should also refrain from accumulating material possessions.** Often we see family members feverishly hoarding worldly acquisitions even when their needs have been fulfilled. We should learn to let go of our covetousness and be **vimucya nirmamaḥ**, thus becoming free of acquisitive tendencies. Only when we discard this feeling of 'ownership' can we attain mental peace, improve the quality of our **Dhyāna** and enjoy Brahmābhūyāya or union with **Brahmā**.

### 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.

The terms **Brahmābhūtaḥ prasannātmā** denote the highest level of bhakti that brings infinite happiness and bliss to the sincere devotee, as he achieves **para-bhakti**.

In the seventh chapter, we have come across four kinds of devotees:

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।

आर्तो जिज्ञासुरथार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥ 16॥

*(O best amongst the Bharatas, four kinds of pious people engage in My devotion—the distressed, the seekers of knowledge, the seekers of worldly possessions, and those who are situated in knowledge)*

After achieving this divine knowledge, a person becomes a real bhakta. This stage is attained when he crosses the four stages of Bhakti. **Such a person neither grieves nor desires the loss or acquisition of material objects.** One of the ideal examples of this kind of one-focused devotion is **Sant Eknath ji**, who went through a host of personal tragedies- the deaths of his wife and his favorite son being amongst the foremost losses that he faced. **Yet, he said that his only aspiration was to be in union with Vitthal Bhagavān. He managed to accomplish devotion of this immense magnitude and enjoy a permanent unison with Brahma tattva, only because he was situated in the eternal state of Dhyāna.** Equipped with equanimity, Sant Eknath ji did not hesitate even for a moment and gave a thirsty donkey the entire cache of Ganga water which he had once brought from Haridwar to take to Rameshwaram. His attitude can be best summarized by the lines from this chapter:

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।

अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥ 20॥

*(Understand that knowledge to be in the mode of goodness by which a person sees one undivided imperishable reality within all diverse living beings.)*

In the eyes of Eknath ji, all the animals and humans were alike. **They were, in his perception, a part of Parampitā.** It is this kind of intellect that qualifies one to achieve the highest level of bhakti.

18.55

**bhaktyā māmabhijānāti, yāvānyaścāsmi tattvataḥ,  
tato māṃ(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.

Sri Krishna says that only by knowing HIM through bhakti and devotion, can a devotee understand HIM thoroughly and completely. The word **tattvato** indicates that such bhaktas understand the essential principles through which they come to know Ishwar in entirety. There is a fine line of difference between 'knowing' and 'understanding'.

Yashoda ji used to see Bāl Krishna as her small, mischievous Kānhā. **However, when she saw HIM lifting the Govardhan Parvat, or when she saw the entire Universe within HIM as HE opened wide HIS mouth, Yashoda understood that her precious child is none other than Parampitā Parameshwar HIMSELF!**

Often, we discriminate between gold ornaments on the basis of their weight and design. If we start looking at these ornaments as having come from the same metal and hence having a common source of existence, we begin to perceive the unity in diversity. Similarly, once the realization occurs that we are all an 'ansh' or a particle of **Paramātmā**, we enter into full consciousness of HIS presence, as indicated by the term **viśate tadanantaram.**

18.56

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

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

Once the realization dawns on a person that he is but a part of Paramātmā, his life becomes devotion-centered, and **he attains liberation as Prasād from HIM**. Meera Bai was perpetually engaged in devotion and is known as one of the foremost devotees of Sri Krishna.

**An interesting point to note is that we never attach the prefix 'ex' to a devotee.** We have Presidents and Prime Ministers of great nations holding high offices and subsequently stepping down, after which they are known as ex-President or ex-Prime Minister, respectively. However, a devotee never steps down from his devout and holy pedestal. **Once a devotee, he remains a Bhakta through eternity.** Let us take the example of Meerabai, Sant Tukaram or Tulsidas ji. **Are they ever known as ex-devotees?** Their existence and identity as bhaktas of **Parampitā** never cease to exist.

18.57

**cetasā sarVākarmāṇi, mayi sannyasya matparaḥ,  
buddhiyogamupāśritya, maccittaḥ(s) satataṃ(m) bhava. 18.57**

Mentally dedicating all your actions to Me, and taking recourse to Yoga in the form of evenmindedness, be solely devoted to Me and constantly fix your mind on Me.

In order to attain this **śāśvat** state of devotion and enjoy HIS blessings, **we need to worship Yogeshwar with the help of our own karmas.** We need to offer all our karmas unto HIS holy feet. The word **sannyasya** means, to dedicate or keep something properly. **Hence, we should seek HIS refuge and surrender our minds and intellect completely unto HIM.**

A person who is constantly in HIS devotion, will ultimately be united with Parameshwar. Surrendering is not easy, and can only come about if we offer our minds to HIM. For example, merely chanting 'Auṃ śrī kṛṣṇārpaṇamastu' while harboring the delusion of being the doer, makes our devotion and surrender a mere formality- a form of superficial verbalization. True surrender lies in offering our intellect to HIM.

The next shloka explains what we achieve when we surrender unto HIM and become united with HIM.

18.58

**maccittaḥ(s) sarvadurgāṇi, matprasādāttariṣyasi,  
atha cettvamahaṅkārān, na śroṣyasi vinaṅkṣyasi. 18.58**

With your mind thus devoted to Me, you shall, by My grace overcome all difficulties. But, if from self-conceit you do not care to listen to Me, you will be lost.

In this shloka, Sri Krishna assures us that **if we fix our minds on HIM, we will overcome all the obstacles and difficulties that we face in life.** However, if due to our ego, we delude ourselves into thinking that we are the doers, then we are to be held responsible for our downfall and

**decline.**

There is a saying in Hindi:

**भगवान की इच्छा के बिना एक पत्ता भी नहीं हिलता**

Truly, nothing moves without the will of Bhagavān. If we incorporate this saying in our lives and realize that no work can be accomplished without HIS Grace, the hurdles in our lives will dwindle.

**Ahaṅkāra** is the commander of all the impurities that exist in our minds. Our saints have said:

**अहंकाराचा वारा न लागो राजसा**

*(Those who are HIS aspirants, let not even the slightest wind of ego affect them.)*

We should never let this egotism or **Ahaṅkāra** touch our lives. Sri Krishna then goes on to explain the benefits of following the wisdom that HE has imparted in the Gitā, which will be covered in the next session.

**The discourse was followed by a Question-answer session**

**.Q & A**

**Sundari Ji-**

**Q. You had said, 'siddhiṃ(m) prāpto yathā brahma, tathāpnoti nibodha me; samāsenaiḥ kaunteya, niṣṭhā jñānasya yā parā.' (18.50). What does 'Nibodh' mean? Further, I could not understand the 53rd Shloka.**

**Ans: Nibodha** means 'I am telling you'. How to attain this siddhi or perfection has been explained by Sri Krishna in the subsequent shlokas. In short, HE is explaining that this knowledge will be attained only after a person reaches the level of naiṣkarmya siddhi. From shlokas 51 to 53, Sri Krishna is talking about the characteristics of a Siddha Puruṣa.

**Shilpa Khadakbhavi ji**

**Q. Attaining Moksha is very far away from me; however, I just want to see God wherever and whichever temple I visit. Since I can't go to pilgrimages due to family responsibilities, as I have to look after my ailing mother-in-law, I try to see God in every person, even in the children who come to me in the Art classes. How can I actually see God?**

**Ans:** Your question has its own answer. You say you see God in the children who come to you for your Art classes. Whatever I know is through Parampujya Gurudev. These saints who I hear about, **have hardly visited any pilgrimages. Moksha is not something you attain after death.** You attain it while living. **Eknath Maharaj and Mira bai did not have to end life, yet they got moksha while living.** What you are saying denotes a high level of devotion-it is like the devotion of Prahlad who believed that God exists everywhere.

Krishna's janma is out of pure bliss. **When you sing, assume that HE is listening. Your belief should be very strong.** You said you need to take care of your mother-in-law. Serving her or your parents is moksha! The children coming to you should be served with love; the family should be served with love. Through this kind of loving service, you might become like Prahlad in the next birth. You need to understand that Yogeshwar is everywhere- even in the zoom meetings that we are having! You are giving importance to the physical aspect of God. However, HE is **Saguna** as well as **Nirguna**. You need to have

full faith in Gurudev and in HIM. Then you will be in a perpetual state of bliss.

## **Annapurna Vishnubhatlaji**

**Q. My health is not well. I tend to walk very slowly as I had a slipped disc. My husband does not take me anywhere. What should I do? I want to visit temples.**

**Ans:** Have the trust that if you cannot go to temples, God is still around you; HE is everywhere!. HE will come for us. You should just have faith within. Wherever we are, we have to merely continue on the path of our own bhakti. Have faith in Bhagavad Gitā. **Sri Krishna HIMSELF says that you do not have to go to any place of worship.** You have to only do the sadhna to attain **daivi sadguna**. You need to increase the **Daivi Sampada** in yourself. We should invest our time and energy in attaining the characteristics that Sri Krishna talks about in the Gitā.

**The evening concluded with a rendition of Hanuman Chalisa.**



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### **Jai Shri Krishna!**

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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