

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 6: Ātma-Saṁyama-Yoga

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Interpreter: GĪTĀ VIŚĀRAD ŚRĪ SRINIVAS WARNEKAR JI

YouTube Link: https://youtu.be/C5lt_rz6XBM

The Real Yogī: One Who Serves Without Ego and Masters the Mind — Walking the Peaceful Path Shown by Bhagavān Śrī Krishna

The name of Chapter 6 of the Bhagavad Gītā is **Ātma-Saṁyama Yoga - The Yoga of Self-Discipline**

The session commenced with deep prajwalan, the customary lighting of the lamp, prayers to the Supreme, and salutations to all the Gurus.

*Gurur brahmā gurur viṣṇuḥ gurur devo maheśvaraḥ
guruḥ sāksāt paraṁ brahma tasmai śrī gurave namaḥ*□

*kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya hareḥ paramātmāne
pranata-kleśa-nāśāya govindāya namo namaḥ*□

*namāma sat-guru śāntaṁ sac-cid-ānanda-vigraham
pūrṇa-brahma parandama īśam-ānanda-vallabham
ratnākara-tapa-dhāma himālaya-kirīṭinī
brahma-rāja-ratnādhyām vande bhārata-mātaram*□

*om pārthāya pratibodhitāṁ bhagavatā nārāyaṇaṁ svayam
vyāsenā grathitāṁ purāṇa-muni-madhye mahābhāratam
advaitāmṛta-varṣiṇī bhagavatī aṣṭādaśādhyāyini
ambā tu sādharma bhagavad gīte bhava namo'stute*□

*namo'stute vyāsa-viśāla-buddhe phullāravinda-ayatapatra-netra
yena tvayā bhārata-taila-pūrṇaḥ prajvālitoyam jñānamayaḥ pradīpaḥ*□

With deep reverence, salutations are offered at the divine feet of **Param Pūjya Sadguru Swami**

Govind Dev Giri Ji Maharaj. Every Gītā-loving seeker is greeted wholeheartedly.

This is the **sixth chapter** of Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, named **Ātma-Saṁyama Yoga** — the Yoga of Self-Discipline, a profoundly important chapter. It teaches how one may truly **practice self-control** and bring spirituality into action.

Unlike many other chapters, **no question** is asked by Arjuna at the beginning of this chapter; it opens directly with **Bhagavān’s own voice**. The reason becomes clear when one looks back at the **concluding verses of the fifth chapter**, where Bhagavān says:

***kāmakrodha-vimuktānāṃ yatināṃ yata-cetasām
abhito brahma-nirvāṇaṃ vartate viditātmanām*** □ (5.26)

And before a seeker sits for dhyāna, Bhagavān explains:

***sparśān kṛtvā bahir bāhyāṃś cakṣuś caivāntare bhruvoḥ
prāṇāpānau samau kṛtvā nāsābhyantara-cāriṇau*** □ (5.27)
***yatendriya-mano-buddhir munir mokṣa-parāyaṇaḥ
vigateccā-bhaya-krodho yaḥ sadā mukta evasaḥ*** □ (5.28)

Here, “**sparśa**” may easily be mistaken as merely the tactile sense of touch — what skin feels. But sparśa refers to **every interaction of the senses with their objects**:

Eyes

- Object: **Rūpa** (forms)
- Mode of sparśa: Visual contact

Ears

- Object: **Śabda** (sounds)
- Mode of sparśa: Hearing

Nose

- Object: **Gandha** (fragrance)
- Mode of sparśa: Smelling

Tongue

- Object: **Rasa** (taste)
- Mode of sparśa: Tasting

Skin

- Object: **Sparśa** (touch)
- Mode of sparśa: Physical contact

One cannot **shut down the senses**. Eyes cannot stop seeing, ears cannot stop hearing; food must still be tasted. Thus, Bhagavān instructs:

sparśān kṛtvā bahir bāhyān —Let the sensory objects remain **outside**, without letting their influence disturb the inner state.

This becomes possible only when one gains mastery over:

yat-indriya-mano-buddhiḥ- Control over the **senses, mind, and intellect**.

Hence, the essential question arises:

How does one conquer the senses?

This chapter explains **that very process** — the art of mastering oneself.

Ātman here must be understood **contextually**:

- Ātman as *the essential Self*
- Ātman as *the individual being*
- Ātman as *mind, body, and senses together forming the “I”*.

Thus, **Ātma-Saṃyama** means:

The discipline of **oneself**, gaining control over **one’s own nature**.

Bhagavān earlier declared that performing such control leads to:

***bhoktāraṃ yajña-tapasāṃ sarva-loka-maheśvaram
suhṛdaṃ sarva-bhūtānāṃ jñātvā māṃ śāntim ṛcchati*** (5.29)

Every human being — knowingly or unknowingly — seeks **one thing: parama-śānti** — the ultimate peace.

And peace arises when one recognises **Bhagavān** as:

- **Sarva-loka-Maheśvara** — Sovereign of all existence
- **Suhṛt Sarva-bhūtānām** — The true well-wisher of every being

“Suhṛt” is **not merely** a companion-friend who reciprocates affection. A suhṛt desires our welfare **even without our choosing it**.

When such truth is realised, enduring peace naturally blossoms.

It seems this profound subject required further elaboration. Therefore, without waiting for a question from Arjuna, Bhagavān Himself begins the sixth chapter:

Returning to the starting inquiry of the fifth chapter, where Arjuna asked:

***sannyāsaṃ karmaṇāṃ kṛṣṇa punaḥ yogaṃ ca śaṃsasi
yac chreya etayor ekaṃ tan me brūhi suniścitam***

He expressed confusion — Bhagavān praises both **sannyāsa** and **karma-yoga**. Which one is truly beneficial?

Thus, right at the outset of Chapter 6,

Bhagavān clarifies: Sannyāsa and Yoga are **not separate paths**. Their essence is one.

6.1

**anāśritaḥ(kh) karmaphalaṃ(ñ), kāryaṃ(ñ) karma karoti yaḥ,
sa sannyāsī ca yogī ca, na niragnirna cākriyaḥ. 6.1**

Śrī Bhagavān said :He who does his duty without expecting the fruit of action is Sannyāsī (Sāṅkhyayogī) and Yogī (Karmayogī) both. He is no Sannyāsī (renouncer) who has simply renounced the sacred fire; even so, he is no Yogī who has given up all activity.

Bhagavān begins this chapter by defining the one who is truly a **sannyāsī** and a **yogī**. He declares that these two are not separate paths. Outer appearances or external lifestyle do not determine a person's spiritual stature.

It is often believed that a sannyāsī is the one who renounces fire rituals — **na niragniḥ** — meaning, one who no longer maintains sacred fire for rituals. Since a renunciate subsists on alms, the need for fire disappears. It is also assumed that a sannyāsī is **na cākriyaḥ** — one who is free from obligatory actions, having no worldly duties to perform.

However, Bhagavān clarifies that simply giving up fire or external acts does not make one a sannyāsī.

The true definition lies in the first half of the verse:

- **anāśritaḥ karma-phalaṃ** — Not depending upon the fruits of action
- **kāryaṃ karma karoti yaḥ** — Performing actions simply because they must be performed

Every action usually begins with a motivation — *What will I gain from this?* The promise of a result becomes the driving force. Bhagavān states that when one performs **kāryaṃ karma** — action that is a **duty**, a **worthy responsibility**, without leaning on the desire for results — that individual is a genuine sannyāsī and yogī.

Here, the term **kārya** is crucial. It does not refer to just any action. It refers to:

- Actions that are **appropriate**
- Actions that are **one's duty**
- Actions that one **ought** to perform

Kārya means that which is fit to be done — one's rightful duty.

Thus, even a small task performed with the feeling —*"This is my duty, this is right for me to do"*— without expectation of benefit, qualifies as spiritual discipline.

If one performs even noble actions with the anticipation of rewards, the qualification of being a sannyāsī or yogī remains incomplete.

Bhagavān highlights:

Inner state defines renunciation, not outer symbols.

The **internal disposition** of a sannyāsī and a karmayogī is identical — both act **without attachment to the result**.

Externally, their roles may differ:

- A renunciate may wear ochre robes
- A householder may fulfill family duties
- Duties vary by **varṇa** and **āśrama**

But if actions are grounded in duty rather than desire, the essence of renunciation is already present.

Bhagavān further prepares to explain ahead what is truly meant by **yoga** and **sannyāsa** — revealing that they are not two paths, but one unified discipline of self-mastery.

6.2

yaṃ(m) sannyāsamiti prāhuḥ(r), yogaṃ(n) taṃ viddhi pāṇḍava, na hyasannyastasaṅkalpo, yogī bhavati kaścana. 6.2

Arjuna, you must know that what they call as Sannyāsa is no other than Yoga; for none becomes a Yogī who has not abandoned his 'Saṅkalpas' (thoughts of the world).

Yam sannyāsam iti prāhuḥ — that which is described as **sannyāsa, tam yogam viddhi** — that alone is **yoga**, O Pāṇḍava. The one who has not renounced *saṅkalpa* — ego-driven desires and mental projections — cannot become a **yogī**.

One should understand this profound truth clearly: what the world calls *sannyāsa*, that very same is *yoga*. These two are not separate paths. They are deeply unified — **antaranga**, inwardly one. When one performs one's actions with the pure awareness that "*This duty has been entrusted to me by Bhagavān*", then that becomes *sannyāsa*, and that becomes *yoga*.

For this, there is no need to abandon home, family, or worldly responsibilities. Whether one is a *grhastha*, *brahmacārī*, *vānaprasthī*, or a renunciate, the inner state remains one. True *sannyāsa* is not about the outer robe; it is the renunciation within.

na hy asannyasta saṅkalpo yogī bhavati kaścana

As long as *saṅkalpa* remains, as long as inner cravings and compulsive desires persist, one cannot be called a *yogī* or a genuine renunciate.

What is *saṅkalpa*?

Samyak kalpate iti saṅkalpaḥ —When the mind labels something as attractive or pleasurable, instantly the desire to obtain it arises. That desire itself is *saṅkalpa*.

But when a person's **dhyeya** — the ultimate goal — becomes supreme and crystal-clear, when nothing else holds attention except that one higher pursuit, all lesser desires melt away naturally.

For instance, consider a student who firmly resolves that this year, excellence in the examinations is the goal — *this is my dhyeya, I shall not abandon it*. Then, even if someone invites them to watch an exciting match, that student remains unmoved. They think:

"My duty at this moment is study; my examination is near. I must achieve the marks I have resolved to achieve."

Their alignment with the *dhyeya* dissolves all distractions.

Such is the working of life itself: When the **goal is high**, the **lower desires** cannot tempt the mind.

Therefore, until these smaller *saṅkalpas* — temptations and personal cravings — dissolve completely, the human being cannot attain the ultimate aim, and thus cannot be recognised as a *yogī* or a *sannyāsī*.

What exactly must be renounced?

The word *sannyāsa* comes from **sam + nyāsa** — a *complete and perfect renunciation*. Not renunciation of fire, not renunciation of action — but renunciation of **ego-centered desires**.

When one becomes single-pointedly devoted to the highest purpose of life, **nothing else can attract or divert the mind**.

What is that supreme **dhyeya**?

For a human being, the highest attainment is **Paramātma-prāpti** — the realisation of oneness with Bhagavān.

“*Nara ka Nārayana banna*” — the transformation from the individual to the Divine — that is the ultimate goal.

This supreme aspiration **must** remain.

It is not a saṅkalpa to be renounced — rather, it is the very fire that burns all other saṅkalpas away.

When this dhyeya is firm, everything else fades effortlessly.

Thus, Bhagavān declares:

na hyasannyastasaṅkalpo yogī bhavati kaścana

Without renouncing lower desires, no one attains yoga; no one becomes a true renunciate.

To walk this path, one essential requirement emerges: **the dhyeya must be firmly established**. Only with a clear and unwavering goal do all other saṅkalpas dissolve.

6.3

āruruṣormuneryogaṃ(ñ), karma kāraṇamucyate, yogārūḍhasya tasyaiva, śamaḥ(kh) kāraṇamucyate. 6.3

To the contemplative soul who desires to attain Karmayoga, selfless action is said to be the means; for the same man when he is established in Yoga, absence of all 'Saṅkalpas' (thoughts of the world) is said to be the way to blessedness.

Bhagavān speaks of two distinct spiritual conditions here — the one striving to ascend the peak of yoga, and the one who has already attained that summit.

āruruṣoḥ — one who desires to climb; who wishes to ascend the **yoga-śikhara**, the pinnacle of spiritual unity;

muner — the seeker who is a *muni*, meaning one who reflects deeply, who constantly contemplates the realisation of Paramātma and the complete oneness with Him.

For such a seeker:

karma kāraṇam ucyate

Action becomes the **kāraṇa** — the means, the *sādhana*, the vehicle.

To climb a mountain, one must walk. One cannot expect to reach the summit by sitting still. If someone declares, “*I will do nothing, yet I wish to reach the peak,*” they will remain where they are. Therefore, for the one beginning the journey, **karma** is indispensable.

Action itself becomes the support, the mode of ascent. Without effort, progress is impossible.

However, the scripture immediately presents the second state:

yogārūḍhasya tasyaiva śamaḥ kāraṇam ucyate

When the seeker reaches the peak — becoming **yogārūḍha**, fully established in yoga — the means also transform.

Now, continued movement would only lead downwards. Upon reaching the summit, walking must stop. There, **śama** — complete stillness and inner quietude — becomes the means.

Nothing remains to be attained.

The ultimate aim of life — **Paramātma-prāpti** — has been fulfilled.

Therefore, no further *sañkalpa*, no desire or projection can arise. The mind becomes wholly desireless and silent.

At this state, the seeker simply abides in the awareness of Bhagavān, merging completely in that presence.

This progression aligns perfectly with the *Aṣṭāṅga-yoga* path — **yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna** — and finally **samādhi**.

What is *samādhi*?

The very root **yuj** means *samādhau yuj* — the union where individuality dissolves into the Supreme. Samādhi is absolute oneness with Paramātma.

Thus:

- When ascending toward yoga: **karma** is the means.
- When established in yoga: **śama**, complete stillness, is the means.

One must introspect:

Am I an ārurukṣu — still climbing?

Or am I a yogārūḍha — established at the peak?

How can one recognise the signs of each state?

This is what Bhagavān continues to reveal in the verses ahead.

6.4

yadā hi nendriyārtheṣu, na karmasvanuṣajjate, sarvasañkalpasannyāsī, yogārūḍhastadocyate. 6.4

When a man ceases to have any attachment for the objects of senses and for actions, and has renounced all 'Sañkalpas' (thoughts of the world), he is said to have attained Yoga.

Bhagavān now describes how one recognises the **yogārūḍha** state — when the seeker has reached the summit of yoga.

He says:

yadā — when...

na indriyārtheṣu anuṣajjate — one is no longer *attached* to **indriyārthas** — the objects of the senses: *śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa, gandha* — sound, touch, form, taste, smell.

Not only does he refrain from clinging to the senses, but **the mind too does not stick to those subjects.**

Usually, a person becomes attached in both ways — with the senses and with the mind's relentless contemplation of what it enjoys.

If something on a screen appears pleasant, the eyes become fixed upon it, the mind becomes absorbed in it, and even essential duties — like food — are forgotten. This is **āsakti** — sticking, clinging.

Bhagavān states:

na karmasu anuṣajjate — he does not cling to actions either.

Many become attached even to work.

They keep doing only what they *like*, forgetting whether it is their *kartavya* — their duty.

One may pick up the phone for work, but a message appears — and instantly **one is stuck elsewhere**, forgetting the purpose.

Therefore, **the test** is clear:

When neither the **sense-objects** nor **actions** can bind a person — when nothing distracts him from his **dhyeya** — his only goal — then:

sarvasaṅkalpasannyāsī — all other desires and intentions have melted away.

Only one purpose remains.

Just as a patriot sees nothing except the freedom of the motherland — every other attraction dissolves — so too, the seeker sees **only** the ultimate spiritual aim.

At that stage:

yogārūḍhaḥ tada ucyate — *Then*, he is truly established in yoga.

Thus, to know whether one has become a yogārūḍha, one must look within:

- Have all other saṅkalpas vanished?
- Does only one single spiritual objective shine in the mind?

If yes, that is the ascent's completion.

However, Bhagavān makes it clear — **reaching such a state is not easy**.

For the mind to entertain **no second thought** apart from the supreme aim, this requires profound inner maturity.

Human nature is such that a person becomes attached to the actions that he finds pleasing. Whether those actions are beneficial or harmful, he continues performing them out of inclination, and gradually he forgets his true *kartavya* (duty). But when this does not happen—when a person ceases to be entangled in sensory objects and the pleasures arising from karma, when all his saṅkalpas (inner resolves and desires) dissolve—then nothing else appears attractive to him. His mind turns naturally towards a higher ideal.

For example, the sentiment expressed in this Marathi line:

“हे मातृभूमि, तुजला मन वाहियेलें,
वक्तृत्व वाक्-विभव ही तुज अपियेलें।”

Here the seeker's heart is completely offered to the motherland. Only the ideal of her freedom remains before him. When such a single, overpowering resolve fills the mind of the devotee, all other desires and ambitions naturally fade away. In such a condition, it should be understood that the seeker has become yogārūḍha—one established firmly in Yoga.

In this state, the yogī and the sannyāsī become one.

There is **no insistence** on the external *āśrama*.

A **gṛhastha**, **brahmacārī**, or **vānaprasthī** — each can attain this very realisation.

It is not the robe that defines renunciation;

it is the **absence of attachment**.

Jñāneśvara Maharaj beautifully illustrates this truth:

“नातरी एकचि उदक सहजे, परी स्नानां घटीं भरिजे।

तैसें भिन्नत्व जाणजे, योगसंन्यासांचें।”

The same water remains one, even if placed in many vessels. Likewise — yoga and sannyāsa are not truly different.

He further says:

“जे इन्द्रियांचे विषय, ते न सुझेचि मानसीं,
तैसेच जे आत्मसुख, तेथे मन निमग्र।
तेव्हा इन्द्रियांचे विषय स्मरणास येत ना।”

When the senses cease to recall their objects, and the mind generates **no new sañkalpas**, and **ātma-bodha** — the awakening to the Self — dawns, then that one is truly **yogārūḍha**.

At this point, a question may arise in Arjuna’s heart:

“Who grants this state? Is it received from a Satguru? Or bestowed by Bhagavān?”

Bhagavān answers ahead — this state is not given from outside...

6.5

uddharedātmanātmānaṃ(n), nātmānamavasādayet, ātmaiva hyātmano bandhuḥ(r), ātmaiva ripurātmanaḥ. 6.5

One should lift oneself by one’s own efforts and should not degrade oneself; for one’s own self is one’s friend, and one’s own self is one’s enemy.

Bhagavān now offers a profound instruction to the seeker regarding responsibility for one’s own spiritual rise.

uddharet ātmanā ātmānam — “One must elevate oneself *by oneself*.”

Who will uplift us?

A disciple once asked his Guru, “You uplift so many beings — how do you do it?”

The Guru replied, “I do not uplift anyone. Their *own surrender* becomes their upliftment.”

A **Sadguru** only shows the path.

Bhagavadgītā shows the way.

But to walk the path — that action must arise from the seeker alone.

Thus, Bhagavān says:

One must accomplish one’s own upliftment.

Further:

na ātmānam avasādayet — “One must not degrade oneself.”

To lower oneself, to move towards *adhogati* — downward decline — this should never be done.

Bhagavān emphasises:

ātmaiva hi ātmanaḥ bandhuḥ — A person is **his own bandhu** — his own friend, his own well-wisher.

ātmaiva ripuḥ ātmanaḥ — And the same person becomes **his own enemy** if he acts against his own welfare.

When one strives for upliftment, one becomes **one’s own friend**.

When one knowingly falls into habits and actions that harm, then one becomes **one’s own enemy**.

Even ordinary people possess a natural sense of **viveka** — an inner knowing of what is right and wrong.

- One with diabetes knows sweets are harmful — yet still eats them.
- All know that smoking is damaging — yet continue.

In such moments, one becomes **the enemy of one's own self**.

But when one protects oneself, avoids what harms, and pursues what elevates, one becomes **a true friend** to oneself.

It is like the notice often seen at a construction site:

“svayaṃ kī surakṣā svayaṃ karein” — *One must ensure one's own safety.*

Objects may fall from above; dangers may appear unexpectedly — hence, one must remain alert and careful.

Likewise, on the path of sādhanā: **One must protect one's own upliftment.**

Bhagavān concludes that no one else will come specially to rescue us.

Each seeker must raise their own consciousness and safeguard themselves from their own decline.

When does one truly become **one's own bandhu — one's own friend?**

Bhagavān reveals this in the next shloka...

6.6

bandhurātmānastasya, yenātmaivātmanā jitaḥ, anātmanastu śatrutve, vartetātmaiva śatruvat. 6.6

One's own self is the friend of the soul by whom the lower self (consisting of the mind, senses, and body) has been conquered; even so, the very Self of him, who has not conquered his lower self, behaves antagonistically like an enemy.

Bhagavān further clarifies how one becomes one's own companion or one's own enemy. In this single śloka, the term *ātman* appears repeatedly - *bandhuḥ ātmā ātmanastasya, yena ātmanā ātmā jitaḥ, anātmanaḥ tu śatrutve varteta ātmaiva śatruvat* - indicating its deep significance here.

What does conquering the self truly mean? *Yena ātmanā ātmā jitaḥ* refers to one who has gained mastery over oneself - victory over one's own body, victory over one's senses, victory over one's mind, and victory over one's intellect. When one is victorious, the defeated must follow. Thus, when the senses are conquered, they obey; when the mind is conquered, it thinks as directed; it does not wander at will. It goes only where the master wills. This mastery becomes possible when the goal — *dhyeya* — is firmly established.

As the intellect remains absorbed in that chosen goal, the mind naturally aligns with the same. Where the intellect is placed, the mind follows. Therefore, self-conquest means bringing one's body, mind, and senses under control, allowing them to work in harmony toward one's higher purpose.

Bandhuḥ ātmā ātmanas tasya — the one who has disciplined the self becomes one's own companion, one's own well-wisher. Such a person uplifts oneself.

But *anātmanah* — one who fails to gain this mastery — ends up acting against one's own wellbeing. *Śatrutve varteta ātmaiva śatruvat* — one then behaves like an enemy to oneself. For example, knowing that smoking is harmful and yet continuing the habit reflects this self-hostility. The warnings are visible — *injurious to health* — and yet ignored. One harms oneself knowingly. That is acting like one's own adversary.

Why must one gain this victory over oneself? For what purpose should one strive so diligently? When the goal of life is clearly chosen — *dhyeya niścita* — nothing else holds importance. Then the question of “why” does not even arise. Still, the assurance is given: only when one conquers oneself does one attain the chosen goal. Without self-mastery, the highest aim remains unattainable.

Thus Bhagavān teaches: one's rise and fall lie in one's own hands. One may become one's greatest supporter — or one's most formidable foe. The choice rests within.

6.7

jitātmanah(ph) praśāntasya, paramātmā samāhitaḥ, śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkheṣu, tathā mānāpamānayoḥ. 6.7

The Supreme Spirit is rooted in the knowledge of the self-controlled man whose mind is perfectly serene in the midst of pairs of opposites, such as cold and heat, joy and sorrow, and honor and ignominy.

Bhagavān describes the state of the one who has conquered oneself — *jitātmanah*. One who has gained mastery over one's own mind, senses, and body becomes *praśāntaḥ* — completely peaceful. In such a person, *Paramātmā samāhitaḥ* — the Supreme dwells fully. Such an elevated being becomes one with Paramātmā, reflecting the same equipoise that is inherent in Paramātmā. This is the *samatva-yoga* that Bhagavān had already expounded in the second chapter while describing the qualities of a *sthitaprajña* — one who remains steady in wisdom.

How is this inner balance expressed? *Śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkheṣu* — whether in cold or heat, comfort or discomfort, joy or sorrow, gain or loss, victory or defeat — such a person remains steady, unmoved.

Not only in life's dualities, but *tathā mānāpamānayoḥ* — even amidst honor and dishonor, one does not allow disturbance to arise within. Respect may come, criticism may come; flowers may be offered, or thorns may prick; achievements may occur, or mistakes may also happen — yet inner balance remains firm.

**“फूल भी बेशक मिलेंगे और मिलेंगे शूल भी,
कार्य कुछ होंगे पुरस्कृत और होंगी भूल भी।”**

A striking illustration is found in the life of Swami Vivekānanda. Once, during his voyage to America by sea, he was standing on the deck of the ship. Two British men nearby noticed him in his saffron robes and began to speak derisively about him. They mocked him, calling him names and attributing unworthy motives to ascetics. Swami Vivekānanda listened calmly, without the slightest agitation. They assumed he could not understand English.

But then their abuse turned towards Bhārat — the motherland. The moment they insulted India, Swami Vivekānanda walked straight to them, held one of them by the collar, and declared firmly that if they uttered a single word against his country, he would throw them overboard. He was mighty in strength and resolute in spirit.

His own insult never disturbed him — *mānāpamāna* regarding himself held no significance. But dishonor toward the nation he could not tolerate. This illustrates the balanced clarity of one who lives with Paramātmā fully established within: personal praise or criticism does not create pride or pain, yet when dharma and dignity demand, firmness arises.

Thus, *jitātmanaḥ prasāntasya paramātmā samāhitaḥ* — only when one has mastered the mind and senses does this deep peace arise; only then does Paramātmā become fully manifest within. For that, self-control and inner discipline are the necessary foundations.

Such a person remains serene in every situation — unwavering, balanced, and inwardly free.

6.8

jñānavijñānatṛptātmā, kūṭastho vijitendriyaḥ, yukta ityucyate yogī, śamaloṣṭāśmakāñcanaḥ. 6.8

The Yogī whose mind is sated with Jñāna (Knowledge of Nirguṇa Brahma) and Vijñāna (Knowledge of manifest Divinity), who is unmoved under all circumstances, whose senses are completely under control, and to whom mud, stone and gold are all alike, is spoken of as a God-realized soul.

Bhagavān describes the yogī who is truly *yukta* — steadfast in yoga. Such a being is *jñāna-vijñāna-tṛpta-ātmā* — fulfilled through **jñāna** and **vijñāna**. Here, *jñāna* refers specifically to **ātmajñāna** — knowledge of the Self, not *sāmānya-jñāna* gathered through the senses. And *vijñāna* means the **direct experience** of that Self-knowledge.

It is one thing to hear that there exists a round, soft, sweet filled with syrup — its appearance and price may be well described. But the real understanding of *rasagullā* arises only when one tastes it. Similarly, merely knowing “Ātmatattva is everywhere, within all, and that is my true nature” remains theoretical until it becomes one’s lived experience. When that experience dawns, the being becomes completely satisfied — *tṛpta-ātmā*.

Such a yogī is *kūṭastha* — like the peak of a mountain. Clouds remain below; rains may fall beneath, yet the summit stays untouched. Likewise, external situations do not generate any disturbance within. He remains **unaffected**.

Bhagavān further says he is *vijitendriyaḥ* — master of the senses. This does not merely mean restraining the senses through effort. For example, during a vrata, one avoids food by conscious discipline. But here, the senses themselves naturally come into alignment; they no longer drag the mind outward. No forced control is required. This effortless mastery is true *vijitendriyatā*.

Such a yogī also remains *śamaloṣṭāśma-kāñcanaḥ* — equal-minded toward **clay, stone, and gold**. This does not mean he is ignorant of their material value, nor that his practical dealings become irrational — throwing away gold and preserving stones. Even a child may treat a colorful scrap of paper better than a currency note because it does not know the value — but that is *ajñāna*.

Here, the yogī **knows the value**, yet the mind does not get attracted or repelled by these differences. Whether something is made of earth, rock, or precious gold — his inner stance remains the same:

“माटी तू न सोणची, दोन्ही माटी समान मानो।”

māṭī tū nahī pikau

sone kīrti āmchī jagī vase

*sone māṭī samāna mānu
manī dhāraṇā hī vase*

“Clay or gold — both stand equal in his sight; only the right understanding resides in the heart.”

So, even if someone tries to tempt such a being away from their dharma by offering ten tolas of gold — even at the highest price of the day — nothing can shake them. There is no inner disturbance caused by acquisition or loss.

There are living examples of such equanimity. When someone once placed an expensive diamond necklace worth several lakhs around a revered saint, he simply accepted it with no excitement — “For me, what does it matter?” As soon as the person left, the saint handed the necklace away to be used for good work. For the one who needs nothing for oneself, whether it is twenty-five lakhs or two and a half crores — it makes no difference.

It is important to distinguish **external dealings** from **inner perception**. The yogī knows how to engage correctly — treating equals equally and unequals appropriately. As even justice (*nyāya*) says: “Treating equals unequally and unequals equally — both are injustice.”

Thus, while the practical world is handled responsibly, internally there is **no attachment, no fascination**. The gaze remains equal — *sama-darśana*. He knows how to balance behavior (*vyavahāra*) and the ultimate standpoint (*paramārtha*).

Such is the samatva — the profound equanimity — described in this verse.

6.9

Suḥṛnmitrāryudāsīna, madhyasthadveṣyabandhuṣu, sādhuṣvapi ca pāpeṣu, śamabuddhirviśiṣyate. 6.9

He who looks upon well-wishers and neutrals as well as mediators, friends and foes, relatives and inimicals, the virtuous and the sinful, with equanimity, stands supreme.

Bhagavān now describes the remarkable equanimity of the truly realised yogī — *śama-buddhi* — a mind that sees all with evenness.

Several types of responses are named here: *suḥṛ* (a friend who truly wishes one’s welfare), *mitra* (a usual friend), *udāsīna* (the detached witness), *madhyasta* (a mediator), *dveṣya* (one viewed with aversion), *bandhuṣu* (relations), *sādhuṣu* (the good), and *pāpeṣu* (the sinful). In every category the yogī’s *buddhi* remains the same — balanced and impartial.

Suḥṛa here denotes more than mere friendliness — it is that inner well-wisher who seeks only the good for another, regardless of reciprocation. *Udāsīna* does not mean depressed or careless; it means sitting above the fray — witnessing without attachment, like an observer on a high balcony watching the traffic below. One’s involvement with the traffic is none; one simply sees. That detached, witnessing stance is *udāsīnatā*.

Madhyasta is the impartial mediator who brings opposing parties together. *Dveṣya* is the one regarded with dislike. *Bandhu* denotes kinship. In all these relations — whether with saints (*sādhū*) or sinners (*pāpi*) — the yogī’s intellect remains steady: *śama-buddhi viśiṣyate*.

What does this equal vision mean in practice? The yogī understands that the **Self** — the ātmā — pervades both the saint and the sinner. Behaviour toward each will differ: one honours the saint, disciplines the wrongdoer; yet inwardly the Self is recognised in both. Thus the yogī’s conduct is appropriate to the situation while the inner vision remains even.

Bhagavān’s teaching finds expression in sacred stories:

When Bhagavān Rāmacandra felled Rāvaṇa in battle, it was not from personal hatred; the action was the completion of dharma. After the killing, He instructed Vibhīṣaṇa, “Perform the final rites for your brother” — treating the vanquished as one still human, not out of vengeance but according to duty; the enemy’s hostility was ended, not nurtured.

Similarly, during America’s Civil War, Abraham Lincoln urged the nation to fight but without hatred in hearts — “fight, but keep love for all” — embodying the principle that action can be resolute without breeding enduring enmity. The yogī’s vision is thus both equitable and practical: love for all, firmness where needed.

When such samatā fills the heart — when all *saṅkalpas* have dissolved and inner balance is established — the yogī naturally turns inward to the single remaining task: steady practice of meditation.

6.10

yogī yuñjīta satatam, ātmānam(m) rahasi sthitaḥ, ekākī yatacittātmā, nirāśīraparigrahaḥ. 6.10

Living in seclusion all by himself, the Yogī who has controlled his mind and body, and is free from desires and void of possessions, should constantly engage his mind in meditation.

Bhagavān now sketches the life of the yogī who has mastered body, mind, and senses and who devotes himself constantly to communion with the Self.

Yogī yuñjīta satatam — the yogī should practise continually, ever placing the ātman in the secret chamber of the heart. Here *ātmā* is used in the context of the person’s own being — the body, the mind, the senses — all of which have come under mastery. The one who has won such inner sovereignty is *rahasya-sthitaḥ* — established in secrecy, sheltered within.

Ekākī yatacittātmā — solitary, with a disciplined mind. This solitude is not mere loneliness but chosen seclusion for sustained inner work. *Nirāśīra-parigrahaḥ* — he abandons clingings and expectations. Needs shrink; possessions lose their hold. The pandemic had already shown how few things are truly necessary; similarly, the perfected yogī accumulates little and depends on nothing.

From this quality of non-attachment arises unwavering hope-free steadiness: having reached the supreme *dhyeya*, the yogī no longer nourishes worldly expectations. He seeks only one union — the merging with Paramātma — and so all other desires fall away.

Such a person naturally withdraws to solitude to practise: sitting quietly, applying the mind constantly to the Self — *ātmānam satatam yujyat* — steady, continual effort to fix heart and mind in the One. There is no longer further duty of worldly action; the only remaining duty is *dhyāna* — meditation — until the final state of *śama* (peaceful absorption) is attained.

Finally, to accomplish this deep peace one needs a proper place and steadfast discipline; having

gained mastery over senses and mind, the yogī's life becomes single-pointed, solitary, and free of all grasping — wholly given to the inner union.

6.11

śucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya, sthiraṃ āsanam ātmanaḥ, nātyucchritaṃ(n) nātinīcaṃ(ñ), cailājīnakuśottaram. 6.11

Having firmly set his seat in a spot which is free from dirt and other impurities with the sacred Kuśa grass, deerskin and cloth spread thereon one upon the other (Kuśa below, deerskin in the middle and cloth uppermost), neither very high nor very low;

Bhagavān continues to describe the discipline of a yogī who has already attained mastery over his mind, senses, and desires. Now, such a yogī prepares for deeper meditation.

The place for meditation must be **śuci** — a single word that encompasses **svacchatā** (cleanliness), **śuddhatā** (purity), and **pavitratā** (sanctity).

A glass filled with crystal-clear water may be clean, yet could still hold unseen impurities. Once purified, it becomes both clean and pure. When the same water is recognised as Gaṅgā-jala, it becomes sacred as well. Such is the depth contained in the word **śuci**.

A **śuci-deśa** is therefore:

- physically clean
- internally pure
- spiritually sanctified

— often due to the presence or sādhana of saints.

Sant Jñāneśvar Mahārāj expresses this beautifully:

“ते सन्त निर्मित असावे स्थान
तेथे सन्तोषा भावे सहाय्य पूर्ण।”

This means: “The place should be one established or sanctified by saints. Their sādhana should have touched that land. Then, the mind experiences natural contentment there, and the place itself becomes fully supportive to spiritual pursuit.”

Such a sacred environment strengthens the inner quality of patience, as the next Ovi says:

“पाळावा अत्यन्त धैर्य गुण अन्तकरणात।”

“One must cultivate great patience in the inner being; such a place helps the heart grow steady and calm.”

A pure and sacred environment provides exactly the kind of atmosphere needed—one that uplifts the mind, steadies the heart, and facilitates meditation effortlessly. Jñāneśvar Māuli has given a vivid and meaningful description of such an atmosphere.

He further adds an insightful line:

“पाखण्डी जाता तेथुन त्याचे ही भावी आस्था पूर्ण
कि करावे आता आचरण, रहावे येथे।”

Even if a pākhāṇḍī (a pretender or hypocrite) were to pass by such a place, the sanctity of the environment would inspire him too. He would feel: “Perhaps I should sit here for a while, reflect,

meditate, or at least behave with purity and sincerity.” Such is the transformative power of a sacred location.

Where saints have performed austerities, the environment itself inspires **santoṣa** (inner contentment) and **dhairya** (steadfastness). Even a spiritually immature person — **pākhāṇḍī** — feels an inner pull to sit and meditate in such a place. An atmosphere that silently reinforces the inclination for tapas is considered ideal.

In such a śuci-deśa, once the yogī is established in his path — devoid of possessions, expectations, and inner struggle — **he chooses solitude**. Now one single duty remains: dhyāna — settling his consciousness into unity with the Supreme.

6.12

tatraikāgraṃ(m) manaḥ(kh) kṛtvā, yatacittendriyakriyāḥ, upaviśyāsane yuñjād, yogamātmaviśuddhaye. 6.12

And occupying that seat, concentrating the mind and controlling the functions of the mind and senses, he should practice Yoga for self purification.

There, the yogī sits upon a steady seat — placing **kuśa-grass below, a deer-skin above, and cloth above all** — and begins to collect the mind into one-pointed focus.

The commentary recalls the five states of **citta**, outlined by Patanjali:

1. **mūḍha** — dull, unaware even of oneself
2. **kṣipta** — extremely restless
3. **vikṣipta** — fluctuating between steadiness and distraction
4. **ekāgra** — deeply concentrated upon a single goal
5. **niruddha** — all mental vṛttis fully dissolved; unity with Paramātmā

Yoga, as Patanjali defines:

“yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ” — *the stilling of the movements of the mind.*

The yogī now restrains all sensory activities (**yata-citta-indriya-kriyāḥ**). External sounds may exist, yet fail to disturb him. Like an absorbed scientist or artist unaware of hunger, thirst, or surrounding movements — such is **ekāgratā**.

Why must the heart be purified (**ātma-viśuddhi**)?

Because accumulated impressions from countless births — **vāsanās** — cloud true perception. These latent tendencies produce irrational attractions or aversions toward people and situations we have never known. This ancient dust must be washed away.

One may see one’s reflection in water — but only when it is:

- **clean**
- **pure**
- **still** — without waves, without disturbance

Likewise, the **true Self** becomes visible only when the mind is **śuddha, śānta, and nirvṛtti**.

Just as a device functions better when unnecessary data is deleted, the yogī steadily deletes residual

tendencies through yogābhyāsa.

Thus:

- He sits in a firm meditative posture
- remains motionless for long durations
- disciplines the body as a servant of higher realisation

This marks the beginning of **the inner journey of silent Self-recognition**.

6.13

ṣamaṃ(ñ) kāyaśirogrīvaṃ(n), dhārayannacalaṃ(m) sthiraḥ, saṃprekṣya nāsikāgraṃ(m) svaṃ(n), diśaścānavalokayan. 6.13

Holding the trunk, head and neck straight and steady, remaining firm and fixing the gaze on the tip of his nose, without looking in other directions.

Bhagavān instructs Arjuna on **how one must sit during meditation**. **Ṣamaṃ kāyaśirogrīvaṃ** — the body (kāya), neck (grīvā) and head (śiraḥ) must be held **in one straight alignment**. The spine should remain upright, the back firm, and the entire posture stable — *dhārayannacalaṃ sthiraḥ* — steady and unmoving.

पाठ वाकली कि पाठ होत नाही।

When the back is bent, the body tires quickly. But when the spine is erect, one can remain seated for long durations without fatigue. Control over the body begins with **mastery over posture**. It is easy to claim one will meditate without practising *āsana*, but without the ability to sit still for long, how can meditation deepen? Stability of posture supports stability of mind.

There is also a practical reasoning behind this. The material of the spinal cord and the brain is similar — when the back is straight, the **grasping power** becomes stronger. When one studies or concentrates while slouching, the mind dulls. When sitting upright, the mind becomes more alert and receptive. Bhagavān Himself emphasizes this: *ṣamaṃ kāyaśirogrīvaṃ* — maintain the straight posture.

Next, Bhagavān says: *saṃprekṣya nāsikāgraṃ svaṃ* — let the gaze rest on the **tip of the nose** (*nāsikāgra*) or at the **space between the eyebrows**, since *agra* refers to the point of origin or front of the nose. Elsewhere in the Gītā, reference appears to focusing upon the *bhru-madhyā* (centre of the brows).

Why not close the eyes completely? Because **closing the eyes easily leads to sleep**. Meditation must happen in an awakened state, not in drowsiness. So, the eyes remain **half-open**, the gaze softly fixed, preventing distraction and sleepiness.

Bhagavān further instructs: *diśaś ca anavalokayan* — do not look elsewhere. Avoid wandering glances. Keep the attention centred. If the eyes begin to wander, the mind wanders with them. For meditation, the body must be steady, the gaze focused, and the senses withdrawn from outward objects.

When all this is achieved — a **stable posture**, an **uplifted and aligned spine**, a **steady gaze**, and **freedom from external distraction** — then true meditation can take place. With this discipline established, the seeker continues further into the inner journey.

With this guidance from Bhagavān on posture and focus, the practice reaches a point of pause. The contemplation concludes here, offering everything at the sacred feet of Bhagavān:

Om Tat Sat
Śrī Kṛṣṇārpaṇamastu

Questions and Answers

Anand Ji

Q: You explained that the supreme goal (*parama-dhya*) of human life is the realization of *Ātma-tattva* or Paramātmā. But for that realization, we have to perform many disciplines such as *yama*, *niyama*, etc. These also require a sort of *saṅkalpa* (determination). Then how does *saṅkalpa* become an obstacle or binding?

A: For the attainment of the supreme goal, every *saṅkalpa* made **with spiritual discrimination** is appropriate. One should remain aware that **all disciplines are only for the realization of the supreme aim**, not for achieving attractions that may arise in between.

On the Yogic path, sometimes *siddhis* occur—whatever one says may come true, or one may gain certain powers. Then people start gathering around, praising, and asking predictions. There is a danger of getting **stuck** in these attractions.

Therefore, the **vision towards the final goal must remain firm**. Performing every duty with the attitude:

“I am doing this for the attainment of my supreme purpose.”

For example, a *grhastha* must fulfil his responsibilities, treating home, business, shop as **belonging to Bhagavān**. He is only a trustee. With such a **trusteeship attitude**, each action becomes *karma-yoga*.

Attractions will come along the way—do not stop there. Maintain the commitment that even the care of the body is for the sake of spiritual pursuit. *Sarīram ādhyam khalu dharma-sādhanam* — the body is the medium for spiritual sādhanā.

So:

- **I perform sūrya-namaskāra** → to keep the body fit **for the ultimate goal**
- **I eat food** → to gain strength **for serving the nation**, which is like Paramātmā for me

Just like Swatantrya Vīra Savarkar dedicated his **mind, speech, poetic and writing abilities** to the Motherland, so must we connect all *saṅkalpas* with the supreme purpose.

Nandini Ji

Q: I have a doubt regarding verse 6.11. It seems a line was skipped—about establishing a proper seat (*sthirāsanam*). How exactly should the seat and place for meditation be chosen?

A: The description of *āsana* is given. Patañjali also says: *sthira-sukham āsanam* — an *āsana* is that posture in which one can sit **steadily and comfortably**. If legs hurt while sitting in *padmāsana*, it is not the right *āsana*.

The place for meditation should not be **too high**, because the body tends to sway. Nor should it be **too low**, like in a cave on the ground, where insects may cause disturbance. Avoid extremes — *na ati-uccam na ati-nīcam*.

The preparation of the seat is explained:

- First, **chaila** — a type of grass
- Over it, **mṛga-carma** (deerskin) — acquired only from a naturally deceased deer
- Over that, a **cotton cloth**

On such a seat, one should sit for meditation.

But this is for one who has already become **yogārūḍha** — established and mature on the Yogic path. Not for beginners to imitate merely because it is mentioned in the Gītā. Meditation practice may certainly be started, but **this specific arrangement belongs to a later stage**, after internal equanimity (*samatva*) is attained.

Pushpa Ji

Q: We worship multiple deities like Gaṇeśa, Śaṅkara, Durgā, Sūrya, etc. Should we perform *ārtī* for all of them daily? Or is one *ārtī*, such as *Jaya Jagadīśa Hare* for Viṣṇu, enough?

A: If you are offering full worship (*upacāra-pūjā*) to multiple deities—bath, *gandha*, *naivedya*, etc.—you may also offer *ārtī* to each. If time is limited, performing **even a single ārtī** is acceptable. There are many ways:

- **Ṣoḍaśopacāra-pūjā** — 16 ritual offerings
- **Pañcopacāra-pūjā** — 5 offerings
- **Ekopacāra** — even one offering
- **Simply bowing down** — is also worship

Do **as much as your capacity allows**.

All ritual discipline exists **for self-mastery**, not to please Bhagavān in some conditional way. By following rules, we become disciplined. A disciplined person has greater self-control — like soldiers trained in the military.

Someone may have told you that *one should not perform ārtī of multiple deities daily*. But:

There is absolutely **no restriction** on performing *ārtī* of all the deities you worship.

The more worship, the better — as long as it helps cultivate discipline.

The session concluded with a heartfelt prayer followed by the chanting of the Hanumān Chālīsā.



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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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