

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 14: Guṇatraya-Vibhāga-Yoga

1/2 (Ślōka 1-8), Sunday, 16 February 2025

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YouTube Link: [https://youtu.be/l7E1Hft1\\_yc](https://youtu.be/l7E1Hft1_yc)

## The three gunas are ropes that bind us to this material world

The 14th chapter of the Bhagavadgītā is known as the **Guṇatraya-Vibhāga-Yoga - The Yoga of Classification of the Three Gunas**.

The evening started with a beautiful rendition to Ma Saraswati invoking HER for blessings; followed by the lighting of the traditional lamp to pay obeisance to the deities and our Gurus. May Yogeśvara and the Devi bestow us with their Divine presence and their blessings enlighten us with knowledge in our journey of learning the Gītā.

After completing the study of Bhakti Yoga (Chapter 12), Puruṣhottama Yoga (Chapter 15), Daivāsura Sampad Vibhāga Yoga (Chapter 16), Rāja Vidyā Rāja Guhya Yoga (Chapter 9), Śhraddhā Traya Vibhāga Yoga (Chapter 17), we are now studying Chapter 14, Guṇatraya-Vibhāga-Yoga. This chapter is interesting from a psychological perspective, as Sri Bhagavān talks about the nature and mechanism of the mind. It is said that our mind is our biggest enemy and it can be our best friend as well. How is this possible? Sri Bhagavān explains it in this chapter. HE also explains the way to become successful in life.

Success is a common goal for everyone, as it is believed to bring happiness. But what is happiness? Why is success often associated with it? Let's explore the relationship between success and happiness. When we think of successful people, we often associate them with certain characteristics, such as fulfilling responsibilities or desires. But why do we have desires in the first place? The answer is simple: to gain happiness. For instance, someone might want to have a child because it brings them joy. Similarly, someone might strive for academic excellence to receive recognition from others, which in turn makes them happy.

Some people aspire to accumulate wealth and build empires, but why? Because they believe that success will bring them happiness. Others find happiness in gaining knowledge and learning new things. Ultimately, success is about fulfilling one's desires and achieving happiness. However, this is

only possible after completing all the responsibilities associated with those desires. Sometimes, we are unable to achieve our goals due to our minds. Our mind can be our biggest obstacle to success. But if we can control our mind and channel its power and energy towards our goals, success is not far behind. **The ability to control one's mind is the key differentiating factor between successful and unsuccessful people.**

In a classroom, students with similar intelligence levels may receive different grades. Some students score 80%, while others score 90% or more. The difference in their grades is due to the amount of effort they put in. Students who score 90% or more put in a lot of effort, while those who score 80% also want to put in more effort but are unable to do so due to a lack of consistency. The more consistent the effort, the better the results.

At Geeta Pariwar, success is defined as being able to memorize all the shlokas, recite them correctly, and understand their meanings. We have observed that some students can easily memorize shlokas by regularly checking their audio recordings, while others struggle to remember them. **Consistency is key to success.** Students who have shown consistency in their efforts have achieved success.

But how can one achieve consistency? It is common knowledge that one must study regularly, practice using the audio recordings sent after class, and send their recordings for checking regularly to memorize all the shlokas in one year. However, only some students are able to apply this knowledge and become successful, while others are not. The difference lies in their ability to control their mind. Successful students have control over their mind, while those who are not successful do not. Sri Bhagavān explains the nature of the mind and how we can control it.

#### 14.1

**śrībhagavānuvāca**  
**param(m) bhūyaḥ(ph) praVākṣyāmi, jñānānām(ñ) jñānamuttamam,**  
**yajñātvā munayaḥ(s) sarve, parām(m) siddhimito gatāḥ. 14.1**

Śrī Bhagavān said :I shall expound once more the supreme knowledge, the best of all knowledge, acquiring which all sages have attained highest perfection, being liberated from this mundane existence.

Śrī Bhagavān is reiterating the knowledge that he has previously imparted. This is akin to a mother feeding her child again and again, even though the child claims to be full, knowing that the child may not have eaten well the first time. Śrī Bhagavān is like our mother. HE knows how much Arjuna needs. It is also not easy to apply this knowledge. Bhagavadgītā as a philosophy is vast in its scope and deep in its interpretation; with special emphasis being placed on the Karma-Yoga. Every shloka carries a different connotation and meaning depending upon the outlook of the person who is explaining it. Various sages like Ādi Śankarācārya, Ram Sukhdas ji, Vallabhacharya ji, and Madhusudan Saraswati ji have presented varied views on the same shlokas.

Remembering all the shlokas of Bhagavadgītā, being able to chant them correctly, and being able to write commentary on the meanings of the shlokas is one thing; being able to implement it is another difficult task.

In the 12th chapter, Bhagavān stated:

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ज्ञानाद्ध्यानं विशिष्यते ।  
ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् ॥ 12॥

“Better than mechanical practice is knowledge; better than knowledge is meditation. Better than meditation is renunciation of the fruits of actions, for peace immediately follows such renunciation.”

Knowledge is not the supreme thing. It is useless if we do not use the knowledge of the Bhagavadgītā to solve our problems in life.

Knowledge is better than mechanical practice, but it is not the highest. Meditation is superior to knowledge, and even more powerful than meditation is the renunciation of the fruits of one's actions. This is very hard to do because it means applying the Gītā in our daily life. Only those who have understood the deeper meaning of the Gītā and have lived by its principles can let go of all the fruits of actions.

The important thing is to read the Gītā again and again to absorb its divine message into our lives. Leaders like Gandhiji said that the Gītā had all the solutions to their problems. We have to interpret the shloka according to our problem to find the solution. To reach this level, we have to learn the Bhagavadgītā first. The Bhagavadgītā can give us solutions to all the problems in life. If we do not apply the knowledge, it is useless.

Śrī Bhagavān has talked about ‘akrodhaḥ’ which is the absence of anger, in many places. In chapter 16, HE mentions anger, lust, and greed as the three gates to hell. These are vikrutis (abnormal tendencies) and hence, should be avoided at all costs, as they lead us to our downfall.

**त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।**

**कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥ 21॥**

These doors of Naraka (the lower planes of existence) which are the destroyers of the Ātman (Self), are of three kinds: passion, anger, and greed.

These are the manifestations of the Rājas and Tāmas Guṇas, which are the modes of nature that bring agitation, greed, anger, ignorance, and suffering. They cloud our perception of reality and keep us entangled in the cycle of birth and death.

Therefore, one should forsake these three qualities. However, despite being aware of this knowledge, we tend to get angry every now and then, throughout the day. We cannot apply the knowledge very easily. That is the reason Śrī Bhagavān is repeatedly telling Arjuna the same knowledge.

Śrī Bhagavān also mentions that this is the most supreme among all the knowledge in the world. Nothing more remains to be known after knowing this. One would be liberated from worldly miseries after getting this knowledge. That is yet another reason why Śrī Bhagavān is repeatedly telling it to Arjuna.

This knowledge is the knowledge of the Ātman, the true Self, which is eternal, blissful, and part of the Śrī Bhagavān. This knowledge is the essence of the Bhagavadgītā, the sacred scripture that reveals the path of yoga, or union with the Paramātmā. This knowledge is the antidote to the three doors of Naraka, as it helps us overcome the influence of the Rajas and Tamas Guṇas and cultivate the Sāttva Guṇa, the mode of nature that brings clarity, peace, and wisdom.

We generally don't like to have serious problems in our lives because they invite pain and anxiety, followed by health issues resulting in a sorrowful state. Everyone wants happiness in life albeit from different sources depending on the nature of the person. Similarly, everyone wants to avoid those sources that lead to pain or sorrow in their life. For example, health issues may be a reason for someone's pain, whereas a colleague could be a source of pain for someone else.

Śrī Bhagavān assures that after acquiring this knowledge one would become free of all the sorrows in life which results into the liberation from Saṃsāra. All sages attained the highest perfection after obtaining this knowledge and got liberated from the mundane existence called Saṃsāra.

The way to happiness is to realize our true nature as the Ātman, the eternal soul, part of the Paramātmā, and not to identify with the body, mind, or senses, which are temporary and subject to change. The way to happiness is to perform our duties without attachment to the results, and to offer our actions to Śrī Bhagavān as a service. The way to happiness is to practice devotion to Śrī Bhagavān, the source of all bliss and love.

## 14.2

**idaṃ(ñ) jñānamupāśritya, mama sādharṃyamāgatāḥ,  
sarge'pi nopajāyante, pralaye na vyathanti ca. 14.2**

Those who, by practising this knowledge have entered into My being, are not born again at the cosmic dawn, nor feel disturbed even during the cosmic dissolution (Pralaya).

Śrī Bhagavān said that after gaining this knowledge, the seeker becomes one with HIM. He realizes that he and Śrī Bhagavān, the Paramātmā, and the Jiva, are one. Such a person does not reincarnate, and achieves liberation.

None of these worlds, either this Swargalok, or Brahmālok, are eternal dwellings, as the individual soul has to re-enter the endless cycle of birth and death once its good deeds are exhausted.

Śrī Bhagavān sums up the temporary quality of these three worlds in chapter 9:

**ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।  
एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥ 21॥**

After enjoying the immense pleasures of Swarga (higher realms of existence), they come back to the earthly plane when their merits are depleted. Thus, those who follow the Vedic rituals, seeking objects of enjoyment, keep coming and going in this world. However, attaining this Supreme knowledge frees one from the endless cycle of death and rebirth, leading to mokṣa and 'param siddhi'; the ultimate goal.

When a person is dying, he suffers a lot of pain due to the worry about his family, children or similar matters. The enlightened seeker is free from such grief as he is not attached to the worldly life. He knows that he is not the body, mind, or senses, but the eternal soul, part of Śrī Bhagavān. He knows that death is not the end, but the beginning of a new journey. He knows that his family and friends are also Souls, who are temporarily related to him by the play of karma. He knows that Śrī Bhagavān is his true friend and the protector, who is always with him.

## 14.3

**mama yonirmahadbrahma, tasmingarbhāṃ(n) dadhāmyaham,  
sambhavaḥ(s) sarvabhūtānāṃ(n), tato bhavati bhārata. 14.3**

My primordial Nature, known as the great Brahma, is the womb of all creatures; in that womb I place the seed of all life. The creation of all beings follows from that union of Matter and Spirit, O Arjuna.

The concept of Prakṛti (primordial nature) of Bhagavān is elucidated in this verse. In the Vedānta philosophy, the material world is termed as "Maya", whereas in Sāṃkhya philosophy it is referred to

as Prakṛti.

Prakṛti is the womb (Yoni) and the Paramātmā is the seed giver. The nature of Prakṛti is also explained in the 9th chapter,

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।  
हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥ 10॥

"All living and non-living things are created by this Prakṛti (material energy) under My guidance, O son of Kunti. This is why the material world goes through the cycles (of creation, preservation, and destruction)."

The combination of the gross and the subtle makes all living things exist. The "Jada" or lifeless aspect of Prakṛti is animated by the infusion of 'Chaitanya' or consciousness by Puruṣa. It is like a fan, which can spin its blades and generate air, only if the electricity is turned on. Parameśvara is like that electricity, without which the fan is worthless and cannot work. Likewise, without HIM, Chaitanya Prakṛti falls apart. Therefore, the Prakṛti is a mirage maintained by Parameśvara.

#### 14.4

**sarvayoniṣu kaunteya, mūrtayaḥ(s) saṁbhavanti yāḥ,  
tāsāṁ(m) brahma mahadyoniḥ(r), ahaṁ(m) bījapradāḥ(ph) pitā. 14.4**

Of all embodied beings that appear in all the species of various kinds, Arjuna, Prakṛti or Nature is the conceiving Mother, while I am the seed giving Father.

For all species and varieties of life, the underlying principle of creation is the same; Yogeśvara is like the father whereas Prakṛti is like the mother in the creation of existence. Prakṛti is all that you can see along with the 84 lakh yonis of existence of beings.

These are classified into following four categories based on how they came into being:

- **Jarayuj** (viviparous): Born from the womb of the mother, like humans and other mammals.
- **Andaj** (oviparous): Born from eggs, like reptiles and birds.
- **Udbhij**: That bursts forth; that sprouts or shoots; born from the earth, born from seeds e.g., trees.
- **Svedaj**: Born from sweat, excreta, e.g., Insects.

In all these life forms, it is HE who provides the life and energy to an otherwise dormant Prakṛti.

#### 14.5

**sattvaṁ(m) rajastama iti, guṇāḥ(ph) prakṛtisambhavāḥ,  
nibadhnanti mahābāho, dehe dehinamavyayam. 14.5**

Sattva, Rajas and Tamas-these three Guṇas born of Nature tie down the imperishable soul to the body, Arjuna.

Thus far, Śrī Bhagavān told how the universe is made. From the fifth shloka onwards, we get to know about the nature of the mind, the consequences after birth, and the factors that prompt us to act in certain ways.

Whether it be the Swarga Loka or this world, there is a common element that binds us, and that is the

presence of the Guṇas. The three Guṇas are the inherent tendencies or qualities; namely, Sāttvika, Rājasika, and Tāmasika; that compel a person to have desires or behave in a particular way, thus covering the true nature of the Jīvā.

As stated in the 18th chapter,

न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः ।  
सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः ॥ 40॥

Bhagavān proclaimed: "No living being on earth or the higher celestial abodes of this material realm is free from the influence of these three modes of nature (Sāttva, Rājas, and Tāmas)."

The Guṇas are born out of Prakṛti. The three Guṇas combinedly make the Prakṛti. The Ātman (soul) gets attached to the body because of the three Guṇas. They bind the Jiva with the Saṃsāra.

Sāttva guna results in goodness. In the 16th chapter, Śrī Bhagavān listed 26 divine qualities that mark the nature of goodness:

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।  
दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥ 1॥

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।  
दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥ 2॥

तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहोनातिमानिता ।  
भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥ 3॥

Bhagavān said: "O scion of Bharat, these are the saintly virtues of those endowed with a divine nature: fearlessness, purity of mind, steadfastness in spiritual knowledge, charity, control of the senses, sacrifice, study of the sacred books, austerity, and straightforwardness; non-violence, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, peacefulness, restraint from fault-finding, compassion toward all living beings, absence of covetousness, gentleness, modesty, and lack of fickleness; vigor, forgiveness, fortitude, cleanliness, bearing enmity toward none, and absence of vanity."

The Guṇas are responsible for the development of Sāttvika characteristics represented by the 26 divine qualities. **The Sāttvika Guṇa symbolizes goodness.**

Sāttva manifests itself as purity, knowledge, and harmony. It is the characteristic of goodness, joy, satisfaction, nobility, and contentment. It is free of fear, violence, wrath, and malice. Sattva is pure and forgiving. **To reach Samādhi or liberation, people should increase their Sāttva Guṇa.**

The negative qualities are mentioned as

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।  
अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम् ॥ 4॥

Bhagavān said: "Oh Parth, the qualities of those who possess an Asuric nature are hypocrisy, arrogance, conceit, anger, harshness, and ignorance."

Ignorance, indolence, and subsequent darkness due to the absence of knowledge characterize the Tāmasika Guṇa.

The gunas are responsible for developing the following characteristics that cause the binding of the Soul with the body.

**काम**

Desire or Lust

**क्रोध**

Anger

**मोह**

Attachment or Delusion

**लोभ**

Greed

**मद**

Pride or Ego

**मत्सर**

Envy or Jealousy

Rājasika tendencies lead to the mode of passion wherein a person is attached to worldly pleasures and is prone to feelings of 'Kama' and 'Krodha' or desire and anger. Rajo guna can create an attachment to people, things, or even knowledge.

These three Guṇas are present in every human being. The proportion in which the Guṇas pervade in each person is what makes them different from one another.

There is an anecdote in the Ramayana about the three brothers; Vibhishana, Ravana, and Kumbhakarana.

Ravana had Rājasika Guṇa in high proportion, Kumbhakarana had Tāmasika Guṇa, while Vibhishana had Sāttvika Guṇa. They all went through severe penance and austerities to please Brahmā ji. Pleased with their tapa (austerity), Brahmā ji asked them to name their desire that could be granted. All of them said, 'Sona'. Their answer was the same, but the implication of the word 'sona' was different for each. For Vibhishana, 'so-na' meant 'I don't want to sleep'. He wanted to always follow the path of Dharma. His ultimate aim was to become a devotee and serve Bhagavān Rām. He wanted to wake up from the sleep of inertia and ignorance and get detached from this illusory "Saṃsāra" so that he would know his true identity and the purpose of his existence. He didn't want to sleep in illusion. Vibhishana was Sattva Guni and therefore wanted to know the reality. He had a desire for knowledge.

Ravana on the other hand being a Rājasika person, asked for Sona, implying gold. Here, Sona meant all worldly possessions like power, prosperity, and money. The typical tendency of the Rājasika person would lean towards material acquisition which can finally lead to sorrow or even insecurity.

For example, a person might feel insecure that today he has an iPhone but the next day he may not have the means and resources to buy one. This lack of security and lust for worldly possessions mark the character of the Rājasika person. Ravana wanted everything under his control. He made devatas to work as laborers in his court. That was the kind of power he had accumulated. He had received the powers through various austerities. He infact, was a learned man with a sound knowledge of the Śāstras, but the craving for power created worldly attachments for him that didn't allow him to apply the knowledge in his life.

When the Rājasika Guna are on the rise, the attachment to worldly objects becomes thick, leading to delusion and lack of discrimination. Raavan kidnapped Ma Sita out of such a delusion, that became



the cause of his destruction. Rājasika Guna creates a lot of cravings.

When Kumbhakaran asked for 'Sona' he meant that he wanted to just sleep for six months. In his ignorance, he did not realize that he could not enjoy anything if he was not awake. His plight is akin to that of a person fumbling around in a dark room. When we are surrounded by darkness, we cannot take the next step as everything appears blurred and unilluminated. When Tāmasika Guṇa is dominating, the person is trapped in the darkness of ignorance.

**All these Guṇas, including the Sāttvika quality, bind us to the world.** These Guṇas are like chains. While Tamas is like an iron chain, Rajas is the silver chain whereas Sattva is like the gold chain. Each chain is of a different metal; nevertheless, each chain serves the common function of binding one to this Saṃsāra.

## 14.6

**tatra sattvaṃ(n) nirmalatvāt, prakāśakamanāmayam,  
sukhasaṅgena badhnāti, jñānasaṅgena cānagha. 14.6**

Of these, Sattva being immaculate, is illuminating and flawless, Arjuna; it binds through attachment to happiness and knowledge.

The Sāttva Guṇa is purifying and imparts discrimination. So long as the Sāttva Guṇa is devoid of attachment, it can lead to supreme knowledge and liberation. These Guṇas cannot exist in isolation and appear in different measures in each person. When Sattva combines with Rājasika qualities, it results in the forming of attachments. The Sāttva Guṇa combined with Rājasika Guna binds one to the Saṃsāra through the attachment to happiness and knowledge.

An example can be given of a person who performs Yajña and cleanses his past deeds. After the Yajña is over, he will be blessed with whatever he wants due to the 'Punya' merits that he has earned. This makes the person want to continue performing yajñas. However, the motive is now different. If earlier the person performed yajña to invoke Divine blessings, now he performs yajña as he has become attached to the ensuing rewards.

It should be noted though, that not all happiness leads to bondage. There are two terms used to denote happiness: Sukha and Ananda.

Sukha, joy the opposite of which is 'dukha' or sorrow, derives its pleasures from external sources, thus leaving one entrenched in this world of illusions. There is no escape from this kind of bondage where worldly happiness keeps one in fetters.

**Anand, or bliss is the eternal happiness that one gets from one's internal connection with Paramātmā.** Such happiness depends on no one, and certainly not on any external source of pleasure. This Anand that comes out of union with the Paramātmā is everlasting. The eternal happiness does not bind one to Saṃsāra. It is the outcome of liberation.

A perfect example of knowledge becoming a source of bondage is the story of Svetaketu who, upon completion of his education, returned from the Gurukul with the arrogant conviction that he had mastered all that was needed to be known in this world. However, when his father questioned him on the Brahmā Vidya, the Knowledge of Brahmān, Svetaketu fell silent as he had no answer. While his Sāttva Guna led him to study well at Gurukul, his Rājas Guna led him into the trap of false ego. This story illustrates how knowledge can be a double-edged sword. On one hand, it can help us understand



the nature of reality and the self. On the other hand, it can also inflate our pride and make us forget our true identity as the eternal soul, part of the Paramātmā.

Therefore, we should try to cultivate Sāttva without attachment. Sāttva is the mode of nature that brings clarity, peace, and wisdom. It is the closest to the transcendental state of pure consciousness. However, Sāttva is not the ultimate goal, as it can also bind us to the material world through subtle attachments and desires.

Performing daily rituals, going to the temple, and studying the scriptures are good Sātvik activities, but taking pride in them and showing off is a sign of attachment, which is not good. We should do these activities as a service to Bhagavān, not as a means to boost our ego or impress others. We should also be humble and respectful to those who have more knowledge or experience than us, and learn from them.

To be free from the bondage to the Saṃsāra that can lead to eternal happiness (Ananda), one must first get rid of Rājas and Tāmas, taking shelter in Sāttva. Rājas and Tāmas are the modes of nature that bring agitation, greed, anger, ignorance, and suffering. They cloud our perception of reality and keep us entangled in the cycle of birth and death.

Having attained the state of Sāttva, one can then try to be free from the hold of Sāttva as well, thus becoming "Tri-Guṇatita", that is, going beyond the three Gunas and being firmly established in renunciation from worldly affiliations. **Tri-Guṇatita is the state of pure devotion to Śrī Bhagavān, where one is not affected by the dualities of the material world**, such as happiness and distress, honor and dishonor, heat and cold, etc. One who is Tri-Guṇatita sees everything as the manifestation of Bhagavān and serves HIM with love and detachment.

Knowledge is a valuable asset, but it can also become a source of bondage if not used properly. We should use our knowledge to realize our true nature as the soul and not to feed our false ego. We should also cultivate Sāttva, the mode of nature that brings clarity and wisdom, but without attachment or pride. The ultimate goal is to be Tri-Guṇatita, the state of pure devotion where one is free from the influence of the three Gunas and the bondage of the material world.

## 14.7

**rajo rāgātmakaṃ(m) viddhi, tṛṣṇāsaṅgasamudbhavam,  
tannibadhnāti kaunteya, karmasaṅgena dehinam. 14.7**

Arjuna, know the quality of Rajas, which is of the nature of passion, as born of desire and attachment. It binds the soul through attachment to actions and their fruit.

This verse explains the nature and origin of Rājas, which is one of the three Guṇas that govern the material world. Rājas is characterized by rāga, which means attraction, attachment, or passion. Rājas is born of tṛṣṇā (thirst, craving, or desire) and saṅga (association, attachment, or contact).

Rājas binds the Soul (dehinam) to the cycle of birth and death, by creating an attachment (nibadhnāti) to the actions (karma) and their results (saṅga).

The attachment arising out of Rājas Guṇa leads one to perform various actions or engage in Karma continuously. Śrī Bhagavān repeatedly advised Arjuna to perform action and engage in the war 'tasmadyuddhasva Bharata'. Doing Karma is not Rājas but getting attached to the results of the action is Rājas. The Rājas Guṇa, being like passion, arises from worldly desires and binds the Jīvātman

through attachment to fruitive actions.

Yogeśvara mentions "Tṛṣṇāsaṅga" as one of the factors of bondage. Tṛṣṇā means extreme thirst and craving, while 'saṅga' means attachment. A desert is devoid of water and leads one to crave for any means to quench one's thirst. Our desires are no different from that of the seeker of water in a desolate, parched land. Tṛṣṇā is what leads to disillusionment.

However, sometimes our very Tṛṣṇā and attachment can become a source of motivation, and in that respect, the quality of Rājas is acceptable. A student of class X, for example, may want to pursue Physics to further his career in the subject. His dedicated efforts will lead him to become a Physicist, thus fetching him accolades from society.

The student would then get attached to the prestige that comes from this position in his field of expertise. There again, we see the Rājas guna at play, thus binding the student to the fruitive actions.

We see examples of students of the Geeta classes, sending recorded audios of their recitation and pronunciation to the trainer. In case they are appreciated for their efforts, they are likely to send more of such audio, this time, adding music to make the audio more appealing. On the other hand, if the trainer does not respond to the audio, the students would get discouraged and even stop attending the Geeta classes. Their attachment to recognition and appreciation leads them to bondage.

Therefore, **we should place a limit on our attachments and cravings as the Jīvā gets trapped in this worldly mesh** because of these tendencies. Attachment, so long as it serves as the basis of motivation, can lead to progress and growth; but when attachment starts becoming an obstruction in their spiritual progress, then one needs to put a firm check on it.

## 14.8

**tamastvajñānajaṃ(m) viddhi, mohanaṃ(m) sarvadehinām,  
pramādālasyanidrābhiḥ(s), tannibadhnāti bhārata. 14.8**

And know Tamas, the deluder of all those who look upon the body as their own self, as born of ignorance. It binds the soul through error, sleep and sloth, Arjuna.

There are three modes of nature or Guṇas that influence the behavior and consciousness of living beings. They are Sāttva (purity, goodness, harmony), Rajas (passion, activity, dynamism), and Tamas (ignorance, inertia, dullness). These Guṇas are constantly in flux and affect the quality of our actions and thoughts.

To identify the foremost and dominant Guṇa that is prevalent in a person, one needs to look into their motives:

- **Sāttvika** person would say that he wants to learn. He is calm, peaceful, wise, and compassionate. He seeks the truth and strives for self-realization.
- **Rājasika** person would say that he loves to engage in any kind of activity. He is restless, ambitious, energetic, and competitive. He seeks pleasure and power and strives for worldly success.
- **Tāmasika** person would say that he wants to indulge in excessive eating and sleeping. He is lazy, ignorant, dull, and insensitive. He seeks comfort and security and strives for nothing.

Tāmasikta shrouds a person with abject ignorance. A lighted torch would be completely dimmed in its brightness and fail to illumine a room if it is covered with a thick blanket. In the same way, Tamas, due to moha (disillusionment) can act like a blanket and put an opaque and impenetrable veil over

desirable qualities like knowledge, intelligence, and happiness, consequently leading to darkness and delusion.

Sri Bhagavān also attributes a Tāmasika person with Pramād (Inadvertent, negligence), ālasya (laziness), and nidrā (sleepiness).

*Pramād* means not doing what one is supposed to do or choosing a wrong action over the right one. Shirking from cooking a meal for the family at the grave cost of the family going hungry is indicative of avoiding a duty that ought to be attended to. Ordering ice creams on a cold winter night points towards inappropriate action. These are examples of Pramād.

*Ālasya* or laziness implies not taking timely action or postponing action to a future date for no reason. Examples are prevalent in classroom situations, where a few students are loathe to pay attention to the teacher and start yawning almost as soon as the lessons begin. They are even reluctant to participate in any productive activity outside the classroom. If their mothers call them for dinner, they will defer coming to the dining table as they want to give preference to their favorite shows on television. Similarly, a person would put off simple acts like giving his telephone number which would take just a minute to complete. An assignment that is meant to be submitted the next day is kept aside for another day.

*Nidrā* or sleepiness implies being in a state of dullness and lethargy, without any awareness or alertness. Examples are people who sleep for more than the required hours, or who fall asleep during important meetings or lectures.

Our mind works under the Guṇas. The action we take is in turn determined by our minds, while our thought processes cast a reflection on our actions and reveal which one of the three Guṇas has a hold over us. **All living beings possess a combination of these three Guṇas. It is up to us how we manage to transform the Guṇas to upgrade ourselves.** A Rājasika person can work hard to uplift himself and move on to becoming a Sāttvika by emulating the qualities that are considered divine. On the other hand, that very person can fall into the Tāmasika mode of life. The choice is ours, what we make of our lives.

Tāmasikta is the lowest mode of nature that binds us to ignorance and suffering. It can be overcome by increasing the Sāttvika and Rājasika qualities in ourselves, which lead us to knowledge and happiness. Some of the ways to overcome Tāmasikta are:

- Following a **regular and disciplined routine of waking up early, eating healthy, exercising, and sleeping on time.**
- Engaging in **activities that stimulate the mind and body, such as reading, learning, playing, or volunteering.**
- Practicing **meditation, yoga, or Prāṇayama to calm the mind and increase awareness.**
- Seeking the **company of positive and inspiring people who can motivate and guide us.**
- Cultivating **gratitude, humility, and devotion to the Supreme Being, who is the source of all Sāttva.**

By following the above-mentioned ways, we can gradually free ourselves from the influence of Tamas and attain the state of moksha or liberation.

The session was followed with Harinaam Sankirtan, and a Questions and Answers session.

### Questions and Answers:

## Shambhu Ratan Trivedi ji

**Q:** The 1st Shlok of this Chapter implies that the knowledge is being repeated. In which chapter is it explained?

**A:** The same concepts have been explained in different chapters like gunas are also explained in the 7th chapter.

**Q:** How can we find our limitations regarding our attachments?

**A:** Ch 9.28 says '**Shubhashubh phalai revam...**' - we should not get attached to the worldly desires and pleasures, then we can attain Supreme Bliss. Detachment is vital. We have to go to the state of Trigunatheeth, above all the desires and attachments. We have to do our duty but without attachment. Prakriti is Trigunamayi, and hence we all have three Gunas. But we need Sadhana to attain that state of complete renunciation. It comes gradually with practice.

The Vivechan concluded with a Prarthana and Sri Hanuman Chalisa.



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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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