



## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 12: Bhakti-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/VX8lifixwdAg>

## Bhagavān's most favourite devotee is The Yogi who has self-control & has totally surrendered to HIM

The 12th chapter of Srimad Bhagavad Gītā is **Bhakti Yoga - the Yoga of Devotion**.

The evening discourse began with Deepa prajwalan, the customary lighting of lamp, prayers to the Supreme, and salutations to all the Gurus.

Bhagavān HIMSELF has proclaimed in the 18th chapter, that whoever teaches, reads and makes Gītā a part of his life is HIS dearest disciple. Since we are in the path of learning Gītā, we are indeed fortunate and blessed. Bhagavān has chosen us to study his teachings, and it is our responsibility and duty to continue walking further in this divine journey.

We have started our Gītā journey with chapter 12, where Sri Krishna elucidates the different modes through which devotees can worship the Paramātmā. The chapter starts with Arjuna's question about the best path of worship. Sri Krishna had explained about reaching the state of '**Sat chit anand**' (eternal state of blissfulness) through the path of **Nirguna Nirakar** (unmanifest consciousness), in the first 10 chapters; and in chapter 11, HE explained about the **Saguna Sakar** (manifest consciousness). Arjuna was confused and wished to know whether the path taken by a devotee who was worshipping the Unmanifest form or the one taken by the devotee worshipping HIS Manifest form was better to reach HIM.

The answer infact depends on one's own nature and capacity to follow the chosen paths. For ordinary seekers like us, the Unmanifest mode of worship is difficult. Bhagavān is aware of this and gracefully has given us alternative options. HE assures us that HIS devotees could attain HIM by either path; however, HE considers those who worship HIS personal form as the best Devotees.

**atha cittam(m) samādhātum(n), na śaknoṣi mayi sthiram,  
abhyāsayogena tato, māmicchāptum(n) dhanañjaya. 12.9**

If you cannot steadily fix the mind on Me, O Arjuna! then seek to attain Me through the Yoga of practice.

Sri Krishna assures that both, the path of devotion or path of knowledge, will lead a seeker to HIM. The path of devotion is however, easier compared to the path of knowledge. HE gives further more options for the final goal of attaining **Moksha**.

The first option HE gives is **Abhyasa yoga** - the yoga of practice. **Abhyasa** refers to the constant practice of fixing the mind again and again, on its goal. **Yoga** refers to the art of equanimity. Practice combined with equanimity results in **Abhyasa Yoga**.

Those who are not able to follow **Abhyasa Yoga**, have another option, as explained in the next shloka.

**12.10**

**abhyāse'pyaṣamartho'si, matkarmaparamo bhava,  
madarthamapi karmāṇi, kurvansiddhimavāpsyasi. 12.10**

If you are unable even to the pursuit of such practice, be intent to work for Me; you shall attain perfection (in the shape of My realization) even by performing actions for My sake.

If one is no able to practice yoga and absorb the mind in HIM completely, then he can **dedicate all his actions to the Supreme**. One should surrender all his deeds to Sri Krishna with devotion. The act of saying **Śrī Krishnānrpanamastu** is an example of dedicating our actions to HIM. Such a devotee would be able to attain HIM.

**12.11**

**athaitadapyaśakto'si, kartum(m) madyogamāśritaḥ,  
sarVākarmaphalatyāgaṁ(n), tataḥ(kh) kuru yatātmavān. 12.11**

If, taking recourse to the Yoga of My realization, you are unable even to do this, then, subduing your mind and intellect etc., relinquish the fruit of all actions.

Yet another option is to **renounce the fruits of one's action**. However, this method is difficult for a lot of people especially youngsters, who are not motivated to do any work without any perks or purpose/ goal. Our Pujya Swamiji recommends that we should have dreams, and work towards achieving them, but then once the goal is reached, we should renounce the fruits of the goal.

One should be devoid of attachment over any action, as well as the results of the action. Uncontrolled mind is responsible for desires and attachments. Hence, **one should have his mind under control and be guided by the intellect**.

**12.12**

## śreya hi jñānamabhyāsāj, jñānāddhyānam(ṽ) viśiṣyate, dhyānātkarmaphalatyāgaḥ(s), tyāgācchāntiranantaram.12.12.

Knowledge is better than practice without discernment, meditation on God is superior to knowledge, and renunciation of the fruit of actions is even superior to meditation; for, peace immediately follows from renunciation.

Bhagavān says that

- **jñāna** (knowledge) is superior than **abhyasa** (practice)
- **dhyānā** (meditation) is better than **jñāna**
- **karmaphalatyāgaḥ** (renunciation of the result of one's action) is better than **dhyānā**

Ultimate peace can be acquired only through **karmaphalatyāgaḥ**. Renunciation (**tyāgaḥ**) leads to immediate peace, while desire-driven actions lead to despair.

### 12.13

## adveṣṭā sarvabhūtānām(m), maitraḥ(kh) karuṇa eva ca, nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ(s), śamaduḥkhasukhaḥ kṣamī. 12.13

He who is free from malice towards all beings, friendly and compassionate, and Free from the feelings of 'I' and 'mine', balanced in joy and sorrow & forgiving by nature.

Bhagavān lists the qualities a devotee must possess in order to become dear to HIM. We can use this as a checklist to evaluate our own position in the eyes of the Paramātmā.

Following qualities are dear to HIM:

**Adveṣṭā**: Without dislike/hate; one should be devoid of hatred because Bhagavān has said in chapter 15 that HE resides in the heart of every living entity.

**sarvasya cāham(m) hṛdi sanniviṣṭo,  
mattaḥ(s) smṛtirjñānamapohanaṁ(ñ) ca,  
vedaśca sarvairahameva vedyo,  
vedāntakṛdvedavideva cāham. 15.15**

HE resides in everyone, even in the person at whom the hatred is directed. A person's actions could be bad, but not the soul that is residing in him. We should not judge others' actions, and hate them.

**Maitraḥ**: Being friendly with all beings.

**Karuṇa**: Compassion for everyone and see every being as fellow souls.

**Nirmamah**: Lack of 'I-ness'. A true devotee realises that nothing in this world, including himself, is different from the Supreme, and that all are same. When he has this outlook, he loses all sense of "I-ness" and "mine-ness". Meera Bai's devotion to Śrī Krishna is a beautiful example of nirmamah.

"मेरे तो गिरधर गोपाल, दूसरो ना कोई"

*There is none other than the one who lifted the Govardhan mountain, the cowherd (giridhar gopal) ie; Śrī Krishna for me.*

**Nirahaṅkāraḥ**: Lack of egoism; a true devotee will be devoid of ego. There is no sense of "I"-ness

because only one "I" – Ishvara – exists. There is no sense of possession because everything belongs to Ishvara. He won't wait for a friend to patch up after a fight; rather he will talk and sort out the problem. The flute that Śrī Krishna loves to play is hollow from inside, devoid of any defects, and hence can play beautiful music. A devotee too should be empty of 'I-ness' in order to be filled with true devotion for The Divine.

**Samaduḥkhasukhaḥ**: Same in sorrow and joy. One should be equanimous in joy/ sorrow, and pleasure / pain. When all senses of duality is nullified, the mind becomes composed. It does not get agitated in sorrowful situations, nor does it get excited in joy, thus maintaining a sense of equanimity. Imbalance in emotions causes situations like depression and other mental health issues.

**Kṣamī**: Forgiveness. Often, those who have pained us will have moved on, but we hold on to the hurt, and refuse to forgive them. We are the victims of our own unforgiving nature; it causes us anxiety and other negative emotions. Forgiveness is a very important quality one has to inculcate.

मनुज गलती का पुतला है, तो अक्सर हो ही जाती है ॥

जो कर ले ठीक गलती को, उसे इन्सान कहते हैं ॥

*'making mistakes is a human trait, but correcting them makes one human'.*

However, one can only correct one's own mistakes, and not of others. All that can be done is to forgive and move on.

## 12.14

### **santuṣṭaḥ(s) satataṁ(ṁ) yogī, yatātmā dṛḍhaniścayaḥ, mayyarpitamanobuddhiḥ(r), yo madbhaktaḥ(s) sa me priyaḥ.12.14.**

The Yogī who is Ever-concentrated and mentally united with Me, nay, who has subdued his mind, senses and body, has a firm resolve, and has surrendered his mind and reason to Me—that devotee of Mine is dear to Me.

Bhagavān continues elaborating on the attributes of a devotee:

**Santuṣṭaḥ**: Being content. It is common for humans to derive contentment from the outside world like other people, objects or certain situations. A true devotee will be in a state where the mind does not seek anything from the outside world. It is also the 8th state of the Navadha bhakti that was described by Śrī Rām ji to Shabri,

**"where there is no desire left, but the gift of perfect peace and contentment with whatever one has. (In this state) one does not see fault in others, even in a dream."**

**Satataṁ yogī**: balanced forever. A Yogi is balanced always, irrespective of the external situation, and derives contentment from Ishvara dwelling within himself.

**Yatātmā**: self controlled. A devotee has total control of his senses, including the 5 **jñānendriyas** (senses of perception for knowledge), 5 **karmendriyas** (senses for action), mind and intellect.

**Dṛḍhaniścayaḥ**: firm conviction. A true devotee is firmly convinced that only Paramātmā exists, and that the world does not exist independently of HIM. He is able to settle his mind and remain consistent in his efforts. For example, sadhakas can be true devotee by remaining consistent in the efforts of learning Gītā, and attending the classes regularly.

**Mayyarpita manobuddhiḥ:** Dedicate to the Supreme, both in mind and intellect. One's mind and intellect are responsible for the birth of thoughts and desires. Paramātmā wants HIS devotee to focus the mind and intellect on HIM constantly, which automatically results in love for HIM.

The yogi who is always content, has self-control, and dedicates his mind and intellect to Paramātmā with firm conviction, becomes HIS dearest devotee.

## 12.15

### **yasmānnodvijate loko, lokānnodvijate ca yaḥ, harṣāmarṣabhayodvegaiḥ(r), mukto yaḥ(s) sa ca me priyaḥ 12.15**

He who is not a source of annoyance to his fellow-creatures, and who in his turn does not feel vexed with his fellow creatures, and who is free from delight and envy, perturbation and fear, is dear to Me.

A devotee should aim to inculcate all these qualities listed in the above shlokas. Developing all the qualities will be difficult; even having a couple of them will take us closer and dearer to Bhagavān.

**yasmānnodvijate lokah:** not agitated. In daily life, it is inevitable that one will experience multiple emotional reactions to people's actions or words. A devotee should develop the attitude of not to agitate or get agitated by people or circumstances. 'This too shall pass' should be our mantra.

The devotee who sees everyone and everything as Divine act, will have no reason to take anything personally. His sense of self is not the small individual ego that common people relate to. He has identified himself with the Supreme Being who runs the multitudes of universes. Such a devotee becomes dear to HIM.

Bhagavān favours that devotee who is free from **harṣā** (joy), **amarṣa** (envy), **bhay** (fear), **udvega** (anxiety/ agitation). When sevis in Geeta Pariwār consider themselves fortunate and blessed to be chosen for the divine work of spreading Gītā, they are not agitated or perturbed by minor issues that arise now and then. Similarly a devotee connected to Paramātmā remains unperturbed. Besides, reactions to insults, agitation and fear dissipate instantly because he sees everything - the insult, the insulter and the recipient of the insult as Paramātmā.

## 12.16

### **napekṣaḥ(ś) śucirdakṣa, udāsīno gatavyathaḥ, sarvārambhaparityāgī, yo madbhaktaḥ(s) sa me priyaḥ. 12.16**

He who wants nothing, who is both internally and externally pure, is wise and impartial and has risen above all the distractions, and who renounces the sense of doership in all undertakings—such a devotee of Mine is dear to Me.

It is important for a devotee to be

- **Anapekṣaḥ:** free from expectations
- **śuci** (internally and externally pure)
- **dakṣa** (expert/aware and one who puts in his best efforts)
- **udāsīno** (unconcerned with other's follies)
- **gatavyathaḥ** (free from all pain)
- **sarvārambhaparityāgī** (not initiating new desires and renouncing every action).

Expectation from external world, like other people and things, is the root cause of misery and despair.

One who is free from expectations is truly in bliss.

***Kyu kalpana khushi ki, khushi se jyada khushi deti hai?  
Kyu samne ki khushi bhi, mutthi se ret ki tarah fisal jati hai?***

This beautiful couplet explains the nature of expectations - *one does not feel pleasure from what one has, causing the current happiness to slip away, as sand would slip from one's hand.*

Gratitude is essential for contentment, as it causes one be content with the present, rather than chase some illusory happiness in the future.

A devotee's mind should be cleansed of selfish desires, making room for actions related to his duties (Svadharmā). He should not undertake new initiatives unnecessarily, if they are not connected to his Svadharmā. He should dedicate the results of his actions to Paramātmā, so that he can be free of expectations of the results. He should be unconcerned and unattached to the results of his actions.

**12.17**

**yo na hr̥ṣyati na dveṣṭi, na śocati na kāṅkṣati,  
śubhāśubhāparityāgī, bhaktimānyaḥ(s) sa me priyaḥ. 12.17**

He who neither rejoice nor hates, nor grieves, nor desires, and who renounces both good and evil actions and is full of devotion, is dear to Me.

This shloka elucidates the attitude of a devotee towards situations, objects, thoughts and emotions that they encounter.

It is common for a person to rejoice when he gets a favourable object or situation, and despair and grieve at its loss. A devotee should be equanimous in all situations. He should not label anything as good or bad, as that is the primary cause of attraction, desire, joy and sorrow. He should accept all that comes to him as blessings from the Supreme, and continue performing his rightful duties.

One who does not rejoice (*hr̥ṣyati*), hate (*dveṣṭi*), grieve (*śocati*) or expects (*kāṅkṣati*), renounces both favourable and unfavourable situations (*śubhāśubhāparityāgī*), and is full of devotion (*bhaktimānyaḥ*), would be dear to Paramātmā.

**12.18**

**śamaḥ(ś) śatrau ca mitre ca, tathā mānāpamānayoḥ,  
śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkheṣu, śamaḥ(s) saṅgavivarjitaḥ. 12.18**

He who deals equally with friend and foe, and is the same in honour and ignominy, who is alike in heat and cold, pleasure and pain and other contrary experiences, and is free from attachment.

The importance of the quality *śamaḥ* (balanced/ alike) is reflected by its repeated reference. It emphasizes the importance of equanimity and stability of a devotee's mind, which is made possible through intense devotion to Paramātmā.

One should be *śamaḥ* at all situations like

- **śatrau ca mitre ca** - behaviour towards both a friend and foe
- **mānāpamānayoḥ** - in praise and insult

- **śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkheṣu** - equanimous in heat and cold, or joy and sorrow.

All of these can only be achieved through **saṅgavivarjitah** (detachment). Sense organs are the doorways through which the inner self contacts the outside world. Attachment or identification with the ego causes the mind and intellect to generate positive or negative reactions to simple messages that come from the skin, the ears and other sense organs. Detachment from outer perceptions is the foremost necessity to develop the quality of **śamaḥ**.

## 12.19

### **tulyanindāstutirmaunī, santuṣṭo yena kenacit, aniketah(s) sthīRāmatih(r), bhaktimānme priyo narah. 12.19**

He who takes praise & criticism alike, and is given to contemplation and is contented with any means of subsistence available, entertaining no sense of ownership and attachment in respect of his dwelling-place and is full of devotion to Me, that person is dear to Me.

Bhagavān summarises by saying that the ultimate devotee is one who is silently contemplating on the divine constantly, in a state of contentment and peace. He is not affected by praise (**stuti**) or abuse (**tulyanindā**). He is content with whatever is available, and does not possess a sense of ownership. He is not attached to his dwelling place (**aniketah**), and is ever ready to lead life as ordained by the Supreme. He is composed, both in speech as well as the mind (**sthīrāmatih**). Such a devotee is the most dearest to HIM.

## 12.20

### **ye tu dharmyāmṛtamidaṁ(ṅ), yathoktaṁ(m) paryupāsate, śraddadhānā matparamā, bhaktāste'tiva me priyāḥa.12.20.**

Those devotees, however, who partake in a disinterested way of this nectar of pious wisdom set forth above, endowed with faith and solely devoted to Me, they are extremely dear to me.

It is humanely difficult to inculcate most of the qualities endorsed by Bhagavān. Yet, we need not despair. The compassionate Bhagavān says that one can become dearer to HIM just by absorbing the nectar of divine discourse of this chapter with faith and devotion, and accepting HIM as supreme.

The chapter concludes with the Pushpika, by invoking the name of The Supreme '**Om Tat Sat**', and offering everything to HIM. Additionally, it also begs for forgiveness of any inadvertent mistakes that may have occurred during the recitation of the divine song.

The session concluded with a two-minutes Hari keertan, followed by a Question & Answer session.

### **Questions and Answers:**

#### **Swarna ji**

**Q:** If we are satisfied (santushta), will it not deter us from aiming for something big?

**A:** Satisfaction comes when we renounce the fruits of our actions. To renounce, we need to have something in the first place, which means, we should have a goal and work towards the result/ fruits. But at the end, we should renounce the fruits of our hardwork. If we have expectations for the fruits, we cannot be satisfied.

**Q:** How can we forgive those people who have wronged us?

**A:** If we are hurt by someone's actions or words, it means that we are reaping past karmas. No one can hurt us; our past karmas are causing us to face all the incidents that we face in our life. When we understand this, it becomes easy for us to forgive others, because we will not see them as the cause of the hurt.

### **Namish Arora ji**

**Q:** If I do something wrong, and reap the paapa karmas, I feel guilty. How can I stop it?

**A:** Feeling guilty means that God's grace is on you. Not everyone will feel guilty when they do something wrong. You can do two things - apologise to the person who you wronged, and promise yourself that you will not do the wrong act again. This way you can stop or control yourself from doing wrong deeds.

### **Rajeshwari Karla ji**

**Q:** How can we overcome the unnecessary thoughts that keep coming to us, and focus on useful things?

**A:** The answer lies in your question - Focus on doing useful things. When we are busy with good activities, the mind cannot indulge itself in unnecessary thoughts. We should also practice controlling our mind by doing meditation, or worship like namajapa etc.

### **Abhinandan Sankolli ji**

**Q:** Is it not Bhagavān's ego that makes HIM say 'I am Supreme, I am the creator' etc.?

**A:** Can we say it is ego when a man tells that he is the father of his son? No! It is not ego, but the fact. Ego can come in only when there is someone else, and you compare yourself with others. In the case of Bhagavān, there is no one else apart from HIM. What HE is telling is the truth, not egoistic claim.

**om tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu  
brahmavidyāyām(ṽ) yogaśāstre śrīkrṣṇārjunasaṁvāde  
bhaktiyogo nāma dvādaśo'dhyāyaḥ.**



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**Jai Shri Krishna!**

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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