

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 15: Puruṣottama-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/I0Bb00f8wXE>

Attain the Supreme Abode by By Overcoming Attachment, Pride, Delusion & Desires

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he 15th chapter of the Bhagavadgītā is Puruṣottama-Yoga - The Yoga of the Supreme Person.

The session began with the customary lighting of the prayer and obeisance at the feet of Śrī Bhagavān and Gurudev.

It is truly a matter of great joy that we have embarked on this sacred journey of studying the Bhagavadgītā. This human life is a precious opportunity to make our existence meaningful, to attain the highest goal of life, to achieve success in both this world and the next, and to uplift ourselves in every possible way.

We are making efforts to read the Gītā, to learn its pronunciation, to understand its meanings, to contemplate upon its teachings, and to apply them in our daily lives. These efforts, however, are not merely a result of our own will. Perhaps they are the fruition of our past life's good deeds, or the righteous actions of this life, or the blessings of our ancestors, or a great soul has graced us in this lifetime. Whatever the reason, we are truly fortunate to have the opportunity to engage with the Bhagavad Gītā.

It was reiterated that we have not chosen the Gītā; rather, we have been chosen by the Gītā. Without the grace of the Divine, no one can listen to the Gītā, read it, understand it, or bring it into their life. This truth is affirmed in the 18th chapter of the Gītā, where Bhagavān Himself declared that those who study the Gita will attain HIM.

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।

अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥ 66॥

Abandon all varieties of dharmas and simply surrender unto Me alone. I shall liberate you from all sinful reactions; do not fear.

In one of his discourses in Rishikesh, Swami Ramsukhdas Ji Maharaj stated that all those present in the audience were assured of attaining Bhagavān and liberation (Moksha) because they were listening to the Gītā. At that moment, the entire audience felt a great sense of relief and joy, believing that their salvation was guaranteed.

However, after a pause, Swami Ji continued, that while attainment of Bhagavān is certain for all who study the Gītā, the timing depends on their dedication and effort. Some may achieve it in this very life, while others might take several lifetimes. It all depends on one's determination and commitment.

Eg: If a person travels from say, Mumbai to Delhi, reaching the destination is certain but the time taken to reach will depend on different things like the speed, the distance, the vehicle used for travelling and the path taken.

Likewise **if this path is followed with resolve and consistency, reaching HIM is certain and there is no doubt about it.**

The Bhagavad Gītā is a small scripture of just 700 verses, yet its wisdom is so profound that even after more than 5000 years, its significance is recognised not just in India but across the world. Philosophers and scholars from various backgrounds have acknowledged its timeless value.

The contribution of institutions like Geeta Press, founded by the great visionary Jaya Dayal Goenka Ji, has been instrumental in making the Gītā and other scriptures accessible to the masses. His preface to the Gita is so powerful and insightful that it can give one goosebumps, revealing the depth of knowledge encapsulated within. Without the efforts of such great souls, these sacred texts might have remained confined to museums, but today, they are available to everyone for study and spiritual upliftment.

After studying all the scriptures, Goenka Ji concluded that there is no scripture more beneficial for humanity than the Bhagavad Gītā. The Upanishads are considered the essence of the Vedas, and the Gītā, in turn, is the essence of the Upanishads. It has been aptly described as the divine milk extracted from the Upanishads by none other than Bhagavan Himself.

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः

पार्थोवत्सः सुधीर्भोक्तुं दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत्

All the Upanishads are cows; the Milker is Śrī Krishna, the cowherd boy; Arjuna is the calf; Wise and pure men drink the milk, the supreme, immortal nectar of the Gītā

According to Śrī Ramanujacharya, reading the Gita alone provides the essence of all scriptures.

गीता सुगीता कर्तव्या किमन्यैः शास्त्रविस्तरैः ।

या स्वयं पद्मनाभस्य मुखपद्माद्विनिःसृता ॥

If one reads Gītā it is equivalent to all other śāstras and it does not matter if no other is read. The gist of all others is embedded in Gītā.

Several other treatises are subjective as the author of each was guided in their own area of expertise, but Gītā is the only one text which can facilitate ultimate success in this world or beyond (*paraloka*) as also in any sphere of life and can be carried ahead even for further births.

In 12th chapter Bhagavān listed 39 characteristics of a devotee. A devotee is not recognised because he

puts a 'tilak' on his forehead or religiously sports a 'shikha' (tuft of hair) or the one who claps his hands in prayer or the one who does bhajans and kīrtana of Bhagavān.

Bhagavan said all such practices are not important. In 12th Chapter HE said:

अद्वेषा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च |
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी || 13||

Those devotees are very dear to Me who are free from malice toward all living beings, who are friendly, and compassionate. They are free from attachment to possessions and egotism, equipoised in happiness and distress, and ever-forgiving. Just as a doctor focuses on symptoms to diagnose and provide the right treatment, Bhagavān too observes the symptoms of devotion such as humility, selflessness, and unwavering faith, rather than the detailed stories of how and where one practices devotion. What truly matters to HIM is the transformation in the devotee's heart and actions, not the external circumstances or elaborate explanations.

In the Bhagavad Gītā, Bhagavān meticulously defines the qualities of a righteous individual across various contexts. In the

- 2nd chapter HE listed qualities of a Sthitaprajna
- 12th chapter HE listed 29 qualities of a true devotee (Bhakta)
- 13th chapter HE described the qualities of a Jnani
- 14th chapter HE explained the qualities of a Gunatita
- 16th chapter HE listed the Daivi Gunas

It does not matter to HIM, how much japa or puja one does, or whether one supports a tilak or not. For HIM true devotion is reflected in inner transformation, kindness, and the cultivation of Sattvika / Daivi qualities, rather than mere external rituals and practices. True purpose of worship, chanting, and meditation is to bring positive changes within a person, rather than being confined to mere rituals.

Bhagavān imparted the teachings of the Bhagavad Gītā to Arjuna and not to Yudhishtira, despite Yudhishtira being elder and known for his steadfastness in Dharma.

Bhagavān greatly admired two qualities in Arjuna and repeatedly addressed him as '**Anagha,**' meaning **one who has never sinned.** Swami Govind Dev Giri Maharaj ji states that anyone who listens to the entire Mahābhārata becomes a fan of Arjuna, although Bhagavān remains in a much higher position. Throughout the epic, there is not a single instance where Arjuna is seen engaging in any wrongdoing. He speaks only when necessary and does not respond unless asked for his opinion, unlike Bhima or Nakula, who were more expressive. Several instances exemplify Arjuna's impeccable character:

1. **Arjuna's Silence in Adversity:** When Yudhiṣṭhira lost the game of dice to the Kauravas, all his brothers reproached him, except Arjuna, who remained silent.
2. **Arjuna was also the ultimate warrior:** No one could ever defeat him. During the Rājasūya yajna conducted by the Pāṇḍavas after the war, all four brothers set out in different directions to collect wealth. Arjuna amassed the highest riches, earning him the title of '**Dhananjaya.**'
3. **Arjuna's Battle with Mahādeva:** In another instance, Arjuna engaged in a wrestling match with Lord śiva. The duel lasted for ten continuous days, and although he did not win, he did not lose either. As an honour to his valour, the mountain where the battle took place came to be known as

'Mallikārjuna Parvata.' Though defeating Lord Śiva was impossible, Arjuna's steadfastness and resilience were unparalleled.

4. **Victory in Incognito:** During their incognito stay in Virātanagara, Arjuna single-handedly defeated the Kaurava army, which included warriors like Bhīṣma Pitāmaha, Droṇācārya, Karna, Duryodhana, Duṣṣāsana, etc all of whom were accomplished warriors, or 'Maharathis.' Arjuna, disguised as Brihannalā and with the prince of Virātanagara, Uttara, as his charioteer, emerged victorious. Despite his unparalleled prowess, Arjuna never boasted about his capabilities and nor did he become envious of spiteful of others. This earned him not only the title 'Anagha' but also **'Anasūya,' meaning one free from envy and spitefulness.**
5. **Arjuna's Composure After Abhimanyu's Death:** When Arjuna's young son Abhimanyu was deceitfully killed by seven Kauravas, violating the rules of warfare, Arjuna took a solemn vow to kill Jayadratha, the main perpetrator, or immolate himself. Despite this grave declaration, he slept peacefully. Bhagavān Krishna, concerned about Arjuna's composure, woke him up and questioned his calmness. Arjuna confidently replied that since Bhagavān was worried, it assured him that HIS blessings would ensure the vow's fulfilment.
6. **Choosing Bhagavān Over an Army:** Before the war, Arjuna approached Bhagavān Krishna for assistance. Bhagavān, who was asleep at the time, found Arjuna seated at his feet when he awoke, while Duryodhana, in his arrogance, had seated himself at the head. Bhagavān offered them two choices: HIS one 'Akshauhini' army (225000 warriors) or HIMSELF, unarmed. Arjuna, without hesitation, chose Bhagavān, expressing his unwavering faith that HIS mere presence ensured victory.
7. **The Khandava Forest Episode:** When Arjuna, alongside Bhagavān Krishna, fought against Indra to assist Agni Deva in consuming the Khandava forest, they emerged victorious. Pleased with Arjuna's valour, Indra gifted him celestial weapons. Agni Deva, in gratitude, offered Arjuna a divine chariot and the mighty Gāṇḍīva bow.

These episodes reflect Arjuna's exceptional devotion, humility, and unwavering faith in Bhagavān, making him the ideal recipient of the Bhagavad Gītā's teachings.

In the 4th chapter Bhagavān said

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।
भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥ ३॥

The same ancient knowledge of Yoga, which is the supreme secret, I am today revealing unto you, because you are My friend as well as My devotee, who can understand this transcendental wisdom.

HE considered Arjuna not just a devotee, but a close friend. As much as Arjuna loved Bhagavān, HE too loved Arjuna. While it is natural for Arjuna to love HIM, the reciprocal love from Bhagavān is special and speaks volumes about Arjuna's character.

After the Khandava Forest was destroyed, Agni Deva hesitantly offered Bhagavān a boon. HE requested that the affection between HIM and Arjuna should never diminish but only grow. This unique instance highlights Bhagavān's deep love and attachment to Arjuna.

However, before the war began, this very Arjuna became distracted and delusional. The Gītā was delivered to Arjuna, but it wasn't only meant for him; it was through him that the teachings were intended to reach us for our benefit.

Though Bhagavān could have consoled and convinced Arjuna right from the start, HE had grander plans and wanted to reveal much more. This deeper purpose only enhanced the essence of the Gītā.

15.1

śrībhagavānuvāca ūrdhvamūlamadhaḥ(ś) śākhā, aśvatthaṃ(m) prāhuravyayam, chandāṃsi yasya parṇāni, yastaṃ(ṽ) veda sa vedavit.15.1

Srī Bhagavān said :He who knows the Pīpala tree (in the form of creation); which is said to be imperishable,with its roots in the Primeval being (God), whose branch is represented by Brahmā (the Creator), and whose leaves are the Vedas, is the knower of the purport of Vedas.

This chapter like the 12th chapter has 20 shlokas out of which 5 are in 'Trishtup chandas'.

- **Anushtup chanda** - Has 8 letters of 4 charanas
- **Trishtup chanda** - Has 13 letters of 4 charan

In the concluding verse of this chapter, **Bhagavān referred to it as consisting of the fundamental rules or 'śāstra.'** This chapter stands apart as the only one in the Bhagavad Gītā that can be directly compared to a śāstra, as it comprehensively describes the three essential aspects of existence - **Īśwara (the Supreme), Prakṛti (nature), and Jīva (the individual soul).** Through this chapter, HE provides a profound understanding of the interconnected relationship between these three elements

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयानघ |
एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत || 15.20||

I have shared this most secret principle of the Vedic scriptures with you, O sinless Arjun. By understanding this, a person becomes enlightened, and fulfills all that is to be accomplished.

This chapter, can be read anytime and anywhere, whether in a journey, during life's transitions, in moments of joy, or times of sorrow. Even when one has the time to read only one chapter, this is the chapter recommended to read.

The significance of this chapter lies in the fact that it offers a complete understanding of Bhagavān in HIS most secretive and profound form as Puruṣottama, the Supreme Being, hence the name Puruṣottama Yoga. **In other words, this chapter can be seen as providing the complete "biodata" of the Supreme, revealing HIS nature, attributes, and relationship with creation in a comprehensive manner.**

Gītā is not a text that can be fully grasped through mere study. It's profound meanings, rooted in the Upanishads, make it challenging to comprehend initially. Therefore Bhagavān begins by explaining the entire cosmos, or Brahmānda, through the analogy of an **inverted peepal tree.**

HE said:

- **Ūrdhvamūlam - Meaning the root is positioned upwards.** This implies direction rather than physical position. Just as a student advancing from the 2nd to the 3rd grade does not mean moving from one floor to another, similarly, 'ūrdhva' signifies spiritual elevation rather than a physical shift.
- **Adhaḥ śākhā - The branches extend downwards.** Though such an inverted tree does not exist in reality, it can be likened to the human body. In human anatomy, the loss of limbs may not necessarily endanger life, but the head, like the roots of a tree, is essential for survival. Similarly, in the tree, the removal of branches or leaves does not stop its growth, but cutting the root ceases its existence.
- **Aśvattham - The Aśvattha tree,** commonly understood as the peepal tree, which carries two significant meanings:

(i) **śva meaning tomorrow; and Aśva meaning that which will not exist tomorrow.** Similarly, the cosmos is in perpetual motion, ever-transforming.

(ii) **That which is in constant flux.** The ever-changing nature of the world is likened to the peepal tree, because its lightly attached leaves sway even with the gentlest breeze.

- **Avyayam - Eternal / Indestructible.** The cosmos which is in perpetual motion and ever-transforming is yet indestructible (*avyaya*). For instance, if a piece of paper is burned, it seems destroyed, but in reality, it merely changes form into soot (carbon). When dissolved in water, it appears as small particles. Thus, in creation, nothing is truly destroyed; everything undergoes transformation. Similarly, living beings persist in various forms, and the total existence remains unchanged despite apparent increases in population.
- **Chhandānsi yasya parṇāni** - The leaves (parṇāni) of this tree are Vedic mantras / Jnana (chhandānsi).
- **Vedavit - The knower of the Vedas.** Bhagavān mentions Vedavit, emphasising that each individual has different capacities for understanding and their comprehension will vary accordingly.

Some people know Gītā only as a book for taking oaths in court, others read it as a scripture. A person may read all 18 chapters yet struggle to grasp their essence. Another may memorise the verses but fail to understand their deeper meaning. Someone else might listen to discourses and comprehend a few chapters, while another like Pujya Swami ji may deeply learn, understand, and incorporate the teachings into their daily life. Such an individual is immersed in this wisdom, applying it in every action and word.

Swamiji Govind Dev Giri Maharaj once shared an example from his visit to Chennai, where he encountered a five-year-old boy reading an English newspaper. When asked if he understood what he was reading, the child confidently read the letters and words but admitted that he did not comprehend their meaning. This anecdote illustrates the difference between the ability to recite and the ability to truly understand—a distinction crucial in studying the Gītā.

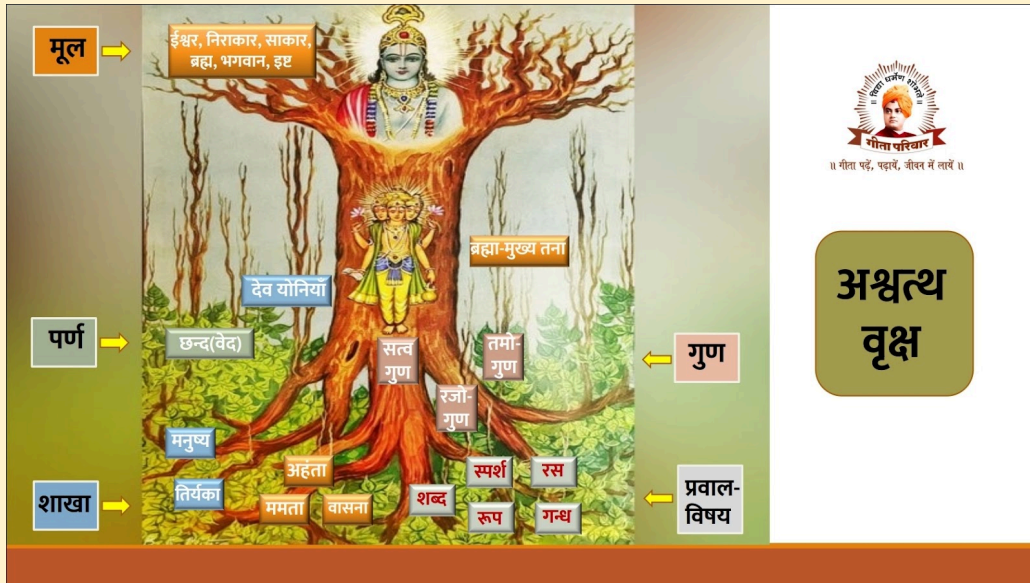
15.2

**adhaścordhvaṃ(m) prasṛtāstasya śākhā,
guṇappravṛddhā viṣayappravālāḥ,
adhaśca mūlānyanusantatāni,
karmānubandhīni manuṣyaloke. 15.2**

Fed by the three Guṇas and having sense-objects for their tender leaves, the branches of the aforesaid tree (in the shape of different orders of creation) extend both upwards and downwards; and

it's roots which bind the soul according to its actions in the human body, are spread in all regions, higher as well as lower.

Bhagavān explained the world and the creation by the upside down Peepal tree.



The Supreme Soul (Paramātmā) is present in the roots of the inverted tree. One may call HIM Paramātmā, attribute HIM as Saguṇa (with qualities), Nirguṇa (without qualities), or refer to HIM by the name of ones chosen deity (Iṣṭa Deva).

In the trunk of this tree resides Lord Brahmā, who provides stability to the tree. It is through Brahmā that the three Guṇas - Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas have been created. These Guṇas combine to form various types of life forms (Yonīs).

The upper regions are inhabited by divine beings (Deva Yonī), the middle by human beings (Manuṣya Yonī), and the lower regions by subhuman species (Tiryak Yonī). There are a total of fourteen Lokas (realms). Above the Earth, there are six higher Lokas, while below the Earth, there are seven lower Lokas. The higher Lokas are inhabited by celestial beings (Devas), whereas the lower Lokas are home to lower life forms such as insects and other inferior species.

The 14 Lokas, are classified as follows:

- **Higher Lokas (Spiritual Realms):** Satya-loka (Brahma-loka), Tapa-loka, Jana-loka, Mahar-loka, Svar-loka (Svarga-loka), Bhuvan-loka, Bhu-loka (Earth, the realm of humans and other creatures).
- **Lower Lokas (Subterranean Realms):** Atala-loka, Vitala-loka, Sutala-loka, Talatala-loka, Mahatala-loka, Rasatala-loka, Patala-loka

Among these, *Bhu-loka* is designated for humans and other living beings, while the lowest realms represent instability and constant movement.

The *Chhanda* or leaves represent the Vedas.

The roots extend in all directions, spreading across both the upper and lower realms (Lokas). In these

lower realms dwell Aham (ego), Vāsanā (latent desires), and Kāmanā (cravings), symbolising entanglement in desires and attachments that keep beings restless and unsettled.

Śrī Bhagavān said that our actions (Karma) bind us to this tree. It is due to the sense of 'I' and 'mine' that we become entangled in the bondage of actions.

For instance, when people die in distant events such as the Ukraine war, we may feel bad but do not cry because we lack a personal attachment to them. However, when a loved one passes away in the same war, we grieve deeply due to our emotional connection and attachment. This illustrates how attachment and bonding, driven by desires, create the illusion that we cannot live without those we are emotionally tied to. Ultimately, **such attachments become the driving force behind our actions our karma.**

The three Guṇas - Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas are the basis for the creation of the five great elements, the Pañca Mahābhūtas.

From these Mahābhūtas, the five fundamental elements or Tattvas have been formed.

- Sound (*Shrotra*) - Hearing
- Touch (*Sparsha*) - Sensation
- Vision (*Chakshu*) - Sight
- Taste (*Rasa*) - Taste
- Smell (*Ghrana*) - Smell

These senses serve as gateways through which desires and attachments manifest, influencing our thoughts, actions, and ultimately our destiny.

15.3

**na rūpamasyeha tathopalabhyate,
nānto na cādirna ca sampratiṣṭhā,
aśvatthamenam(m) suvirūḍhamūlam,
asaṅgaśastreṇa dr̥dhena chittvā. 15.3**

The nature of this tree of creation, does not on mature thought, turn out what it is represented to be; for it has neither beginning nor end, nor even stability. Therefore cutting down this Pīpala tree, which is m

Bhagavān said that the mystery of the aśvatth tree is not easy to understand for the embodied souls, as they are deeply entangled in the continuous cycle of life and death.

- **na rūpamasyeha tathopalabhyate** - signifies that the depiction of the world as an inverted tree is merely an illustrative analogy and not a literal representation of reality. It serves as a symbolic way to understand the transient and interconnected nature of existence.
- **nānto na cādirna ca sampratiṣṭhā** - conveys that while the tree depicted in the analogy has a beginning and an end, the world created by Bhagavān is eternal and without a fixed form, constantly evolving and changing.

The concept of Ahanta (self-consciousness), Mamata (attachment), and Vāsanā (desires) are the roots of

this worldly tree. To attain liberation, one must sever these bindings using the weapon of detachment, known as "**asaṅgaśastreṇa.**"

The human body is composed of the five great elements (*Pañcamahābhūtas*), whereas the Devatās are made of light energy, and the demons are formed from wind (*Vāyu*). The creation encompasses various forms of life, including insects, plants, herbs, and even viruses, amounting to a total of 84 lakh species.

The origin of all creatures is based on the interplay of the three Gunas - Sāttvik, Rājasik, and Tāmasik. The predominance of any of these Gunas determines the nature and destiny of a being.

Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya Ji beautifully described the cycle of life and rebirth in his verse:

**पुनरपि जननं पुनरपि मरणं, पुनरपि जननी जठरे शयनम्
इह संसारे बहुदुस्तारे, कृपयाऽपारे पाहि मुरारे**

The repetitive cycle of birth, life, and death continues across countless lifetimes based on the karmic impressions (*Guṇas*) from previous births. Bhagavān has assured that one can break free from this endless cycle by becoming HIS devoted follower.

Illustration: **The Story of Shukadev Ji and King Janaka**

Shukadev Ji, who imparted the Bhāgavatam to Parikshit ji, was the son of Maharshi Veda Vyasa. He was in the womb of his mother for 12 years, and as soon as he took birth he wished to renounce the world to pursue penance. However, his father advised him to first seek knowledge and himself imparted the knowledge of the Bhāgavatam. Later to get answers to some questions, Veda Vyasa ji sent Shukadev ji to King Janaka, who was revered as an ocean of wisdom.

King Janaka in this context is not the father of Sita mata. The Bhagavatam has references of 73 King Janaka's, Sita ji's father being the 49th.

Initially reluctant, Shukadev Ji eventually agreed and travelled to Mithila. Upon arrival, he introduced himself to the palace guards with a long introduction, and expected an immediate audience with the king. However, King Janaka did not meet him for six days, during which Shukadev Ji's self-introduction gradually shortened, shedding his ego and attachment.

On the seventh day, when Shukadev Ji humbly expressed his desire to gain wisdom, Janaka invited him in and honoured him. Before their discussion, the king assigned him a task - to carry a vessel filled with oil through the grand festival procession without spilling a drop. Shukadev Ji accepted, concentrating entirely on the vessel to complete the journey without distraction.

Upon successful completion in six hours, Janaka inquired about the city's grandeur, but Shukadev Ji realised he had not observed anything due to his focused mind. Janaka then explained that this was his first lesson - **living in the world like a lotus in water, untouched by distractions, with the mind fixed on Bhagavān.**

**जो जग में रहूँ तो ऐसे रहूँ, जैसे जल में कमल का फूल रहे,
मेरे सब गुण दोष समर्पित हों, करतार तुम्हारे हाथों में ॥**

This verse emphasises that one should live in the world with a detached mind, focusing solely on Bhagavān, just as a lotus remains untainted by the muddy waters in which it blooms.

Shukadev ji stayed in Mithila for 7 days and learnt 7 valuable lessons of life from Janaka ji.

15.4

**tataḥ(ph) padaṃ(n) tatparimārgitavyaṃ(ṡ),
yasmingatā na nivartanti bhūyaḥ,
tameva cādyāṃ(m) puruṣaṃ(m) prapadye,
yataḥ(ph) pravṛttiḥ(ph) prasṛtā purāṇī.15.4**

Thereafter a man should diligently seek for that supreme state, viz., God, having attained which they return no more to this world; and having fully resolved that he stands dedicated to the Primeval Being (God Nārāyaṇa) Himself, for whom the flow of this beginningless creation has progressed, he should dwell and meditate on Him.

Bhagavān told Arjuna that by cutting off all attachments with the weapon of detachment, one should wholeheartedly worship that Supreme Father, Paramātma. One must seek that Supreme Abode (Paramātmā), upon attaining which a person does not return to this world again.

We must reflect upon the fact that we are under the refuge of that Primordial Supreme Being, from whom this creation has expanded since time immemorial. Upon realising HIM, a person does not return to this worldly existence. Therefore, one should constantly contemplate and meditate upon that Supreme Being.

Bhagavān further describes the state of such enlightened beings who engage in this kind of contemplation and meditation in the next verse.

15.5

**nirmānamohā jitasāṅgadoṣā,
adhyātmanityā vinivṛttakāmāḥ,
dvandvairvimuktāḥ(s) sukhaduḥkhasañjñaiḥ(r),
gacchantyamūḍhāḥ(ph) padamavyayaṃ(n) tat. 15.5**

They who are free from pride and delusion, who have conquered the evil of attachment, and are constantly abiding in God, whose cravings have altogether ceased and who are completely immune to all pairs of opposites going by the names of pleasure and pain, and are undeluded, attain that supreme immortal state.

Bhagavān said that the great souls who are free from pride and delusion, who have conquered the faults arising from attachment, who are constantly engaged in the contemplation of the Supreme Being, and who have become free from all desires ; their characteristics are as follows:

- **nirmāna-mohā: Freedom from pride and delusion**

The first sign is that their minds are completely free from pride and delusion.

- **jīta-sāṅga-doṣhā: Overcoming attachment and evils**

The second characteristic is the elimination of the fault of attachment. Attachment means the desire for things one likes to always remain with them, and for things they dislike to go away. For example, remembering the taste of a sweet (like *jalebi*) for days, months, or even years after having it is attachment. Often, we become emotionally attached to objects and experiences. Me and mine are attachments. Likewise things one does not like, one wants to do away with, are also attachments.

Bhagavān said the great souls overcome such attachments.

- **Adhyātma - nityā: Dwelling constantly on the Self and Bhagavān**

The third sign is that they engage in continuous study and do contemplation. Sometimes one may feel inclined towards spiritual practices such as scriptural study, worship, and reflection on the Bhagavad Gītā, and sometimes they may not. However, Bhagavān says that such great souls always remain dedicated to their spiritual pursuits.

- **vinivṛitta-kāmāḥ: Freedom from desires**

The fourth characteristic is being free from desires. Whether they receive delicious food like *jalebi*, *kheer*, or simple dry bread, they remain content and unaffected. They do not crave for anything in particular.

- **dvandvair vimuktāḥ sukha-duḥkha-sanjñair: Rising above dualities of pleasure and pain**

The fifth state of such a yogi is that they transcend all dualities of life, such as pleasure and pain, attachment and aversion, honour and dishonour, life and death.

Such a wise yogi attains the Supreme Abode (**padam avyayam tat**), from where they do not return to this world. Those who reach this ultimate state are taken under HIS divine refuge and protection.

15.6

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

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

Herein Bhagavān described HIS Abode.

Bhagavān said that after attaining the Supreme Abode, the being does not have to return to the material world again.

From the fourteen realms of existence, the departing soul keeps returning repeatedly. However, the divine abode of the Supreme is self-illuminated and does not require the light of the sun or moon to shine.

In the next three verses, the cycle of the soul's transmigration is explained. How the soul transitions from one body to another, and what factors lead it to take birth in different forms of life. We will explore this in the next session.

With this, today's session came to an end, followed by the question-and-answer session.

Question And Answers

Kamini Ji

Question - Can you please explain the meaning of the fourth verse of this chapter?

Answer - In this verse, Bhagavān says that one who understands the eternal Ashvattha tree in this way begins to understand the Supreme Being. The one who comprehends the nature of the universe ultimately realises the Supreme. Once the Supreme is known, one is no longer bound to return to this world. Such a

person becomes free from the cycle of birth and death. This verse describes such a Yogi, and Bhagavān is referring to them in this context.

Ganesh Ji

Question - You mentioned the Ashvattha tree in the above verse. Can it also refer to the Banyan tree?

Answer - The word *Ashvattha* has two meanings. It refers to something that does not remain the same till tomorrow, and something that is constantly changing. This world is ever-changing, and nothing in it remains permanent.

The Peepal tree (sacred fig) is also called *Ashvattha* because its leaves are extremely restless. Even when the wind is barely moving, the leaves of the Peepal tree continue to tremble. Due to this restless nature, Bhagavān has likened the Ashvattha tree to the Peepal tree.

Chandraprabha Ji

Question - If one finds a good Guru, even an ordinary disciple can progress significantly. In the Mahābhārata era, there were great Gurus like Dronacharya and Bhīṣma pitāmaha. Yet, why did the war happen? Why didn't they guide their disciples to avoid it?

Answer - Wars happened in every era, be it Satya Yuga, Treta Yuga, or Dvapara Yuga.

Our actions depend on the three qualities—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. Bhagavān says that no entity in this world can exist without these three gunas. Good and evil will always coexist. Without evil, one cannot appreciate goodness. There will always be people of both types.

A person who predominantly possesses Sattva is considered divine, whereas one dominated by Tamas is considered demonic. These two tendencies always exist.

If everyone in the world were good, life would become monotonous. We would all function like robots or machines, with no freedom to make mistakes.

Gopal Ji

Question - In today's discourse, you mentioned where Bhagavān resides. In the 10th and 11th chapters, Bhagavān describes His divine manifestations. My question is why are we taught the 12th and 15th chapters first when studying the Gītā? Why does our learning start with these chapters?

Answer - It is important to understand that the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā is not a novel; it is a scripture. Scriptures must be studied according to a specific method, which is determined by our Gurus. They decide the starting point based on the disciple's level of understanding.

It is crucial for the Guru to assess what the disciple needs to know first and what they are capable of understanding. This is an ancient tradition of studying the Gītā.

The 12th chapter is taught first for several reasons:

- It is the shortest and simplest chapter, making it easier for the disciple to develop interest and curiosity to learn further.
- The first chapter, being lengthy, primarily describes Arjuna's sorrow (Arjuna Viṣāda Yoga). If it is taught first, students might lose interest as it mainly portrays Arjuna's grief.
- The 12th chapter is about *Bhakti Yoga* (the path of devotion), which inspires devotion in the disciple's heart and prepares them to receive further teachings.

Following this, the session concluded with the recitation of the Hanuman Chalisa.



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Thank you-For reading the summary

You have enjoyed this vivechan writeup! In spite of intense editing and proofreading, errors of grammar, as also of omission and commission may have crept in. We appreciate your forbearance.

Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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