

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 6: Ātma-Saṁyama-Yoga

1/4 (Ślōka 1-9), Sunday, 26 January 2025

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/AJPYe38LzAw>

## A true Sanyasi or Yogi is one who carries out the prescribed duties without attachment to the results

The session on the sixth chapter (Sloka 1-9) of the Bhagavad Gita- “**Ātma-Saṁyama-Yoga - The Yoga of Self-Control**” started with Bhajana, Śrī Hanuman Chalisa, Aarti and lighting of auspicious lamp signifying enlightenment. Prayers were offered unto the holy feet of Sri Krishna, our Guru Swami Govind Dev Giriji Maharaj, and Ma Sharada. After learning about Jnana Yoga and Karma Yoga there is a strong desire to know how to achieve them. The sixth chapter is important as it reveals the knowledge to become a Sanyasi with control over the mind. One has to bow down before the Guru to seek this knowledge. In Sloka 7 chapter 2 Arjuna surrenders to Shri Krishna to show him the path best for him:

**kārpaṇya-doṣhopahata-svabhāvaḥ  
pṛichchhāmi tvāṁ dharma-sammūḍha-chetāḥ  
yach-chhreyaḥ syānniśchitaṁ brūhi tanme  
śhiṣhyaste 'haṁ śhādhi māṁ tvāṁ prapannam**

After this Śrī Krishna opens the gate of knowledge. As Swami Ji says, “Learn Gītā, teach Gītā, and live Gītā”, this chapter helps us to put the principles of Gītā into practice, by teaching us how to become a Yogi.

### 6.1

**anāśritaḥ(kh) karmaphalaṁ(ñ), kāryaṁ(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.

In the Sloka 29 of chapter 5, Śrī Bhagavan says:

***bhoktāraṃ yajña-tapasāṃ sarva-loka-maheśhvaram  
suhṛidaṃ sarva-bhūtānāṃ jñātvā mām śhāntim ṛichchhati***

A person can attain Him only if he knows Him; to know Him, one has to be a Yogi. This Sloka clearly defines the true nature of a yogi and Sanyasi.

The common perception of a Sanyasi is someone who renounces their home to live a mendicant life, often recognized by their ochre clothing. To understand the true Sanyasi, we can break down the terms used:

***anāshritaḥ karma-phalaṃ***: one who does not act with a desire for the fruits of their actions.

***kāryaṃ karma karoti yaḥ***: one who performs their prescribed duties.

***sa sannyāsī cha yogī cha***: such a person is both a Sanyasi and a Yogi.

***na niragnir na chākriyaḥ***: not someone who has ceased to kindle the fire (Agni) or engage in sacrifices and physical actions.

The true Sanyasi or Yogi is an individual who carries out their duties without attachment to the results. Actions performed without a desire for personal gain are carried out as a duty. Any unrighteous action is typically motivated by a desire for material gain or sensory gratification. Desires, *Vāsanās* (subtle tendencies), and ego reside in the mind. Suppose a renunciant carries these attachments with them, it does not matter whether he lives in a mountain cave, a palace, or a city—eschewing physical activities alone does not qualify one as a Sanyasi; such a person would be an idler. There is a distinction between a Sanyasi and a Karma Sanyasi. A Karma Sanyasi acts for the pleasure of the Paramātmā (Super soul) without any desire for the fruits of their actions or a sense of doership; this is the practice of spirituality in a renounced state.

**All physical activities are external, and one must perform their responsibilities without attachment to the results. Lust, desire, ego, and greed cloud the mind; to become a true Sanyasi, one must cleanse the mind of these impurities while fulfilling their prescribed duties in this world.**

## 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).

No matter which path one chooses—Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Dhyan Yoga, or Sannyas—the underlying principle remains consistent: the rejection of desires for material gains that are insentient. Without relinquishing these desires (***asannyasta***) and the ego-driven resolutions (***saṅkalpaḥ***) aimed at achieving results solely for sensory gratification, it is impossible for anyone to become a Yogi or a Sanyasi. Sometimes people ask what will we get from learning Bhagavad Gītā? The simple answer it is our spiritual duty to learn Gītā for true knowledge, not for sense objects.

## 6.3

## **āruruḡṣormuneryogaṃ(ñ), karma kāraṇamucyate, yogaṛūḡhasya tasyaiva, śamaḡ(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.

A beginner (**āruruḡṣoḡ**) with the resolve to ascend the mountain of Yoga and meditation, should start with Karma Yoga, which involves working without attachment. **Nishkama Karma** serves as the fundamental foundation for spirituality and Yoga. In Patanjali's **Ashtanga Yoga, Aparigraha** (non-attachment or the absence of greed for insentient matter) is included as one of the principles in the first limb, known as "**Niyama**." To progress in spirituality and meditation, a steady mind is essential. Thus, Nishkama Karma is beneficial for purifying the mind, allowing individuals to gradually ascend the ladder of Yoga. Those who have ascended the mountain of Yoga (**yoga ārūḡhasya**) can proceed to meditation (**śamaḡ**). It is like a person in a hurry to reach the seventh floor of a building rushes to take the lift, and once he is in he does nothing, it is the lift that takes him up to the seventh floor. Similarly, once a Sadhak becomes **yoga ārūḡhasya** he can go for meditation for self-purification and to attain Brahma.

**For householders, practicing Nishkama Karma is feasible and does not require excessive effort. Hasty attempts to go into meditation can lead to difficult consequences.**

## **6.4**

### **yadā hi nendriyārtheṣu, na karmasvanuṣajjate, sarvasaṅkalpasannyāsī, yogaṛūḡhastadocyate. 6.4**

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

To achieve a state of meditation, the previous verse indicates that a person must be established in Yoga (**yoga-ārūḡhaḡ**). Bhagavad Gītā provides a checklist for every attribute; in the 2nd chapter checklist is for "**Sthitaprajña**", the chapter 3rd and 4th provide such list for "**Karma-Yogi**", the 14th chapter defines "**Trigunatita**", chapter 16th provides a checklist for "**Daivi Guna**". This chapter provides a checklist for **yoga-ārūḡhaḡ**. It begins with "**yadā**" (when) and concludes with "**tadā**" (at that time), setting a condition for being called **yoga-ārūḡhaḡ**.

A person is considered **yoga-ārūḡhaḡ** when they attain:

1. Non-attachment (**anuṣhajjate**) to sense objects (**indriyārtheṣu**)
2. Non-attachment (**anuṣhajjate**) to Actions (**karmasu**)
3. The renunciation of all desires to act to achieve material objects for sense gratification (**sarvasaṅkalpa-sannyāsī**). Sankalpa may be good if it is for a good cause, like our freedom fighters took Sankalpa to get freedom for the country.

**As long as the mind craves sense objects, it remains engaged in the external world, in a perturbed and wavering state. However, once a person is elevated in Yoga, their mind no longer yearns for a sense gratification. With this purified mind, one may then enter the state of meditation.**

## 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.

A person himself (**ātmānam**) is ultimately responsible for his elevation (**uddharet**) or degradation (**avasādayet**) in the path of spirituality, through the use of his mind; it can serve as either a friend or a foe. While scriptures and gurus can show the path, no one can walk that path for another. Though Swami Vivekanand Ji was blessed by Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa ji, Swami Vivekanand Ji worked very hard to rise to that level despite pathetic conditions at home, Śrī Hridayanath Ji, nephew of Paramahansa ji could not rise to that level. A combination of the mind, intellect, consciousness (*Chitta*), and ego, along with inherited tendencies (*Samskaras*), determines an individual's journey. From the same circumstances, some individuals emerge as luminaries in various fields, while others fade into obscurity. Examples galore from ancient India to modern India. One must utilize his own physical and mental resources for personal growth. True knowledge, or self-realization, cannot be shared or transferred to anyone else. Desires for sensory gratification and the resolutions made to fulfill these desires serve as significant obstacles to the elevation of the soul, pushing us into the quagmire of dualities

**Desires for the sense gratification, and resolutions to work to fulfill such desires are major stumbling blocks in the elevation of the soul, they push us into the quagmire of pairs of dualities.**

## 6.6

### **bandhurātmātmanastasya, 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.

For those who have conquered their mind (**ātma**), it becomes a friend (**bandhuḥ**); for those whose minds remain unconquered (**anātmanaḥ**), the mind turns into a foe (**śhatrutve**). Our sense organs are merely external tools that send messages to the mind about sense objects. It is the mind that develops longings for these objects and seeks enjoyment in sensory pleasures found in the external world. Verses 62 and 63 illustrate how contemplation of these sense objects initiates a downward spiral.

**dhyāyato viṣhayān puṃsaḥ saṅgas teṣūpajāyate**

**saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmaḥ kāmāt krodho 'bhijāyate (2.62)**

**krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ sammohāt smṛiti-vibhramaḥ**

**smṛiti-bhranśhād buddhi-nāśho buddhi-nāśhāt praṇaśhyati (2.63)**

The sequence begins with a person contemplating sense objects, which generates attachment and desires for them. This is followed by feelings of anger, delusion, a loss of memory, destruction of memory, and intellect, ultimately leading to the person's ruin. Our clinging to this Samsar is like a trap set for Parrot; a light-weight small pipe is hung in a tree branch, when parrots sit on this pipe, it starts swinging turning the

parrot upside down. For fear of falling down, the parrot holds the pipe tight, though it could easily fly. Our condition is no different in this objective world.

Paramātmā resides in us but we remain focussed in the material world. An instance in the life of Swami Ram Das Ji describes it so well. He used to visit his disciple Śrī Patel, a businessman; Patel Ji used to say, "I want to practice spirituality but this business and other activities are gripping me tightly". One day when Swami Ji was to leave, he held on tight to a pillar, and said, "This pillar is holding me tight and not letting me go". Patel Ji politely told Swami Ji to leave the pillar as it was not holding him. Swami Ji told him that the pillar was holding him just like Patel's Samsara and business were holding him. This was a good message for Patel Ji as well as for us.

A calm mind, free from all disturbances (*vikaras*), resembles a dust-free mirror that reflects our true self. Such a mind acts as a friend, guide, and supporter in our spiritual journey, and it also assists us in navigating worldly matters.

## 6.7

### **jitātmanaḥ(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.

The uncontrolled mind is affected by the pairs of opposites, heat, and cold, pain and pleasure, honor, and dishonor (**śhītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkheṣu tathā mānāpamānayoḥ**). The person who has conquered the mind (**jita-ātmanaḥ**) remains always in peace (**praśhāntasya**) and attains (**samāhitaḥ**) Paramātmā, and is unmoved by these pairs of opposites. As long as the mind is misled by external illusory sense objects it remains entangled with material activities. Once the mind is controlled by the practice of any Yoga it is considered to have reached the destination, the Paramātmā which is so near, inside our body. We have to close all doors of temptation of the material world first to start the spiritual journey.

**Equanimity in all situations saves the mind from the turbulences of the external world. Energy so saved can be used for spirituality.**

## 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.

This Sloka describes the characteristics of a Yogi-

**jñānavijñānatṛptātmā**- Satisfied with the understanding of Self, received from scriptures, Gurus, and elders, and direct realization of self. Satisfaction is gradual, it starts with the first step towards spirituality. Such a person does not hanker for worldly material gains and remains fully satisfied in all circumstances with whatever he possesses.

**kūṭasthaḥ**- Remains unshaken and unmovable by external stimuli, like the iron block- kūṭa, used by the jeweller, that remains unchanged by the hits of the chisel.

**vijita indriyaḥ**- Having conquered the senses. No temptation from sense objects.

**yuktaḥ**- Is always in communion with Paramatma.

**samaloṣhṭāśhmakāñchanah**- Looks equally on the lump of mud, stone, and gold. Each of these may have different monetary value, but for the Yogi, all comprise of the same basic elements.

## 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.

The perspective of equality applies not only to inanimate objects but also to living beings. A Yogi does not expect anything in return from anyone; he maintains an equal-minded attitude towards well-wishers, friends, enemies, indifferent individuals, mediators, envious people, relatives, the pious, sinners, impartial individuals, and distinguished ones alike. The intellect of a Yogi is impartial (**sama-buddhiḥ**), perceiving everyone with the same mental attitude, devoid of personal prejudice and favoritism, while recognizing all as creations of the Paramātmā.

It is important to note that it is **sama-buddhiḥ**, not **sama-vartante**, meaning that at the level of intellect, the Yogi treats all as equals, but in practice, individuals receive what they deserve based on their actions. For example if a sinner and spiritual Guru are standing together, a wise person will see both as human beings, a creation of Paramātmā, but he will bow to the spiritual Guru only with different attitude in his behaviour.

**Only a Yogi with true knowledge of Paramātmā sees His creation everywhere and in everyone. Such an attitude resonates and comes back to us with more strength, quieting the mind for its purification and resting in Paramātmā.**

#### **Questions and Answers:**

##### **Chinmaya Ji:**

**Q:** In reference to Sloka number 7, which discusses being equipoised in pairs of dualities, how do we reconcile instances like Śrī Krishna killing Shishupal for repeated insults or Devi Sati sacrificing herself in a fire to honor her husband? Is there a contradiction?

**A:** Citing such examples without a deep understanding of the scriptures can lead to misinterpretation born of ignorance.

##### **Rajiba Ji:**

**Q:** What is Brahma Vidya?

**A:** It is the true knowledge of the "ultimate Truth." Every chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā guides one toward the realization of the true self-the Brahma.

**Gayatri Ji:**

**Q:** Is it true that taking a holy dip in the Maha Kumbh should be done together by the husband and wife to earn Punya?

**A:** Spiritual journeys and righteous actions are inherently individual-centric. Each person must make their own efforts on this path. Even if both partners are physically present, their inner intentions (Bhava) may differ, and that is what matters most.



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**Jai Shri Krishna!**

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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