

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 14: Guṇatrāya-Vibhāga-Yoga

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YouTube Link: https://youtu.be/GWGS9_-wsyw

The Binding Forces of Life: Understanding the Play of the Gunas

Chapter 14 of the *Srimad Bhagavad Gītā* - **Guna Traya Vibhaga Yog** - **The Yog of the three modes of nature**

Yoga through Understanding the Three Modes of Material Nature.

The 14th chapter of the *Bhagavad Gītā* is titled **Gunatrāya Vibhaga Yoga**, which focuses on the three Gunas or qualities, **Sattva (goodness)**, **Rajas (passion)**, and **Tamas (ignorance)**, that govern human behavior and all of the material nature.

Our first session on this chapter began with the traditional lighting of the lamp, followed by the opening prayer, and concluded with the closing prayer and heartfelt salutations to all Gurus.

In our discussions on Chapter 17 (*Śraddhātrāya Vibhāga Yoga*), we had briefly touched upon these three Gunas. Now, in Chapter 14, we will explore them in much greater detail, understanding not only their characteristics but also how they influence our thoughts, actions, and destiny.

This chapter attempts to answer some profound and relatable questions, such as:

- If the entire world is created by Bhagavān, then why do some people develop bad habits or tendencies?
- Why didn't HE make everything purely good?
- Why is it so difficult to maintain focus, even after resolving to study sincerely for two hours? Why does the mind wander within just ten minutes?
- Why, at such times, does the mind start thinking about what's cooking in the kitchen instead of focusing on what's written in the textbook?
- Why do thoughts drift toward friends and the games they might be playing at that very moment?
- Why does the mind not listen to us?

The answers to these questions lie in understanding the three guṇas and how they constantly interact within and around us. As we delve deeper, we will begin to see how mastering awareness of these guṇas can lead us on the path of true spiritual growth and inner freedom.

14.1

śrībhagavānuvāca
param(m) bhūyaḥ(ph) praVākṣyāmi, jñānānām(ñ) jñānamuttamam,
yajjñātvā 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.

In this verse, Bhagavān tells Arjuna that He will once again share the supreme knowledge, a teaching He has already touched upon in earlier chapters like *Chapter 9 (Rāja Vidyā Yoga)*, *Chapter 12 (Bhakti Yoga)*, and *Chapter 15 (Puruṣottama Yoga)*. The very phrase “once again” reflects Bhagavān’s deep compassion and His intuitive understanding of Arjuna’s inner struggle. Despite all the previous instructions, Arjuna is still confused, still seeking clarity on the essence of spiritual truth.

This approach of patiently returning to a concept until it’s understood is the mark of a true teacher. A genuine teacher doesn’t give up but instead explains the same truth from different angles, using fresh examples and new insights, until the student can grasp it fully. In that same spirit, Bhagavān now introduces a new perspective to help Arjuna understand how the three Gunas (*Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas*) govern all beings and bind them to the material world.

In the material world, we achieve various goals through knowledge, whether it’s becoming a doctor, a scientist, a soldier, or an astronaut. Every goal requires a specific kind of learning. But when our aspiration is truly elevated, when we seek to understand how this universe came into being, how it functions, and what our true role in it is, then the knowledge we need must also be of the highest kind.

Yet, acquiring knowledge alone is not enough. It does not automatically lead us to Bhagavān, nor does it ensure liberation. Even those who misuse knowledge, like terrorists who design destructive weapons, are knowledgeable, but they lack *viveka* (discrimination and wisdom). Without the right intention and purpose, knowledge can become a tool for harm rather than upliftment.

Therefore, the true value of knowledge lies in how it is applied. When we use knowledge to serve others, to uplift lives, and to act in line with dharma, then that knowledge becomes *uttam jñāna*, supreme wisdom. When our actions are aligned with this higher understanding, we begin to experience closeness with Bhagavān. HE becomes our friend, our companion, and eventually we begin to move toward oneness with the *Paramātmā*.

This is why Bhagavān says He will reiterate this supreme knowledge, not just so that we understand the theory of the guṇas, but so that we learn to rise above them and apply this wisdom meaningfully. Those who live this knowledge with clarity, humility, and a spirit of service are the ones who attain ***mokṣa—freedom from the endless cycle of birth and death.***

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).

In this verse, Bhagavān explains the power and ultimate result of the supreme knowledge HE is about to teach. He says that those who take shelter in this wisdom and live by it, not just intellectually understand it, attain a divine state similar to HIS own nature (*mama sādharṃyam*). Such individuals are no longer tossed around by the cycles of birth and death, nor are they affected by cosmic changes like *creation (sarga) or dissolution (pralaya)*.

This is an extremely powerful statement. It means that the one who realizes this knowledge in full, and rises above the influence of the three Gunas, becomes liberated from the ups and downs of worldly existence. Such a person no longer fears death, nor are they pulled back into the cycle of rebirth. They are established in eternal truth, at peace with themselves and the universe, and in harmony with the divine.

What Bhagavān is hinting at here is that the true fruit of spiritual knowledge is freedom, freedom not just from worldly suffering, but from the very root of bondage. This is what makes this knowledge **“uttam jñāna”**, supreme and liberating.

About Swami Janardan

Known across Nagpur as Yogmurti Janardan Swami, he arrived in the city in 1949 and quietly initiated a transformative yoga movement that continues today through the Janardan Swami Yogabhyasi Mandal. With no publicity or fanfare, he traveled from home to home, schools, temples, and parks, sharing the science of yoga and wellness, and instilling holistic health within the community

Swamiji emphasized that *yogābhyāsa* (yoga practices) should be freely taught to everyone, irrespective of caste, religion, or gender. His philosophy was that yoga is not to be commercialized but shared as a service to life itself. His signature motto, inscribed on his samādhi:

“Samādhānāya Saukhyāya Nirogatvāya Jīvane; Yogaṃ eva abhyāset prajñāḥ yathāśakti nīrantaram”

"Yoga for contentment, happiness, and health—practiced continuously, according to one's capacity."

A Glimpse of Oneness - Swami Janardan Maharaj's Narmada Parikrama Experience

An incident from Swami Janardan Maharaj's Narmada Parikrama offers a rare insight into the depth of his spiritual realization, a state where the veil separating the divine and the world had completely dissolved. During this sacred pilgrimage, a rigorous, deeply spiritual journey circling the revered river Narmada, Swamiji unknowingly took a narrow path that gradually closed in. At its end was a gufa (cave). As he approached, he noticed a striking sight: a lion, lioness, and their cubs, resting calmly inside. For any ordinary person, panic would have set in. There was no way forward, and turning back would mean exposing his back to the lion, a sure risk to his life. But Swamiji was no ordinary pilgrim. Instead of fear, he felt divine reverence. With folded hands and a heart full of bhakti, he bowed down and began offering prayers, not to escape danger, but in gratitude. In that lion, he saw Bhagavān Himself. With total surrender, he said

"O Bhagavān, thank You for giving me darshan in this majestic form today."

This moment reflected the supreme spiritual state he had attained, where one no longer sees the world through the lens of fear and duality, but through oneness and divinity. Swamiji's realization was not theoretical; it was alive, present, and fully embodied. He had become one with Bhagavān, and so, could

recognize the Divine even in the form of a lion. Such a response is only possible when the mind is free from ego, fear, and attachment, and one lives in constant awareness of the Divine presence in all beings. This incident is not just a story; it is a testament to the highest fruits of spiritual knowledge, lived and expressed with absolute humility and devotion.

Sant Tukaram Maharaj and the True Test of Sādhana

Sant Tukaram Maharaj, one of the greatest saints of the Bhakti tradition, lived in Dehu, a small village near Pune. Deeply immersed in devotion to Vithoba, he would often retreat into nature to perform sādhanā, immersing himself in divine remembrance and kīrtan.

During these times of solitude, Tukaram Maharaj observed something subtle yet telling. He noticed that the creatures around him, birds, animals, even the wind, did not naturally gather near him. He took this not as a disturbance caused by them, but as a reflection on the depth of his own inner spiritual state. He humbly concluded that his sādhanā had not yet reached its peak, that he was still walking the path and had not yet become one with the universal rhythm of nature.

He compared this to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose divine presence was so magnetic and pure that when He played His flute, all beings, humans, animals, birds, trees, were irresistibly drawn toward Him. The entire environment resonated with His divine melody.

That is the mark of a being who has become one with Paramātmā, where no separation exists between the self and the rest of creation.

This deep realization by Sant Tukaram Maharaj shows his spiritual humility and sincerity. He did not measure his progress by how many bhajans he sang or how many people gathered around him, but by the response of nature itself, a mirror that reflects the vibrations we emit.

In this, we see the hallmark of a true saint: always looking within, always seeking to go deeper, and forever remaining a humble servant of the Divine.

14.3

**mama yonirmahadbrahma, tasmingarbhaṃ(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.

In this śloka, Bhagavān addresses Arjuna as **“Bharata,”** not merely as a name, but as a gentle reminder of his noble lineage and inner potential. By calling him Bharata, Bhagavān encourages Arjuna, even in the midst of his doubts. He is essentially saying: *“Even though you are confused right now, remember who you are—a descendant of the great King Bharata, born into a lineage that upheld dharma and wisdom.”*

This subtle invocation of heritage is meant to rekindle courage and clarity in Arjuna’s heart.

Beyond the historical reference, the name **“Bharata”** also carries deep spiritual significance. The word **rata** (or **rat**) in Sanskrit means to be completely immersed or devoted to something. In Geeta Pariwar, we often use terms like **Sevarat**, meaning someone entirely dedicated to **seva** (selfless service). Similarly, **Bharat** is not just a name; it represents a state of being. Here, **“Bha”** stands for light, knowledge, or consciousness, and **“rat”** implies one who is immersed in it. Thus, **Bharat** signifies a

person, or a land, completely devoted to the pursuit of knowledge.

In this context, the people of Bharat do everything, study, work, worship Lakṣmī-jī, even earn wealth, not merely for personal gain, but ultimately for the sake of attaining higher knowledge and inner growth. That is the true essence of our civilization.

This deep cultural and spiritual identity is why our nation is proudly called **Bharat, a land where knowledge is not just acquired, but lived.**

The name “India” was given by outsiders, popularized during British colonial rule. It is a geographical label, disconnected from our cultural soul and spiritual essence. In contrast, Bharat is not just a name; it carries the weight of a noble lineage tracing back to King Bharata and reflects the values of a civilization that has always been devoted to knowledge, truth, and dharma.

To use Bharat is to reclaim our self-respect, to embrace our ancient values, and to pass on a culturally awakened identity to future generations. Our true pride lies in the name “Bharat” itself. It is not merely an identity; it represents a way of life, rooted in wisdom, service, and inner growth.

Those who live in Bharat should strive to be immersed in knowledge, jñāna mein rata. Every action, every pursuit in this land should ultimately lead to the attainment of wisdom and its meaningful application for the welfare of others.

When we study the Bhagavad Gītā, we don’t do it just for ourselves. We learn it so that it becomes meaningful and useful for others. If you look closely at the logo of Geeta Pariwar, it carries the tagline: **“Tasmāt yogī bhava Arjuna”** — “Therefore, O Arjuna, become a yogi.”

Bhagavān is encouraging Arjuna, and through him, all of us, to become yogīs. But the first step to becoming a yogi is to first become a **sahyogī—a co-traveler**, a supporter of others, or an upyogī, someone who is useful and purposeful in society.

And that is the spiritual and cultural significance of the name Bharat, a land where people dedicate their lives to learning, serving, and uplifting others through knowledge and action.

In this verse, Bhagavān says, “O Arjuna, O Bharata!” reminding him of his noble lineage while guiding him toward understanding the divine process of creation. Just as we are born from our parents in the physical world, similarly, all *living beings* (jīvas) are born through the **union of Prakṛti (Nature) and Bhagavān’s divine presence.**

This union, the coming together of the material energy (Prakṛti) and the divine seed (consciousness), is what gives rise to life. It is Bhagavān alone who is the ultimate cause behind all creation.

14.4

**sarvayoniṣu kaunteya, mūrtayaḥ(s) saṁbhavanti yāḥ,
tāsāṁ(m) brahma mahadyoniḥ(r), ahaṁ(m) bijapradāḥ(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.

In this verse, Bhagavān explains the divine process of creation:

"**Sarva yoniṣu**" – In all wombs or forms of life, be it human, animal, plant, or celestial, every living being is born from Prakriti (Mother Nature), which acts as the universal womb. HE calls HIMSELF the "**bija-pradaḥ pitā**", the seed-giving Father. While Prakriti provides the body, Paramātmā provides the soul, the essence of consciousness and life.

This can bring up a natural question:

Question: If Bhagavān resides equally in every heart, why do we all behave so differently?

Answer: Even twins, born at the same time, to the same parents, raised in the same environment, often develop unique personalities, choices, and temperaments. Among siblings, one may be calm (*shant*), while another may be outgoing or restless. Even two rose plants, grown from the same seeds, in the same soil, with equal sunlight and water, may bloom differently.

Across billions of people through history, no two fingerprints have ever been identical. No two retinas match. Every eye carries a distinct pattern. So, Bhagavān, YOU say YOU are in every being, yet we're all so different. Why such immense variety? Why so many differences in thought, behavior, and nature?

Here lies the beauty of divine design:

Just like a television screen uses only three colors, *Red, Green, and Blue (RGB)* to produce millions of shades, in the same way, the three gunas, **Sattva (purity), Rajas (activity), and Tamas (inertia)**, exist in every being in different combinations and proportions.

It is this unique mix of gunas in each soul that creates diversity in:

- Our likes and dislikes
- Our thoughts and emotions
- Our habits, behavior, and even spiritual inclinations

That is why we are all different by nature, and yet the same divine Bhagavān dwells within each of us. **Our duty is to keep the three gunas in balance.** When they are in harmony, we live with peace, clarity, and purpose. But when one guṇa dominates, we lose balance, and the journey toward self-realization slows down.

By studying the Gītā again and again, and living with awareness, we learn to transcend these three guṇas and move toward inner freedom, just like the realized ones who have gone beyond.

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.

In this verse, Bhagavān reveals a profound truth about the inner workings of our existence. He explains that the three gunas, *Sattva (purity), Rajas (passion), and Tamas (inertia)*, are born of Prakriti, or Nature. These gunas are not part of the soul itself, but they belong to the material world. Yet, they have the power to bind the **imperishable soul** to the body. That is, even though the soul is eternal, pure, and untouched by change, it becomes entangled in the material experience through its association with these gunas.

Sattva is the guna of clarity, light, harmony, and knowledge. It brings peace, joy, and understanding. Yet, even Sattva can bind us, not through pain or confusion, but through attachment to pleasure, to virtue, to

knowledge, or even to the sense of being a “good” person. One may become proud of being sattvic, and that pride itself becomes a subtle bond.

Rajas, on the other hand, is the guna of action, desire, ambition, and restlessness. It drives us to chase goals, seek recognition, and stay constantly busy. It binds the soul by fueling endless craving and attachment to the fruits of action.

Tamas is the guna of darkness, inertia, ignorance, and confusion. It dulls the mind, brings laziness, and traps us in denial, avoidance, or sleep-like living. Under its grip, we resist growth, delay action, and often stay stuck in unproductive habits.

Despite being so different in nature, all three gunas are capable of binding the soul. Whether it is a golden chain of Sattva, a fiery chain of Rajas, or a heavy, dull chain of Tamas, a chain is still a chain. Each binds differently, but the result is the same: the soul forgets its true nature and identifies with the body and mind.

This is why spiritual practice is about not only cultivating Sattva but eventually rising above all three gunas. The Gītā encourages us to first become aware of these tendencies, then learn to balance them, and finally transcend them.

The journey of inner freedom begins by watching how these gunas influence our thoughts and actions, and by learning not to get entangled in them. We are not the gunas; we are the eternal witness behind them. And this understanding begins the process of liberation.

Sattva guna encourages us to walk the path of knowledge, clarity, and inner harmony. It uplifts our consciousness, enabling us to make wise choices, reflect deeply, and live in alignment with dharma. That is why it is often considered the most favorable among the three gunas for spiritual and personal growth. However, if only **Rajo guna** (activity and desire) or **Tamo guna** (inertia and ignorance) begin to dominate without the balancing influence of Sattva, then true progress in life becomes difficult. Rajas may keep us endlessly busy, restless, and attached to outcomes, while Tamas may pull us into laziness, confusion, or denial. Neither of these, on their own, can lead us toward real fulfillment.

It is only with the light of Sattva that we gain the vision to rise above the pull of the other two, and begin the journey inward, toward lasting peace and wisdom.

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.

In this verse, Bhagavān called Arjuna "**Anagha**", which means *sinless, pure-hearted, or untainted*. HE addressed Arjuna as Anagha because Arjuna was spiritually prepared to receive deep, subtle knowledge. A pure heart and a relatively untainted mind are essential for understanding the highest truths, and Bhagavān acknowledged that Arjuna had that inner readiness.

This verse explains the nature of Sattva guna, one of the three fundamental modes (gunas) that govern all of nature and the human mind. Bhagavān says:

- The state of Sattva is "**nirmala**" (pure) and
- It brings **prakāśa** – clarity, wisdom, light.

- The same leads to mental and emotional wellness ("**anāmayam**"), free from restlessness or delusion.
- Sattva is higher than **Rajas (passion) and Tamas (ignorance)**, but **moksha (liberation)** lies beyond all three gunas.
- Even Sattva must be transcended eventually.

Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj explains that while we may rise to the level of Sattva, often pride quietly enters through the back door. For example, if we are learning the Bhagavad Gītā, we may notice that not all our friends or peers are doing the same. At such moments, the mind might whisper, "I am special; others are not learning what I am." But this pride is the very thing that taints the purity of Sattva.

We must remember, as Warnekar Kaka Ji often says, that even the desire to study the Gītā is not born from our own effort. It is Gītā Mā herself who recognizes a certain purity in the seeker and allows them to come close. This is not a right, but a blessing. There are many who receive the same invitations or links to join a Gītā learning program, but the spark of desire to open the link simply doesn't arise. There are many who keep the Gītā at home, even worship it, but do not feel drawn to study or live it. Why does this happen?

Because Gītā Mā has not yet called them. And if she has called us, it is purely by grace, not merit. So, there is nothing here to feel proud about. Rather, we should be filled with gratitude, with the awareness that we are being allowed, for reasons beyond our understanding, to walk this sacred path.

If someone around us is also learning, we should support and serve them with love. And when we see someone who hasn't yet been drawn to this journey, we must never feel superior or boastful. That would only spoil the very Sattva we are cultivating. True Sattva must be lived with humility (namratā). Otherwise, it too becomes a subtle bondage.

The moment we attach pride to our spiritual progress, we unknowingly slip from light back into shadow.

14.7

**rajo rāgātmakam(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 of **Rajo Guna (the mode of passion)** in detail. It arises from **desire (tṛṣṇā) and attachment (saṅga)** and pushes us into constant action, craving results, achievements, and recognition. It binds the soul by making us attached to the outcome of our actions. While Rajo Guna gives us energy and motivation, if unchecked, it leads to restlessness, ego, and dissatisfaction. Hence, desires born from Rajas should be filtered through Sattva to ensure they're pure and aligned with higher values.

Story - King Midas and the Curse of Gold

King Midas was a wealthy and powerful king who loved gold more than anything. One day, he was granted a wish by the God Dionysus. Midas wished that everything he touched would turn to gold. His wish was granted. At first, he was delighted, until he realized he couldn't eat or drink, as food and water turned to gold. Worse still, when he hugged his daughter, she too turned into a golden statue. Realizing his mistake,

Midas begged for the gift to be taken away. Dionysus told him to bathe in the river Pactolus, which washed away the golden touch and restored his daughter.

When children go abroad and choose not to return, leaving their aging parents behind or placing them in old-age homes, it often reflects the influence of Rajo Guna. This mode is driven by ambition, desire, and personal success, sometimes at the cost of deeper human values. On the other hand, when Sattva Guna begins to guide our lives, we gain clarity about what truly matters. It helps us recognize that the love and presence of the parents who raised us are far more meaningful than worldly achievements. Living with them, caring for them, and being present in their later years becomes a blessing, not a burden.

When there is an excessive dominance of Rajo Guna, its outcomes are like the above instances.

This is why maintaining a balance between the drive of Rajo Guna and the clarity of Sattva Guna is so essential for a meaningful and harmonious life. Rajo Guna in itself is not entirely bad. Even noble desires arise because of it. However, whenever a desire emerges, it should be reflected upon through the lens of Sattva Guna. Only if it aligns with purity, clarity, and higher values should one pursue it. This ensures our actions are not just driven by passion, but also guided by wisdom.

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.

Once again, Bhagavān addresses Arjuna as 'Bharata'. HE is reminding Arjuna of his noble lineage, while also explaining the definition of *Tamo Guna*. Bhagavān is essentially saying, '*Don't have any doubt; you truly belong to the Bharata lineage. I'm only describing the nature of Tamas, not implying that you are ruled by it.*'

The nature of Tamo Guna, the third of the three Gunas (qualities of nature). Tamas arises from ignorance (*Avidya*), and its influence leads to delusion and darkness of understanding. A person under its influence becomes:

- **Negligent (Pramāda):** lacking attention or mindfulness, or, in simple terms to neglect our duties and engaging in meaningless or purposeless activities.
- **Lazy (Ālasya):** unwilling to act, or lacking energy
- **Sleepy (Nidra):** both physical sleep and spiritual unconsciousness

Tamas binds the soul by keeping it inactive, confused, and unaware of its higher purpose. It dulls clarity, weakens willpower, and obstructs spiritual progress. They not only neglect their duties towards others, but they also fail to care for their own well-being. For them, sleep and rest become the top priority, even at the cost of their growth or responsibilities.

14.9

**sattvaṃ(m) sukhe sañjayati, rajaḥ(kh) karmaṇi bhārata,
jñānamāvṛtya tu tamaḥ(ph), pramāde sañjayatyuta. 14.9**

Sattva draws one to joy and Rajas to action; while Tamas, clouding wisdom, impels one to error, sleep and sloth Arjuna.

This verse explains how the three qualities (*gunas*) of nature bind us:

- **Sattva (goodness)** binds by attachment to happiness and knowledge.
- **Rajas (passion)** binds through restless activity and desire.
- **Tamas (ignorance)** binds by clouding understanding and leading to laziness or confusion.

Each *guna* binds the soul to the material world in its own unique way. The ultimate goal, as the Gita teaches, is to transcend all three and attain inner freedom. There is indeed a possibility to rise above these *gunas*, and Bhagavān will reveal this in the upcoming shlokas.

When a seeker transcends the influence of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, a quiet sense of *divyata* (divinity) begins to radiate from within. Swami Vivekananda was one such master; he had become *Gunateet*, beyond the sway of the three *gunas*. His mind rested exactly where he chose, unwavering and self-directed. Such mastery is possible only when one rises above nature's binding forces and lives anchored in the Self.

Story: Swami Vivekananda and the Practice of Shooting

During his visit to America, Swami Vivekananda once stayed with a family who had young boys. One day, they invited him to join them for target shooting with an air rifle. Swamiji, though never trained in shooting, agreed. The boys had been practicing for weeks but kept missing the target. Swamiji picked up the rifle, aimed once, and hit the bullseye. Then again. And again. Every shot was perfect. Amazed, the boys asked, "*Swamiji, how did you do that without any practice?*" He smiled and said: "*Whatever you do, do with your whole heart and soul. Concentrate on it completely. That is the secret of success. If you can control your mind, you can do anything.*"

Story: Arjuna and the Bird's Eye

Once, Dronacharya, the royal guru of the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas, tested his students' concentration. He placed a dummy bird on a tree and asked each prince to aim at its eye with a bow and arrow. But before they could shoot, he asked: "What do you see?" Yudhishtira replied, "I see the tree, the bird, the branch, and the sky." Dronacharya told him to step aside. The same question was asked of Bhima, Nakula, and Sahadeva; all gave similar answers. Then came Arjuna. Drona asked, "What do you see?" Arjuna replied: "I see only the eye of the bird, nothing else." Dronacharya smiled and said, "Now shoot." Arjuna did, and hit the mark with perfection.

What Do These Stories Teach Us?

They both point to Ekagrata, single-pointed focus.

So why could only Arjuna hit the target?

Because his mind was fully centered, undistracted.

Why couldn't the others do it?

Because their minds were scattered, the three *gunas* (*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*) constantly pull our minds in different directions: As long as these *gunas* control us, we are not in control. True Focus Comes from Rising Above the *Gunas*. Arjuna's mind didn't wander, not because of talent, but because of mastery. Like Swami Vivekananda, he had learned to place his mind where he chose. Such focus is not a one-time trick. It is a discipline, a way of living.

And how do we cultivate it?

By studying, reflecting, and living the message of the Bhagavad Gītā, again and again.

Each time we return to its wisdom, we rise a little higher, shedding the grip of the *gunas* and stepping into true inner freedom.

**rajastamaścābhibhūya, sattvaṃ(m) bhavati bhārata,
rajaḥ(s) sattvaṃ(n) tamaścaiva, tamaḥ(s) sattvaṃ(m) rajastathā. 14.10**

Overpowering Rajas and Tamas, Arjuna, Sattva prevails; overpowering Sattva and Tamas, Rajas prevails; even so, overpowering Sattva and Rajas, Tamas prevails.

This verse explains the constant tug-of-war between the three gunas, Sattva (goodness), Rajas (passion), and Tamas (ignorance). Each guna tries to dominate the mind and behavior. At different times, one becomes more powerful, suppressing the other two:

- When clarity, peace, and knowledge dominate, **Sattva is ruling.**
- When there is activity, ambition, restlessness, **Rajas is in charge.**
- When there is inertia, confusion, or laziness, **Tamas has taken over.**

These three are always shifting, influencing our mood, decisions, thoughts, and even spiritual practice. That is why early morning is considered the most precious time of the day. In the early hours, especially before sunrise (Brahma Muhūrta), **Sattva guṇa** is naturally at its peak. The mind is clear, calm, and receptive — ideal for learning, meditation, reflection, or prayer.

As the day progresses, **Rajo guṇa** (activity and restlessness) starts taking over. The mind gets pulled in many directions, focused on tasks, desires, and worldly engagements.

By evening, especially after sunset, **Tamo guṇa** begins to dominate. The mind becomes heavier, duller, and less alert; our learning capacity and clarity gradually decline.

14.11

**sarvadvāreṣu dehe'smin, prakāśa upajāyate,
jñānaṃ(m) yadā tadā vidyād, vivṛddhaṃ(m) sattvamityuta. 14.11**

When light and discernment dawn in this body, as well as in the mind and senses, then one should know that Sattva is predominant.

This verse describes the signs by which one can recognize the predominance of the mode of Sattva (goodness) in a person.

“**Sarva-dvāreṣu**” refers to all the “gates” or senses of the body: two eyes (sight), two ears (hearing), two nostrils (smell), the mouth (speech and taste), the anus (excretion), and the genitals (reproduction). These are the pathways through which we perceive and interact with the world. “**Prakāśa upajāyate**”, when light or clarity arises, symbolizes the awakening of wisdom and understanding. In such a state, a seeker naturally desires to see only what is pure and sacred, to hear only what is auspicious and uplifting, and to speak only words that carry goodness. Even unintentionally, harsh or inappropriate language does not arise.

If we wish to become more Sattvic (pure and balanced), we can consciously reverse this process. Let the eyes refuse to see anything that disturbs inner peace. Let the tongue speak only kind and elevating words. Let no abusive or harmful speech arise, even by mistake. Through such mindful living, the qualities of Sattva will begin to grow within us.

As Sattva guna dawns, it not only transforms the inner world; it begins to influence the outer world as well.

Others are naturally drawn to Sattvic energy, often without knowing why. As we discussed earlier, Sant Tukaram reflected on this very phenomenon. He questioned why not all beings are immediately drawn to us, or why they don't trust us instantly. In his own case, when the Sattva within him deepened, even animals and strangers began to approach him with love, trust, and openness. It wasn't merely outward behavior, it was inner purity radiating outward.

A Sattvic person can be recognized by certain unmistakable signs: their thoughts, actions, speech, and even their choices in what to see or hear reflect clarity, purity, and harmony. There is a quiet joy in their presence. They are not entangled in worldly attachment, nor are they lost in delusion. Everything around them, their work, their space, their words, radiates auspiciousness and grace.

The verse concludes with: "**jñānaṃ yadā tadā vidyād vivṛddhaṃ sattvam ity uta.**"
"When knowledge arises, one should know that Sattva has increased."

When a person is predominantly in the Sattvic state, their senses are purified. Their speech becomes truthful, their eyes see with compassion, their ears are drawn to uplifting knowledge, and their actions are guided by discernment. Knowledge (jñāna) becomes visible through their being. Such a person becomes calm, joyful, contemplative, and deeply connected to truth and higher values.

Question & Answer

Rashi Ji.

Question: In Learn Geeta Program, why are we not starting the study of the Bhagavad Gītā from Chapter One?

Answer: Firstly, the chapters we begin with, like 12, 15 etc., are shorter and simpler to understand. Swami Govind Dev Giri Ji Maharaj has thoughtfully structured the learning program this way so that we find the initial topics interesting and engaging. Gradually, as our interest and understanding deepen, we are guided into the longer and more complex chapters of the Gītā.



We are sure you enjoyed reading the Vivechan write-up. Please invest three minutes of your time to provide us your feedback. Use the link below:

<https://vivechan.learngeeta.com/feedback/>

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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