

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 14: Guṇatrāya-Vibhāga-Yoga

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With unalloyed devotion towards Bhagavān, one will be able to rise above the three Gunas and transcend to the level of the Brahmān

Chapter 14 of the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā - **Guna Traya Vibhaga Yog - The Yog of the three modes of Prakṛti**

The session begins with the prayer and the lighting of the lamp.

We begin with the session by bowing down to each other (inspired from the Varkari sect). The Akhand Harinam Saptah is a form of communal religious worship in the Varkari sect. Akhand Harinam Saptah holds great importance in the Varkari sect. For each and every year people celebrate Akhand Harinam saptah for a period of seven days with full devotion to the Supreme Divine.

The Veena is used as an instrument to chant the names and glories of the Supreme Divine. When the veena is passed on to the next person, the person who now obtains the veena for sankirtan touches the feet of the person who passes the veena and vice versa. This tradition of touching each others feet signifies that Charana Sparsha, is a gesture of respect and humility, symbolizing the acceptance of each other's wisdom and experience.

In this Chapter, Bhagavān expounds on the three modes or the three Gunas of Prakṛti - Sattva (mode of goodness) , Rajas (mode of passion) and Tamas (mode of ignorance).

The influence of the three Gunas

Any being emanating from Prakṛti is under the influence of the three Gunas. It is not possible to be devoid of the three Gunas. For efficient functioning in life, one needs to be endowed with the three Gunas in the right proportion.

Say for example, the right proportion of Tamo Guna is necessary to have the required duration of sleep during the night. Disbalance in Tamo Guna would lead to insomnia or hypersomnia.

Likewise, it is the Rajo Guna which propels a person towards activity and dynamism. Rajo Guna is associated with the creative energy and is essential for action and worldly engagement, but it can also lead to attachment, restlessness, and distraction from spiritual pursuits if not balanced with other Gunas.

Likewise, Sattva Guna propels an individual towards purity, harmony and knowledge. If one is devoid of Sattva Guna, one would then be devoid of an overall well-being leading to a stunted spiritual growth.

The significance of the three Gunas

It is necessary to strike a balance within the three Gunas. The three Gunas are essential as they are the fundamental forces that govern all of existence, influencing our thoughts, actions, and even the material world around us.

The infusion of Prakṛti and Puruṣa tattva (Paramātmā tattva)

The soul is a small fragment of HIS supreme soul (which is the source of consciousness to the physical body).

From Prakṛti, the embodied soul inherits the entities as stated below:

- The physical body (constitutes the Pancha Mahabhutas)
- The mind
- The intellect
- The ego (sense of I, ME, or MINE)
- The five senses (Panchendriya)
- The five cognitive sense organs (Gyanendriya)

However, since the Prakṛti constitutes of the three Gunas, any being that emanates from Prakṛti is by default under the influence of the three Gunas.

The analogy of helium balloons

Helium balloons are regular balloons filled with the gas helium instead of air. The use of helium makes these balloons float or move upwards. Hence, they need to be tied to an object with the thread to prevent them from floating upwards.

Likewise, it is the three Gunas which bind the soul to the physical body. It is by the virtue of the three Gunas that the soul dwells within the physical body.

Consequence of the soul being bound to the physical body

Consider the example of a car. If driving a car is unknown to the owner, he would then hire a driver. If the driver drives carefree and causes an accident, the consequence has to be borne by the passenger.

Likewise, the soul is bounded to the physical body by the three Gunas. The actions are discharged based on the proportion of the three Gunas (i.e., one Guna might predominate the other two Gunas at a given point in time). Hence, it is the soul that has to bear the consequences of all actions that are performed under the influence of the three Gunas.

How is the soul liberated from the clutches of the three Gunas?

The embodied soul needs to transcend from :

- Tamo Guna to Rajo Guna,

Usually a king functions from the state of Rajo Guna (with an exception to kings like Janak). Although Ravana was a scholar of the Vedas and shashtras, he was gripped by vices like ego, arrogance, greed, desires, anger etc. He embraced demoniac qualities which eventually led to his downfall.

Kumbhakarna - The symbol of Tamo Guna

Kumbhakarna was demon who slept most of the time. He would eat for six months and then sleep for six months. The traits of inertia, lethargy, sluggishness etc are the traits of Tamo Guna.

Practical takeaway

- It is only when we transcend the Tamo and Rajo gunas within us we can make the Sattva guna reign in our hearts.
- The one who transcends Sattva Guna becomes a Gunateeta (transcendentalist) who attains liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

Key difference between Yog and Bhog

Yog signifies union with the Supreme Divine and aims for spiritual liberation, often involving practices like meditation and self-discipline to achieve inner peace and enlightenment.

Bhog, on the other hand, focuses on worldly pleasures, material possessions, and sensory indulgence, potentially leading to attachment and suffering.

Hence, Bhagavad Gītā is known as Yog Śāstra which puts one on the path of liberation.

As Bhagavān says in Chapter 4:

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।

विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥ 4.1॥

Bhagavān says : I taught this eternal science of Yog to the Sun God, Vivasvan, who passed it on to Manu; and Manu, in turn, instructed it to Ikshvaku.

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।

स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परन्तप ॥ 4.2॥

O subduer of enemies, the saintly kings thus received this science of Yog in a continuous tradition. But with the long passage of time, it was lost to the world.

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।

भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥ 4.3॥

The same ancient knowledge of Yog, 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.

The darkest hour is dispelled by the sunrays. Likewise, the Rajo Guna and the Tamo guna can be dispelled with the wisdom bestowed by Sattva. We need to elevate to the state of Sattva which illuminates the intellect, by virtue of which, one will be able to discriminate between the right action and wrong action. A swan (Rajahamsa) has the ability to separate milk from water and drink only the milk. This symbolizes the ability to discern between good and bad, or the eternal and the transient. This ability can be inculcated by embracing Sattva.

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.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains the traits of Sattva Guna. HE says that when all the gates of the body are illumined by knowledge, it is a manifestation of the mode of goodness or Sattva.

The nine gates of the body are the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, the month, the anus and the genitals. The inner self is known as the tenth gate. With pranayama, the seeker is now mindful of what enters and exits from these gates. One can then achieve greater control over their actions and ultimately evolve on the path of spritual journey.

The five practices of Prāṇayama

1. Kapalbhati

This is a form of Prāṇayama involving forceful exhalations and passive inhalations. The term "Bha" refers to light or brightness and hence with regular practice of Kapalbhati pranayama, one would radiate the brightness from the eyes and the aura.

2. Bhastrika

This involves a rapid and forceful process of inhalation and exhalation powered by the movement of the diaphragm.

3. Anulom Vilom

It involves inhaling and exhaling through opposite nostrils, alternating between them, to purify energy channels and potentially improve respiratory health.

4. Pranocchar

This is a form of Pranayama that involves a slight constriction in the throat while inhaling and exhaling, creating an oceanic sound. One could also chant AUM with a long exhalation.

5. Bhramari

This is also known as the humming bee breath. This is a calming practice that soothes the nervous system and helps to connect us with our truest inner nature.

The five koshas, or sheaths, in yoga philosophy are Annamaya Kosha (physical sheath), Pranamaya Kosha (vital energy sheath), Manomaya Kosha (mental sheath), Vijnanamaya Kosha (wisdom sheath), and Anandamaya Kosha (bliss sheath). These koshas represent different layers of our being, from the physical body to the deepest levels of consciousness. When one is endowed with Sattva Guna, the Pancha-Koshas emit positivity and peace.

These practices help one transcend to the state of Sattva. With the above practices, the aura of the Sattvik individuals radiate a sense of peace and positivity. This sense of peace and positivity can create a calming and uplifting effect on those around them, leading to feelings of comfort and trust.

Prāṇayama techniques in yoga can increase Sattva Guna by calming the mind, promoting clarity and reducing restlessness. These practices help in harmonizing the body and the mind which then lead to a peaceful state of being (The characteristic trait of Sattva guna).

Hence, Bhagavad Gītā is also known as Yog shashtra as it emphasises the practical application of Yoga principles to achieve self realisation and liberation from suffering. These practices begin with pranayama and puts the seeker on the path to attain Dharana (focussed concentration), Dhyana (meditative absorption) and Samādhi (a state of enlightenment).

14.12

lobhaḥ(ph) pravṛttirārambhaḥ(kh), karmaṇāmaśamaḥ(s) sprhā, rajasyetānijāyante, vivṛddhe bhatarṣabha. 14.12

With the preponderance of Rajas, Arjuna, greed, activity, undertaking of action with an interested motive, restlessness and a thirst for enjoyment make their appearance.

When the Rajo Guna (mode of passion) predominates over the other two Gunas, one is gripped by greed, stressful states for worldly gain, restlessness, and craving for worldly possessions.

Consider the example of a student. When the student is is obsessed with a goal to attain the first place, he moves into a state of stress due to the worry or attachment towards the results.

On the contrary, if the student focusses on the process of learning instead of the results, the performance soars. By being process oriented instead of goal oriented, one's performance sharply rises.

Consider another example of the share market. When one invests in shares with an expectation of a certain outcome, one is in a constant state of stress when the markets rise and fall.

Being attached to results and thereby being gripped by stress or exertion is the characteristics of Rajo Guna. One desire leads to another and one is then gripped by whirlpool of desires.

Hence the below shloka states that :

**अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ 12.16॥**

Those who are indifferent to worldly gains, externally and internally pure, skillful, without cares, untroubled, and free from selfishness in all undertakings, such devotees of Mine are very dear to Me.

If one performs all actions with the above mindset, one will then be able to cut through the stressful states (Say anxiety, worry, unhealthy competition etc) caused by Rajo Guna.

14.13

aprakāśo'pravṛttiśca, pramādo moha eva ca, tamasyetāni jāyante, vivṛddhe kurunandana. 14.13

With the growth of Tamas, Arjuna, obtuseness of the mind and senses, disinclination to perform one's obligatory duties, frivolity and stupor-all these appear.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains the traits of Tamo Guna. When the Tamo Guna is predominant, one is gripped by ignorance, inertia, negligence, and delusion. Any action performed from a predominant Tamo Guna would be detrimental to oneself or the other.

Those deluded by Tamo Guna fail to distinguish between Sattvik happiness (a state of bliss), Rajasik

happiness (temporary happiness) and Tamasik desires. They are unable to comprehend that the Tamasik desires (which they believe to be happiness from the state of delusion) is detrimental to themselves and others.

The personal experience of the speaker

Many years ago, there was a well known industrialist whose son was in college. The boy was soon to celebrate his 18th birthday. He wrote a letter to his father to gift him a motor bike, so that the boy could easily commute from his hostel to the college when compared to commuting with a cycle. On his 18th birthday, the boy was certain and almost sure that his father would gift him the motor bike by sending a demand draft. The boy received an envelope from his father on the day of his 18th birthday.

Although he anticipated the demand draft, he was taken aback to find just a hand written letter. The father said "I am glad that you are celebrating your 18th birthday. But I do not understand why would you need a motor bike to commute 100 meters of distance from the hostel to college. I have instead sent the membership details for swimming classes which you could enroll".

The boy was disappointed. When the boy graduated from college, he joined his father's business only after he proved his capability by working as a consultant with one of the elite motor companies of those times.

The learning from this real life experience is that, children should be taught from the right age to overcome Tamo Guna and to rise to Rajo Guna and then to Sattva for the overall development and well being. In this manner, they would make a difference in the society and contribute to the progress of the nation.

14.14

**yadā sattve pravṛddhe tu, pralayaṃ(m) yāti dehabhṛt,
tadottamavidāṃ(m) lokān, amalānpratipadyate. 14.14**

When a man dies during the preponderance of Sattva, he obtains the stainless ethereal worlds (heaven etc.,) attained by men of noble deeds.

Bhagavān now explains the fate of the embodied soul when it relinquishes the body with a predominant Guna

Those who die with predominance of *sattva* reach the pure or higher abodes. Those who cultivated virtues and knowledge, are born in families of pious people. Or, they go to the higher celestial abodes.

Consider the example of a visitor visiting a home. If the hosts are Sattvik, they would welcome the guest with utmost hospitality. If the hosts are devoid of Sattva Guna, they would crib or lament over the guests visiting them, as they would have to channelise their resource and energy in hospitality. Those with Sattva embrace kindness and compassion.

A large percentage of population hails from the Rajo Guna (i.e., they neither engage in pious tasks nor in unvirtuous activities). Hence, the percentage of Sattva and Tamas are comparatively low. An embodied soul will have to wait longer to attain a pious life or to be reborn in Tamo Guni environment since the respective sect is comparatively low.

14.15

rajasi pralayaṃ(ñ) gatvā, karmasaṅgiṣu jāyate, tathā pralīnastamasi, mūḍhayoniṣu jāyate. 14.15

Dying when Rajas predominates, he is born among those attached to action; even so, the man who has expired during the preponderance of Tamas is reborn in the species of the deluded creatures such as insects and beasts etc.

In this shloka, Bhagavān continues to explain that those who die with prevalence of the Rajo Guna (mode of passion) are born among people driven by work. Those who permitted themselves to be overcome by greed, avarice, and worldly ambitions are born in families focused on intense material activity.

Once, there was a man from business class. When he was on a flight, a Chinese man was seated beside him. When a mosquito flew across them, the Chinese man caught hold of the insect and swallowed the same. When a second mosquito passed by, the businessman caught hold of it and started to negotiate the price for selling the mosquito to the Chinese man.

The key learning here is that, the Rajo Guni persons are Bhogis by nature, i.e., they enjoy worldly pleasures and chase worldly desires. They channelize all their focus on worldly ambitions and refrain from focussing on spiritual goals and evolution. They remain unaffected by the positive influence of Sattva Guna.

Bhagavān then explains that those who die with a predominant Tamo Guna (mode of ignorance). Those who were inclined to intoxication, violence, laziness and ignorance are born amongst Tamo Guni families. Or they could even descend down the ladder and take birth in the animal kingdom.

Consider the example of a bull. Although it pulls the cart during weddings (in the previous era), it still looks for hay (unlike the wedding guests who enjoy rich food).

Likewise, the Tamo Guni persons have a limited perceptive, unable to see beyond their immediate surroundings or experiences. They are content with their deluded limited understanding and ignorance, believing it to be the extent of all there is.

Thus, the soul can climb upward in its spiritual evolution, remain at the same level, or even slide down, based upon the intensity and frequency of the gunas it adopts.

14.16

karmaṇaḥ(s) sukṛtasyāhuḥ(s), sāttvikaṃ(n) nirmalaṃ(m) phalam, rajasastu phalaṃ(n) duḥkham, ajñānaṃ(n) tamaśaḥ(ph) phalam. 14.16

The reward of a righteous act, they say, is Sāttvika i.e., faultless in the form of joy, wisdom and dispassion etc., sorrow is declared to be the fruit of a Rājasikā act and ignorance, the fruit of a Tāmasika act.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains the outcome or fruit of actions from each of the three Gunas.

The fruit of actions performed from a state of Sattva (mode of goodness) results in a pure outcome. Those who undertake any action from a state of Sattva experience a blissful outcome.

Bliss here refers to the term Ananda. Happiness will lead to sadness, pleasure could lead to pain, excitement could turn into disappointment, comfort could lead to discomfort or distress, but bliss or ananda is an eternal state of happiness. It is an enduring state of bliss that transcends the fleeting pleasures and pains of the material realm. The state of Ananda does not have any dualities or opposites.

Bhagavān then explains that actions done with a predominant Rajo Guna (mode of passion) result in pain. Say for example, when one enjoys watching cricket all the time, it attracts temporary happiness. But when the exams approach and one performs poorly, the happiness now turns into sadness.

Likewise, if one enjoys sitting in an air conditioned room at all times which yields temporary happiness, the problems with the back or knee eventually attract sadness. The more one chases material happiness, the more it will evade. Seeking for happiness brings unhappiness.

Thus, any action performed from a state of Rajo Guna initially appears to be pleasurable, but eventually it transforms into an painful outcome.

A student said the opposite word of happiness, regret. But how can we say regret? At the railway station, announcements are being made about trains coming and going without any hesitation. Why is the employee on duty not sorry, not regretting? A passenger waiting for the train feels sorry if he finds out that the train is late. The feeling of momentary sorrow is called grief, while the feeling of momentary joy is called joy. We can say that the opposite of grief is joy. The question still remains, what is the opposite word of joy. In fact, there is no opposite word for the word joy. Tukaram Maharaj ji says, "**ānaṁdāce dohī, ānaṁda taraṁga**" That is, the other end of joy is joy. The joy of devotional love is unattainable. The ultimate end of happiness is sorrow, the ultimate end of expectation is disappointment. But the ultimate end of joy is infinite joy.

Amongst knowledge, science and ignorance, knowledge is eternal. If science is changeable, then ignorance will have to be defined as ignorance, but we should also try to go to a higher level through the virtue of goodness.

Bhagavān then explains that the actions performed from a state of Tamo Guna (mode of ignorance) result in darkness. It is certain that the outcome is always a form of misery.

14.17

sattvātsañjāyate jñānaṁ(m), rajaso lobha eva ca, pramādamohau tamaso, bhavato'jñānameva ca. 14.17

Wisdom follows from Sattva, and greed, undoubtedly, from Rajas; likewise, obstinate error, stupor and also ignorance follow from Tamas.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that from Sattva (the mode of goodness) arises knowledge and wisdom, by virtue of which, one can discriminate between the right action and wrong action. One engages in virtuous deeds with a predominant Sattva Guna.

Bhagavān then explains that from Rajo Guna (the mode of passion) arises greed and the pursuit of chasing material goals or ambitious desires.

Bhagavān then explains that from Tamo Guna (the mode of ignorance) arise negligence, carelessness in one's actions and thoughts and delusion. One is clouded by ignorance and hence engages in

unvirtuous activities.

If one aims to overcome Rajo Guna and Tamo Guna, one needs to embrace Sattva Guna as a sadhana. Only then would one be able to transcend to the state of Sattva.

14.18

**ūrdhvaṃ(ñ) gacchanti sattvasthā, madhye tiṣṭhanti rājasāḥ,
jaghanyaguṇavṛttisthā, adho gacchanti tāmasāḥ. 14.18**

Those who abide in the quality of Sattva wend their way upwards; while those of a Rājasikā disposition stay in the middle. And those of a Tāmasika temperament, enveloped as they are in the effects of Tamoguṇa, sink down.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that those situated in Sattva (mode of goodness) rise upward and reach the celestial abodes.

Those situated in Rajo Guna (mode of passion) stay in the middle or return to the earthly plane. As the below shloka states:

**पुनरपि जननं पुनरपि मरणं
पुनरपि जननी जठरे शयनम् ।**

Birth again, death again, again resting in the mother's womb! It is indeed hard to cross this boundless ocean of saṃsāra (cycle of repeated birth and death).

Those who are situated in Tamo Guna (mode of ignorance) descend downwards to nether regions or hellish abodes.

Hence, the seeker needs to strive to elevate from Tamo Guna to Rajo Guna and then from Rajo Guna to Sattva Guna.

Say for example, one can try and bring down the levels of anger by chanting the holy name of the Supreme Divine. Every time when one is gripped by anger, one needs to become aware about the inner state of anger. One is then required to put in the conscious effort to remember the name of the Supreme Divine.

Eventually, one would be able to recall the name of the Divine even before one is under the grip of anger. In this manner, one can aim to transcend from Rajo or Tamo Guna to the state of Sattva.

14.19

**nānyaṃ(ñ) guṇebhyaḥ(kh) kartāraṃ(m), yadā draṣṭānupaśyati,
guṇebhyaśca paraṃ(m) vetti, madbhāvaṃ(m) so'dhigacchati. 14.19**

When the discerning person sees no one as doer other than the three Guṇas, and realizes Me, the supreme Spirit standing entirely beyond these Guṇas, he enters into My being.

The soul can climb upward (elevate to celestial abodes) in its spiritual evolution, remain at the same level (Earthly plane), or even slide down (descend down to nether regions or animal kingdom), based upon the intensity and frequency of the gunas it adopts.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that the one who has transcended the three Gunas (including

Sattva) is called as a Gunateeta or a transcendentalist. Such a person:

- See the three Gunas as the doer of all actions.
- Understands the true divinity of the Supreme Divine.

Thus, such a person who transcends the three *guṇas*, and attain the divine nature like Bhagavān.

14.20

guṇānetānātīya trīn, dehī dehasamudbhavān, janmamṛtyujarāduḥkhaiḥ(r), vimukto'mṛtamaśnute. 14.20

Having transcended the aforesaid three Guṇas, which have caused the body, and freed from birth, death, old age and all kinds of sorrow, the embodied soul attains supreme bliss.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that when we transcend the three modes, then we are no longer bound by the three Gunas. Thus, the soul is liberated from the cycle of birth and death, old age and the sorrows of the material realm.

The fate of the soul after death depends upon the state of consciousness and the thoughts that were harbored at the time of death. If one is gripped by greed for wealth or thoughts of assets, the fate of the soul in next life would be based on the impressions of the mind (i.e., a life full of stress about wealth) at the time of death.

If one cribs and laments all life by counting the miseries, one would eventually be gripped by such thoughts at the time of death, which would eventually attract a life full of miseries in the next birth. Hence, one needs to count the blessings instead of lamenting over the miseries.

We identify ourselves as the physical body instead of the soul. Hence, when the physical body is in pain, we experience the pain as our own misery. The identification with the physical body leads us to suffer the illusion of birth and death. The day we realise and experience the truth that we are not the material body but the soul is the day we attain the path to liberation by dismantling all sorrows.

14.21

arjuna uvāca kairliṅgaistrīnguṇānetān, atīto bhavati prabho, kimācāraḥ(kh) katham(ñ) caitāms, trīnguṇānavartate. 14.21

Arjuna said :What are the marks of him who has risen above the three Guṇas, and what is his conduct? And how, Lord, does he rise above the three Guṇas?

In this shloka, Arjuna asks the below questions:

- What are the traits of those who have transcended the three Gunas?
- In what manner do such transcendentalists conduct themselves?
- How does one transcend the three Gunas?

Bhagavān answers these questions in the forthcoming shlokas.

14.22

śrībhagavānurvāca
prakāśaṃ(ñ) ca pravṛttiṃ(ñ) ca, mohameva ca pāṇḍava,
na dveṣṭi saṃpravṛttāni, na nivṛttāni kāṅkṣati. 14.22

Śrī Bhagavān said :Arjuna, he who abhors not illumination (which is born of Sattva) and activity (which is born of Rajas) and even stupor (which is born of Tamas), when prevalent, nor longs for them when they have ceased.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that the persons who are transcendental to the three guṇas neither hate illumination (which is born of sattva), nor activity (which is born of rajas), nor even delusion (which is born of tamas), when these are abundantly present, nor do they long for them when they are absent.

As Bhagavān has explained in the below shlokas:

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् |
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता || 2.57||

One who remains unattached under all conditions, and is neither delighted by good fortune nor dejected by tribulation, he is a sage with perfect knowledge.

सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः |
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः || 12.14||

They are ever-content, steadily united with Me in devotion, self-controlled, of firm resolve, and dedicated to Me in mind and intellect.

Contentment comes not from increasing our possessions, but by decreasing our wants. Such persons who are contented no longer look upon material objects as the source of pleasure, and thus are content with whatever they get. They do not crib about mundane things like "I do not like this vegetable", "I lack this possession", "I do not want this, I want that", etc.

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति |
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः || 12.17||

Those who neither rejoice in mundane pleasures nor despair in worldly sorrows, who neither lament for any loss nor hanker for any gain, who renounce both good and evil deeds, such persons who are full of devotion are very dear to Me.

The transcendentalists who has risen above the three Gunas rise above pleasure and despair. They neither yearn for pleasant things nor grieve on losing them.

14.23

Udāsīnavadāsīno, guṇairyo na vicālyate,
guṇā vartanta ityeva, yo'vatiṣṭhati neṅgate. 14.23

He who, sitting like a witness, is not disturbed by the Guṇas, and who, knowing that the Guṇas alone move among the Guṇas, remains established in identity with God, and never falls off from that state.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that the persons who have transcended the three Gunas remain neutral to the modes of nature and are not disturbed by them. Knowing it is only the guṇas that act, they stay established in the self, without wavering.

Such transcendentalists function from a state of witness consciousness. They do not see themselves as the doer of actions. Instead, they perceive themselves as an instrument of the Divine to discharge HIS duties.

There are three steps to achieve the same:

- Control over breath regulation with the practice of Prāṇayama
- Control over sensations (like pain or itch).
- Control over the mundane or negative thoughts

The one who masters the above three steps is on the path to attain the state of Gunateeta.

When the heart is filled with the sense of I, ME or MINE, we cannot attain the state of unalloyed devotion towards the Supreme Divine. When the heart is pure (devoid of ego or the sense of I), the Divine himself dwells within the heart.

As the below Bhajan states :

उतरो तम पथ पर ज्योति,
चरण उतरो उतरो उतरो।

पद चिह्न बने नखतावलियाँ,
झूमे दिशि दिशि दीपावलियाँ।
जन शुभ युग मंगल किरणों की,
छवि मांग रहा तुमसे कण कण।
उतरो उतरो उतरो।

अवनी अम्बर के अधर मिले,
मानव संस्कृति के सुमन खिले।
जन मानस की लहरी करले,
पावन ज्योत्स्ना का पुण्य वरण।
उतरो उतरो उतरो।

तुम छिपे यहीं यमुना तट पर,
मोहन भरते मुरली का स्वर।
दो नवल रश्मि जग को जिससे,
अणु अणु आलोकित हो क्षण-क्षण।
उतरो उतरो उतरो।

The day when one attains this the state of shunya (a profound state of consciousness beyond the limitations of the mind and ego) is the day where one is on the path to attain the state of a transcendentalist. Such persons transcend all dualities of the material realm.

**ṣamaduḥkhasukhaḥ(s) svasthaḥ(s), ṣamaloṣṭāśmakāñcanaḥ,
tulyapriyāpriyo dhīraḥ(s), tulyanindātmasaṃstutiḥ. 14.24**

He who is ever established in the Self, takes pain and pleasure alike, regards a clod of earth, a stone and a piece of gold as equal in value, is possessed of wisdom, accepts the pleasant as well as the unpleasant in the same spirit, and views censure and praise alike.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that the transcendentalists are alike in happiness and distress and they are established in the self. They have risen above the dualities of life and remain the same amidst pleasant and unpleasant events.

This gives them an equal vision, with which they see a piece of stone, a lump of earth, gold as of equal value. They are endowed with the wisdom that this life is temporary and everything has to be left behind one day at the time of death. Hence, they live from a state of equanimity towards all entities.

14.25

**mānāpamānayostulyaḥ(s), tulyo mitrāripakṣayoḥ,
sarvārambhaparitāgī, guṇātītaḥ(s) sa ucyate. 14.25**

He who is equipoised in honour or ignominy, is alike towards a friend or an enemy, and has renounced the sense of doership in all undertakings, is said to have risen above the three Guṇas.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains that the transcendentalists who have risen above the three Gunas accept both blame and praise with equanimity.

They are devoid of pride and ego and hence, they are themselves as an instrument to discharge the activities of the Divine. They relinquish the sense of doer-ship and see the hand of the Divine behind all tasks.

They remain the same in honor and dishonor, treat both friend and foe alike and have abandoned all enterprises. They are neither attached to a friend nor are they disturbed upon seeing a foe. They function from an equipoised state at all times.

14.26

**māṃ(ñ) ca yo'vyabhicāreṇa, bhaktiyogena sevate,
sa guṇāṅśamatītyaitān, brahmabhūyāya kalpate. 14.26**

He too who, constantly worships Me through the Yoga of exclusive devotion-transcending these three Guṇas, he becomes eligible for attaining Brahma.

In this shloka, Bhagavān explains how one can become a transcendentalist. Along with the realisation of the self, Bhagavān explains that with unalloyed devotion towards HIM, one will be able to rise above the three modes of material nature and transcend to the level of the Brahmān.

Bhagavān explains that **it is the Nishkaam Bhakti or unconditional devotion towards the Supreme Divine that enables one to attain the level of the Brahmān.** Nishkaam Bhakti is when one has no expectations of returns from the Supreme Divine. There is no upper limit to Nishkaam Bhakti and it keeps increasing with intensity.

Such persons who practice Nishkaam Bhakti count the blessings and are filled with gratitude, instead of lamenting over what they lack or focus on the black spot instead of the white area.

14.27

brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham, amṛtasyāvyayasya ca, śāśvatasya ca dharmasya, sukhasyaikāntikasya ca. 14.27

For, I am the substratum of the imperishable Brahma, of immortality, of the eternal Dharma and of unending immutable bliss.

Bhagavān concludes this Chapter by explaining in this shloka that by engaging in unwavering and unalloyed devotion towards the Supreme Divine, one would be bestowed with the ability to transcend the three Gunas. Bhagavān states that those who engage in unalloyed devotion towards HIM will be bestowed with immortality (liberation from the cycle of birth and death).

Thus, one needs to rise above Tamo Guna to Rajo Guna and from Rajo Guna to Sattva Guna. Eventually, one would transcend beyond the three Gunas and attain the state of the Gunateeta by practicing unalloyed and unconditional devotion towards the Supreme Divine.

The session ends with the prayer and Hanuman Chalisa.

Question and Answer

Palak Ji

Q: How to control the fickleness of the mind?

A: With the practice of Prāṇayama, one can control the wavering mind. Prāṇayama enhances the ability of focus and concentration.

Vidyasagar Ji

Q: What is the difference between Shreya and Preya?

A: Shreya refers to the well-being of oneself and the others while Preya refers to only to the pleasure of the self.

Daksha Ji

Q: What is the meaning of Udaseena?

A: Udaseena refers to being balanced during dualities.

Dhanesh Ji

Q: If my work is tainted with flaws, how to nullify the same?

A: In Chapter 18, Bhagavān says that even if one's work is tainted with flaws, one should align to one's own Swa-Dharma instead of embracing Para Dharma.

Vikas Ji

Q: If Bhagavān is responsible for all actions then why do we blame Ravana and Kamsa?

A: We have been bestowed with wisdom to discriminate between the right action and wrong action.

Hence, we are responsible for our own actions.

**om tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu
brahmavidyāyāṃ(m) yogaśāstre śrīkrṣṇārjunasaṃvāde
Guṇatrayavibhāgayogo nāma caturdaśo'dhyāyaḥ.**



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Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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