

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 18: Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/vreks5l25aA>

Fulfilment of Svadharma (inherent duties) with sincerity, surrender and as worship; becomes the pathway to Param Siddhi (Supreme Perfection).

The **18th chapter** of Śrīmadbhagavadgītā is - **The Yoga of Liberation through the Path of Knowledge and Self Surrender.**

Today's session began with the customary lighting of the lamp. Prayers were offered to Gurudev, Sant Dnyāneshwar, Bhārat Mātā, Vyāsa Muni and Saraswati Devi Ji.

Today, being the sacred day of Ekadashi, all the sādhakas were warmly greeted and reminded of how truly blessed they were to be listening to the divine song, **the Gītā**, sung by Bhagavān HIMSELF, on such an auspicious occasion.

Blessings were invoked from Bhagavān, Gurudev, and Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj before continuing with the explanation of Dnyaneshwar Maharaj's Kalāśa Adhyāya.

It is said that during the Pandharpur pilgrimage (Wari), if due to the overwhelming crowd of devotees one is unable to reach the Lotus Feet of Bhagavān Panduranga, even the darshan of the temple's Kalāśa (sacred pinnacle) bestows the same merit (*punya*). Similarly, this chapter being the synopsis of the entire Bhagavadgītā, is said to grant the fruit of reading the whole text when studied with devotion and understanding.

Bhagavān imparted the teachings of this sacred scripture to Arjuna amidst the chaos of the battlefield, to lift him from a state of despondency and confusion, and to inspire him to perform his Svadharma - his inherent duty with utmost dedication and clarity. HE made Arjuna an instrument (*nimitta-mātra*) to bring this eternal knowledge to mankind for our spiritual upliftment.

Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj beautifully said:

सहजे ब्रह्मरसाचे पारणे। केले अर्जुनालागीं नारायणे।
कीं तेचि अवसरीं पाहुणे। पातलों आम्ही॥६-२॥

This conveys that this chapter flows naturally with the nectar of divine knowledge, quenching the thirst of the sincere seeker, just as effortlessly as the eternal truth reveals itself to one who is ready to accept.

Just as a rich man distributes sweetmeats to everyone present at a charity feast, similarly, everyone standing in Arjuna's queue receives the same divine knowledge imparted by Bhagavān.

Bhagavān explained that the entire universe is composed of **Trigunas**, the three fundamental qualities: Sattva (purity and knowledge), Rajas (activity and passion), and Tamas (inertia and ignorance). These Gunas bind the soul just like the strands of a rope, tying it to the cycle of birth and death.

Everything in creation, both animate and inanimate, is made up of countless permutations and combinations of these three Gunas. **The universe functions and evolves through the permutations and combinations of these Gunas.** Even our actions and personalities are shaped by the unique blend of these qualities within us.

Every being is ultimately in pursuit of happiness. We have seen that Rājasik Sukha, ie., pleasure arising from activity and desire, leads to bondage and eventual sorrow. Tāmasik Sukha, rooted in ignorance and inertia, results in the individual's downfall and spiritual stagnation. To uplift such a life, one must rise to the state of Sāttvika Sukha, wherein every action is performed selflessly, for the welfare of all beings - **sarva-bhūta-hite ratāḥ**.

When Arjuna requested Bhagavān to explain the concept of Tyāga (renunciation), Bhagavān went further and revealed the threefold nature of Jñāna (knowledge), Karma (action), Kartā (doer), Buddhi (intellect), Dhṛti (fortitude), and Sukha (happiness). This profound exposition gave Arjuna a completely new lens through which to view the world. When we look around us, we often fail to reflect inwardly. Hence, Bhagavān, like a compassionate teacher, held up a mirror through these teachings, so that we might look within and assess where we stand in relation to the Gunas.

18.40

**na tadasti pṛthivyām(m) vā, divi deveṣu vā punaḥ,
sattvaṃ(m) prakṛtijairmuktaṃ(m), yadebhiḥ(s) syātttribhirguṇaiḥ. 18.40**

There is no being on earth, or in the middle region or even among the gods or anywhere else, who is free from these three Guṇas, born of Prakṛti.

Bhagavān said there is no living being on earth (**pṛthivyām**), or on the higher celestial abodes (**divi**), or even among celestial beings (**deveṣhu**), who is free from the influence of these three Gunas born of Prakṛti.

The smallest unit of matter, the atom, symbolises this:

- Electrons, in constant motion, reflect Rajoguna (activity and restlessness),
- Protons, stable and positively charged, reflect Sattva Guna (purity and balance),
- Neutrons, neutral and passive, embody Tamoguna (inertia and dullness).

This elegant interplay of the Gunas at every level - from the cosmic to the atomic, governs the entire universe. **Our journey is to recognise these influences and consciously elevate ourselves toward Sattva, aligning our lives with harmony, knowledge, and service.**

A person with a dominant Sattva Guna will still possess traces of Rajas and Tamas. Similarly, someone who is constantly engaged in activity due to a dominant Rajoguna will also have elements of Sattva and Tamas within. A classic example of this can be seen in the three brothers - Ravana, Vibhishana, and Kumbhakarna.

Ravana, driven by Rajoguna, sought power, fame, and was filled with pride and arrogance. His ego led him to abduct Sītā Ji, the wife of Bhagavān Rāma, and hold her captive merely to satisfy his inflated sense of self-worth.

Kumbhakarna was predominantly influenced by Tamoguna. He would sleep for six months at a stretch and wake up only to eat and drink, symbolising inertia, ignorance, and indulgence.

In contrast, their third brother Vibhishana was Sattvik in nature. He was devoted to Bhagavān Rāma, upheld righteousness, and had a clear sense of discrimination. It was out of this sattvic nature that he advised Ravana to release Sītā Ji, warning him of the consequences of adharma.

18.41

**brāhmaṇakṣatriyaviśāṃ(m), śūdrāṇāṃ(ñ) ca parantapa,
karmāṇi pravibhaktāni, svabhāvaprabhavaiguṇaiḥ. 18.41**

The duties of the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas, as well as of the Śūdras have been assigned according to their innate modes of Prakṛti (Guṇas), Arjuna.

Bhagavān stated that based on the diversity created by the interplay of the three Gunas, society, on a broader level, was classified into **four Varnas (categories)** -

Brāhmaṇas - the priestly class;

Kṣatriyas - the warrior and administrative class;

Vaiśyas - the mercantile and farming class; and

Śūdras - of the worker class or the skilled class.

Their duties are distributed according to their qualities, in accordance with their guṇas (and not by birth). It is to be noted that it is Śūdras and not ksūdras or the lower class.

Sanātana Dharma came into existence with the very creation of the universe. It rests upon a strong foundation of sixteen pillars, which guide every aspect of human life and spiritual evolution. These are:

1. **Four Purushārthas** – the goals of human life:

- **Dharma** (righteous living)
- **Artha** (pursuit of wealth and prosperity)
- **Kāma** (fulfillment of desires within dharma)
- **Moksha** (liberation from the cycle of birth and death)

2. **Four Varnas** – the classification of individuals based on their innate tendencies and duties:

- **Brāhmin** (the seekers of knowledge)
- **Kṣatriya** (the protectors and warriors)
- **Vaishya** (the traders and agriculturists)
- **Shūdra** (those who serve and support society)

3. **Four Āshrama** – the stages of life:

- **Brahmacharya** (student life)
- **Gṛhastha** (householder life)

- **Vānaprastha** (contemplative life)
- **Sannyāsa** (life of renunciation and spiritual pursuit)

4. **Four Sādhana Mārgas** – the spiritual paths suited to different temperaments:

- **Jñāna Mārga** (path of knowledge)
- **Yoga Mārga** (path of discipline and meditation)
- **Karma Mārga** (path of selfless action)
- **Bhakti Mārga** (path of devotion)

By following these sixteen foundational pillars of Sanātana Dharma, an individual gradually evolves on the spiritual path. Each step purifies the mind and refines the personality.

Ultimately, the seeker moves closer to the supreme goal of life: **union with Paramātmā**, the Supreme Consciousness. This unison is the culmination of human existence, where the individual soul (jīvātmā) merges with the Universal Soul (Paramātmā), attaining eternal peace and liberation (*moksha*).

Arjuna, overwhelmed by sorrow and delusion, wished to abandon his svadharma - the duty of a Kṣatriya by choosing not to fight the war. Bhagavān repeatedly reminded him that performing one's inherent duty, without attachment to gains or outcomes, is the true path to liberation.

Not everyone is meant to do everything. Each person's capabilities are shaped by their svabhāva - their inner nature. A Kṣatriya excels in courage and protection, but may not possess the contemplative qualities required for deep knowledge like a brāhmaṇa, who is a seeker of truth and wisdom. We recently witnessed the precision and expertise our airforce exhibited to destroy the enemy targets. A Brahmin, a Vaishya or a Śūdra could not have achieved the same success.

Svabhāva is influenced both by heredity - our birth and by the environment in which we are raised. Thus, our duties should align with our nature, and when performed with dedication and detachment, they become a means to spiritual evolution.

All four varṇas are essential for the smooth functioning of society. A nation, or even an organisation cannot operate effectively without the presence and cooperation of all four.

For instance, consider a factory. There is an administrative department where the strategic thinkers and planners work together to guide the factory's progress - this represents the brāhmaṇas. Then comes the security department, similar to the kṣatriyas, which safeguards the factory premises and its people. The finance department, akin to the vaiśyas, manages the accounts, investments, and profits. Lastly, the skilled workers and labor force, who form the backbone of the production process, represent the śūdras.

Each role is valuable and contributes to the holistic growth and balance of the system. What is true of the macrocosm and also true to the microcosm. Hence when we look at our own life too, we see that we perform all types of duties in our life. To study, we use our intellect, deal with our thoughts, manage our life with necessary skills, manage our finances, provide service to the babies and old people in our life.

Therefore we must wisely chose our profession keeping our Svabhāva in mind; whatever will help us grow mentally and spiritually. The famous quote by French philosopher Henri Bergson reverberates with this:

"To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating yourself endlessly."

**śamo damastapaḥ(ś) śaucaṁ(ñ), kṣāntirārjavameva ca,
jñānaṁ(m) vijñānamāstikyaṁ(m), brahmakarma svabhāvajam. 18.42**

Subjugation of the mind and senses, enduring hardships for the discharge of one's sacred obligations, external and internal purity, forgiving the faults of others, straightness of mind, senses and behaviour, belief in the Vedas and other scriptures, God and life after death etc., study and teaching of the Vedas and other scriptures and realization of the truth relating to God-all these constitute the natural duties of a Brāhmaṇa.

In this verse Bhagavān listed the qualities of a Brāhmin. HE said tranquility (**śhamo**), restraint (**damas**), austerity (**tapah**), purity (**śhauchaṁ**), patience (**kṣhāntir**), integrity (**ārjavam**), knowledge (**jñānaṁ**), wisdom (**vijñānam**), and belief in a hereafter (**āstikyaṁ**), these are the intrinsic qualities (**svabhāva-jam**) of work (**karma**) for Brahmins.

A sāttvik person, a seeker of Self-knowledge must cultivate control over the mind and senses (**Shama and Dama**). Such a person possesses a pure *antahkaraṇa* (inner instrument), and governs the faculties of the senses with complete awareness and restraint.

To walk the path of knowledge, he must be equipped with patience and the courage to face adversities with calmness and faith. When the Yaksha asked Yudhiṣṭhira, "What is **Tapa** (austerity)?", Yudhiṣṭhira responded, "**Tapasvi dharma vartitvam**", i.e., to abide by righteousness under all circumstances.

Another definition of Tapa is : "**Tapo dvandva-sahanam**", i.e., the endurance of the dualities of life, such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain, fame and infamy etc without agitation.

Shauch (purity) is another essential attribute of a Brahmin. It is important to understand that cleanliness and purity are not the same. For example, Ganga Jal is considered pure even if it may not appear clean. On the other hand, water that looks clean can become pure only when passed through a filter that removes unseen impurities like microorganisms. In the same way, shauch refers not just to external cleanliness, but to inner purity of thoughts, emotions, and intentions.

The next quality is **Kṣhānti**, which means forgiveness. It also encompasses patience, tolerance, and the ability to remain calm even in difficult situations.

Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj beautifully captured the essence

**ऐसी अनाक्रोशी क्षमा, जयापाशीं प्रियोत्तमा,
जाण तेणें महिमा, ज्ञानासि गा ॥**

Near one who is free from anger, filled with forgiveness and compassion, patience becomes supremely glorious like a vast ocean filled with priceless gems

A person with kṣhānti doesn't retaliate when wronged. Instead, they forgive with inner strength and composure. Just as the ocean holds many treasures quietly in its depth, a sāttvik person holds virtues like forgiveness and peace within.

Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj had to endure great adversities inflicted by society. His father, Vitthalpant, had taken sannyāsa and left home. However, upon learning that his disciple was already married, the Guru who had given him sannyāsa instructed him to return to grihastha āśhrama.

In the father's absence, their mother Rukmini bai had undertaken great tapasya (austerity) and pleased her Guru. The Guru blessed her, saying that noble sons would be born to her. Eventually, four children were born, Nivṛttināth, Dnyaneshwar, Sopan, and Muktabai.

However, society did not accept the return of a sannyāsī to family life and ostracised the entire family. They were denied even the basic right to live with dignity.

Despite facing such injustice and cruelty, Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj never held bitterness in his heart. In Pasayadān, the concluding prayer of his Dnyaneshwari, He prayed not for revenge but for the forgiveness and upliftment of those who wronged his family.

आतां विश्वात्मके देवे, येणे वाग्यज्ञे तोषावे,
तोषोनि मज द्यावे, पसायदान हे ॥

"Now may the Supreme Soul (Viśvātmā) grant this boon: May those who behave improperly be calmed and corrected. May their faults and wrong tendencies be washed away and the entire world may be uplifted. Such is the true Deity."

Ārjavam means purity and straightforwardness of the *antahkaraṇa*, the inner instrument comprising the mind, intellect, ego, and memory. Bhagavān recognised this quality in Arjuna, which is why HE chose Arjuna as the recipient of the most profound and secret knowledge of the Self.

Dnyaneshwar Mauli says:

अहो अर्जुनाचिये पांती | जे परिसणया योग्य होती।
तिहीं कृपा करून संतीं | अवधान द्यावे ॥ १.६२ ॥

Only those whose hearts and minds are in alignment with Arjuna, ie., pure, honest, and sincere in their spiritual seeking; can truly grasp and absorb this subtle and difficult jñāna.

Āstikyam refers to having faith in higher truths, such as the existence of God, the authority of scriptures (like the Vedas), and the eternal nature of the soul. It is not just blind belief, but a positive, trustful attitude toward life.

18.43

**śauryam(n) tejo dhṛtirdākṣyam(m), yuddhe cāpyapalāyanam,
dānamīśvarabhāvaśca, kṣātram(ṇ) karma svabhāvajam. 18.43**

Heroism, majesty, firmness, diligence and dauntlessness in battle, bestowing gifts, and lordliness-all these constitute the natural duty of a Kṣatriya.

In this verse Bhagavān described a Kṣatriya. His natural qualities include - Valour (**śhauryam**), strength (**tejah**), fortitude (**dhṛiti**), skill in weaponry (**dākṣhyam**), resolve never to retreat from battle (**yuddhe apalāyanam**), large-heartedness in charity (**dānam**), and leadership abilities (**īśhvara**).

- **śauryam** (Valour) - Bravery and courage in action; a fearless attitude.
- **tejah** (Vitality) - Enthusiasm, inner strength, and a commanding presence.
- **dhṛtiḥ** (Fortitude or Determination) - The strength to persevere through challenges without giving up.

The chariot of victory runs on two wheels - **Dhairya** (patience and inner fortitude) and

Shaurya (valour and courageous action).

Defence personnel are often endowed with Dhairya - patience and inner courage. This quality can be innate, but it is also deeply shaped by the environment. Children born into defence families grow up amidst values of discipline, sacrifice, and patriotism. As a result, when the time comes, they are prepared to rise in defence of their motherland.

A shining example from history is the story of Shivaji Maharaj's birth. His mother, Jijabai, was expecting him during a time when the cruelty and oppression of the Mughal regime were at their peak. With unwavering faith, she prayed to Lord Śiva to bless her with a brave son, one who would rise to fight injustice and restore Dharma. Her prayers bore fruit, and Shivaji was born. He was a true embodiment of Dhairya and Shaurya, who became a legendary protector of the land and its people.

When Bhagavān Krishna went to Duryodhana as a peace envoy, asking for just five villages for the Pāṇḍavas, Duryodhana arrogantly refused, declaring he would not part with land even as small as the eye of a needle. Upon hearing this, Kunti Mata sent a powerful message to her sons: *"If you have truly imbibed the strength of my milk, then rise and fight for your rightful share."*

- **dākṣyam (Resourcefulness or Skillfulness)** – Alertness/efficiency in action, was described by Yudhiṣṭhira during the Yakṣa-Prashna episode in the Mahābhārata. When the Yakṣa asked, "What is Dakṣatā?" Yudhiṣṭhira replied:

"कर्तव्येषु अप्रमादः दक्षता"

"Dakṣatā is unwavering attentiveness in performing one's duties."

- **yuddhe apalāyanam (Not fleeing from battle)** – Courage to face conflicts and protect righteousness without running away. In the Bhagavadgītā, Bhagavān Krishna advised Arjuna not to abandon the battlefield out of sorrow or fear. HE said that fleeing from one's svadharma (righteous duty) is cowardice, and such escapism is unworthy of a kṣatriya. Instead, HE urged Arjuna to rise with courage and clarity, and fight not out of hatred, but for upholding dharma.
- **dānam (Charity or Generosity)** – Readiness to give and serve, especially in protecting the weak.
- **īśvara-bhāvaḥ (Lordliness or Leadership)** – A natural sense of responsibility, leadership, and governance over others with fairness and vision. Bhagavān Rama and Shivaji exemplified their leadership and īśvara-bhāvaḥ.

One who is fortified with a blend of these noble qualities becomes a true protector of the nation. A Kṣatriya does not act for personal gain but works selflessly for the welfare of the community and the preservation of Dharma.

Hanuman Ji is a shining example of an ideal Kṣatriya. He embodied all these qualities - bravery, strength, wisdom, humility, and devotion. As Tulsidasji writes:

विद्यावान् गुनी अति चातुर, राम काज करिबे को आतुर।

He is full of wisdom, virtues, and great intelligence, Always eager to carry out Śrī Rama's work.

Hanuman Ji was ever ready to serve Bhagavān Rāma with complete surrender and selflessness. He used his strength and intelligence not for personal fame, but in service of the Supreme.

kṛṣṭigaurakṣyavāṇijyaṃ(m), vaiśyakarma svabhāvajam, paricaryātmakaṃ(ñ) karma, śūdrasyāpi svabhāvajam. 18.44

Agriculture, rearing of cows and honest exchange of merchandise-these constitute the natural duty of a Vaiśya (a member of the trading class); and service of the other classes is the natural duty even of a Śūdra (a member of the labouring class).

Herein Bhagavān listed the qualities of a vaiśhya and śhūdras. Agriculture (**kṛiṣhi**), dairy farming (**gau-rakṣhya**), and commerce (**vāṇijyaṃ**) are the natural works (**svabhāva-jam**) for those with the qualities of vaiśhya. Serving through work (**paricharya**) is the natural duty (**svabhāva-jam**) for those with the qualities of śhūdras.

Just as Jñānīs dedicate themselves to the pursuit of knowledge and apply that wisdom for the welfare of society, and Kṣatriyas protect their motherland and uphold peace and order, similarly, Vaiśyas take care of the **economic, financial, and social needs of the community**, ensuring prosperity and sustenance for all.

Trade, agriculture, and cattle rearing are their inherent duties, forming the foundation of economic activity in society.

The śhūdras contribute to society through their valuable skills and dedicated service.

The Bhagavadgītā teaches us to understand our inherent nature (svabhāva) and to focus on fulfilling our own duties. In essence, it guides us to '**mind our own business**' by sincerely performing the role we are naturally suited for.

18.45

sve sve karmaṇyabhirataḥ(s), saṃsiddhiṃ(m) labhate naraḥ, sVākarmanirataḥ(s) siddhiṃ(m), yathā vindati tacchṛṇu. 18.45

Keenly devoted to his own natural duty, man attains the highest perfection in the form of Godrealization. Hear the mode of performance whereby the man engaged in his inborn duty reaches that highest consummation.

Bhagavān assured that by fulfilling their inherent duties, born of their innate qualities, human beings can attain perfection. Further HE said HE will explain how one can become perfect by discharging one's prescribed duties.

By sincerely performing one's own duties, one moves closer to the ultimate goal (*param siddhi*) - unification with the Supreme. There are two types of siddhis: one is *siddhi* as excellence or expertise in one's chosen field; the other is *samsiddhi*, which leads to *moksha* or liberation.

For instance, a doctor attains perfection by performing numerous surgeries with dedication and precision. Similarly, a housewife perfects her role by diligently managing her household with love and care. Bhagavān explains that those who perform their duties sincerely, selflessly, and with the feeling that they are working for HIM, attain *param siddhi*.

Dnyaneshwar Maharaj beautifully conveys that performing one's own duties with sincerity and purity becomes a form of worship to the all-pervading Paramātmā.

तया सर्वात्मिका ईश्वरा । स्वकर्मकुसुमांची वीरा ।
पूजा केली होय अपारा । तोषालागीं ॥ १८.११७ ॥

To that Lord who is the Self of all beings, I have offered the flowers of my own actions (svakarma) in worship, This worship is boundless, And it is done only to please Him.

18.46

**yataḥ(ph) pravṛttirbhūtānām(m), yena sarvamidam(n) tatam,
sVākarmaṇā tamabhyarcya, siddhiṁ(m) vindati mānavaḥ. 18.46**

From whom all beings come into being and by whom the whole universe is pervaded, by worshipping Him through the performance of his own natural duties, man attains the highest perfection.

In this verse, Bhagavān stringed the whole of mankind into a single thread of oneness.

HE did not reserve this sacred wisdom only for a particular sect, region, or religion. Instead, HE bestowed upon the entire humanity a universal principle for attaining HIM.

HE said by performing one's own prescribed duty (**svakarmaṇā**), one worships (**abhyarchya**) the Creator from whom (**yataḥ**) all living entities (**bhūtānām**) have come into being (**pravṛttir**), and by whom (**yena**) this (**idam**) whole (**sarvam**) universe is pervaded (**tatam**). By such performance of work, a person (**mānavaḥ**) easily attains (**vindati**) perfection (**siddhiṁ**).

By teaching that one can worship the Supreme through one's own prescribed duty (svakarma), Bhagavān made the path to perfection accessible to all, regardless of their background, profession, or tradition. This verse is an expression of HIS grace upon all beings that came into being through HIM, and not just the followers of Hindu Dharma.

HE declared that **every individual**, by performing their work sincerely, selflessly, and with devotion to the Supreme, can **attain siddhi (perfection)** and eventually **unite with Paramātmā**.

An incident from the life of Swami Vivekananda's disciple, Sister Nivedita, beautifully captures the essence of spiritualized duty. When someone asked her how long she had been teaching, she humbly replied, **"I am not teaching; I am worshipping the Supreme. These students are sent to me by HIM."** She saw teaching not as a profession, but as an act of devotion.

In the same way, a soldier must see his service as worship of the motherland. A teacher should feel that by nurturing young minds, he is serving the Divine. A doctor, farmer, artist, or homemaker, each one, by performing their own duties with sincerity, devotion, and selflessness, becomes a true yogi.

Bhagavān says that **one who performs their svadharma with the sentiment of offering it to HIM is sure to attain HIM. This is Param Siddhi.**

Another inspiring incident is from the life of Swami Haridas, the renowned saint and music master of Tansen, one of the nine jewels (navaratnas) in the court of Emperor Akbar. Once, Akbar asked Tansen that he sings so beautifully, and he wants to meet his guru who taught him this divine art. The king wanted to hear him sing. Tansen told him, that to hear the Guru, he would have to go to his āśrama, his dwelling in the forest. Eager to meet such a master, Akbar agreed. When Swami Haridas sang, his voice flowed like a stream of devotion, pure, untouched, and divine. Akbar was spellbound.

He turned to Tansen and asked although his singing was extraordinary, but it did not have the same effect as that of his Guru. Tansen bowed respectfully and said, "I sing for the King of Delhi, while my Guru sings only for the Supreme Divine of the Universe (Dillīśwara ke liye main gātā hoon, par mere Guru ke gīt keval Īśvara ke liye hote hain.)

Even the role of an executioner, often seen with disdain, is not considered wrong or sinful if done without hatred or cruelty, and purely as a dispassionate duty in service.

Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj's said:

हैं विहित कर्म पांडवा । आपुला अनन्य वोलावा ।
आणि हेचि परम सेवा । मज सर्वात्मकाची ॥ १८.९०६ ॥

*Even a seemingly impure or 'bloody' action (like that of an executioner), if it is **one's svadharma** (inherent duty) becomes a source of merit and purification.*

This reveals that when **work becomes worship, when ego dissolves and only surrender remains, then the same action becomes a pathway to Param Siddhi (Supreme Perfection).**

18.47

**śreyānsvadharṃ viguṇaḥ(ph), paradharmātsvanuṣṭhitāt,
svabhāvaniyataṃ(ñ) karma, kurvannāpnoti kilbiṣam. 18.47**

Better is one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than the duty of another well-performed; for, performing the duty ordained by his own nature, man does not incur sin.

It is better (**śhreyān**) to do one's own *dharma*, even though imperfectly (**viguṇaḥ**), than to do another's *dharma* (**para-dharmāt**), even though perfectly (**sv-anuṣṭhitāt**). By doing one's innate duties (**svabhāva-niyataṃ karma**), a person does not incur (**nāpnoti**) sin (**kilbiṣam**).

Bhagavān said that no work is impure or lowly if performed in accordance with one's *svadharma* (inherent duty), with detachment, without ego, and as an offering to HIM.

Dnyaneshwar Maharaj wrote :

अगा जया जें विहित । तें ईश्वराचें मनोगत ।
म्हणौनि केलिया निभ्रांत । सांपडेचि तो ॥ १८.९११ ॥

Whatever is ordained by God, if a person mentally accepts it wholeheartedly and acts upon it, then through such disciplined practice based on this firm understanding (siddhānta), liberation (mukti) is surely attained.

The Bhagavadgītā imparts two core teachings:

1. Perform your work as worship to the Supreme
2. Remain true to your own nature. Do not be enticed by the duties or actions of others.

This profound wisdom finds a vivid example in the episode of Arjuna during his incognito exile (agyātvās). During this period, Arjuna, disguised as a brāhmaṇa, attended Draupadī's svayaṃvara. With unwavering focus and supreme skill, he pierced the revolving eye of a fish by looking only at its reflection, thereby fulfilling the difficult condition set for winning Draupadī's hand.

Although he succeeded, Draupadī's father King Drupada and her brother Dhṛṣṭadyumna were unsure

whether the winner was truly a brāhmaṇa. Aware that such marksmanship could not belong to one born in the lineage of scholars and priests, Dhṛṣṭadyumna arranged an exhibition to discern the truth.

In one hall, there were various sections: One displayed scriptures and texts, Another showcased weapons, A third, mechanical devices, And the last held general items of interest.

When the Pāṇḍavas visited the exhibition, they were naturally drawn to the chamber of weapons, examining them with the ease and familiarity of those trained in the art of war. This reaction confirmed their true identity, that they are not brāhmaṇas, but kṣatriyas, born to protect and uphold dharma.

Dnyaneshwar Maharaj wrote :

येरी जिया पराविया । रंभेहुनि बरविया ।
तिया काय कराविया । बाळकें तेणें ? ॥ १८.९२८ ॥

Other women may be more beautiful than Rambha but what does this matter to her children?

अगा पाणियाहूनि बहुवें । तुपीं गुण कीर आहे ।
परी मीना काय होये । असणें तेथ ॥ १८.९२९ ॥

Ghee (clarified butter) floats higher than water, and it possesses more richness and quality than water. But what use is that to a fish? The fish can only live in its own natural habitat ie., water.

A child born to an ugly mother would love her as much as any other child. Likewise, however enriching ghee may be, a fish cannot survive in ghee. It needs water to survive. Therefore just as Arjuna instinctively gravitated toward weapons, revealing his kṣatriya essence, so too, we must recognise and accept our nature, cultivate it, and offer it in worship to the Divine. Perform ones duty as karmayoga as this would lead one to Param Sidhhi.

18.48

**sahajaṃ(ñ) karma kaunteya, sadoṣamapi na tyajet,
sarvārambhā hi doṣeṇa, dhūmenāgnirivāvṛtāḥ. 18.48**

Therefore, Arjuna, one should not relinquish one's innate duty, even though it has a measure of evil; for all undertakings are beset by some evil, as is the fire covered by smoke.

Bhagavān declared one should not abandon (**na tyajet**) duties born of one's nature (**saha-jam karma**), even if one sees defects (**sa-doṣha**) in them, O son of Kunti (**kaunteya**). Indeed, all endeavours (**sarvārambhā**) are veiled (**āvṛtāḥ**) by some evil (**doṣeṇa**), as fire (**agni**) is by smoke (**dhūmena**).

If a soldier refuses to shoot the enemy, saying it will incur sin, he misunderstands the nature of svadharma (one's own duty). As a kṣatriya, it is his duty to protect the nation and uphold righteousness. If an enemy threatens the safety of the people or the land, it becomes the soldier's righteous obligation to act, even if it means taking a life.

A soldier who fights with the spirit of duty, not hatred or personal motive, incurs no sin. In fact, by refusing to do his duty, he becomes responsible for the greater harm that might come to society.

18.49, 18.50

**asaktabuddhiḥ(s) sarvatra, jitātmā vigataspr̥haḥ,
naiṣkarmyasiddhiṃ(m) paramāṃ(m), sannyāsenādhigacchati. 18.49
siddhiṃ(m) prāpto yathā brahma, tathāpnoti nibodha me,
samāsenaiḥ kaunteya, niṣṭhā jñānasya yā parā. 18.50**

He whose intellect is unattached everywhere, whose thirst for enjoyment has altogether disappeared and who has subdued his mind, reaches through Sāṅkhyayoga (the path of Knowledge) the consummation of actionlessness.

Arjuna, know from Me only briefly the process through which man having attained actionlessness, which is the highest consummation of Jñānayoga (the path of Knowledge), reaches Brahma.

Bhagavān revealed that those whose intellect is unattached (**asakta-buddhiḥ**) everywhere (**sarvatra**), who have mastered the mind (**jitātmā**), and are free from desires (**vigata-spr̥haḥ**) by the practice of renunciation (**sannyāsenā**), attain (**ādhigachchati**) the highest (**paramāṃ**) perfection of freedom from action (**naiṣkarmya-siddhiṃ**)

HE further briefly (**samāsenā**) explained (**nibodha**) to Arjuna, how one, who has attained (**prāpta**) perfection (**siddhiṃ**) (of cessation of actions), can also attain Brahmān by being firmly fixed (**niṣṭhā**) in transcendental (**parā**) knowledge (**jñānasya**).

A true renunciate (sannyāsī) is one whose intellect is not entangled in anything. He works, but without emotional entanglement or dependency on outcomes. He has conquered his mind and senses (Jitātmā). And he is free from desires and expectations (Vigata-spr̥haḥ).

Bhagavān said such a person, by simply living in renunciation, attains naiṣkarmya-siddhi - the perfection of actionlessness where no karma binds him. Naiṣkarmya does not mean doing nothing, but it is a state of being unaffected by actions because they are done without ego, desire, or attachment.

Doership, enjoyership, and attachment to action are the three main deterrents on the path of Karma Yoga.

Doership (kartṛtvabhāva) creates ego: "I am the one doing this."

Enjoyership (bhoktṛtvabhāva) creates desire: "I will enjoy the fruits of my actions."

Attachment (āśakti) binds us emotionally to success, failure, and outcomes.

One who performs actions with complete surrender, without ego, without craving for the results, and without attachment to the action itself, such a person attains Naishkarmya Siddhi.

That is the state of action less ness amidst action where the body acts, but the Self remains untouched. Vinoba Bhave ji said:

"I did everything by doing nothing, and did nothing by doing everything". This is the essence of Karma Yoga.

Another befitting example here is of the sun. The Sun, shines effortlessly, giving life, light, and warmth to the universe. It does not 'do' with ego or expectation. It simply is, and yet it sustains all.

Raman Maharishi said " He is doing nothing, and he is doing everything".

Kabir Ji also wrote something similar:

ना कछु किया न करि सका, नाँ करने जोग सरीर।
जो कछु किया सो हरि किया (ताथै) भया कबीर कबीर ॥

Likewise we should perform every action with the attitude of **Naishkarmya** (non-doership), and offer it humbly at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavān. Every such act, done without ego, becomes an offering. Instead of thinking “I am doing,” we should train the mind to say, “HE is doing through me.” This transforms our life into a continuous act of sacred worship.

This path purifies us, uplifts our consciousness, and ultimately leads us to union with the Supreme (parama-siddhi).

The session concluded here after offering it at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavān and Gurudev.

Question and Answers.

Richa Goyal Ji

Question: Bhagavān said by doing svadharma one does not incur sin. A soldier does not incur sin by killing the enemy. Do we incur sin by killing insects at home?

Answer: No, this too does not incur sin if done with the right intent and for the protection of health and hygiene. Bhagavān has emphasised the spirit of “Sarva-bhūta-hite ratāḥ” - acting for the welfare of all beings. If an action is done not out of hatred or cruelty, but out of necessity to protect oneself, one's family, or society, it is not considered sinful.

Insects and pests can cause harm, disease, and discomfort. Removing them with the intent of protecting well-being is considered rightful action, especially when there is no alternative. Scriptures guide us to act with viveka (discernment) and dayā (compassion), so if non-violent alternatives exist, they should be tried first.

However, if the whole society practices non violence then there would be lawlessness. So violence to safeguard ones interests and righteousness is not considered sin by our scriptures.



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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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