



ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 3: Karma-Yoga

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The Sacred Wheel of Action: Yajña, Selflessness, and Realization

Chapter 3 Bhagavadgītā: Karma-Yoga - The Yoga of Action

The third chapter of the **Bhagavadgītā** is titled **Karma-Yoga**, the Yoga of Action. As per tradition, the session commenced with the **lighting of the lamp** and **invocation prayers**, setting a sacred and reverent atmosphere. After offering salutations to the **Guru**, praying to **Śrī Krishna**, and reciting verses extolling the **Bhagavadgītā**, the discourse began with heartfelt obeisance to **Sage Vyāsa**, the divine seer who composed the **Mahābhārata** and compiled this spiritual scripture.

These prayers invoked blessings of: **The Guru**, seen as the embodiment of **Brahmā (Creator)**, **Viṣṇu (Preserver)**, and **Maheśvara (Destroyer)**, and ultimately the **Supreme Brahman**. **Śrī Krishna**, the Lord within, who dispels all sorrow and ignorance. The **Bhagavadgītā**, revered as the **Divine Mother** and a **fountain of Advaitic wisdom**. **Sage Vyāsa**, whose enlightened intellect lit the lamp of knowledge with the oil of the Mahābhārata.

Prayers Recited:

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः। गुरुः साक्षात् परब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः॥

The Guru is Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva. The Guru is verily the Supreme Brahman. I bow to that sacred Guru.

कृष्णाय वासुदेवाय हरये परमात्मने। प्रणतः क्लेशनाशाय गोविंदाय नमो नमः॥

Salutations to Śrī Krishna, son of Vasudeva, the Supreme Self, who destroys all sorrow.

नमामि सद्गुरुं शान्तं सच्चिदानन्द विग्रहम्। पूर्णब्रह्मपरानन्दमीशं आलन्दिवल्लभम्॥

I bow to the true Guru, serene and of the nature of Sat-Cit-Ānanda (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss), the Lord of Supreme Bliss.

रत्नाकराधौतपदां हिमालयकिरीटिनीम्। ब्रह्मराजर्षिरत्नाढ्यां वन्दे भारतमातरम्॥

Salutations to Bhārat Mātā, whose feet are washed by oceans and crowned with the Himalayas, adorned with the jewels of sages.

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं। व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना मध्ये महाभारतम्॥ अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीमष्टादशाध्यायिनीम्। अम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्गीते भवद्वेषिणीम्॥

I meditate upon the Bhagavadgītā, taught by Nārāyaṇa Himself to Arjuna, compiled by Vyāsa within the Mahābhārata—she who showers the nectar of non-dualism and dispels bondage.

नमोस्तुते व्यास विशालबुद्धे फुल्लारविन्दायतपत्रनेत्र। येन त्वया भारततैलपूर्णः प्रज्वालितो ज्ञानमयः प्रदीपः॥

Salutations to Vyāsa, of vast intellect and lotus-like eyes, who lit the lamp of wisdom with the oil of the Mahābhārata.

With these sacred invocations, the session began, seeking blessings of **Param Pūjya Śrī Govind Dev Giriji Maharaj**, our revered Guru, and extending heartfelt greetings to all **Gītā Sādhakas**.

Essence of Karma-Yoga

In this chapter, **Śrī Bhagavān** begins by declaring:

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत्।

No one can ever remain, even for a moment, without performing action.

All living beings are constantly active. The goal of this chapter is to explain **how to transform Karma into Karma-Yoga**. That is, how to spiritualize our actions.

Yajña - Sacred Action

Every living being is born with duties. The Creator said at the beginning of creation:

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः। अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वम् एष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक्॥

Having created mankind along with yajña (sacrifice), Brahmā said: "You shall prosper through this. May this fulfill your desires."

Here, **Yajña** is not merely ritual—it is selfless, dutiful action done for the well-being of all.

देवान्भावयतानेन, ते देवा भावयन्तु वः।

Foster the devas through yajña, and the devas will foster you in return.

Nature—rivers, mountains, air, forests—continuously nourish us. They are **devatās**, not lifeless matter. We must also serve them. We say "Ganga Maiyā" because we revere these elements. If every being works for the other, prosperity naturally follows.

इष्टान्भोगान्हि वो देवा, दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः।

The gods, pleased through yajña, grant all desired enjoyments.

Fulfilling Our Debts (Ṛṇas)

We are born carrying multiple debts:

- **Deva-ṛṇa** - debt to divine forces
- **Pitr-ṛṇa** - debt to ancestors
- **Ṛṣi-ṛṇa** - debt to sages and seers

- **Samāja-ṛṇa / Manuṣya-ṛṇa** – debt to society
- **Bhūta-ṛṇa** – debt to living beings

By working for others with a spirit of service, we begin to **repay these ṛṇas**. Such work becomes **Yajña**, and its remains are considered **amṛta** (nectar).

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः।

Those who partake of the remnants of yajña are freed from all sins.

भुञ्जते ते त्वघं पापा, ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात्॥

Those who cook only for themselves, for personal enjoyment, eat only sin.

Those who live only for themselves incur sin. But those who act in service of others perform sacred action.

Arthur Schopenhauer’s Admiration for Indian Wisdom

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), a German philosopher best known for his philosophy of **pessimism** and the concept of the **Will**, had **profound respect** for Indian spiritual thought—especially the **Upanishads**, the **Vedas**, and indirectly, the **Bhagavadgītā**. He described the **Upanishads** as:

“The most satisfying and elevating reading possible in the world.”

“In the whole world, there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads.

It has been the solace of my life—it will be the solace of my death.”

3.14

annādbhavanti bhūtāni, parjanyaḍannasam̐bhavaḥ, yajñādbhavati parjanyo, yajñah(kh) karmasamudbhavaḥ. 3.14

All beings are evolved from food; production of food is dependent on rain; rain ensues from sacrifice, and sacrifice is rooted in prescribed action.

In the previous verse (3.13), Śrī Bhagavān declared that those who live selflessly—consuming only the sacred remnants of yajña—are freed from sin, while those who live only for themselves partake in sin. This verse builds upon that idea and presents a **divine ecological cycle**, rooted in dharma, through which life is sustained.

It shows how **righteous human action** is intricately connected to the **forces of nature** and **universal well-being**.

- **annādbhavanti bhūtāni** – *All beings are born of food*
Every form of life—humans, animals, plants—depends on **food (anna)** for its existence. Food is thus the most basic requirement for sustaining life on earth.
- **parjanyaḍannasam̐bhavaḥ** – *Food is produced by rain*

Food is generated through **parjanya** (rain). Without rainfall, agricultural produce would cease. This verse reminds us that **nature is not under our command**, and yet it plays a crucial role in our survival.

- **yajñādbhavati parjanya** – *Rain comes from yajña*

Rain is sustained through **yajña**—which refers not only to ritualistic offerings but also to **dharmic actions performed selflessly**, with reverence and without personal desire. This includes actions that contribute to maintaining **balance in nature**.

The **yajña for rain** is not only performed in ritual halls but by **Sun (through heat and evaporation)** and **Wind (through circulation and cloud movement)**. These forces operate tirelessly and purposefully. Their function shows that **they are not random—someone must be operating them**. Rain is thus the **result of an ongoing cosmic yajña**.

- **yajñaḥ karmasamudbhavaḥ** – *Yajña arises from karma*

Yajña is born of **karma**—specifically **prescribed actions** (*niyatam karma*) as laid out in the scriptures. When we perform our duties (towards family, society, nature, and the divine) with the **right intention**, it becomes yajña. Therefore, karma is the **seed** from which the entire cycle begins.

Illustrative Story - The Painting and the Universe

A young boy once said to his father that he didn't believe this world was created by God. He thought the world came into being by itself. The father smiled and said nothing. That night, the father painted a beautiful picture and placed it next to the boy's bed.

When the boy awoke the next morning and saw the painting, he was amazed. He asked, "Who made this?"

The father replied, "No one made it. It just appeared here on its own."

The boy protested, "That's not possible! Someone must have painted it. I know you did it."

The father gently said, "Son, if even a **simple painting** cannot come into existence on its own and must have a **creator**, then how can this **vast, perfectly working universe** exist without a **Supreme Intelligence** behind it?"

The boy understood the truth he had overlooked.

Key Takeaway:

This verse teaches that **our selfless actions**, rooted in dharma, are not isolated efforts but part of a **cosmic machinery** that supports life on earth. The forces of nature—like rain, sun, and wind—are themselves participating in a grand yajña. When we do our part by offering our actions to the greater good, we align ourselves with this **divine rhythm**, ensuring **prosperity, harmony, and spiritual purity**.

This prepares us for the **next verse (3.15)**, where Śrī Bhagavān explains that this cycle of yajña and karma is **eternally rooted in the Vedas**, which in turn are born from the **Supreme Brahman**. Thus, this entire system is sacred, timeless, and divinely ordained.

3.15

**karma brahmodbhavaṃ(ṽ) viddhi, brahmākṣarasamudbhavam,
tasmātsarvagataṃ(m) brahma, nityaṃ(ṽ) yajñe pratiṣṭhitam.□3.15□**

Know that prescribed action has its origin in the Vedas, and the Vedas proceed from the Indestructible

(God); hence the all-pervading Infinite is always present in sacrifice.

In the previous verse (3.14), Śrī Bhagavān revealed how **karma (action)** sustains yajña, which in turn nourishes the world. But where do these karmas come from? Are they arbitrary human inventions? Verse 3.15 now **takes the inquiry deeper**, tracing karma back to its **divine origin**.

- **karma brahmodbhavam viddhi** – *Know that karma arises from Brahma (the Vedas)*

The **duties (karma)** prescribed in the Gītā and other śāstras are **not random**. They arise from **Brahma**, which here refers to the **Vedas**—the eternal scriptures that outline **svadharma (one’s rightful duties)**.

The Vedas are described as “**Apauruṣeya**”—**not created by any human**. They are **timeless revelations (śruti)** perceived by ancient ṛṣis (seers) in deep states of meditation. Therefore, **karma is not man-made—it is divinely ordained**.

- **brahma akṣarasamudbhavam** – *Brahma (the Vedas) arise from the Akṣara (the Imperishable)*

The **Vedas**, though expressed in language, have their source in the **Akṣara**—the **eternal, changeless Brahman**, the Supreme Reality beyond time and space. This reinforces the idea that the **moral and spiritual structure** of the world is not of human construction—it is a reflection of the **cosmic order (ṛta)**.

- **tasmāt sarvagataṃ brahma** – *Therefore, the all-pervading Brahman*

Because **karma and yajña** both trace their origin to the **Supreme**, the **all-pervading Brahman** is present in every aspect of righteous action. There is **no separation between the Divine and Dharma**—they are expressions of the same truth.

- **nityaṃ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam** – *is eternally established in yajña*

The **Supreme Being** is ever established in **selfless action (yajña)**. Whenever we perform our actions as **offerings**, free of ego and desire, we become **instruments of Brahman**. In this way, **yajña becomes a medium for divine manifestation** in the world.

Key Takeaway:

This verse reveals that **karma is not merely a human responsibility—it is a divine principle**. The **Vedas**, being **Apauruṣeya** (not authored by any person), form the eternal basis of **duty**, and they themselves originate from **Akṣara Brahman**. Thus, when we follow **scripturally ordained actions**, we are aligning not only with **social order**, but with the **highest spiritual truth**.

Yajña—selfless action performed in the spirit of offering—is not just a ritual; it is **the very seat of the Supreme**. Therefore, **Karma-Yoga is the bridge between the finite and the Infinite**.

In the next verse, Śrī Bhagavān will explain the **consequences of ignoring this cosmic yajña cycle**. Those who refuse to participate in this sacred order—who consume but do not contribute—live in sin and are spiritually lost. Thus, the Gītā now turns toward **individual responsibility within the divine order**.

evaṃ pravartitaṃ(ñ) cakraṃ(n), nānuvartayatīha yaḥ, aghāyurindriyārāmo, moghaṃ(m) pārtha sa jīvati. 3.16

Arjuna, he who does not follow the wheel of creation thus set going in this world i.e., does not perform his duties, leads a sinful and sensual life, he lives in vain.

In the previous verse (3.15), Śrī Bhagavān described how the **cycle of yajña**—rooted in karma and the eternal Vedas—upholds the balance of nature and creation. Now, He warns of the **consequences of refusing to participate in this cycle**.

This verse is a direct and powerful reminder that **life must be aligned with dharma and duty**; otherwise, it becomes **wasteful and destructive**.

- **evaṃ pravartitaṃ cakraṃ** - *This wheel thus set in motion*

The divine cycle—**karma → yajña → rain → food → life**—is not arbitrary; it has been **set in motion by the Supreme**, and is meant to be followed for the **balance of creation**.

- **nānuvartayati iha yaḥ** - *He who does not follow it in this world*

One who **chooses not to perform their duties**—who consumes but does not contribute—is **disrupting this divine wheel**. Such a person becomes **spiritually disobedient** to the design of the cosmos.

- **aghāyuh** - *Of sinful life*

This individual lives a **life full of spiritual error**. "Aghāyuh" implies that even their lifespan becomes a **source of sin**, as they **take from the world without giving back**.

- **indriyārāmaḥ** - *Addicted to sensual pleasures*

Instead of engaging in karma-yoga, they are immersed in **sense pleasures, comfort, and self-indulgence**—living not for service, but for **stimulation and gratification**.

- **moghaṃ sa jīvati** - *He lives in vain*

Such a person, though physically alive, is **spiritually useless**. His life has no higher meaning, no direction, no alignment with dharma. As Śrī Bhagavān bluntly puts it, **his life is a waste**.

Key Takeaway:

This verse emphasizes a **foundational truth of the Gītā: To live without contributing is to live in vain**.

A person who eats, breathes, and enjoys the world but refuses to **engage in duty or selfless service** is considered a **burden on Earth**.

As we say in Marathi:

खायला काळ आणि भुईला भार

He only eats and becomes a burden to the Earth.

This proverb perfectly reflects the essence of this verse. It criticizes those who only live for themselves, draining the world without nourishing it. Such a person **wastes the divine opportunity of human birth**, which is meant for **service, sacrifice, and spiritual ascent**.

In the next verse, Śrī Bhagavān will **qualify an exception**—the **enlightened one** who, though free from obligation, may still engage in action for the **welfare of the world**. This sets the stage for understanding **true detachment**, not as escapism, but as **wisdom-driven engagement**.

3.17

yastvātmaratireva syād, ātmatṛptaśca mānavaḥ, ātmanyeva ca santuṣṭaḥ(s), tasya kāryaṃ(n) na vidyate. 3.17

He, however, who takes delight in the Self alone and is gratified with the Self, and is contented in the Self, has no duty.

In the preceding verse (3.16), Śrī Bhagavān explained that one who neglects their duties and lives only for sensual pleasure lives in vain. In this verse, He describes the **noble exception**—a **realized soul**, who has no inner deficiency and is therefore free from obligation.

However, this freedom is **not born of escapism**, but of **Self-realization**.

- **yas tv ātmaratir eva syāt** - *He who delights only in the Self*

This refers to the **Self-realized individual** who derives **joy, interest, and contentment** not from external stimuli but from the **realization of the true Self (ātman)**. Such a person no longer seeks stimulation from the world.

- **ātmatṛptaś ca mānavaḥ** - *Who is completely satisfied in the Self*

This person has reached a state of **inner fulfillment**. There is no craving for power, possession, recognition, or result. **They are full** from within.

- **ātmany eva ca santuṣṭaḥ** - *Who is content solely in the Self*

They are **stable and peaceful**, drawing **emotional strength from within**. Their happiness is independent of circumstance.

- **tasya kāryaṃ na vidyate** - *For such a person, no duty remains*

This does **not mean inaction**. It means there is **no obligatory karma** left for purification or attainment. Such a person may still act—but action is **not binding** for them. It is **offered**, not **demanded**.

Types of People Based on Karma:

To better understand this verse, consider the **four types of individuals** in the world:

1. **One who needs to work for daily sustenance and performs duties accordingly.**

This is the **common person**, whose survival depends on regular effort.

2. **One who needs to work for daily sustenance but avoids work, living off others or chance gains.**

This type **avoids responsibility** and becomes a **burden to society**.

3. **One who has everything and thus has no material need to perform actions—and accordingly does nothing.**

While not dependent, this person **misses the higher opportunity** of using their capacity for **seva (selfless service)**.

4. **One who has everything and has no compulsion to act, yet continues to perform their duties for the welfare of others.**

This is the ideal person. This is the **karma-yogī** described by Bhagavān. **Action does not bind them**, yet they continue to act **as a service to the world**, with no attachment to results.

Key Takeaway:

This verse shifts our perspective on karma. We should not see duty as **compulsion**, but as a **divine opportunity**.

Our outlook should be:

"I have got the opportunity to perform this action,"

rather than:

"I am forced to do this."

This mindset transforms action into **yajña** and liberates us from bondage.

Thus, the **Self-realized soul** is not obligated to act—but if they do act, it is **pure, detached, and beneficial to all**.

Śrī Bhagavān will further explain that **even though nothing remains to be gained or lost for such a person**, they may still **engage in karma**—out of **choice**, not **necessity**. This deepens our understanding of **non-attachment and noble action**.

3.18

**naiva tasya kṛtenārtho, nākṛteneha kaścana,
na cāsya sarvabhūteṣu, kaścīdarthavyapāśrayaḥ. 3.18**

In this world that great soul has nothing to gain by action nor by abstaining from action; nor has he selfish dependence of any kind on any creature.

This verse continues the **description of the enlightened person** introduced in the previous verse (3.17). Śrī Bhagavān clarifies that such a realized soul is **completely free** from worldly **gains, losses, and dependencies**, whether they perform actions or not.

This insight helps us understand the **true freedom of the Karma-Yogī**—not just in renouncing work, but

in transcending **attachment to its fruits and instruments**.

- **naiva tasya kṛtenārthaḥ** – *He has nothing to gain from action*

For the realized one, **karma (action)** holds **no transactional value**. Their **inner fulfillment is complete**, so there is **no sense of 'I need to achieve or acquire anything'** through action.

- **na akṛtena iha kaścana** – *Nor anything to lose by not acting*

Similarly, **abstaining from action** does not make them fall or regress. Their **spiritual position is steady**, unaffected by either **performance or non-performance**. Their being is rooted in **Self-awareness**, not external outcomes.

- **na ca asya sarvabhūteṣu kaścit artha-vyapāśrayaḥ** – *Nor does he depend on any being for any purpose*

This is the mark of complete **inner independence**. The realized person does **not rely on anyone**—human, divine, or natural—for **emotional, material, or existential support**.

Their state is described in the Gītā as "**ātma-nirbhara**"—**Self-reliant**, but in the deepest spiritual sense.

Key Takeaway:

This verse describes a person of **perfect inner freedom**—one who has **nothing to gain or lose**, and who is **free from all dependence**. Such a being may act or remain still, may speak or remain silent—yet they remain **unmoved and unbound**.

The purpose of highlighting this ideal is **not to promote detachment from life**, but to inspire us to reach a stage where:

- We act **without need**
- We serve **without dependence**
- We live **without clinging**

In spiritual maturity, **external karma becomes irrelevant to inner wholeness**.

The Karma-Yogī does not stop action, but becomes so **pure in intent** and **content in Self**, that their **action no longer binds them**.

Having described the inner freedom of the realized being, Śrī Bhagavān will now turn His teaching back to **ordinary seekers**. In the next verse, He will instruct that **until one reaches such perfection**, one **must continue to act**—but with **detachment**, to purify oneself and uplift the world.

3.19

**tasmādasaktaḥ(s) satataṃ(ñ), kāryaṃ(ñ) karma samācara,
asakto hyācarankarma, paramāpnoti pūruṣaḥ. 3.19**

Therefore, go on efficiently doing your duty at all times without attachment. Doing work without attachment man attains the Supreme.

Following the description of the liberated person in verses 3.17-3.18, who has no binding duty, Śrī Bhagavān now speaks directly to all those **still on the path**. The instruction is simple but profound: **Keep performing your duties, but do so without attachment.**

This is the very essence of **Karma-Yoga**.

- **tasmād asaktaḥ satataṃ** – *Therefore, always remain unattached*

Since only the realised are free from obligation, **everyone else must keep acting**—but without **asakti** (attachment). The key is to act **without clinging to results or outcomes**.

- **kāryaṃ karma samācara** – *Perform your rightful duties diligently*

The term **kāryaṃ karma** refers not to just any action, but to those actions that are **appropriate, timely, and dharmic**—those that **ought to be done**.

‘Kārya’ comes from the root ‘kr’ (to do), and denotes that which is **fit to be done**.

This is clarified through similar Sanskrit expressions:

- **Peya** – *liquid fit for drinking*
- **Geya** – *song fit for singing*
- **Kārya** – *action fit to be performed*

Thus, **kāryaṃ karma** refers to **duties born of one’s role, nature, and stage in life (svadharma)**—not to everyday involuntary actions like eating or sleeping, though they are also technically karma.

It includes responsibilities toward **family, society, nature, and spiritual pursuit**, carried out with **consciousness and devotion**.

- **asaktaḥ hi ācaran karma** – *He who acts without attachment*

Repeating the central idea: it is not action that binds us, but **attachment to the fruits of action**. **Asakti** is the inner freedom that allows external action to be non-binding.

- **param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ** – *Such a person attains the Supreme*

The ultimate reward of Karma-Yoga is not worldly success but **Paramāpatti**—**attainment of the Supreme Reality**, where the doer merges with the **Will of the Divine**.

Understanding Samādhān & Samādhi

- The word **Samādhān** means **mental composure, resolution, or deep contentment**.

It originates from **Samādhi**—the final limb of **Aṣṭāṅga Yoga**, where the **mind becomes one with Paramātmā**.

Samādhān is the **inner joy** or **steadiness** that arises when one begins to **taste the stillness of Samādhi** even in day-to-day life.

Aṣṭāṅga Yoga - The Eightfold Path to Samādhi:

- **Yama** – Restraints (non-violence, truth, non-stealing, etc.)
- **Niyama** – Observances (cleanliness, contentment, self-discipline, etc.)
- **Āsana** – Steady posture
- **Prāṇāyāma** – Regulation of breath
- **Pratyāhāra** – Withdrawal of senses
- **Dhāraṇā** – Concentration
- **Dhyāna** – Meditation
- **Samādhi** – Absorption into the Self (merging with Paramātmā)

Samādhi is the **peak of Yoga**, and **Samādhān** is the **inner serenity** that reflects its fragrance even in the earlier stages of life.

Key Takeaway:

Kāryaṃ karma means actions that are **worthy of being done**—those that align with **Dharma** and **one's role in the cosmic order**. These must be performed **not out of compulsion**, but with the joyful awareness:

“I have received the grace of being entrusted with this karma.”

By performing such karma **without attachment**, one becomes free from bondage and steadily **rises to the Supreme**.

This is **not renunciation of work**, but **renunciation in work**.

Śrī Bhagavān will now offer the **example of King Janaka** and other wise rulers who, even after Self-realisation, **continued to perform their worldly duties** for the **welfare and upliftment of society**. This reinforces the ideal of **selfless action as a guiding example** for the world.

3.20

**karmaṇaiva hi saṃsiddhim, āsthitā janakādayaḥ,
lokasaṅgrahamevāpi, saṃpaśyankartumarhasi. 3.20**

It is through action without attachment alone that Janaka and other wise men reached perfection. Having in view the maintenance of the world order too, you should take to action.

In the previous verse (3.19), Śrī Bhagavān advised Arjuna to perform **kāryaṃ karma**—prescribed duties—with **non-attachment**, as the means to attain the Supreme. Now, to **reinforce the teaching**, He cites the **historical example of great kings and sages**, especially **King Janaka**, who were **spiritually advanced** yet remained **deeply engaged in action**.

This verse bridges **personal liberation** with **social responsibility**.

- **karmaṇaiva hi saṃsiddhiṃ** – *Indeed, through action alone, perfection was attained*

Bhagavān emphasizes that **action**—and not withdrawal—is the **path to perfection (saṃsiddhi)**

even for great souls. **Janaka** and others did not abandon duties; they **engaged actively and attained Self-realization** through that very path.

- **āsthītā janakādayaḥ** – *By Janaka and others*

King Janaka (father of Sītā) is often cited in scriptures as an ideal **Rājṛṣi**—a **king-sage** who ruled with wisdom and detachment. Though spiritually realized, he ruled diligently, balancing **dharma and governance**.

Others like **Aśvapati**, **Yudhiṣṭhira**, and **Rāma** too are examples of those who attained **inner liberation through active outer responsibility**.

- **lokasaṅgraham eva api** – *Even for the sake of world maintenance*

Lokasaṅgraha means the **well-being, order, and moral stability of the world**. Wise men continue to act **not for personal gain**, but to set **an example**, uphold **dharma**, and ensure **social harmony**. Their action becomes a **living instruction** for others.

- **saṃpaśyan kartum arhasi** – *Seeing this, you too ought to act*

Bhagavān says: “O Arjuna, **understand this larger view** and act accordingly.”

Don’t think of karma merely in terms of personal gain or loss. Your actions must be performed **with awareness of their influence** on others. Your **example will inspire or mislead millions**.

Key Takeaway:

Even **Self-realized souls** like Janaka **did not renounce action**. Why?

- To **purify themselves further** through Karma-Yoga
- To **maintain the world order (Lokasaṅgraha)**
- To **set a righteous example** for those still walking the path

Therefore, **one should not abandon karma** under the pretext of renunciation or inner peace. Instead, karma should be **spiritualized**—done with **non-attachment and broader vision**.

True greatness lies **not in escaping the world**, but in **engaging with it, without being entangled by it**.

This is the **ideal of Karma-Yoga—liberation through action**, not inaction.

In the next verse, Śrī Bhagavān will explain the **power of influence**—that **whatever a great person does**, others follow. This strengthens the case for **righteous action by leaders**, saints, and all those who hold positions of **respect and responsibility**.

3.21

**yadyadācarati śreṣṭhaḥ(s), tattadevetaro janaḥ,
sa yatpramāṇaṃ(ñ) kurute, lokastadanuvartate. 3.21**

For, whatever a great man does, that very thing other men also do; whatever standard he sets up, the generality of men follow the same.

In the previous verse (3.20), Śrī Bhagavān emphasized **lokasaṅgraha**—the **preservation of social order**—as a key reason why even enlightened souls like King Janaka continued to perform their duties. Now He provides the **psychological and social basis** behind it: **people emulate what they observe**, especially from those they respect or depend on.

- **yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhaḥ** – *Whatever the noble or superior person does*

The word **śreṣṭhaḥ** refers to anyone regarded as an **example**—a **leader**, a **parent**, a **teacher**, a **saint**, or even someone **senior in age or position**. Their conduct sets the **tone for society**.

- **tat tad eva itaraḥ janaḥ** – *That same is followed by ordinary people*

Whether consciously or subconsciously, **people imitate those they admire or rely upon**. Children, students, and citizens all **absorb cues** from their immediate environment—especially from those they trust.

- **sa yat pramāṇaṃ kurute** – *Whatever standard they establish*

The term **pramāṇa** here refers to a **model of behaviour or reference point**. A leader’s words may be forgotten, but their **actions become the benchmark**. Even small behaviors can create **lasting impressions**.

- **lokaḥ tad anuvartate** – *The world follows that example*

Society follows the example set by its **visible figures**. This verse is not just about kings and saints; it applies to **every individual who has influence over another**—especially within the **family or classroom**.

Practical Illustration - The Home as a Classroom:

A father receives a phone call at home and, not wanting to answer, tells his child: **“Tell them I’m not at home.”**

The child obeys, but something **deeper happens**—he **learns that lying is acceptable** if it serves convenience.

Later in life, when the same child lies to parents, teachers, or society, the root lies in **that seemingly trivial act**, which was observed and **absorbed as normal**.

Elders may give **lectures on honesty**, but **children learn more from behaviour than from instruction**. Thus, this verse is a call to all—especially parents, teachers, and leaders—to understand that:

- **Our conduct shapes character,**
- **Our daily actions set the tone,**
- And even **casual shortcuts** can have **lifelong consequences**.

Key Takeaway:

Whether you are a **king** or a **common householder**, a **monk** or a **business leader**, your life is **being watched and emulated**. You are already a **role model** to someone. Therefore:

- Set the **right example**,
- Live your **values publicly**,
- Let your **life be your loudest teaching**.

**“Speak the truth” is a good message.
But “Live the truth” is a powerful example.**

The Gītā teaches that **real leadership is by example, not instruction.**

To make this principle even more powerful, Śrī Bhagavān will now present **His conduct as the highest standard.** Though He has **nothing to gain**, He continues to act **for the sake of upholding Dharma and guiding humanity.**

3.22

**na me pārthāsti kartavyam(n), triṣu lokeṣu kiñcana,
nānavāptamavāptavyam(ṁ), varta eva ca karmaṇi. 3.22**

Arjuna, there is no duty in all the three worlds for Me to perform, nor is there anything worth attaining, unattained by Me; yet I continue to work.

In Verse 3.21, Śrī Bhagavān emphasized the **power of example**—that **whatever a great person does**, the world follows. To **demonstrate this principle**, He now holds up **His own life as the ultimate example.**

Though being the **Supreme Lord**, completely free and self-sufficient, He still performs karma—for **lokasaṅgraha (world welfare)** and to set a **standard for humanity.**

- **na me pārtha āsti kartavyam** – *O Arjuna, there is no duty for Me*
Bhagavān directly states: **He is not bound by any duty.** As the **Ísvāra**, the controller of all creation, He is **not subject to the obligations** that govern embodied beings.
- **triṣu lokeṣu kiñcana** – *In all the three worlds*

The **three worlds** refer to **heaven (svarga), earth (martyaloka), and the nether worlds (pātāla).** Even in this vast structure of existence, **nothing compels Him to act.** There is no superior authority above Him.
- **na anavāptam avāptavyam** – *Nothing unattained remains to be attained*
Bhagavān has **nothing to gain or accomplish**—no **personal ambition**, no **desire unfulfilled**, no **goal remaining.** All that exists is already **within Him or by Him.**
- **varta eva ca karmaṇi** – *Yet I continue to engage in karma*
Despite having **no obligation**, He remains **engaged in action.** Why? To **uphold dharma**, maintain balance, and to **set an example** for humanity to follow.

Divine Example - Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Karma Yogi:

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has set the **highest ideal of Karma-Yoga** through His own life:

- As a **child in Gokul**, He used to **take cows for grazing**, lovingly caring for them.
- During the **Rājasūya Yajña of the Pāṇḍavas**, He **personally lifted the used leaf-plates** after the meal—tasks considered ‘low’ in worldly eyes, but sacred in His vision.

- In the Mahābhārata war, He took the role of a **charioteer for Arjuna**, bearing the dust and heat of the battlefield.
- After each day's war, He would **tend to the horses, clean their wounds, wash their bodies**, and serve them silently—**pure Karma-Yoga** without pride or expectation.

Even though He is the **Supreme Lord**, He never refrained from **any service**. His life was an unbroken **example of action without ego**.

Modern Inspiration - Pūjya Swami Govind Dev Giriji Maharaj:

A living embodiment of Karma-Yoga is **Param Pūjya Swami Govind Dev Giriji Maharaj**:

- Having embraced **Sannyāsa**, he has **nothing left to attain**.
- Yet, he remains **constantly active**, travelling across cities and villages, **delivering discourses, guiding seekers, and nurturing Sanātana Dharma**.
- Despite his extremely busy schedule, he ensures **daily Sandhyā-Vandana** and **nitya karma**, even though these are **not obligatory for a Sannyāsi**.
- He does this not for himself, but to **set an example**—to silently **teach the importance of discipline and inner purity**.

His selfless service and untiring karma show how the **realized ones act for the benefit of others**, just like Bhagavān.

Saint Dnyaneshwar Maharaj on Karma of Saints:

Sant Dnyāneshwar Maharaj, in his profound commentary on Karma Yoga, gives the following verses:

हे ऐसे असते स्वभावे म्हणोनि कर्म न सोडावे
ते विशेष प्रकारे आचरावे लागते संतांना ॥

Even though saints are naturally free from the need to act, they still take up action consciously—to guide the world through their conduct.

आंधळ्यापुढे मार्गात जैसा डोळस जातो चालत
तैसा अज्ञांसाठी करावा प्रकट धर्म आचरण सुज्ञांनी ॥

Just as a sighted person leads a blind man by hand, so too must the wise openly demonstrate Dharma through their life—for the benefit of those unaware of the path.

These lines **perfectly echo Bhagavān's message**—those who see must walk for those who cannot.

Key Takeaway:

Even the **Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa**, even **great saints and gurus**, who have **nothing to gain**, continue to **serve and act**—for the benefit of the world.

True Karma-Yoga is not about whether you **have to act**,
But whether you are **willing to act**, for the **good of others**.

This verse calls upon each of us:

- **Don't wait for personal gain** to act
- **Let your life be an example**

- **Act with humility, serve without pride**

In the next verse, Śrī Bhagavān will warn of the **consequences if He were to stop acting—social collapse and chaos**. This underscores that **neglecting one’s duty** can shake the foundations of Dharma itself.

3.23

**yadi hyahaṃ(n) na varteyaṃ(ñ), jātu karmaṇyatandritaḥ,
mama vartmānuvartante, manuṣyāḥ(ph) pārtha sarvaśaḥ. 3.23**

Should I not engage in action scrupulously at any time, great harm will come to the world; for, Arjuna, men follow My way in all matters.

This verse continues the divine reasoning of Śrī Bhagavān from the previous verse (3.22), where He declared that though He has nothing to gain, He still performs action. Now, He reveals **what would happen if He chose not to act**.

- **yadi hi ahaṃ na varteyaṃ** – *If I were not to act*
Bhagavān says: *Suppose I, the Supreme, stopped engaging in karma...*
- **jātu karmaṇi atandritaḥ** – *Even for a moment, without attentiveness or diligence*
“Atandritaḥ” means without laziness or negligence. Even a single moment of indifference in action by Bhagavān would have grave consequences.
- **mama vartma anuvartante manuṣyāḥ sarvaśaḥ** – *All human beings follow My path in every way*
Humans instinctively look up to leaders. They **imitate the conduct** of those they admire. If Bhagavān stops acting, others would also neglect their duties, believing inaction is divine. Thus, to **uphold Dharma** and maintain **worldly order**, the Divine Supreme stays active.

Why This Is Crucial:

This verse highlights the **responsibility of leadership**. When a person of stature acts carelessly, it impacts society far beyond personal consequence.

This is also **true in families**:

- If a father lies on the phone and tells the child to say “I’m not home,” the child learns that lying is acceptable.
- If elders skip duties, rituals, or ethics, the younger ones lose respect for those values.

Hence, **Śrī Kṛṣṇa acts, not out of need, but to guide the world by example**.

Story of a Saint - Power of Leading by Example:

A mother once approached a saint and said, “Maharaj, my son eats jaggery all day long. Even in the hot summer, when blood comes from his nose, he still continues to eat it. He even steals to satisfy this habit.

Please help and advise him.”

The saint listened and calmly said, “Bring him back after 15 days.”

The mother returned with the boy after 15 days. The saint lovingly took the child on his lap, patted his back and gently said, “Son, eating too much jaggery is harmful. It can spoil your health. Don’t eat it excessively.” Then he blessed the child.

After some time, the mother returned to thank the saint. She said, “Maharaj, my son has stopped eating jaggery except when given. But why didn’t you advise him the same on the first day?”

The saint replied with a smile, “Because I myself used to eat jaggery every day. I couldn’t honestly advise him unless I first gave up that habit. In those 15 days, I gave it up, and only then my words had strength.”

True leadership is living the advice you give.

Key Takeaway:

Nobility brings responsibility.

The higher your position, the greater your impact.

Be it a **king, teacher, parent, or elder**, your actions set the standard.

Let every action of ours be such that it **uplifts, inspires, and instructs**.

In the following verse, Śrī Bhagavān will elaborate further—showing how His **non-action would lead to societal chaos**, collapse of order, and destruction of harmony.

3.24

utsīdeyurime lokā, na kuryāṃ(ñ) karma cedaham, sañkarasya ca kartā syām, upahanyāmimāḥ(ph) prajāḥ. 3.24

If I ever cease to act, these worlds would perish; nay, I should prove to be the cause of confusion, and of the destruction of these people.

This verse continues from the previous two (3.22 and 3.23), where Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains why even He, the Self-sufficient Supreme Being, continues to act. Now, He emphasizes the **consequences of inaction**.

- **utsīdeyur ime lokāḥ** – *These worlds would perish*
If Śrī Kṛṣṇa stops acting, the **cosmic balance** would collapse. His actions sustain the universe in harmony. The natural and moral order would decay.
- **na kuryāṃ karma cet aham** – *If I do not perform action*
A direct assertion: **If I abstain from karma**, it will not just be personal neglect—it will have global impact.
- **sañkarasya ca kartā syām** – *I would become the cause of social disorder*
“Saṅkara” means confusion of roles, duties, and varṇāśrama order. Without dharmic action from those in leadership, society descends into **chaos and ethical anarchy**.

- **upahanyām imāḥ prajāḥ** – *I would destroy these people*

Not by violence, but by **abandoning His example**, He would cause spiritual, moral, and societal ruin.

It is a strong warning: **Neglecting your duty can destroy others**, even if done passively.

Reflection on Cosmic Order:

- The **Earth** holds us through its **gravity**.
- The **Earth revolves** in its orbit because of the **Sun God's gravitational pull**.
- The **Sun**, in turn, is held in place within the **Akāśa Gaṅgā (Milky Way)**.
- This vast, expanding **universe**, who sustains it? Who created it? Where will it finally dissolve?

It is the **Paramātmā** who upholds the universe. He is the creator, sustainer, and the ultimate refuge.

If the **Sun God** were to cease functioning, **life would cease**. Yet, if praised, the Sun might humbly respond:

“I do nothing. I remain where I am. It is **your Earth that rotates**, creating day and night. It is **due to My light** that all work is possible, but I claim no credit.”

Even the **Sun**, a devatā with immense power, **acts without attachment**, silently sustaining life—just like Bhagavān describes here.

Key Takeaway:

Inaction by the capable is not neutrality—it is destruction.

When leaders, parents, teachers, saints, or scholars fail to act righteously, they don't just fall—they **drag society down with them**.

By continuing action, even without personal need, one becomes a **pillar of sustenance** for the world.

In the next verse, Śrī Bhagavān turns attention toward the wise and realized ones—explaining why **they too must act** in the same spirit, for the welfare of the world.

3.25

**saktāḥ(kh) karmaṇyavidvāṃso, yathā kurvanti bhārata,
kuryādvidvāṃstathāsaktaḥ(ś), cikīrṣurlokasaṅgraham. 3.25**

Arjuna, as the unwise act with attachment, so should the wise man, with a view to maintain the world order, act without attachment.

This verse directly follows the theme of **leadership by action** explained in the previous verses (3.22–3.24). Here, Śrī Bhagavān shifts the focus from Himself to the **wise human beings** — the **Jñānīs** and **leaders of society**.

- **saktāḥ karmaṇi avidvāṃsaḥ yathā kurvanti** – *As the unwise (ignorant) act attached to their work*

The common man (avidvān) is naturally attached to karma because he sees it as **the means to achieve personal desires**. He identifies with the body and ego, and so he works with the mindset: **“This is my action; the result is mine.”**

- **tathā kuryāt vidvān asaktaḥ** – *So too should the wise act, but without attachment*

The **wise (vidvān)**, even though free from personal desire, must continue to act, **but without ego or expectation**. He must act **not out of need**, but **out of responsibility**.

- **cikīrṣur loka-saṅgraham** – *With the intention of maintaining societal harmony*
“Loka-saṅgraha” means **preserving the social order**, inspiring the masses by example.
The wise man’s selfless work **uplifts and unites society**, whereas his inaction may **confuse or mislead** others.

Higher Realisation - No 'Other'

As the wise person matures, he comes to realise that the **so-called 'other' is no other at all**. Everywhere he looks, he sees the **same Paramātmā**.

Such saints **do not possess 'bhed dṛṣṭi'** (vision of duality). Their hearts melt at the sorrow of others and rejoice in others' happiness. They **serve all beings** not out of obligation, but out of **oneness with all**. For them, karma is not a duty — it is a **natural flow of love**.

Parallel with Previous Verses:

- In **3.22**, Bhagavān said He has no personal need to act.
- In **3.23**, He explained that people follow His example.
- In **3.24**, He warned that neglecting duty would destroy society.
- Now in **3.25**, He directs the same principle to **all wise people**.

Key Takeaway:

Even the wise must act—not for personal gain, but to guide the world.

Action without attachment is the highest example of Karma Yoga.

Real renunciation is not leaving work—it is working without ego and desire.

And finally, in the eyes of the realised saint, **there is no 'other'. All is one**.

3.26

**na buddhibhedaṃ(ñ) janayed, ajñānāṃ(ñ) karmasaṅginām,
joṣayetsarVākarmāṇi, vidvānyuktaḥ(s) samācaran. 3.26**

A wise man established in the Self should not unsettle the mind of the ignorant attached to action, but should get them to perform all their duties, duly performing his own duties.

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān gives a subtle and compassionate instruction to the enlightened — **how to guide the ignorant without causing confusion or discouragement**.

- **na buddhi-bhedaṃ janayet** – *He should not create conflict or confusion in understanding*

The enlightened person **should not disturb the mindset** of those who are still engaged in action with attachment (karma-saṅgī ajñānīs). Their actions may be selfish or desire-driven, but these actions still keep them within the circle of dharma and societal order.

- **ajñānām karma-saṅginām** – *Among the ignorant who are attached to karma*
Most people act out of desire, ambition, or duty with attachment. This is not ideal, but it's better than inaction or turning away from responsibility.
- **joṣayet sarva-karmāṇi** – *He should encourage all their duties*
Rather than criticizing or preaching renunciation, the wise should **inspire continuity of action** — gradually leading others by their example.
- **vidvān yuktaḥ samācāran** – *The wise, being self-disciplined, should perform his own duties*
The best way to teach is **through silent action**. When the wise act mindfully, they **indirectly uplift others** by setting a standard of selfless, disciplined action.

Practical Illustration:

An enlightened person sees beyond ego and duality. But if he tells a beginner, “You are not the body, stop worrying about food and job,” the result may be **disastrous**. People must grow gradually — through action, through dharma, through purification.

Therefore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says: **do not unsettle their mind**.

In 3.25, Bhagavān said that the wise should act without attachment for **loka-saṅgraha** (welfare of society). In this verse (3.26), He clarifies how: **not by preaching detachment, but by acting with steadiness and letting others act too, without disturbing them**.

Key Takeaway:

True wisdom does not shout — it **guides gently**.

Do not disturb others’ faith; instead, **strengthen their action** by being an example.

Lead not by preaching, but by practising — this is the highest Karma Yoga.

3.27

prakṛteḥ(kh) kriyamāṇāni, guṇaiḥ(kh) karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ, ahaṅkāravimūḍhātmā, kartāhamiti manyate. 3.27

In fact all actions are being performed by the modes of Prakṛti (Primordial Nature). The fool, whose mind is deluded by egoism, thinks: “I am the doer.”

This verse penetrates deeply into the illusion of **ego and doership**, and is a cornerstone for understanding **Karma Yoga**.

- **prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni** – *All actions are done by Prakṛti (Nature)*
Prakṛti, or the material nature, is the true field of activity. It governs the body, mind, and senses — all actions arise from its functioning.

- **guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ** – *All actions are done through its three guṇas*

The three guṇas — sattva (purity), rajas (activity), and tamas (inertia) — are the **driving forces**

behind every karma. Even thinking, eating, speaking, or walking happen due to this **interplay of guṇas**.

- **ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā** – *One whose self is deluded by egoism*
“Ahaṅkāra” is the sense of “I”-ness. The ignorant one becomes **bewildered by ego**, thinking that they are the independent doer of actions.
- **kartā aham iti manyate** – *Thinks, “I am the doer”*
This false belief — that “I am acting, I am the controller, I deserve the result” — is the **root cause of bondage** and suffering. In truth, the **Self is merely a witness**.

In Chapter 14 of the Gītā, it is explained that **Prakṛti is made up of three guṇas** — **Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas**. The **body** too is a manifestation of these three guṇas. Therefore, all action is performed through the body, **by these guṇas of Prakṛti**.

The **one who says “this is my body” is not the doer** — the body itself is acting as per the influence of these guṇas.

All work happens due to the presence of the **Ātman (Self)** — like electricity enabling a fan to move. But the Ātman **does not act**; it merely **enables**.

So, **actions are done by Prakṛti** through the guṇas, **in the presence of the Ātman**, but due to identification with the body and ego, we think “I am the doer.” This is the delusion caused by **ahaṅkāra** (egoism).

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān points out that only the ego-deluded person imagines himself to be the doer. In the next verse, He describes the **wise one**, who knows the true nature of action — that the guṇas alone act on the guṇas — and thus remains unattached.

Key Takeaway:

The root cause of bondage is the egoistic belief: “I am the doer.”

In reality, all actions are carried out by Prakṛti. The wise perform karma as an instrument, not as an owner. Let go of the ego and realise your true nature — the ever-free witness, the Self.

3.28

**tattvavittu mahābāho, guṇakarmavibhāgayoḥ,
guṇā guṇeṣu vartanta, iti matvā na sajjate. 3.28**

However, he who has true insight into the respective spheres of Guṇas (modes of Prakṛti) and their actions, holding that it is the Guṇas (in the form of the senses, mind, etc.) that move among the Guṇas (objects of perception), does not get attached to them, Arjuna.

This verse contrasts the **wise (tattvavit)** with the ego-deluded of the previous verse. The enlightened one knows the reality of action and remains unaffected by it.

- **tattvavit tu mahābāho** – *But the one who knows the truth, O mighty-armed*
The wise person, who knows the essence (tattva) of action and nature, is not confused by what appears to be his own doing.

- **guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ** – of the distinction between guṇas and their functions

He understands the **difference between the guṇas (qualities of Prakṛti) and karma (actions)** arising out of those guṇas. For example, hunger is tamas, effort to find food is rajas, and offering it to someone else is sattva.

- **guṇā guṇeṣu vartanta** – The guṇas interact with the guṇas
The senses (formed of guṇas) engage with the objects (also composed of guṇas). It is a play within Prakṛti.
Eyes see forms, ears hear sounds — all this is one aspect of nature interacting with another.
- **iti matvā na sajjate** – Knowing this, he does not get attached
The wise does not identify himself with the action or the result. He sees the **Self as separate**, uninvolved, and **remains unattached**.

In verse 3.27, Bhagavān explained that those deluded by ego falsely believe “I am the doer.” This verse shows the **opposite mindset of the wise** — they understand that it is only **Prakṛti acting within itself**.

The wise know: “This body-mind complex belongs to Prakṛti, not to me. I am only a witness.”

Sant Kabir Das says:

जो कुछ किया तुम किया, मैं कुछ किया नहीं।
कहैं कभी जो मैं किया, तो तुम ही हो मुझ माहिं ॥

Whatever is done, is done by You (the Divine); I have done nothing. If ever I say, "I did this", then it is only You who resides within me and acts through me.

This bhāva (attitude) aligns perfectly with the message of this verse — the true devotee or wise one does not claim doership.

Key Takeaway:

Wisdom lies in knowing that **the senses, made of guṇas, interact with objects, also made of guṇas**.

The Self, the real 'I', does nothing.

This understanding frees a person from attachment, pride, and sorrow.

To live wisely is to act without identifying with action.

Looking Ahead:

The wise should try to understand:

- Who truly performs the action?
- What must be done to gain this insight?
- How to convert daily work into **Karma Yoga**?

These questions and their answers will be explored further in the upcoming verses in the next session.

The session concluded with offering this study at the **sacred feet of Gurudev**. It was followed by an engaging **Question and Answer session**, where various spiritual doubts and applications of Karma Yoga were discussed.

Question And Answer Session

Chamma Agarwal Ji

Q: One of my close relatives — also a friend’s husband — has created immense trouble for his own family. He has filed over 50 cases and FIRs against people who didn’t agree with him. He has deeply strained social relationships. My friend, his wife, is emotionally exhausted. She asked me if I can help in any way. Her husband refuses to listen to anyone and behaves as if he is God himself.

A: The **Bhagavadgītā** is a transformative scripture intended for *those who seek help for themselves with humility*. Just as Bhagavān Śrī Krishna imparted divine wisdom **only after Arjuna surrendered as a disciple**, the Gītā’s message truly transforms when approached with surrender and openness.

“Aham karta” — This false ego is the greatest barrier.

When a person is deeply consumed by **ahaṅkāra** (ego) and becomes **vimūḍha** (deluded), even divine wisdom cannot reach them — unless they themselves are ready to receive it.

In such cases, **what lies in our hands is to support the person who is suffering — the wife** — and guide her toward the path shown in the Bhagavadgītā. If she walks the path of wisdom, detachment, and inner strength shown by Bhagavān, she can find inner peace and the strength to face her circumstances.

The **Bhagavadgītā is not just a scripture**; it is the **literary form of Bhagavān Himself**. Its effect is as direct and divine as Arjuna experienced.

We often wish to change others, but:

“We cannot reform others by force — we can only inspire them by example.”

The best we can do is live in a way that sets a noble example and uplifts those around us.

Bhagavadgītā says:

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत्।

One must uplift oneself by one’s own efforts, and never degrade oneself.

Helping others is truly possible **only for realized saints**. If someone surrenders at the feet of a **true saint**, then transformation becomes possible. Without surrender, no amount of external advice or help can penetrate the armor of ego.

Sushma Gupta Ji

Q: The recent Air India flight mishap at Ahmedabad has deeply shaken us all. It raises questions in my mind. Since Bhagavān is all-knowing, was this incident His will? Or did the people on board simply have only that much lifespan?

A: It was indeed a tragic and unsettling incident. But to understand such events, the **Bhagavadgītā invites us to look beyond immediate emotions and view life through the lens of eternal truth**.

What we call *death* is simply the departure of the **body**, not of the **Self (Ātmā)**. This foundational teaching is introduced in Chapter 2. The body changes continuously — from childhood to youth to old age — yet the individual continues to say, *“This is me.”* But who is this “me” that has remained unchanged throughout?

Bhagavān clearly says: **The Self is eternal, unchanging, indestructible.**

When the time destined for a soul is over, the body is left behind — but the Self continues on its journey.

A profound story from the **Garuḍa Purāṇa** illustrates this well:

Once, the Devatās had assembled for an important deliberation. Bhagavān Viṣṇu, Bhagavān Śiva, Brahmājī, and Yamarāja were present. A pair of birds on a nearby tree saw Yamarāja and became terrified, fearing their end was near. They pleaded with **Garuḍa**, the divine eagle and vehicle of Viṣṇu, to take them far away. Garuḍa compassionately carried them all the way to the Himalayas and left them there, thinking he had protected them.

After the assembly, Yamarāja asked Garuḍa about the birds. Garuḍa said he had taken them to the Himalayas to save them.

Yamarāja responded calmly, “That’s perfect. Their time had indeed come — and they were destined to leave this world in the Himalayas. I was only wondering how they would get there in time.”

Even while trying to escape fate, the soul is unknowingly guided towards it.

Destiny is not imposed — it unfolds as per the soul’s own karmic design.

The **Bhagavadgītā** doesn’t only teach us how to live; it also teaches **how to leave** — with peace, awareness, and freedom.

In **Chapter 6**, Bhagavān describes where the soul goes after leaving the body.

In **Chapter 8**, He teaches how to **prepare for death**, and how to attain the highest through remembrance at that final moment. The **essence of wisdom (jñāna)** is to know our **real identity** — that we are not the body, but the eternal Ātmā.

Living with this awareness, performing our duties with sincerity and detachment, brings **clarity and fearlessness**.

Let us pray for those souls and offer our actions in their memory — and meanwhile, strive to understand who we truly are.

Basanti Sahu Ji

Q: You mentioned the terms *Karma* and *Kārya*. Could you kindly explain the difference once again?

A: Certainly.

In Sanskrit, **‘Karma’** simply means **action** — any action, whether good or bad, intentional or unintentional. For example, even acts like **stealing** or **drinking alcohol** are technically *karma*, because they are actions. However, such actions are **not** called **‘Kārya’**.

‘Kārya’ refers to **that karma which is right, appropriate, and dhārmic** — that which *ought to be done*.

Let’s understand it through some analogies from Sanskrit:

- Liquid that is fit for drinking is called **‘Peya’**.
- A song that is fit for singing is called **‘Geya’**.
- Likewise, an action that is **fit to be performed** is called **‘Kārya’**.

So, while all *kārya* are *karma*, not all *karma* are *kārya*.

In the **Bhagavadgītā**, **Bhagavān** advises us to perform only 'kārya karma' — actions that are aligned with duty, righteousness, and the larger good. Actions that purify the mind and lead us towards liberation are considered *kārya*. The path of **Karma Yoga** begins by recognizing this distinction — and committing to performing *kārya*, not just any karma.



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Thank you-For reading the summary

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

Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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