

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 8: Akṣara-Brahma-Yoga

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## Unraveling the Mysteries of Life, Death, and the Eternal: Arjuna's Questions and Bhagavān's Revealing Answers on Om̐, Karma, the Self, and the Supreme Goal

The name of **Chapter 8** of the Bhagavad Gītā is **Akṣara Brahma Yoga - The Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman**

The session commenced with deep prajwalan, the customary lighting of the lamp, prayers to the Supreme, and salutations to all the Gurus.

**Vasudeva Sutam Devam, Kansa Chāṇūra Mardanam,  
Devakī Parama Ānandam, Kṛṣṇam Vande Jagadgurum.**

**Yogeśam Saccidānandam, Vāsudeva Rājapriyam,  
Dharma Saṁsthāpakam Vīram, Kṛṣṇo Vande Jagadgurum.**

**Śrī Guru Caraṇa Kamalabhyo Namaḥ.**

By the supremely auspicious grace of Bhagavān, a rare and sacred moment has dawned in the lives of the seekers—a moment of spiritual awakening, of turning toward the eternal wisdom of the Bhagavad Gītā. Whether it is due to the merit of this very birth, or the fruits of noble actions from previous lives... whether it is the blessings of the ancestors or the unseen grace of a saintly being upon the soul—something has surely ripened. And that something has led them to the lotus feet of the Gītā, with the desire to make this human birth meaningful, successful, and uplifted.

In truth, many who find themselves on this path have often begun with confusion. The scriptures may have been read, the verses chanted—but the understanding seemed elusive. The terms were difficult. The concepts unfamiliar. Even while reading the meaning, the heart would whisper: *"Let this chapter pass quickly... it's too complex."*

There was a time when the **Akṣara Brahma Yoga**—this very eighth chapter—felt like a mountain, heavy and burdensome. As children sometimes read a textbook chapter just to get it over with, without truly understanding it, so too was the early experience of this chapter for many. But then, a shift occurred. When the teachings of revered saints and realized masters began to touch the intellect and the heart, the same chapter that once felt like a burden now began to bloom with joy and clarity. And with that blossoming, came ananda—the quiet delight of recognition and understanding.

In the seventh chapter, Bhagavān had begun revealing the profound truths of **Jñāna-Vijñāna Yoga**—the Yoga of Knowledge and Wisdom. But as the discourse progressed, a few unfamiliar and rather profound terms emerged. In the third verse of Chapter 7, Bhagavān spoke of:

**"saṁsiddhānām kaścid mām vetti tattvataḥ"** (7.3)

And later, in the concluding verses, He declared:

**"sādhyaḥ saṅkalpasamyuktaḥ sā yātrā yānti te param"**

But as Chapter 8 begins, Bhagavān speaks of **Om**, of **adhyātma**, **adhiyajña**, **adhibhūta**, **adhidaiva**, and the critical moment of **prayāṇa-kāla**—the time of departure.

Bhagavān says in verse 7.30:

**"sadhibhūtaadhidaivam mām sādhiyajñam ca ye viduḥ  
prayāṇa-kāle'pi ca mām te vidur yukta-cetasah"** (7.30)

Here, He speaks of those who know Him in His true nature as **adhibhūta**, **adhidaiva**, and **adhiyajña**, and remember Him even at the final moment—such seekers are truly united with Him.

Now, for Arjuna, these terms were entirely new and unfamiliar. He had been following the teachings on **Jñāna** and **Vijñāna** with utmost sincerity, but suddenly, Bhagavān introduced these layered concepts that seemed to belong to a higher dimension of understanding. It was as if a father were narrating a historical story and suddenly mentioned a character unknown to the child—and the child, curious and confused, interrupts: *"Wait! Before you continue, tell me—who is this person you just mentioned?"*

In the same spirit, Arjuna too interrupted—not to challenge, but to seek clarity.

Thus begins Chapter 8—**Akṣara Brahma Yoga**—with Arjuna's humble, sevenfold inquiry:

## 8.1

**arjuna uvāca**

**kiṁ(n) tadbrahma kimadhyātmaṁ(ñ), kiṁ(ñ) karma puruṣottama,  
adhibhūtaṁ(ñ) ca kiṁ(m) proktam, adhidaivaṁ(ñ) kimucyate. 8.1**

Arjuna said:

Ṛṣṇā, what is that Brahma (Absolute), what is Adhyātma ( Spirit), and what is Karma (Action)? What is called Adhibhūta (Matter) and what is termed as Adhidaiva (Divine Intelligence)?

*"What is that **Brahman**? What is **adhyātma**? What is **karma**, O Puruṣottama? What is referred to as **adhibhūta**, and what is called **adhidaiva**?"*

Here, Arjuna places **six distinct questions** in a single verse, asking for clarity on the unfamiliar yet vital terms that Bhagavān mentioned.

## 8.2

### **adhiyajñaḥ(kh) kathaṃ(ñ) ko'tra, dehe'sminmadhusūdana, prayānakāle ca kathaṃ(ñ), jñeyo'si niyatātmabhiḥ. 8.2**

Kṛṣṇa, who is Adhiyajña here and how does he dwell in the body? And how are you to be realized at the time of death by those of steadfast mind?

What is *adhiyajña*? Who is it, and how does it dwell within the body? And most significantly—how can a person with a steady mind come to know Bhagavān at the moment of death?

Among the seven questions posed by Arjuna, the first six are deeply technical in nature. But the seventh question—**prayānakāle ca katham jñeyaḥ**—touches the very core of spiritual inquiry. It is this final question that becomes the centerpiece of the entire chapter. While Bhagavān responds to the first six in just two verses, the answer to the seventh spans the rest of the chapter, twenty-eight verses in total, testifying to its immense significance.

Bhagavān, in His boundless compassion, does not merely offer an answer; He unveils a deep spiritual mystery. In doing so, He reveals the paths of **nirguṇa** and **saguṇa upāsana**, and introduces profound concepts such as **uttarāyaṇa** and **dakṣiṇāyaṇa**, which, when first encountered, can seem truly mind-bending.

It is said that Bhagavān smiled upon hearing Arjuna's questions. For, as if He already knew, Arjuna was bound to stumble here. Had Arjuna remained silent, it would have implied inattentiveness. But his questioning revealed sincere engagement. And Bhagavān was pleased, for a seeker who pauses to ask, to reflect, and to seek clarity is indeed attentive.

With divine grace, Bhagavān begins His reply:

## 8.3

### **śrībhagavānuvāca akṣaraṃ(m) brahma paRāmaṃ(m), svabhāvo'dhyātmamucyate, bhūtabhāvodbhaVākaro, visargaḥ(kh) karmasaṃjñitaḥ. 8.3**

Śrī Bhagavan said:

The supreme Indestructible is Brahma, one's own Self (the individual soul) is called AdhyAtmā; and the Primal resolve of God (Visarga), which brings forth the existence of beings, is called Karma (Action).

The imperishable (**akṣara**) is called **Brahma**. One's essential nature (**svabhāva**) is referred to as **adhyātma**. The offering which gives rise to the being of all creatures—the act of creation—is known as **karma**.

To truly grasp what **akṣara** means, one must turn to Chapter 15 of the Gītā, where Bhagavān speaks of two fundamental concepts: **kṣara** (the perishable) and **akṣara** (the imperishable). **Kṣara** is that which constantly undergoes change and decay. The very word is related to **kṣaya**—decline, deterioration.

Consider the human body. The moment it is born, it begins to change. Hair grows—not suddenly, but constantly, even if imperceptibly. If one were to place a high-speed camera over a patch of skin, the growth would be visible second by second. The body is in a perpetual state of flux—emerging, existing, and ultimately perishing.

**Kṣara** undergoes these three stages: **utpatti** (origin), **sthiti** (existence), and **laya** (dissolution). Everything born is bound to die. Every created object must someday be destroyed.

In contrast, **akṣara** is that which remains unchanged in all three times—past, present, and future. It is unaffected by time. **Kāla** has no authority over it.

To help seekers understand this profound truth, the seers of the Upaniṣads offer evocative analogies:

- 1. Remove the ocean from the waves—what remains? **Waves minus ocean = nothing.**
- 2. Remove gold from ornaments—what remains? **Ornaments minus gold = nothing.**

The forms seen in jewelry owe their existence to gold. Without gold, there is no ornament.

- 3. Remove clay from pots—what remains? **Pots minus clay = nothing.**

And finally:

- 4. Remove Brahma from this “I”—what remains? The body without Brahma is merely an inert mass.

To illustrate this, consider the scenario of a loved one on the deathbed. Family members rush the person to the hospital, willing to spend lakhs to preserve life. “*Do whatever it takes, doctor, but save them,*” they plead. But if that life slips away, the same person is now referred to as a *dead body*. The very individual for whom no cost was too high is suddenly someone to be hurriedly disposed of.

Even the most attached family will not wish to keep the body at home for long. “*How soon can we perform the cremation?*” becomes the only question. Ice boxes are arranged, final rites hurried. All because the animating force, the *cetana*, has departed.

What changed? The body still weighs the same. The skin still shines. Not a gram has shifted. But with the departure of Brahma, all value is lost.

This is the secret. The body has no intrinsic worth. Its value comes from the **ātmā** that resides within—the imperishable, the **akṣara**.

And yet, throughout life, one worries only for the body. Creams, medicines, supplements—all for this ever-changing **kṣara**. But how much concern is there for the **cetana**, the true Self?

That **akṣara**—unchanging, eternal, beyond time—that alone is **Brahma**. That alone is real.

**Brahma meṃ brahma ke sivā kuch bhī nahīṃ.**

In **Bālakāṇḍa**, **Goswāmī Tulasīdās** offers a deeply profound and poetic depiction of Brahma-tattva. Through Doha 117, he reveals the transcendental nature of the Supreme Being—beyond form, beyond senses, yet fully potent in all divine activities:

"बिनु पग चलइ सुनहि बिनु काना।  
कर बिनु कर्म करहिं विधि नाना।।  
आनन रहित सकल रस भोगी।  
बिनु वानी वक्ता वड जोगी।।  
तन विनु परसु नयन विनु देखा।  
गृहइ घ्राण बिनु वास असेषा।।  
असि सव भाँति अलौकिक करनी।  
महिमा जासु जाइ नहिं बरनी॥

The Being being spoken of here—Brahman—needs no feet to move, no ears to hear, no hands to act. Without a mouth, It enjoys all rasas (essences). It is the supreme speaker without a tongue, touches all without a body, sees all without eyes, and perceives every fragrance without a nose. Its every action is *alaukik*—utterly beyond the mundane. Its glory, indeed, remains beyond articulation.

This entire composition is an exquisite example of "**Vibhāvanā Alaṅkāra**"—a poetic ornament where actions are portrayed happening in the absence of their usual cause. In the material realm, action is always preceded by cause; but when it comes to Brahman, the cause and effect are non-different. There is no distinction between **kartā** (doer) and **karma** (action). All actions manifest without dependence on instruments or faculties. And this, indeed, cannot be logically proved or intellectually captured.

Even if all the beings from all the three worlds come together in contemplation, they will still fall short. For Brahman is **achintya**—inconceivable, and **aprameya**—immeasurable. The intellect, being composed of inert matter (**jaḍa**), cannot fathom that which is fully conscious and infinite.

We may read, hear, and speak of Brahman, but what we comprehend is limited by the instrument we use—the mind. Human intelligence, no matter how vast, remains finite. And the infinite cannot be grasped by the finite. Everyone speaks of the "infinite", the "**ananta**". We hear of infinite galaxies, **ananta ākāśagaṅgāyem**—but can anyone truly comprehend what "infinite" means?

The mind tries to build a structure—if there are 10 galaxies, there must be 12, if 12 then 25, then 1000, then a million... but then what? The question remains unanswered. It is because the buddhi is conditioned to think in terms of number, limit, and end. And therefore, the infinite remains forever beyond it.

Bhagavān calls this **Paramākṣara**—the Supreme Imperishable.

"**Śvabhāvo 'dhyātma ucyate**"—that which is the intrinsic nature of the Self is termed as **adhyātma**. Bhagavān draws a distinction between two aspects: the perishable nature of **prakṛti** and the imperishable reality of the Self.

Prakṛti is of two kinds—**aparā** and **parā**. The **aparā prakṛti** is all that we can see, touch, measure, and comprehend. The body, the senses, the thoughts—they all fall within this realm. But **parā prakṛti**, the supreme nature, is that which animates this body, which cannot be perceived through any sense or mental faculty.

A simple example may help. We can see a tube light shining, but can we point and say exactly where in it electricity resides? No. Electricity pervades it, but its presence is not bound to a form. In the same way, the conscious Self pervades this inert body, but it remains beyond grasp.

"**Svabhāva**" means the nature of the **sva**—the Self. However, even the notion of "I" (**aham**) is often misunderstood. When people say, "Don't be so full of 'I'," they refer to the ego—**smaller 'i'**. But the Self referred to in the scriptures is the **capital 'I'**, the unchanging Witness.

There is a fundamental difference between the ego and the real Self. The ego, **ahaṅkāra**, is fleeting and tied to identity—this body, this name. But the Self, the one who says "I" when five years old, and again at twenty, and then at eighty—that Self remains unchanged, even as the body transforms entirely.

One may not recognize an old photograph of oneself unless told—but the feeling of "I", that inner presence, remains steady. That changeless "I" is the **Jīva** in its truest sense. Hence, the word **adhyaṭma**—from **adhi** (beyond) and **ātmā** (Self)—means the knowledge that removes the veil over the Self and reveals its true nature.

Now Bhagavān speaks of "**bhūta-bhāva-karo visargaḥ karma-sañjñitaḥ**". This phrase may appear dense but reveals a subtle truth. That act which gives rise to the becoming of beings—the projection of the world—is called **karma**.

To understand this, one might consider a relatable scenario from the material world. In a war situation, say between Russia and Ukraine, the President might decide upon war. But he doesn't execute the war himself. He shares the thought with his generals, who pass it on to their commanders, who in turn instruct the soldiers. The soldier, when asked why he is fighting, will say—"I am obeying orders."

The action is not his own volition. It originated from a thought in the President's mind. But that thought alone didn't start the war. It was only when the idea was communicated, relinquished by him to the generals, and eventually acted upon by the soldier that it became **karma**.

In this metaphor, the **President's thought is the bhāva**, the feeling. The **surrender of that bhāva is visarga**. And the **manifest action on the ground is karma**.

When the **Samāṣṭi** Brahman relinquishes the state of pure unity, creation appears. Similarly, when the **Vyaṣṭi** Jīva relinquishes its bhāva of identification with the Self, it enters karma. This is the secret of creation and bondage.

Thus, the Supreme, being actionless, appears to perform all actions. Being formless, it manifests through all forms. Being indescribable, it is spoken of through words, yet forever remains beyond them.

Such is the brilliance of the Brahma-tattva—**ja nahim bharanī**—a glory that cannot be contained.

As that inner thought is renounced and passed on successively—from the mind of one to another—it finally takes form as action when it reaches the last in line, just like a soldier who carries out a command originating from a distant authority. The initial thought itself is not action; it is the renunciation of that thought—its transmission into execution—that turns it into karma.

To illustrate: when one feels a sudden craving for jalebis, it is merely a desire. No action occurs. Desires come and go countless times a day. But every desire does not lead to karma. Only when one acts on it—either by going to the shop or instructing someone to fetch jalebis—that thought becomes karma. This is **visargaḥ karmasamjñitaḥ**—the offering of intent becomes the action.

When the cosmic Self—**Brahman**—relinquishes a thought, the entire creation manifests. When that same **Brahman** withdraws it, dissolution follows. In the **samaṣṭi** (collective or cosmic realm), the manifestation and dissolution of the universe arise from this renunciation of thought. In the **vyāṣṭi** (individual), karma springs forth from the relinquishment of personal intent.

Bhagavān then reveals a profound truth to Arjuna:

#### 8.4

### **adhibhūtaṃ(ñ) kṣaro bhāvaḥ(ph), puruṣaścādhidaivatam, adhiyajño'hamevātra, dehe dehabhṛtām vara. 8.4**

All perishable objects are Adhibhūta, the shining Puruṣa (Brahma) is Adhidaiva and in this body I Myself, dwelling as the inner witness, am Adhiyajña, O Arjuna !

The perishable entities—all that arises and perishes—are termed **adhibhūta**. The primal cosmic being (**Puruṣa**) who presides over the deities is **adhidaiva**. And as for **adhiyajña**, the indwelling presence within this very body who accepts and oversees every act of worship—that is Bhagavān Himself.

**Goswami Tulsidās** wonderfully echoes this concept in **Rāmcharitmānas** with a chaupāī:

Gochar jaha lag man jayi, so sab māyā jānu bhāi  
Wherever the mind and senses can reach, all that is but māyā, dear one.

**Gochar** means that which is perceptible through the senses. All that is graspable by the mind and senses belongs to the realm of the **adhibhūta**—it is part of the phenomenal world.

Earlier, Bhagavān had spoken of **parā** and **aparā prakṛti**. The **aparā prakṛti** is the lower nature—all that is visible, tangible, conceivable. It includes the body, the elements, and all mutable things. All these fall under **adhibhūta**.

The **adhidaiva** refers to the divine presiding deities of the senses:

- The eyes are empowered by **Sūrya** (the sun).
- The nose functions through the element of **Pṛthvī** (earth).
- The hands act under the strength of **Indra**.
- The feet move through the energy of **Viṣṇu**.

And this is precisely why, in the Sanātana tradition, reverence is paid not to the head or hands—but to the feet. Though hands are washed frequently and may appear more hygienic, it is the feet that are offered obeisance. Why? Because through touching the feet, one bows to **Nārāyaṇa**, who empowers movement, and in doing so, offers devotion to the Supreme within the other being.

A beautiful analogy arises here, connecting the Gītā with the *Rāmcharitmānas*. As it is often said: the Gītā is theoretical science, and the *Rāmcharitmānas* is applied science. What Bhagavān speaks in the Gītā, Bhagavān Rāma lives in the **Mānas**. For instance, in **Uttarakāṇḍa**, the following doha and chaupāī illuminate the working of the senses:

गो गोचर जहँ लगि मन जाई।  
सो सब माया जानेहु भाई ॥

The doha below is mentioned in Ramcharitra Manas (verse 117):

इंद्रीं द्वार झरोखा नाना।  
तहँ तहँ सुर बैठे करि थाना।।  
आवत देखहिं बिषय बयारी।  
ते हठि देही कपाट उघारी।।

Each sense organ is a window, and at each window, a devatā is stationed with full authority—like policemen at their respective posts. As the outer world appears, these devatās perceive and experience the viṣayas (sense-objects) through the opened doors of the body.

The appointment of these devatās—assigning each devatā to its respective sense—lies in the domain of *Brahmā*, also called *Hiraṇyagarbha*. It is *Brahmā* who divides the roles and functions of these divine forces.

Bhagavān then speaks of **adhiyajña**—the ultimate recipient of all sacrificial acts. He says:

***adhiyajño'ham evātra***

*"I am the adhiyajña within this body."*

Different versions of the Gītā offer different interpretations, but they all point to the same essence: Bhagavān—whether as Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu, or any chosen **saguṇa iṣṭa**—is **adhiyajña**, the one who accepts all offerings and sanctifies them.

This particular verse is counted among the core essence of the Gītā and holds tremendous significance. If one remembers just this one verse, love for the Gītā arises naturally, and the motivation to live by its wisdom blossoms from within.

Bhagavān assures Arjuna with this profound shloka:

**8.5**

**antakāle ca māmeva, smaranmuktvā kalevaram,  
yaḥ(ph) prayāti sa madbhāvaṃ(m), yāti nāstyatra saṃśayaḥ. 8.5**

He who departs from the body, thinking of Me alone even at the time of death, attains My state; there is no doubt about it.

At the final moment of one's life, if a being leaves the body while remembering **mām eva**—me alone—such a soul unquestionably attains **mad-bhāva**, my very state of being. There is not the slightest doubt about this.

To grasp the inner workings of this truth, consider an old house where a certain wall has tilted. Even if it doesn't collapse immediately, when it eventually does, it will inevitably fall in the same direction it leans. A wall tilted southward cannot possibly fall northward. Whether it takes six months or ten years, it will fall the way it is inclined. This analogy reflects the subtle nature of **smaraṇa** at the time of death. The mind, trained and conditioned throughout life in a certain direction, turns there in the final moment.

Now, some might take this as an easy formula: Live however one wishes—eat, drink, and make merry—and in the end, remember "Rāma" or "Kṛṣṇa" and be liberated. But Bhagavān sets the record straight in the very next shlok\*:

**yaṃ(m) yaṃ(m) vāpi smaranbhāvaṃ(n), tyajatyante kalevaram,  
taṃ(n) tamevaiti kaunteya, sadā tadbhāvabhāvitaḥ. 8.6**

Arjuna, thinking of whatever entity one leaves the body at the time of death, that and that alone one attains, being ever absorbed in its thought.

Whatever **bhāva** one remembers at the final moment of departure, O Kaunteya, to that very state one goes, being ever absorbed in that **bhāva** during their life.

The life one lives becomes the destiny one meets. This idea is echoed in a **bhajan** attributed to Tilochan, a disciple in the Nānak tradition. It warns against misplaced remembrance in the final hour:

**Hymn from Guru Granth Sahib**

Bhagat Trilochan Ji's hymn from the Guru Granth Sahib (Page 526) beautifully illustrates this teaching:

**अरी बाई गोविन्द मति बिसरै**

अंति कालि जो लछमी सिमरै, ऐसी चिंता महि जे मरै ॥  
**सरप जोनि वलि वलि उतरै ॥१॥** अरी बाई गोविन्द मति बिसरै..

अंति कालि जो इसत्री सिमरै, ऐसी चिंता महि जे मरै ॥  
**वेश्या जोनि वलि वलि उतरै ॥२॥** अरी बाई गोविन्द मति बिसरै..

अंति कालि जो लड़िके सिमरै, ऐसी चिंता महि जे मरै ॥  
**सूकर जोनि वलि वलि उतरै ॥३॥** अरी बाई गोविन्द मति बिसरै..

अंति कालि जो मंदर सिमरै, ऐसी चिंता महि जे मरै ॥  
**प्रेत जोनि वलि वलि उतरै ॥४॥** अरी बाई गोविन्द मति बिसरै..

अंति कालि नारायण सिमरै, ऐसी चिंता महि जे मरै ॥  
**बदति तिलोचनु पावै मुक्ति, बसै हृदय पीताम्बरधारी ॥५॥**  
अरी बाई गोविन्द मति बिसरै

अरी बाई गोबिंद नाम मत बिसरै  
अरी बाई गोबिंद नामु मति बीसरै ॥  
अंति कालि जो लछमी सिमरै ऐसी चिंता महि जे मरै ॥  
सरप जोनि वलि वलि अउतरै ॥१॥  
बेसवा जोनि वलि वलि अउतरै ॥२॥  
सूकर जोनि वलि वलि अउतरै ॥३॥  
प्रेत जोनि वलि वलि अउतरै ॥४॥  
अंति कालि नाराइणु सिमरै ऐसी चिंता महि जे मरै ॥  
बदति तिलोचनु ते नर मुकता पीताम्बरु वा के रिदै बसै ॥५॥

O brother, do not forget Govind. If one remembers wealth (Lakṣmī) at the time of death, immersed in such anxiety, one falls into the **sarp yoni**—the womb of a serpent.

One who dies with the remembrance of a woman enters the **vaiśyā yoni**.

Those absorbed in their sons and daughters at the end take birth in the forms of pigs and dogs—**sūkara** and **kukkura**.

Even one who remembers temples at death is not spared.

They are said to fall into **preta yoni**—the realm of disembodied spirits.

He who remembers Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, or Rāma at life’s end, and departs with such remembrance, surely attains **mukti**—liberation. Says Tilochan, he is embraced by the one clad in yellow robes—**pītāmbar dhārī**.

Hence, it is not merely about reciting a name at the time of death, but about shaping one’s **bhāva**—one’s inner emotional structure—throughout life. For in the final hour, only what we are deeply habituated to will arise spontaneously. The constant contemplation of wealth, property, relationships, and attachments becomes the very chain that binds the jīva to future births.

There was a woman, wealthy and influential, who was nearing her final moments. Her husband, a renowned *seth ji*, gently asked her if she had any last wish. “Just say it,” he insisted, “I’ll fulfill it—there’s no shortage of anything in this house.”

Tears welled up in her eyes. “You cannot fulfill my wish,” she replied, “no matter how much you want to.”

“Just tell me what it is,” he pleaded again.

With great distress, she finally revealed the burden on her heart: “I have ten thousand sarees in my cupboard. My daughter-in-law lives abroad and has no use for them. All these sarees will go to my *devarāni*. I’ve been thinking and trying to find some way to prevent that. But nothing will work. They will go to her. And that’s what troubles me deeply.”

Even as death approached, her mind was tethered to sarees. Such was her final contemplation.

Then there was another merchant—an aged man, dedicated to his shop all his life. He never entrusted the business to anyone, not even his sons. As he lay on his deathbed, he called out, “Rāmlāl, where are you?”

“Here, Father,” came the reply.

“Shyāmlāl?”

“Here too.”

“Hari?”

“Yes, I’m here.”

“Nārāyan?”

“Present, Father.”

The dying man grew restless. “You all are standing here? Then who is looking after the shop?!”

Even in his final breath, the mind was chained to the shop, not to Bhagavān.

Another tale comes to mind—humorous yet thought-provoking. An elderly man was in his last moments, whispering something incomprehensible. His three sons worried he might be revealing some secret fortune—some buried treasure, an unshared FD, or a hidden piece of land. Desperate, the eldest ran to the doctor. “Please do something,” he begged. “We’ll pay whatever it takes.”

The doctor said, “There’s a powerful injection worth ₹5000. It will allow him to say one last sentence. Think carefully.”

Though financially strained, the brothers agreed. After the injection, the man gathered the strength to utter just one sentence:

**“Naās piṭo, dekho! Gāy jhāḍū khā rahi hai!”**

("You fools, look! The cow is eating the broom!")

...and then, he passed away.

This may sound amusing, but such are the realities. If the entire life is immersed in trivial worries—brooms, shops, sarees—then that’s exactly what emerges at the final moment. Even if one has heard spiritual discourses, the mind at death reveals one’s true attachment.

A powerful episode in **Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa** illustrates this.

After vanquishing Bāli, Bhagavān took his head onto His lap. Bāli, despite being an enemy, argued with Bhagavān:

Bali’s Liberation in the Ramayana

In the Ramayana, Bali’s encounter with Śrī Bhagavān illustrates the importance of divine remembrance. After being wounded by Rama, Bali questions why he was killed and why Sugriva was favored:

**धर्म हेतु अवतरेहु गोसाईं। मारेहु मोहि ब्याध की नाई ॥**

**मैं बैरी सुग्रीव पिआरा। अवगुन कवन नाथ मोहि मारा ॥3 ॥**

Even though, my Supreme, YOU descended on earth for upholding righteousness, YOU have killed me as a hunter would kill a wild beast. I, YOUR enemy and Sugriva, YOUR Dear Friend! For what fault did YOU take my life?

**अनुज बधू भगिनी सुत नारी। सुनु सठ कन्या सम ए चारी ॥**

**इन्हि कुदृष्टि बिलोकइ जोई। ताहि बधे कछु पाप न होई ॥4 ॥**

Bhagavān Śrī Rama says: Listen, O, wretch; a younger brother's wife, a sister, a daughter-in-law and one's own daughter- these four are alike. One would incur no sin by killing him who looks upon these with an evil eye.

**सुनहु राम स्वामी सन चल न चातुरी मोरि।**

**प्रभु अजहूँ मैं पापी अंतकाल गति तोरि ॥9 ॥**

Bali says: Listen of Śrī Rama; my shrewdness cannot avail against my Master. But o' my Supreme, am I a sinner yet, eventhough I found shelter in YOU at the hour of my death?

**सुनत राम अति कोमल बानी। बालि सीस परसेउ निज पानी ॥**

**अचल करौं तनु राखहु प्राणा। बालि कहा सुनु कृपानिधाना ॥1 ॥**

When Śrī Rama heard this most tender speech of Bali, HE stroked his head with HIS hand. "I make your body immortal; you may keep up your life."

**जन्म जन्म मुनि जतनु कराहीं। अंत राम कहि आवत नाही ॥**

**जासु नाम बल संकर कासी। देत सबहि सम गति अबिनासी ॥2 ॥**

Said Bali, " Listen O' Ocean of mercy; sages continue their efforts (for attaining YOU) during successive births; but at the last moment fail to utter the Name 'Rama.' But HE on the strength of whose Name Bhagavān Shiva bestows immortality on all alike, ---

**मम लोचन गोचर सोई आवा। बहुरि कि प्रभु अस बनिहि बनावा ॥3 ॥**

has appeared in a visible form before my very eyes! Shall I ever get such a golden opportunity again?

Before him stood Bhagavān Rāma Himself, placing His hand gently upon the forehead. The devotee, overwhelmed with awe, said, "I am but mad. I wish to return to my mortal body. Here I sit in Your lap, with Your hand upon my head. Now I live; I have come to life. Yet, I remain mad. Even after lifetimes of rigorous penance by sages, many fail to attain liberation. And here I am, ready to receive it freely, without effort. Am I not a fool, seeking this gift of life from You?"

But Bāli spoke firmly, "No, I do not desire this life-giving boon."

Bhagavān, greatly pleased, granted him his abode. Though Bāli had been slain as an enemy, his devotion and intelligence moved Bhagavān deeply.

In the final moments, remembrance of Bhagavān's name—Rāma Nāma—will arise only if one's heart has inclined toward Him throughout life. Like a wall leaning all its life in one direction will fall that way, the mind bowed continuously toward worldly attachments will not turn to Bhagavān at last. But if the heart has bent toward Bhagavān, there is hope it will finally collapse in that direction.

Therefore, one must devote life to bhajan, study the Gītā, memorize it, and live it. Even if one falls into coma, let the shlokas of the Gītā resound from within, for this is why the Gītā's verses are committed to memory—not to burden the mind, but to anchor the soul.

The body's hold is uncertain—when will sight fail, hearing cease, speech falter? But once the sacred words are enshrined in the heart, the Gītā dwells eternally within.

On this Mokshada Ekadashi, the Gītā Jayanti, over one hundred thousand devotees have gathered. When the narration began, only five thousand were present. The goal was one lakh, yet it seems many lakhs will participate. From 6 a.m. onward, the reading continues, flowing through 42 hours until midnight tomorrow. Three hundred twenty-four trainers and devotees raise their voices in unison over the microphone, millions joining together in sacred chant.

This collective devotion helps the heart lean gradually toward Bhagavān; only then will the wall fall rightly.

Bhagavān said, "Sada tadbhava bhava" — always dwell in that sentiment. The mind that dwells on Bhagavān will, in all circumstances, reflect that presence.

Arjuna's great shloka highlights this eternal truth:

## 8.7

### **tasmātsarveṣu kāleṣu, māmanusmara yudhya ca, mayyarpitamanobuddhiḥ(r), māmevaiṣyasyasaṃśayaḥ. 8.7**

Therefore, Arjuna, think of Me at all times and fight. With mind and reason thus set on Me, you will doubtless come to Me.

As explained by the venerable Swami Ji Maharaj, this sutra is the most essential teaching of the Gītā — in a single line it conveys the whole essence. The Gītā is full of such sutras, dense pearls of wisdom.

Here, "yuddha" does not merely mean war but any adverse, challenging situation. Whether cooking in the kitchen, working in the office, or dealing with worldly affairs, one must never abandon remembrance of Bhagavān, even in the fiercest battle.

**"tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu"** — at every moment, without exception, never let the remembrance cease. Even for a microsecond, be mindful of Bhagavān with unwavering faith:

**"māt manobuddhi mad-bhāvam yaccānyad vibhāvyate  
tato mām tattvato jñāsyasi"**

He who with steady mind and intellect contemplates Bhagavān thus, is surely united with Him.

Then came a tale. Once, at the great Kumbh Mela, Bhagavān Śiva and Mata Pārvatī observed the scene from above. Mata Pārvatī remarked on the wondrous arrangement—millions bathing in the sacred Sangam, Ganges, and other holy rivers, washing away sins.

But Bhagavān Śiva hesitated, "Not everyone truly becomes free of sin here."

Mata Pārvatī argued, "Thousands come and their sins vanish; how can it be otherwise?"

Bhagavān Śiva replied, "It is true, yet not everyone believes it. Some doubt the efficacy of the Kumbh. Belief is the key."

Mata Pārvatī was puzzled. Bhagavān Śiva explained, "Your problem is disbelief. You hesitate to accept this. Last time, I sent her alone and it ended poorly—Mata Sati's sacrifice. This time, I will accompany her."

Descending, Bhagavān Śiva created a deep pit and transformed into a leper, falling into it. Mata Pārvatī took the form of a beautiful maiden standing nearby.

Bhagavān Śiva instructed, "You must call for help from those who pass by, tell them my plight."

This retelling captures the profound spiritual message — the power of unwavering remembrance, the significance of devotion, and the subtle truths behind sacred traditions and divine leelas. The Sanskrit verses and core teachings are woven naturally to inspire the reader to live a life inclined toward Bhagavān, ensuring that in the final moment, the heart falls rightly toward liberation.

Bhagavān Śiva instructed that those descending into the pit must be warned carefully. Anyone who still carries even a single sin (pāpa) and touches the afflicted one will also become a leper. Therefore,

only those who are free of sin should dare to make contact.

Pārvatī questioned, "Then who will come down?"

Bhagavān Śiva replied firmly, "You must do as I say."

Standing nearby as a radiant woman, Pārvatī wept, saying, "My husband has fallen below. If anyone passes by, please rescue him." Many came, but each hesitated. Pārvatī warned again and again, "Be careful, he is a leper. Anyone who has any sin and touches him will be afflicted as well."

Hearing this, fear gripped the people, and no one dared to enter the pit. From morning till evening, hundreds came and went. Despite Pārvatī's repeated calls, none made contact. They all fled.

Suddenly, a boy of 141 years, running swiftly, plunged into the water of the Kumbh and rushed straight toward the pit. Pārvatī called out, "Wait! Wait! Listen!"

The boy paused and said, "I know your concern. I have been listening carefully. I just took the sacred bath and now I am coming to rescue Śiva."

He lifted Śiva from the pit, but soon after, the boy passed away. Pārvatī asked, "Did you not fear?"

He replied calmly, "Why should I fear? I have just bathed in the sacred waters of the Kumbh. All my sins have been washed away. I came rushing to save him so that no new sin falls upon me. Now that my sins are gone, how could I become a leper?"

Pārvatī observed that though millions bathe, only a rare few hold the firm faith that this sacred act truly dissolves their sins. While everyone bathes, few truly believe in its power.

This reveals the subtle truth: no matter how many philosophical discourses one hears or repeats, the mind remains anchored to worldly pleasures and attachments. The intellect may grasp the teachings, but the heart often stays engrossed in daily cares—remembering the evening tea or the meal to be prepared—thus, the mind is ever leaning toward worldly enjoyment rather than Bhagavān.

This internal conflict is indeed a kind of battlefield (yuddha). The struggle is that the mind tends to dwell on transient pleasures instead of the eternal Divine.

But if one manages to keep the mind focused on the Divine amid all worldly activities, then the wall within will gradually fall in that sacred direction.

Before concluding, the devotees engage in collective chanting:

"Hari Sharanam Hari Sharanam Hari Sharanam"

Recalling with devotion Yogeshwar Śrī Krishna Chandra Bhagavān ki Jai

## **Questions and Answers**

**Q:** I wanted to talk to you. In the last session, you mentioned three stages of jñāna — **vyāvahārika, prātibhāsika, and pāramārthika**. Is that right?

**A:** Yes, that's correct.

**Q:** Which chapter were the 4th and 5th śloka from that you explained using these perspectives?

**A:** They were from Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gītā. The 4th and 5th ślokas.

**Q:** You said that from the vyāvahārika standpoint, Bhagavān exists in all beings, but on the pāramārthika level, realized beings see everything as one.

**A:** Yes. The jñānī who has attained realization reaches the pāramārthika state and sees no difference between ātman and paramātman. To them, the world and Bhagavān are not separate — they are one.

**Q:** But for us?

**A:** We live in the vyāvahārika state, where we perceive everything as separate — Bhagavān, ourselves, and the world. We believe that Bhagavān is present in every atom, but the jñānī sees each atom itself as Bhagavān. This is the essence of “ahaṁ brahmāsmi.”

**Q:** Are Śankarācārya and Ādi Śankarācārya the same?

**A:** Ādi Śankarācārya refers to the original Bhagavatpāda Śankarācārya. After him, in his tradition, four main pīṭhas were established. Those who later headed these pīṭhas were also called Śankarācāryas. Their birth timelines may differ; historians debate on the exact century. Accepting any specific ideology depends on one's preference.

**Q:** Today was dvādaśī in udaya tithi, so how was it ekādaśī?

**A:** Today was indeed ekādaśī by udaya tithi. Even in Gītā Parivār, two ekādaśīs were observed — today for vaiṣṇava dīkṣita followers and yesterday for gṛhasthas. Since Swamiji observed it today, so did we.

## **Vidya Ji**

**Q:** Which chapter of the Gītā can we read daily during worship at home?

**A:** All chapters are relevant, but practically, Chapters 12 or 15 are usually preferred as they are short and easy to chant with family. At Chinmaya Vishwavidyāpīṭha, Chapter 15 was recited daily. Alternatively, you can read one chapter each day and complete all 18 in a rotation, which helps revise all chapters. This is also my personal practice.

## **Radhey Ji**

**Q:** If Bhagavān gave this knowledge to Arjuna, why didn't Dhṛtarāṣṭra benefit from it?

**A:** As said by Bhagavān in Chapter 18, śloka 67 — “**idaṁ te nātapaskāya...**” — this knowledge should not be given to the abhakta or one without śraddhā. Many may hear the jñāna, but not all can grasp or apply it equally. Dhṛtarāṣṭra may have heard the Gītā, but he neither fully understood nor accepted it. Swamiji has given us a key message: “Gītā paṛhem, paṛhāyem, jīvan merṁ lāyem” — read it, teach it, and live it. The third step is the most difficult and demands sincere sādhanā.

## **Sangeeta Ji**

**Q:** I used to offer water to Tulsi daily in Delhi, but here I don't have space for a real plant. What can I do?

**A:** You can keep a silver Tulsi (rūpyamayī tulasī) in your home temple. Worship it just like other deities — offer a symbolic snāna, apply tilak, and perform ārati. You don't need to pour full water over

it.

The session concluded with prayers and chanting Hanuman Chalisa.

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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.

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**Jai Shri Krishna!**

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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