

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 18: Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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Freedom from Doership: Understanding Knowledge, Action, and the Doer

Introduction to **Chapter 18** Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā : **Mokṣha Sannyāsa Yoga - The Yoga of Renunciation and Surrender**

With deep reverence, we embark on the study of the **eighteenth and final chapter of Srimad Bhagavad Gītā—Mokṣha Sannyāsa Yoga, the Yoga of Renunciation and Surrender**. This chapter serves as the **culmination of the Gītā's teachings**, bringing together the wisdom imparted in the previous chapters and guiding the seeker towards **true liberation (mokṣha) through selfless action, wisdom, and devotion**.

Before we immerse ourselves in its profound message, let us humbly offer our **salutations to Gurudev, Maa Saraswati, and Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj**, seeking their divine blessings for clarity and realization.

Invocation of the Guru and Divine Wisdom

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः।
गुरुः साक्षात् परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्री गुरवे नमः॥

"The Guru is Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Maheśvara; the Guru is the very embodiment of the Supreme Brahman. Salutations to that revered Guru."

नमामि सद्गुरुं शान्तं सच्चिदानन्दविग्रहम्।
पूर्णब्रह्मपरानन्दम् ईशमाळन्दिवल्लभम्॥

"I bow to the Sadguru, who is the embodiment of peace, truth, consciousness, and bliss. He is the Supreme, the divine source of boundless joy."

कृष्णाय वासुदेवाय हरये परमात्मने ।
प्रणतः क्लेशनाशाय गोविंदाय नमो नमः ॥

"Salutations to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul, the remover of all suffering."

रत्नाकराधौतपदां हिमालय किरीटिनीम् ।
ब्रह्मराजर्षिरत्नाढ्यां वन्दे भारतमातरम् ॥

"I bow to Bhārat Mātā, adorned with the Himalayas as her crown and the ocean washing her feet, enriched by sages and divine wisdom."

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं
व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना मध्ये महाभारतम् ।
अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीम्- अष्टादशाध्यायिनीम्
अम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्-गीते भवद्वेषिणीम् ॥

"O Bhagavad Gītā, the divine mother who showers the nectar of Advaita (non-duality), revealed by Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa Himself to Arjuna and compiled by Sage Vyāsa within the Mahābhārata, I bow to you!"

The Significance of Chapter 18

This concluding chapter of the Gītā serves as a **comprehensive synthesis of all its teachings**, offering a **practical guide to living with wisdom, selflessness, and devotion**. It reinforces the central themes of **karma (action)**, **jñāna (knowledge)**, and **bhakti (devotion)**, leading to **ultimate liberation**.

The Bhagavad Gītā begins with the words:

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे

Ahilyabai Holkar beautifully captured the essence of the Gītā in these very first words, signifying that **life itself is a battlefield where every action must be aligned with Dharma (righteous duty)**. The field of action is, in essence, the **field of Dharma**—a truth that remains relevant across time and circumstances.

Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj further illustrates this eternal wisdom:

जेथ भवानी प्रश्न करी | चमत्कारोनी ॥७०॥
तेथ हर म्हणे नेणजे | देवि जैसैं कां स्वरूप तुझें |
तैसैं हें नित्य नूतन देखिजे | गीतातत्त्व ॥७१॥

"Where Goddess Bhavānī raises questions through divine wonder, there Lord Hari responds, 'O Devi, just as your form is beyond comprehension, so too is the wisdom of the Gītā—ever fresh and ever new.' "

This highlights how **the truths of the Gītā are timeless**, unfolding deeper insights as seekers evolve in their spiritual journey.

Key Teachings

As the final discourse between Śrī Bhagavān and Arjuna, this chapter addresses **one of Arjuna's most fundamental questions—the difference between Sannyāsa (renunciation) and Tyāga (relinquishment)**.

Bhagavān explains that while certain actions may be renounced, there are three **essential duties that should never be abandoned**:

- **Yajña (Sacrifice)** – Offering actions selflessly for a higher cause.
- **Dāna (Charity)** – Sharing resources with a pure heart.
- **Tapa (Austerity)** – Practicing self-discipline and inner purification.

This chapter also expands upon:

- The **three types of renunciation**—Sāttvika (pure), Rājasika (desire-driven), and Tāmasika (ignorant).
- The **role of Guṇas (Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas) in shaping actions and choices**.
- The **importance of surrendering all actions to the Divine**, transcending the cycle of karma and rebirth.

Ultimately, Śrī Bhagavān assures that **by surrendering to Him with unwavering faith, one can attain mokṣha—freedom from all bondage**.

18.11

**na hi dehabhṛtā śakyaṃ(n), tyaktuṃ(ñ) karmāṇyaśeṣataḥ,
yastu karmaphalatyāgī, sa tyāgītyabhidhīyate. 18.11**

Since all actions cannot be given up in their entirety by anyone possessing a body, he alone who renounces the fruit of actions is called a man of renunciation.

Bhagavān explains to Arjuna that as long as one exists in a physical body, engaging in actions is unavoidable. However, true renunciation (tyāga) does not mean abandoning duties; rather, it means giving up attachment to the results of those actions.

- **na hi dehabhṛtā śakyaṃ tyaktuṃ karmāṇyaśeṣataḥ**

“For an embodied being, it is impossible to renounce all actions entirely.”

- We all must eat, sleep, work, and fulfill our responsibilities. Avoiding action completely is impractical.

- **yastu karmaphalatyāgī sa tyāgītyabhidhīyate**

“One who relinquishes the fruits of actions is considered a true renunciant.”

- True renunciation means performing duties selflessly without worrying about rewards or outcomes.

Wisdom from Saints and Scriptures

Dnyaneshwar Maharaj beautifully explains this concept through a simple analogy:

**"वृक्ष का वेली लोटली, फळे आली तैसी
सांडी निपजली, कर्म सिद्धे"**

"Just as a tree naturally sheds its fruits once they ripen, one should let go of the fruits of action effortlessly."

Similarly, he further clarifies:

"आणि हां गा सव्यसाची । मूर्ति लाहोनि देहाची ।
खंती करिती कर्माची । ते गांवढे गा ॥ २१८ ॥"

"O Arjuna! Those who consider themselves merely the body and avoid their duties are ignorant."

"तैसा शरीराचेनि आभासें । नांदतु जंव असे ।
तंव कर्मत्यागाचें पिसें । काइसें तरी ? ॥ २२२ ॥"

"As long as one lives in a physical body, renouncing actions is meaningless. Instead, renounce attachment to their results."

Key Insight

- **Action is Necessary:** We cannot avoid performing duties while living in this world.
- **True Renunciation:** Letting go of attachment to success or failure, pleasure or pain, is the essence of tyāga.
- **Freedom from Ego:** Both superiority and inferiority complexes destroy inner peace; surrendering to Bhagavān with a selfless attitude brings true joy.

By practicing this wisdom, one attains inner peace, remains undisturbed by life's ups and downs, and moves closer to Bhagavān. Let me know if further refinement is needed!

18.12

**aniṣṭamiṣṭam(m) miśram(ñ) ca, trividham(ñ) karmaṇaḥ(ph) phalam,
bhavatyatyāginām(m) pretya, na tu sannyāsinām(ñ) kvacit. 18.12**

Agreeable, disagreeable and mixed-threelfold, indeed, is the fruit that accrues after death from the actions of the unrenouncing. But there is none whatsoever for those who have renounced.

Bhagavān explains how attachment to actions binds a person to their results, whereas renunciation liberates one from karmic consequences.

- **aniṣṭam iṣṭam miśram ca trividham karmaṇaḥ phalam**

"The results of actions are of three types—pleasant, unpleasant, and mixed."

- **iṣṭa (pleasant)** – Righteous actions performed with good intentions bring joy, success, and prosperity.
- **aniṣṭa (unpleasant)** – Actions driven by negativity, greed, or harm lead to suffering and hardships.
- **miśra (mixed)** – Some actions result in both joy and sorrow, as they carry a blend of good and bad consequences.

- **bhavaty atyāginām pretya na tu sannyāsinām kvacit**

"Those who do not renounce must face the consequences of their actions, but true renunciants are free from them."

- Those who act with attachment, expecting rewards, must experience the results of their karma even beyond this life.
- True **sannyāsins**, who dedicate all actions to Bhagavān, transcend the karmic cycle.

They neither claim doership nor seek rewards, and thus remain untouched by karma.

A Deeper Perspective

When Nishadraj asked Śrī Rāma why He had to suffer exile despite being the noblest of all, Śrī Rāma replied:

सुखस्य दुःखस्य न कोऽपि दाता।

"No one else is the giver of happiness or sorrow."

Happiness and suffering are not given by others but are the results of one's own past actions. Every being reaps the fruit of their own karma.

Just as fire completely burns whatever is placed in it, renunciation burns away all karmic impressions. A true renunciant is like a fire that consumes everything but remains untouched itself.

Key Insights

- **Threefold Results of Actions** – Those who act with attachment experience joy, sorrow, or a mix of both based on their karma.
- **Freedom Through Renunciation** – Offering all actions to Bhagavān liberates one from karmic bondage.
- **Beyond the Cycle of Karma** – Selfless action, performed without personal attachment, does not bind the soul.
- **Path to Liberation** – Detachment from rewards allows one to attain true peace and spiritual freedom.

This verse teaches us that karma binds only those who are attached to its fruits. If we dedicate all our actions to Bhagavān, we can move toward true renunciation and liberation.

18.13

**pañcaitāni mahābāho, kāraṇāni nibodha me,
sāṅkhye kṛtānte proktāni, siddhaye sarVākarmaṇām. 18.13**

In the branch of learning known as Sāṅkhya, which prescribes means for neutralizing all actions, the five factors have been mentioned as contributory to the accomplishment of all actions; know them all from Me, Arjuna.

Bhagavān introduces Arjuna to the five essential factors responsible for the execution of any action. These factors, as described in Sāṅkhya philosophy, help in understanding that no action is performed by an individual alone.

- **pañcaitāni mahābāho kāraṇāni nibodha me**
"O mighty-armed Arjuna, understand from Me the five causes of all actions."
 - Bhagavān emphasizes that every action has multiple contributing factors and is not merely the result of personal effort.
- **sāṅkhye kṛtānte proktāni siddhaye sarvākarmaṇām**
"These five causes have been declared in Sāṅkhya, the philosophy that teaches how actions can be transcended."

- It teaches that understanding these factors leads to wisdom and detachment, ultimately leading to liberation.
- Sāṅkhya philosophy explains both the process of action and the way to become free from its bondage.

A Deeper Perspective

Often, people believe that their achievements are solely the result of their own efforts. However, Bhagavān reminds Arjuna that action is a collective process influenced by various elements. Just as a tree needs sunlight, water, soil, and air to grow, every action requires multiple factors to be successfully accomplished.

If even a leaf of a tree moves only by the will of God, then why do crimes happen in the world? Does God make people commit crimes?

The reality is that God does not make people do deeds. He only provides power. While doing deeds, we should bear in mind that HE neither makes us do deeds nor does HE do anything for the result of deeds. All this happens as a result of our earlier or present deeds. The power is of the Divine and the wish is of the living being. Deeds happen according to the wish of the living being.

We will try to understand this with an example. A father gave two thousand rupees each to his two sons. One son bought a good book with that money and became curious to read it, or he may have used that money for some charitable act while the other son spent that money on vices. Will the father be at fault for the act of his son who used the money for wrong deeds?

The answer would be NO! He had provided the same amount of money but the sons who used it spent it according to their desires.

That is why it is said-

īśvarastu parjanyaavat draṣṭavyaḥ

The Supreme Divine should be looked at like the rain. Whatever seed is sown in the field, its fruit will grow. If someone sows hemp, only hemp will grow and if someone sows the seeds of wheat, gram etc., any grain or mango etc., only that will grow. In this process, just as rain does its work, similarly humans do all the work with the grace of the Divine. Karmas are performed by the living being due to his desires and lust.

Two types of allegations are leveled against Sri Bhagavān – partiality and harshness. Respected Gurudev has used two very beautiful words in this regard – ***Vaiṣamya*** and ***Naighṛṇya***. *Naighṛṇya* means harshness.

Is the Divine Supreme so cruel that he will be unjust to one and show favoritism to the other? In the ninth chapter, Sri Bhagavān says that:

samo'haṃ sarvabhūteṣu na me dveṣyo'sti na priyaḥ
ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cāpyaḥam

Sri Bhagwan says, “Arjuna! Everyone is equal for ME but some people come to ME, worship ME and in return, I give them blessings. Some people do not come to ME at all and hence they remain deprived of those blessings.

Adi guru Shankaracharya ji gives an example that if someone lights a fire in the winter season due to which people around start getting its heat, then a person standing far away will say that I am not getting the heat of this fire, this fire is being partial.

That is why Sri Bhagavān here refutes both these allegations against Himself and in the next verse, will reveal the five factors that contribute to all actions.

Key Insights

- **Actions Are Not Performed Alone** – Every action depends on multiple causes, not just individual effort.
- **Wisdom from Sāṅkhya** – The philosophy of Sāṅkhya helps one understand action and transcend its bondage.
- **Beyond Doership** – Recognizing the factors behind action helps in developing detachment and humility.
- **Preparation for Liberation** – Understanding the nature of action is a step toward freeing oneself from its binding effects.

18.14

**adhiṣṭhānaṃ(n) tathā kartā, karaṇaṃ(ñ) ca pṛthagvidham,
vividhāśca pṛthakceṣṭā, daivaṃ(ñ) caivātra pañcamam. 18.14**

The following are the factors operating towards the accomplishment of actions, viz., the body and the doer, the organs of different kinds and the different functions of manifold kinds; and the fifth is Daiva, latencies of past actions.

Bhagavān explains that no action is performed solely by an individual. Five key factors play a role in executing any task, whether worldly or spiritual.

- **adhiṣṭhānaṃ - The body as the base or field of action**
The physical body is the essential platform where all actions take place. Without it, no action can be executed.
- **kartā - The doer or the conscious being who initiates the action**
The individual, driven by intent, desire, and willpower, is responsible for starting an action.
- **karaṇaṃ ca pṛthagvidham - The various senses or instruments of action**
This includes the five sense organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin) and the five organs of action (hands, feet, speech, excretion, and reproduction). In a broader sense, this also includes external tools: a plow for a farmer, a computer for a programmer, or utensils for a cook.
- **vividhāśca pṛthakceṣṭā - Different types of efforts or movements**
The functioning of the mind, intellect, and prāṇa (life force) all contribute to action. Every action involves physical, mental, and emotional effort.
- **daivaṃ caivātra pañcamam - Divine will or destiny**
The unseen influence of past karma and divine grace, which can shape the outcome of an action. Daiva's role is only one-fifth. It influences results but does not eliminate the need for effort.

Pujya Swami ji has analysed it very minutely for our understanding. Swami ji says that “After any deed is done, we should think about *daivaṃ* factor, that why did it happen? We should not think about *daivaṃ* beforehand. First we should do the deed with full commitment on the basis of four factors,

and only then if there is some error in it, then we should think about *daivam*."

Bhagavān emphasizes that success is a combination of personal effort and divine grace. A farmer must plow the field, plant seeds, and water the crops. If there is insufficient rain, that is the role of *daivam*. But if he does nothing, the rain alone won't help. A student must study diligently before an exam. Simply praying for good results without putting in the effort won't lead to success. A musician must practice regularly. Talent (past karma) and luck (*daivam*) may help, but without effort, mastery is impossible.

Consistent effort makes *daivam* favorable.

नहीं चींटी जब दाना लेकर चलती है
चढ़ती दीवारों पर, सौ बार फिसलती है
मन का विश्वास रगों में साहस भरता है
चढ़कर गिरना, गिरकर चढ़ना न अखरता है
आखिर उसकी मेहनत बेकार नहीं होती
कोशिश करने वालों की हार नहीं होती!

Just like an ant tirelessly climbs, falls, and climbs again until it succeeds, we must continue our efforts without fear of failure.

Bhagavān highlights these five factors to remove the illusion of ego—"I alone am the doer."

Key Takeaways

- **Five factors behind every action** – The body, the doer, senses, efforts, and divine will shape all actions.
- **No action is solely one's own doing** – Recognizing the role of divine influence removes ego and promotes humility.
- **Effort + Grace = Success** – Perform duties sincerely while surrendering results to Bhagavān.
- **Freedom from anxiety** – Understanding this principle helps us remain detached from both success and failure, leading to inner peace.

This verse teaches us to act with awareness, humility, and devotion, knowing that success is not entirely in our hands but guided by a higher force.

18.15

**śarīravāñmanobhiryat, karma prārabhate naraḥ,
nyāyyaṃ(m) vā viparītaṃ(m) vā, pañcaite tasya hetavaḥ. 18.15**

These five are the contributory causes of whatever actions, prescribed or prohibited, man performs with the mind, speech and body.

Bhagavān continues the discussion from the previous verse by explaining that every action, whether good or bad, is influenced by the five factors mentioned earlier: the body, the doer, the senses, efforts, and divine will.

- **śarīravāñmanobhiḥ yat karma prārabhate naraḥ** – "Every action performed by a person through the body, speech, and mind."

Actions are not limited to physical deeds. Words and thoughts also contribute to karma. Speaking

harshly or thinking negatively has consequences just as much as physical actions.

- **nyāyyaṃ vā viparītaṃ vā** - "Whether righteous or unrighteous."
Every action, whether dharmic (righteous) or adharmic (unrighteous), follows the same process. Good and bad actions arise from the same five causes.
- **pañcaite tasya hetavaḥ** - "These five are the causes."
The five factors—body, doer, senses, effort, and divine will—are responsible for every action. Even an unintentional action is governed by these five causes.

Bhagavān reminds us that actions are not performed in isolation. Every action is influenced by a combination of effort and circumstances. For example:

- **A teacher explaining a lesson** - Uses the body (writing on the board), speech (speaking to students), and mind (structuring the explanation).
- **A person telling a lie** - Uses speech (words), mind (intention), and body (gestures). Even mental actions, such as plotting or scheming, generate karma.
- **A farmer growing crops** - Uses the body (labor), senses (tools), mind (planning), effort (hard work), and divine will (rain and climate).

Since every action is driven by these five causes, no one can claim full credit for their success or blame others entirely for their failures. Understanding this removes arrogance and cultivates humility.

Key Takeaways

- **Threefold Actions** - Every action is performed through the body, speech, or mind.
- **Moral Responsibility** - Whether an action is righteous or unrighteous, the same five factors contribute to its execution.
- **Role of Divine Will** - While effort is crucial, divine will also plays a part in determining results.
- **Eliminating Ego** - Realizing that multiple factors contribute to action helps us remain humble and detached from outcomes.

This verse encourages us to act with awareness, ensuring that our thoughts, words, and deeds align with righteousness.

18.16

**tatraivaṃ(m) sati kartāram, ātmānaṃ(ñ) kevalaṃ(n) tu yaḥ,
paśyatyakṛtabuddhitvān, na sa paśyati durmatih. 18.16**

Notwithstanding this, however, he who, having an impure mind, regards the absolute, taintless Self alone as the doer, that man of perverse understanding does not view aright.

Bhagavān warns against the illusion of sole doership. Those who fail to recognize the fivefold causes of action (body, doer, senses, effort, and divine will) wrongly assume that the Self (Ātman) alone is responsible for all actions. This misconception arises from ignorance and an unrefined intellect.

- **tatraivaṃ sati kartāram ātmānaṃ kevalaṃ tu yaḥ**

"One who considers the Self alone as the doer."

- The ego-driven mind assumes full responsibility for actions, failing to acknowledge external and divine influences.
- Just as a river does not flow by itself but is aided by gravity, terrain, and rainfall, action too is governed by multiple factors.

- **paśyaty akṛtabuddhitvān**

"Due to an unrefined intellect, they see incorrectly."

- An undeveloped intellect (akṛta-buddhi) lacks the wisdom to perceive the deeper truth.
- Such a person takes personal credit for success and blames others for failures, remaining caught in illusion.

- **na sa paśyati durmatih**

"That deluded person does not perceive the truth."

- Blinded by ego and ignorance, they fail to see that actions happen due to the interplay of **Prakṛti (Nature)** and **Divine Will**.
- Just as a puppet dances based on the strings pulled by a puppeteer, human actions are influenced by many unseen factors.

Examples for Clarity

- A **driver** may say, "I am driving the car," but without fuel, roads, and weather conditions, the journey would not be possible.
- A **farmer** may think, "I grew the crops," but without sunlight, water, and fertile soil (which are beyond his control), no crops would grow.
- A **student** may say, "I passed the exam because of my effort," but teachers, books, environment, and even past impressions also contributed.

Bhagavān encourages us to rise above ego and recognize the collective interplay of forces behind every action. This realization leads to humility and detachment.

Dnyaneshwar Maharaj's Analogy

दीपाचेनि प्रकाशे । गृहीचे व्यापार जैसे ॥

देहीं कर्मजात तैसे । योगयुक्ता ॥

Just as a lamp's light enables household activities but does not perform them itself, in the same way, the Self is uninvolved in action, though actions take place through the body.

Key Takeaways

- **The Self is Not the Sole Doer** – Actions arise from multiple factors, including the body, mind, effort, and divine will.
- **Ego Creates Illusion** – Those with an impure intellect believe they alone are responsible for their success or failure.
- **Wisdom Brings Clarity** – Understanding the role of Prakṛti and divine grace helps us remain detached from false pride.
- **True Vision Lies in Surrender** – A spiritually awakened person sees action as a cosmic process rather than personal effort alone.

This verse teaches us to cultivate humility, surrender attachment to doership, and recognize the divine hand behind all actions.

**yasya nāhañkṛto bhāvo, buddhiryasya na lipyate,
hatvāpi sa imāṃllokān, na hanti na nibadhyate. 18.17**

He whose mind is free from the sense of doership, and whose reason is not affected by worldly objects and activities, does not really kill, even having killed all these people, nor does any sin accrue to him.

Bhagavān reveals a profound truth: a person who has transcended the sense of personal doership is not bound by karma, regardless of the nature of their actions. The essence of renunciation is not in abandoning actions but in letting go of attachment to their results.

- **yasya nāhañkṛto bhāvo** – *"One who is free from ego and the sense of doership."*
 - The root of attachment lies in the thought *"I am the doer."*
 - When one understands that all actions happen through Prakṛti (nature) and that the Self (Ātman) remains untouched, they transcend doership.
- **buddhir yasya na lipyate** – *"One whose intellect remains unattached."*
 - Such a person does not seek personal gain or feel pride in achievements.
 - Praise or criticism, success or failure—none of these affect them because their intellect is fixed in Bhagavān.
- **hatvāpi sa imāṃllokān na hanti na nibadhyate** – *"Even if he kills, he neither kills nor is bound."*
 - This does not justify violence but emphasizes duty without attachment.
 - Arjuna, as a warrior, must act according to dharma. If he performs his duty without ego and selfish intent, he accrues no karma.
 - Just as fire burns without intent and the sun gives light without expectation, the wise act without personal involvement.

Clarifying Through Examples

- A **judge** delivering a death sentence does so as a part of duty, without personal malice, and thus remains unaffected.
- A **doctor** performing surgery may cause pain, but since the intent is healing, there is no sin.
- A **soldier** protecting the nation must fight, yet if the action is without hatred or selfishness, it does not bind him.

Connection to Chapter 7

Bhagavān previously explained how all elements of existence, including ego and intellect, arise from His lower material nature:

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च।
अहङ्कार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥ (7.4)

"Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect, and ego—these constitute My eightfold material nature."

This verse reminds us that even ego and intellect are part of Bhagavān's material energy. When one sees beyond these, realizing that the Self is beyond action, they attain liberation.

Dnyaneshwar Maharaj's Insight

किं बहुना तुमचें केले
धर्म कीर्तन सिद्धिस नेले
येथे माझेचि उरले पायिकपण

A devotee who dissolves ego and dedicates actions to Bhagavān attains divine grace. The misconception of "I am the doer" vanishes, leading to true spiritual liberation.

Key Takeaways

- **Freedom from Ego** – True renunciation means giving up the false notion of individual doership.
- **Detached Intellect** – The wise act with clarity, without seeking personal rewards or fearing loss.
- **Action Without Bondage** – When duty is performed selflessly, karma does not bind the soul.
- **Path to Liberation** – Realizing that the Self is beyond all action leads to true spiritual freedom.

This verse teaches us to act with purity of heart, surrendering all actions to Bhagavān, thereby freeing ourselves from the cycle of karma.

18.18

**jñānaṃ(ñ) jñeyaṃ(m) parijñātā, trividhā karmacodanā,
karaṇaṃ(ṇ) karma karteti, trividhaḥ(kh) karmasaṅgrahaḥ. 18.18**

The Knower, knowledge and the object of knowledge-these three motivate action. Even so, the doer, the organs and activity-these are the three constituents of action.

Bhagavān explains that every action arises from a combination of three motivating factors and three executing factors. Understanding this helps us recognize how actions function and why they lead to different results.

- **jñānaṃ jñeyaṃ parijñātā** – "*Knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the knower.*"
 - **Jñāna (Knowledge):** The awareness or understanding that drives action.
 - **Jñeya (Object of Knowledge):** The goal or subject being known (what one seeks to understand).
 - **Parijñātā (Knower):** The individual who gains knowledge and applies it.
 - Example: A student (knower) studies science (knowledge) to understand the principles of physics (object of knowledge).
- **trividhā karmacodanā** – "*These three are the motivators of action.*"
 - Knowledge influences how and why we act.
 - A person's understanding (right or wrong) determines their choices.
- **karaṇaṃ karma karteti** – "*The instrument, the action, and the doer.*"
 - **Karaṇaṃ (Instrument):** The senses, tools, and means through which an action is

performed.

- **Karma (Action):** The actual activity taking place.
- **Kartā (Doer):** The one who initiates and carries out the action.
- Example: A farmer (doer) using a plow (instrument) to cultivate the land (action).

- **trividhaḥ karmasaṅgrahaḥ** - "These three make up every action."

- All actions consist of these three elements, whether physical, mental, or verbal.
- Just as a musician (doer) plays a flute (instrument) to create music (action), every task involves an actor, a tool, and an execution.

Clarifying Through Examples

- A **teacher** (knower) imparts knowledge (knowledge) to students (object of knowledge). Using books and a board (instruments), they teach (action), shaping young minds.
- A **cook** (doer) uses utensils (instruments) to prepare food (action), making meals for others.
- A **sculptor** (doer) carves stone (object of knowledge) using chisels (instrument) to create an idol (action).

Key Takeaways

Threefold Cause of Action: Knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the knower determine why we act.

- **Threefold Process of Action:** The doer, the instrument, and the action define how we act.
- **Understanding Leads to Right Action:** Clarity in knowledge ensures righteous actions, avoiding ignorance-driven mistakes.
- **Awareness Dissolves Ego:** Recognizing these components helps detach from doership, aligning actions with divine will.

This verse helps us reflect on our actions, ensuring they are guided by true knowledge and performed selflessly for spiritual growth.

18.19

**jñānaṃ(ñ) karma ca kartāca, tridhaiva guṇabhedataḥ,
procyate guṇasaṅkhyāne, yathāvacchṛṇu tānyapi. 18.19**

In the branch of knowledge dealing with the Guṇas or modes of Prakṛti, knowledge and action as well as the doer have been declared to be of three kinds according to the Guṇa which predominates in each; hear them too duly from Me.

Bhagavān now begins an analysis of how the three Guṇas—Sattva (goodness), Rajas (passion), and Tamas (ignorance)—affect knowledge, action, and the doer. These three aspects shape every decision, behavior, and outcome in life.

- **jñānaṃ karma ca kartā ca** - "Knowledge, action, and the doer."

- **Jñāna (Knowledge):** The perspective or awareness that influences action.
- **Karma (Action):** The way an action is performed.

- **Kartā (Doer):** The individual who carries out the action.
- **tridhaiva guṇabhedataḥ** - "Are of three types based on the Guṇas."
 - Everything in life is influenced by the three Guṇas.
 - Knowledge, action, and the doer are classified according to whether they are sattvic (pure), rajasic (driven by passion), or tamasic (ignorant).
- **procyate guṇasaṅkhyāne** - "The system of classification based on Guṇas."
 - The scriptures categorize all behaviors and tendencies according to the three Guṇas.
 - Sattva leads to wisdom and selflessness, Rajas leads to desire-driven action, and Tamas leads to confusion and inaction.
- **yathāvac chrṇu tānyapi** - "Listen as I explain them in detail."
 - Bhagavān now instructs Arjuna on how these three Guṇas influence human thought, action, and character.
 - By understanding these, one can evaluate their tendencies and cultivate a higher mode of living.

Practical Examples of Guṇa-Based Action

- **Sattvic Knowledge:** Seeing the unity in all beings, understanding the eternal truth beyond the material world.
- **Rajasic Knowledge:** Viewing everything in terms of personal gain and competition.
- **Tamasic Knowledge:** Having a limited, confused, or false understanding of reality.

Similarly, actions and doers will be classified in upcoming verses based on these modes.

Key Takeaways

- **Knowledge, Action, and Doership Are Guṇa-Based:** Our understanding, efforts, and identity as doers are shaped by the predominance of Sattva, Rajas, or Tamas.
- **Self-Assessment Leads to Growth:** Recognizing one's predominant Guṇa helps in self-improvement and spiritual evolution.
- **Higher Awareness Leads to Liberation:** Sattvic tendencies elevate the mind toward truth, whereas Rajasic and Tamasic tendencies create attachment and ignorance.
- **Listening and Applying Knowledge is Key:** Bhagavān urges Arjuna (and us) to listen carefully and apply this wisdom in daily life.

This verse sets the stage for a deeper exploration of how the three Guṇas influence our thoughts, actions, and character, guiding us toward spiritual clarity and liberation.

18.20

**sarvabhūteṣu yenaikaṁ(m), bhāvamavyayamīkṣate,
avibhaktaṁ(m) vibhakteṣu, tajjñānaṁ(m) viddhi sāttvikam. 18.20**

That by which man perceives one imperishable divine existence as undivided and equally present in all individual beings, know that knowledge to be Sāttvika.

Bhagavān describes the highest form of knowledge—Sāttvika Jñāna—which leads to spiritual wisdom and

liberation.

- **sarvabhūteṣu yenaikaṃ bhāvam avyayam īkṣate** - *"That which perceives the one eternal reality in all beings."*
 - A person with Sāttvika knowledge recognizes that beyond external forms, all beings share the same divine essence.
 - Differences of caste, nationality, wealth, or intelligence are seen as temporary, while the unchanging Ātman within is realized as eternal.
- **avibhaktaṃ vibhakteṣu** - *"That which is undivided even in the midst of diversity."*
 - Just as the same sun reflects in countless water bodies, the Divine pervades all beings.
 - While the body, mind, and intellect differ from person to person, the underlying consciousness remains one and the same.
- **tajjñānaṃ viddhi sāttvikam** - *"Know that knowledge to be Sāttvika."*
 - This knowledge fosters humility, selflessness, and compassion.
 - It removes false distinctions, allowing one to love and serve all beings as manifestations of Bhagavān.

Thakur Ramakrishna Paramhansa's Vision of Oneness

Thakur Ramakrishna Paramhansa, a great saint and devotee of Maa Kali, embodied this Sāttvika knowledge. Toward the end of his life, he suffered from throat cancer. Seeing his pain, Swami Vivekananda, his devoted disciple, asked:

"Thakur, why don't you pray to Maa Kali to cure you?"

Thakur Ramakrishna smiled and replied:

"I ask Her only for the realization of the Ātman, the eternal truth. Why should I ask Her for this perishable body?"

Even in suffering, his mind remained fixed on the higher truth. He then revealed his profound realization:

"And tell me, who is eating through all these mouths? Are they not one with me?"

Through this statement, Thakur Ramakrishna demonstrated his vision of unity. He saw no distinction between himself and others—he perceived the Divine as one, living through all beings.

Examples of Sāttvika Knowledge in Daily Life

- A saint sees Bhagavān in every person and serves all with equal love.
- A mother nurtures her children without favoritism, recognizing their inherent equality.
- A scientist discovers that all living beings share the same essential elements, reinforcing the unity within diversity.
- A true leader sees all people as equal and works selflessly for the well-being of society.

Key Takeaways

- **Seeing Unity in Diversity:** A person with Sāttvika knowledge understands that all beings are fundamentally one, despite external differences.
- **Freedom from Discrimination:** Sāttvika knowledge removes distinctions of caste, status,

wealth, or intelligence, fostering universal love.

- **Compassion and Selflessness:** Those who see all as one naturally develop deep love and kindness for others, leading to inner peace.
- **Path to Liberation:** By realizing the oneness of all existence, one dissolves ego and attachment, attaining spiritual freedom.

This verse and the life of Thakur Ramakrishna Paramhansa inspire us to cultivate a higher vision—one that perceives all beings as divine manifestations of Bhagavān, fostering harmony, respect, and unconditional love.

18.21

**pr̥thaktvena tu yajjñānaṃ(n), nānābhāvānpr̥thagvidhān,
vetti sarveṣu bhūteṣu, tajjñānaṃ(m) viddhi rājasam. 18.21**

The knowledge by which man cognizes many existences of various kinds, as apart from one another, in all beings, know that knowledge to be Rājasika.

Bhagavān explains that Rājasika knowledge leads to division and attachment, as it views the world in fragmented parts rather than as a unified whole.

- **pr̥thaktvena tu yajjñānaṃ** - *"That knowledge which sees everything as separate."*
 - A person influenced by Rājasika knowledge perceives differences—between individuals, nations, religions, and social classes—rather than underlying unity.
 - This results in a sense of competition, possessiveness, and an ego-driven mindset.
- **nānābhāvān pr̥thagvidhān** - *"Perceiving diverse forms and distinctions."*
 - This knowledge classifies beings based on their external characteristics—rich and poor, strong and weak, educated and uneducated—without recognizing their shared divine essence.
 - It fosters attachment to personal identity, leading to pride, envy, and conflicts.
- **vetti sarveṣu bhūteṣu tajjñānaṃ viddhi rājasam** - *"Such knowledge is Rājasika."*
 - It is driven by personal ambition, self-interest, and material concerns, rather than spiritual insight.
 - Instead of seeing Bhagavān in all beings, it sees people as competitors, adversaries, or instruments for achieving selfish goals.

Examples of Rājasika Knowledge

- A person who sees only differences between people based on race, religion, or nationality, without acknowledging the common human spirit.
- A businessman who views employees only as tools for profit, ignoring their well-being.
- A politician who promotes division for personal power rather than working for unity and welfare.
- A student who compares their marks with others, feeling superior or inferior, instead of focusing on self-improvement.

Contrast with Sāttvika Knowledge

- **Sāttvika Knowledge (18.20):** Sees unity in diversity, understanding that all beings share the same divine essence.

*ahaṃ nirvikalpaṃ nirākāramekaṃ
vibhutvācca sarvatra sarveṃdriyāṇāṃ |
yacāsaṅgatam naiva bandhaṃ na mokṣam
cidānaṃdarupa śivohaṃ śivohaṃ ||*

Jagadguru Adi guru Shankaracharya says, "I am the conscious element."Sattvik

- **Rājasika Knowledge (18.21):** Sees diversity as separation, leading to attachment, pride, and a materialistic approach to life.

Consequences of Rājasika Knowledge

- **Insecurity and Anxiety:** Constant comparison with others creates dissatisfaction and fear of losing status.
- **Desires and Attachments:** Leads to excessive ambition, selfishness, and craving for personal success.
- **Ego and Conflict:** Fosters a "me vs. them" mentality, increasing disputes and misunderstandings.

Key Takeaways

- **Rājasika knowledge sees diversity but lacks the vision of unity.**
- **It creates attachment, competition, and division in society.**
- **True wisdom lies in seeing beyond external differences and recognizing the divine presence in all.**
- **By shifting from Rājasika to Sāttvika knowledge, one moves from fragmentation to oneness, fostering peace and harmony.**

This verse teaches us to rise above divisive thinking and cultivate a vision of unity, seeing all beings as interconnected manifestations of Bhagavān.

18.22

**yattu kṛtsnavadekasmin, kārye saktamahaitukam,
atattvārthavadalpaṃ(ñ) ca, tattāmasamudāhṛtam. 18.22**

Again, that knowledge which clings to one body as if it were the whole, and which is irrational, has no real grasp of truth and is trivial, has been declared as Tāmasika.

Bhagavān describes the **lowest form of knowledge**, which is narrow, irrational, and leads to ignorance. Such knowledge arises from attachment to **limited viewpoints** and prevents individuals from seeing the greater truth.

- **yattu kṛtsnavadekasmin kārye saktam ahaitukam**
 - Tāmasika knowledge is **one-sided and rigid**. It fixates on a single aspect of reality while **ignoring the broader truth**.
 - Such people may blindly follow outdated customs or superstitions **without questioning**

their validity.

- **atattvārthavat alpaṃ ca**

- This knowledge is **not based on truth**. It lacks depth and fails to recognize the **eternal, spiritual reality**.
- Instead of guiding one toward wisdom, it **creates illusions** and false understanding.

- **tattāmasam udāhṛtam**

- Bhagavān declares such knowledge as **Tāmasika**, meaning it is born out of **ignorance, laziness, and delusion**.
- This knowledge keeps individuals trapped in **narrow thinking, arrogance, and prejudice**, making them resistant to growth and wisdom.

Saints Guide Us to Sāttvika Knowledge

The **saints and scriptures** advise us to **rise above** Tāmasika and Rājasika tendencies and seek **Sāttvika knowledge**, which leads to wisdom and self-realization.

The revered **Samarth Ramdas Swami** beautifully expressed this aspiration in his devotional poem "**Pavan Bhiksha**":

कोमल वाचा देदो राम, अभेध भक्ति देदो राम, आत्मनिवेदन देदो राम।।

- **कोमल वाचा देदो राम**

"O Rāma, grant me soft and kind speech," so that my words bring peace and harmony to others.

- **अभेध भक्ति देदो राम**

"O Rāma, grant me non-dual devotion," so that I see all beings as one with You and cultivate pure love.

- **आत्मनिवेदन देदो राम**

"O Rāma, grant me complete self-surrender," so that my ego dissolves, and I become one with Your divine will.

This prayer reminds us that **true knowledge** must be accompanied by **humility, devotion, and self-surrender**, leading to spiritual enlightenment.

Preview of the Next Verses

In the **upcoming verses**, Bhagavān continues to explain the **threefold division** of Karma (actions) and Kartā (the doer) based on the three Guṇas—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas.

- How does a **Sāttvika person** perform their duties selflessly?
- What motivates a **Rājasika person** to act?
- Why does a **Tāmasika person** act without discernment?

These insights will help us recognize **our own tendencies** and guide us toward **the path of righteousness, clarity, and liberation**.

Conclusion of the Session

With deep reverence, the **session was humbly offered at the feet of Gurudev**, seeking His blessings for the wisdom imparted through the teachings of **Śrī Bhagavān** in the Bhagavad Gītā.

Following this, a **question-and-answer session** was conducted, where students enthusiastically participated, sharing their insights, clarifying doubts, and deepening their understanding of the concepts discussed.

Questions and Answers

Rashmi Parida Didi Ji

Question: Which Bhagavad Gītā should we read?

Answer: For accurate pronunciation, you may refer to **Saral Pathanīya Gītā** by **Geeta Pariwar**, which we are already using. It is designed to help with correct recitation.

To understand the meanings and deeper insights of the Bhagavad Gītā, you may refer to:

- **Sādhaka Sañjīvanī** by **Swami Ramsukhadas Ji** (*Gita Press, Gorakhpur*) – This detailed commentary explains each verse with practical applications for spiritual aspirants.
- **Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā - Tātparya** by **Swami Chinmayananda Ji** – A profound philosophical exposition of the Gītā's teachings.
- **Bhāvārtha Dīpikā (Jñāneśvarī)** by **Sant Jñāneśwar Maharaj** – A poetic and experiential commentary in Marathi, deeply insightful for seekers.

For a simple Sanskrit-Hindi translation, the **Gita Press Gorakhpur's Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā** with Hindi translation is widely recommended. It provides Sanskrit verses alongside Hindi explanations.

Question: We want to sell our land to buy a house in the city, but the land is not getting sold. Is there any specific worship that will help?

Answer: As we discussed today, Bhagavad Gītā explains that every action's accomplishment depends on multiple factors.

- **Effort (Karma)** is the most important factor. We must make sincere efforts and take practical steps to ensure the sale.
- **Divine Will (Daiva)** also plays a role, but Bhagavān gives us the power to shape our destiny through persistent karma.
- **Faith and Patience:** By maintaining faith in Bhagavān and continuing righteous actions, the right opportunity will present itself.

Instead of seeking a specific ritual, focus on **dedicating your actions to Bhagavān and surrendering the results to Him**. This way, you will remain at peace while continuing your efforts.

Vinayak Argade Ji

Question: Can you explain the meaning of “tattāmasamudāhṛtam” in Verse 18.22?

Answer: The term "**tattāmasamudāhṛtam**" refers to **Tāmasika knowledge**, which is influenced by ignorance, laziness, and delusion.

- **Tāmasika knowledge** limits one's vision to only one aspect, ignoring the bigger truth.
- It is **irrational**, meaning it lacks real understanding of the deeper reality.
- It is **narrow-minded**, clinging to a limited perspective without seeking wisdom.

Such knowledge leads to confusion and misguides a person away from true understanding. Bhagavān advises us to **rise above Tāmasika and Rājasika knowledge and cultivate Sāttvika knowledge** to perceive the truth clearly.

Ram Sundar Dasaundhi Ji

Question: Is it true that our present life is based on our past life's karmas, and our future life will be shaped by our present karma?

Answer: Yes, that is absolutely correct.

- Our **past actions (Prārabdha Karma)** influence our current life circumstances.
- Our **present actions (Kriyāmāṇa Karma)** will shape our future, including future births.
- **Sañcita Karma** refers to accumulated karma from previous lives that may manifest in future births.

Bhagavad Gītā emphasizes that **conscious and righteous actions in the present can transform our future** and even lead to liberation.

Question: Can we not receive the fruits of good deeds in this life itself?

Answer: Yes, the results of good karma can be experienced in this life too.

- **Some results come immediately** – for example, if you help someone, you may feel inner peace and satisfaction.
- **Some results take time** – just like a seed needs time to grow into a tree and bear fruit, karma also unfolds over time.
- **Some results may manifest in future births** – Bhagavad Gītā teaches that no good karma is ever lost. Even if results are unseen now, they will surely come at the right time.

Bhagavān assures in Gītā 2.40: "**In this path, no effort is wasted, nor is there any failure. Even a little progress saves one from great fear.**"

Aarti Rane Ji

Question: It is often said that a Guru is necessary for spiritual progress. Is that true?

Answer: Yes, having a Guru is extremely beneficial in spiritual progress, but Bhagavad Gītā teaches that **when a sincere seeker truly desires to reach Bhagavān, Bhagavān Himself arranges for the Guru to appear.**

- **A Guru is like a guiding light** – helping us navigate the path and clear our doubts.
- **One must first develop a sincere yearning for spiritual wisdom.** When this longing is strong enough, the right Guru will be found naturally.

- **Even Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was Arjuna's Guru**, teaching him the Bhagavad Gītā at the most crucial moment in his life.

Bhagavān Himself assures in Gītā 4.34:

"Approach a true Guru with humility and devotion. Ask sincere questions and serve with love. The wise will impart divine knowledge to you."

Thus, our responsibility is to

seek knowledge with sincerity, and the right Guru will guide us at the right time.



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

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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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