

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 2: Sāṅkhya-Yoga

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

Timeless Truths of the Gītā: Śrī Krishna's Teachings on the Immortal Soul, Righteous Duty, and Detachment in Arjuna's Moment of Doubt.

The Chapter 2 of Shrimad Bhagavad Gītā is **Sāṅkhya Yoga - The Yoga of Analytical Knowledge**

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

**Vasudeva Sutam Devam, Kamsa Chanura Mardanam,
Devaki Paramanandam, Krishnam Vande Jagadgurum.
Yogesham Sachidanandam, Vasudeva Vraja Priyam,
Dharma Sansthapaka Veeram, Krishnam Vande Jagatgurum.
Shri Guru Charan Kamalebhyo Namah.**

By the boundless and auspicious grace of the Divine, a rare and blessed opportunity has arisen for all, allowing the realization of the true purpose of human life. This journey toward fulfillment and enlightenment is guided by the timeless wisdom of the Bhagavad Gītā, which serves as a path to the highest spiritual attainment. Through its sacred teachings, life can be made purposeful, victorious, and ultimately meaningful—not just in this world but beyond as well.

Now, upon reaching the fourth level of understanding, an inseparable bond has formed with the Gītā. The question of whether or not to engage with it no longer arises; rather, the thought of living without it is inconceivable. The Bhagavad Gītā has become an integral part of existence, and its benefits are experienced daily in immeasurable ways. These transformations are so profound that words fail to encapsulate them fully.

Reciting the shlokas with precise pronunciation, pure intention, and devoted listening undoubtedly yields immense benefits. The sacred vibrations bring about deep inner change, refining one's nature and illuminating life with divine brilliance. Yet, if engagement with the Gītā is limited to mere

recitation, its infinite wisdom remains only partially tapped. The spiritual rewards of chanting have their limits, and to transcend those boundaries, one must embrace the Gītā not just in words but in life itself.

This is the essence of the guidance given by Pujya Swamiji:

**"Gītā Padhe, Padhaye, Jeevan Mein Laye."
(Learn Gītā, Teach Gītā, Live Gītā.)**

Living the Gītā's teachings takes one beyond the realm of verbal recitation into the boundless expanse of divine realization. While the vibrations of the sacred verses certainly work their magic, true transformation unfolds only when the principles are deeply understood and applied in daily life.

As the festival of **Holikotsav** is being celebrated, its deeper significance must be understood. **Pujya Swamiji** emphasized that the true essence of Holi lies in burning away one's vices, just as **Holika** was consumed by fire, and allowing virtues to emerge and flourish, just as **Prahlada** stood resilient in righteousness. This is the **true celebration of Holi—to destroy negativity within and nurture the qualities of purity, devotion, and truth.**

With this perspective, sincere introspection and action are essential. From every discourse, at least one or two key takeaways should be applied immediately. There is always a tendency to postpone change, thinking, "I will implement this later", "I will work on it someday". But true transformation begins in the present moment. What lesson can be taken today? What change can be implemented right now, this evening, and starting tomorrow morning? When one begins to practice this with genuine intent and effort, life undergoes an unparalleled elevation.

Currently, the **second chapter** of the Bhagavad Gītā is being explored—a profoundly significant chapter. The eleventh shloka of this chapter holds special importance, which is why the previous discourse paused at the tenth shloka. The reason lies in the interpretation given by Adi Shankaracharya ji and many revered saints of Bharat, who considered the true essence of the Bhagavad Gītā to begin from this very verse.

Some have questioned this perspective, wondering whether it means the Gītā consists of only 643 shlokas instead of 700, as the first 47 shlokas from the first chapter and the first 10 shlokas of the second chapter are excluded in this view. However, the saints clarified that this is not about exclusion but about structure and classification.

Just as in childhood, when learning to write essays, three elements were emphasized—**Prasang** (context), **Sandarbha** (reference), and **Vyakhya** (explanation)—a similar framework applies to the **Bhagavad Gītā.**

- **Prasang (Context):** The **first chapter**, starting from the **first shloka**, along with the **first seven shlokas** of the **second chapter**, sets the stage for the Gītā. It introduces the background, the battlefield, the turmoil in Arjuna's heart, and the circumstances that lead to Śrī Krishna's divine discourse.
- **Sandarbha (Reference):** The **eighth to the tenth shloka** of the **second chapter** serve as the reference point, indicating what is about to unfold. Just as a poet, before elaborating on a theme, provides a reference to guide the reader's understanding, these verses hint at the wisdom that Śrī Krishna is about to impart.
- **Vyakhya (Explanation):** True interpretation and deeper philosophical exposition begin from the **eleventh shloka** of the **second chapter**, marking the commencement of Śrī Krishna's

teachings in their full depth. Adi Shankaracharya ji and many saints viewed this as the core starting point of the Gītā's spiritual wisdom.

As the dialogue unfolds, Arjuna, filled with sorrow and despair, is described by **Sanjaya** as being overwhelmed with **Vishāda**—deep distress. His face is pale, his spirit burdened with grief. When one sees a dear friend in sorrow, the natural response is to reflect their sadness, to share in their pain. But what is striking here is the contrast between **Arjuna** and Śrī **Krishna**.

Sanjaya distinctly describes that while Arjuna is engulfed in grief, Śrī **Krishna remains smiling—Prasannānavam Bhārata**. This is extraordinary. In an atmosphere so heavy with sorrow, Śrī Krishna stands with a radiant smile. Such a reaction seems unusual, even inappropriate by worldly standards. In deeply serious situations, smiling may appear insensitive, as if one lacks awareness of the gravity of the moment. And yet, Śrī Krishna smiles.

What does this signify?

It reveals the **divine perspective**. While Arjuna perceives a crisis, Śrī Krishna sees an opportunity for transformation. Where Arjuna sees despair, HE sees the unfolding of divine wisdom. This smile is not of indifference but of assurance, a silent message that **truth will prevail**, that **clarity will emerge from confusion**, and that **this very moment of turmoil will give birth to enlightenment**.

And so, in this state, **Bhagavān begins to speak**.

2.11

śrībhagavānuvāca aśocyānanvaśocastvaṃ(m), prajñāvādāṃśca bhāṣase, gatāsūnagatāsūṃśca, nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ. 2.11

Śrī Bhagavān said:

Arjuna, you grieve over those who should not be grieved for and yet speak like the learned; wise men do not sorrow over the dead or the living

Śrī Krishna begins his divine discourse by addressing Arjuna's sorrow, offering wisdom that transcends human emotions. Arjuna, overwhelmed with grief, speaks as though he possesses great wisdom, yet his lamentation is misplaced. True **panditas** (wise ones) do not grieve over the living or the dead, for they understand the eternal nature of the soul.

Before delving into Śrī Krishna's words, it is essential to understand the depth of Arjuna's sorrow. Dhritarashtra, too, was burdened by grief—his very first words in the Gītā reflects his anxiety:

**"Dharmakṣetre Kurukṣetre samavetā yuyutsavaḥ,
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavās caiva kim akurvata sañjaya?" (1.1)**

*With a trembling heart, he asks **Sanjaya** what transpired on the battlefield between his sons and the **Pāṇḍavas**.*

His sorrow is rooted in attachment—his use of the word "**māmakāḥ**" (my sons) reveals his deep-seated bias, separating his own children from those of his deceased brother, King Pāṇḍu. His grief stems from self-interest, concerned only about the fate of his own sons.

Arjuna's sorrow, however, is different. He does not weep for himself but for those who stand against him in battle—his **Svajana** (own kin). He sees **Duryodhana, Duśśāsana, Bhīṣma, Droṇa, his own**

maternal uncles, his father-in-law, and revered elders before him and is unable to bear the thought of their destruction. His lament is not for his **own** suffering, nor does he express concern for his brothers—**Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Nakula, or Sahadeva**. Instead, he mourns for those who stand in the opposing army, showing his heart is bound by compassion, even for those on the other side.

Dhritarashtra's grief is driven by delusion (**moha**), but it is **self-centered**—his concern is solely for his own gain. In contrast, Arjuna's sorrow, though also rooted in delusion, is **selfless**, arising from a broader sense of duty and love for his kin, even among his adversaries.

Seeing Arjuna in this state, Śrī Krishna smiles—not out of mockery, but because he perceives the greater truth beyond Arjuna's temporary confusion. His smile radiates divine assurance, for he knows that Arjuna is about to receive the ultimate wisdom that will dispel his sorrow forever.

Śrī Krishna tells him:

"You speak words of wisdom, but your sorrow is misplaced. The wise do not grieve for those who have perished or for those who are alive."

True wisdom (**prajñā**) is not mere intellectual discourse; it is an **awakened understanding**. Śrī Krishna points out that Arjuna's words may sound like those of a learned man, but his sorrow contradicts true knowledge. Those with true wisdom recognize the imperishable nature of the soul, and therefore, do not mourn over the transient nature of life and death.

Through this verse, Śrī Krishna begins to unravel the illusion that binds Arjuna's heart, leading him toward detachment, duty, and ultimate self-realization.

In today's world, there is no shortage of educated fools. Many people believe that accumulating vast amounts of information equates to wisdom. They collect data from books, the internet, and various other sources, assuming themselves to be knowledgeable. However, true knowledge does not arise from mere information gathering; it is born out of experience. Information and knowledge are entirely different. Information can be obtained from books, television, or the internet, but knowledge requires experience and realization.

A striking example of this distinction occurred when a young engineer, fresh out of college, received his first major contract to design a factory. This was a defining moment in his career, and he approached the project with great diligence, relying on his academic knowledge. The factory was to house a massive plant imported from Germany, with precise dimensions provided in advance. The engineer designed a deep pit, ensuring it was ten feet deep and twenty feet by twenty feet wide, as specified. He also left a large gate for the plant to be moved inside. After six months, the factory was completed, and the imported plant arrived at its destination.

However, upon arrival, the engineer realized a grave mistake. The plant was too heavy to be manually positioned inside the pit; it required a crane for installation. Yet, he had not accounted for the crane's movement within the factory. There was no space left for the crane to operate, making it impossible to lift and position the plant. Panic set in. If the building had to be demolished, it would not only mean financial ruin but also the end of his career before it even began.

Desperate for a solution, he consulted senior engineers, who unanimously declared that the only way forward was to break the walls. He sought advice from India's leading architectural consultancy firms, paying enormous fees, only to receive the same response: "The walls must be broken." He reached out to experts across the globe—in the US, Germany, Australia—spending millions on consultations. Each expert concluded that demolition was the only option.

Two months passed, and the massive plant stood idle. The engineer, overwhelmed with despair, was on the verge of collapse. Then, one day, a labor contractor, a man in simple attire, approached him. This contractor supervised 20-50 workers and had been observing the engineer's distress.

With quiet confidence, he said, "Sir, I can offer you a solution."

Frustrated, the engineer dismissed him. "Do not trouble me. The greatest experts in the world have failed to find a solution."

The contractor persisted, "Sir, I only ask for five lakh rupees as my fee, but only if the solution works."

The engineer, skeptical yet intrigued by the man's confidence, finally agreed to listen. "Tell me your idea."

The contractor asked, "Will the plant be damaged if submerged in water?"

The engineer consulted the plant's manual and replied, "No. If necessary, we can temporarily remove and seal the motors."

The contractor smiled. "Then the problem is solved."

Astonished, the engineer asked, "How?"

The contractor explained, "Instead of lifting the plant, we will slide it in. We will fill the pit with ice blocks until the surface is level with the factory floor. Then, we will slide the plant over the ice and position it above the pit. Gradually, as the ice melts, the plant will lower itself. Using suction pumps, we will remove the water, and in a week, the plant will settle perfectly at the bottom."

The engineer was speechless. He had consulted the best minds globally, yet this simple laborer had provided the solution. He asked, "How did you come up with this idea?"

The contractor replied, "Sir, I come from a village. When we need to lower heavy objects into deep wells, we do not have cranes. We use this method, filling the well with ice, sliding the object over, and letting it gradually sink as the ice melts. We have been doing this for generations."

The method was implemented, and within days, the plant was successfully installed without demolishing a single wall.

This story highlights a profound truth: experience-based knowledge far surpasses theoretical knowledge. The young engineer had studied at a prestigious university, yet his bookish knowledge failed him. Meanwhile, the contractor, with no formal education, possessed invaluable practical wisdom acquired through generations of experience.

This principle is echoed in the Bhagavad Gītā. When Arjuna is consumed by sorrow, Śrī Krishna tells him:

“अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे।

गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः॥”

(“You grieve for those who should not be grieved for, and yet you speak words of wisdom. The wise neither mourn for the dead nor for the living.”)

Arjuna is overwhelmed by three emotions: **shoka** (sorrow for the past), **moha** (attachment to the present), and **bhaya** (fear for the future). He mourns for his ancestors, is attached to his kin, and fears the destruction of his lineage. Śrī Krishna teaches that a true **pandita** (wise person) does not succumb to these emotions.

The term **pandita** does not refer to someone of a particular caste but rather to a person of true knowledge. In the Mahabharata, Vidura defines a **pandita** in **Vidura Niti**, listing fifteen qualities that define wisdom. Nowhere does he mention caste; rather, he describes a **pandita** as one who possesses deep understanding.

The term **panda** for pilgrimage priests also stems from this idea. They maintain records of generations, knowing details even the pilgrims themselves may not remember. Their vast repository of information earns them the title of **panda**—one who possesses knowledge.

True wisdom is not the mere accumulation of facts. It is the ability to discern, apply, and transform knowledge through experience. A person who combines bookish learning with experiential wisdom becomes truly great. But one who only collects information, without experience, remains an educated fool.

One day, in a serene monastery where the Enlightened One resided, a grief-stricken mother rushed in, carrying the lifeless body of her only son. Her face was pale with sorrow, her breath uneven, her steps unsteady. The monks at the entrance tried to stop her, asking where she was going, but her grief was deafening—she heard nothing, saw nothing, but the still face of her child. She pushed past them, running straight to where the Buddha sat in deep meditation.

Before anyone could intervene, she collapsed at his feet, clutching the child's body close to her chest, tears streaming down her face. Her voice trembled as she spoke, "O Master, I have not come for a sermon, nor do I wish to hear any teachings. I know you are divine, I know you can do anything. Bring him back to life! I seek nothing but my son. Tell me, can you do it or not?"

Again and again, she repeated her plea, sobbing uncontrollably. The monks tried to calm her, to reason with her—life and death are inevitable, no one returns from the other side. But she heard none of it. Again, she cried out, "Can you or can you not? Answer me!" Ten times she repeated, each time more desperate than the last.

A profound silence fell upon the monastery. The monks looked toward the Buddha, wondering—would he perform a miracle today? He, the Enlightened One, the divine being who had never intervened against the law of nature, would he now defy it? The air was thick with anticipation, and all eyes rested upon him.

Calmly, with infinite compassion in his gaze, he said, "Yes, I can."

For the first time, the woman fell silent. Hope flickered in her tearful eyes. The monks, too, were astounded—was today the day a dead man would rise?

The Buddha continued, "But first, you must fulfill one condition. Go into the village and bring me a handful of rice from a house where no one has ever died."

Without hesitation, she rose and ran. She knocked on every door, repeating the request. But every home carried the same sorrow—some had lost a father, some a mother, some a child, some a friend. Every household had witnessed death in some form. "What a strange request!" they told her. "Is there

such a house where no one has died?"

Hours passed, and she returned to the monastery. Her steps were slower now, her spirit heavy. The once frantic mother, desperate to undo fate, now walked with the weight of realization.

She placed the lifeless body of her son before the Buddha and said, "There is no house untouched by death. Every door I knocked on told me the same tale of loss. No one is exempt. No one is spared."

The Buddha looked at her with deep understanding and said, "You were unwilling to listen before, but now you see the truth. Death is inevitable. It does not discriminate between rich and poor, king and beggar. Even the greatest have walked this path—none remain. **'Rajā api jāyate, raṅga api jāyate—No king, no wealth, no power can defy it.'** This body is mortal; it is bound to perish. Knowing this, the wise do not grieve for what is destined to pass, neither for the dead nor for the living."

Tears still glistened in her eyes, but something had changed. The storm within had settled into acceptance. She looked at her son one last time, not with despair, but with the realization that he had simply taken the path all must walk. Folding her hands in gratitude, she bowed before the Buddha and stepped into the light of understanding, carrying within her the wisdom of impermanence.

There was never a time when existence ceased, nor will there ever be a time when it vanishes completely. The past, present, and future are but different expressions of the same eternal truth.

2.12

**na tvevāhaṃ(ñ) jātu nāsaṃ(n), na tvaṃ(n) neme janādhipāḥ,
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ(s), sarve vayamataḥ(ph) param. 2.12**

In fact, there was never a time when I was not , or when you or these kings were not. Nor is it a fact that hereafter we shall all cease to be.

Never was there a moment when "I" did not exist, nor was there ever a moment when "you" were absent, nor were the kings of this world ever nonexistent. And never shall there be a time in the future when we all cease to be.

The eternal nature of existence transcends time. The self is not bound by the constraints of mortality—it has always been, and it will always be. The wisdom of the verse unveils a profound truth: in all three phases of time—past, present, and future—existence remains.

The choice of words is remarkable. "I" and "you" are singular, but "all these kings" is plural, beautifully encompassing the entire spectrum of existence. It is not merely an assertion of individual immortality but a revelation of the universal, timeless presence of life.

2.13

**dehino'sminyathā dehe, kaumāraṃ(ṽ) yauvanaṃ(ñ) jarā,
tathā dehāntaraprāptiḥ(r), dhīrastatra na muhyati.2.13**

Just as boyhood, youth and old age are attributed to the soul through this body, even so, it attains another body, The wise man does not get deluded about this.

In the journey of life, the body undergoes inevitable transformations—childhood, youth, old age, and ultimately, the transition to another body. Yet, the wise remain undisturbed, for they understand the eternal nature of the self.

Just as the soul experiences childhood, youth, and old age within a single body, it similarly moves on to another body after death. The enlightened do not grieve over this natural course of existence.

Life is a journey, much like traveling from one city to another. When one reaches a new destination, they do not say, "I have become Mumbai" or "I have become Delhi"; rather, they acknowledge having arrived at a new place. Similarly, the self does not become a child, a young person, or an old individual—it merely resides in different phases of bodily existence. But due to deep attachment, people falsely identify themselves with these stages, saying, "I am a child," "I am young," or "I am old." This misidentification leads to suffering.

The body changes, yet the inner self remains constant. At five years old, the awareness of "I am" is the same as it is at forty or even eighty. The body ages, but the essence of being does not. The great folly of the world is that people mourn death as though it were an anomaly when, in truth, it is the most certain aspect of existence.

This eternal truth was beautifully expressed in the **Yaksha Prashna**, where Yudhishtira was asked, **"What is the greatest wonder in the world?"** He replied,

***"Ahanyahani bhūtāni gachchhantiha yamālayam,
śeṣāḥ sthāvaram icchanti kim āścaryam ataḥ param"***

Every day, living beings pass away, yet those who remain believe they are permanent. What could be more astonishing than this? People wail over the departed as though they were never meant to go, while forgetting that their own turn is inevitable.

There is a story of Yudhishtira that illustrates this truth. After reclaiming his kingdom, he was once distributing alms when a beggar arrived late. The royal donations had been wrapped up, so Yudhishtira told him, "Come tomorrow." Bhima, overhearing this, called for the beating of victory drums and celebrated grandly. Confused, Yudhishtira asked what had happened. Bhima replied, "Our king has conquered death! He has become God himself!"

Startled, Yudhishtira asked why Bhima was saying such a thing. Bhima answered, "You must have conquered death; otherwise, how could you be certain you will be here tomorrow to give alms?" Realizing his mistake, Yudhishtira acknowledged the folly of assuming future certainty. From that day on, he never spoke in absolute terms about tomorrow but rather said, "It is my intention to do this."

This wisdom is still practiced in sacred institutions like Gita Press in Gorakhpur and Govind Bhavan in Kolkata. Those who follow this path never claim with certainty, "I will reach there on the 27th" or "I will do this tomorrow." Instead, they say, "It is my plan," knowing that nothing is guaranteed.

Life is a cycle—childhood, youth, old age, and ultimately, the departure to another form. The wise do not lament this process. As Sant Kabir beautifully cautioned in his verses, one must awaken before it is too late, understanding the transient nature of the body and the permanence of the self.



मन फूला फूला फिरे, जगत में कैसा नाता रे ॥

मन फूला फूला फिरे, जगत में कैसा नाता रे।

माता कहे यह पुत्र हमारा, बहन कहे बीर (भाई) मेरा,

भाई कहे यह भुजा हमारी, नारी कहे नर मेरा, जगत में कैसा नाता रे ॥1॥

पेट पकड़ के माता रोवे, बांह पकड़ के भाई,

लपट झपट के तिरिया रोवे, हंस अकेला जाए, जगत में कैसा नाता रे ॥2॥

जब तक जीवे माता रोवे, बहन रोवे दस मासा,

तेरह दिन तक तिरिया रोवे, फेर करे घर वासा, जगत में कैसा नाता रे ॥3॥

चारगजी चरगजी बनाई, चढ़यो काठ की घोड़ी,

चारो कानी आग लगाई, फूँक दियो ज्यों होरी, जगत में कैसा नाता रे ॥4॥

हाड जले जौ लाकड़ी, केश जले जौ घासा

सोने जैसी काया जर गई, कोइ न आया पासा, जगत में कैसा नाता रे ॥5॥

घर की तिरिया ढूँढन लागी, ढुंडी फिरि चहु देशा,

कहत कबीर सुनो भई साधो, छोड़ो जगत की आशा, जगत में कैसा नाता रे ॥6॥

मन फूला फूला फिरे, जगत में कैसा नाता रे।



The world is fleeting, and yet, the mind wanders in attachment, believing in relationships that are, in essence, impermanent.

"Man phoola phoola phire jagat mein, kaisa naata re."

People take pride in their relationships— a mother calls her son her own, a sister claims her brother, a brother holds onto his sibling as his right hand, and a wife believes her husband belongs to her. But what remains of these bonds when the soul departs?

"Jaget mein kaisa naata re."

At the moment of departure, those who once claimed deep connections grieve intensely. A mother clutches her stomach, remembering the child she carried for nine months, a brother grasps the arms that once protected him, and a wife weeps, but only for a while.

**"Jab tak jeeve mata rove, bahan rove das masa.
Terah din tak tiriya rove, phir kare jag basa."**

A mother mourns for as long as she lives, recalling her child. A sister, whose bond is made of flesh and blood, grieves for ten months. A wife, deeply attached, mourns for thirteen days, but soon, life moves on. Responsibilities call— the household must be maintained, elders must be cared for, and children must be raised. The world does not stop.

Despite accumulating wealth, fine clothes, luxurious mansions, and even fleets of airplanes, in the end, the body must be carried away on a bier of wood.

"Char gaji, char gaji banayi, chadhyo kaath ki ghodi."

And like the firewood of Holi, which is burned to ashes in all four directions, so too is the body set ablaze, its existence reduced to nothing.

"Charo kaani aag lagayi, phook diyo jo hori."

As the body burns, bones crackle like dry wood, and hair is reduced to ashes in an instant. The golden-hued body, once adorned and cherished, is now nothing but dust.

**"Hadd jale jo laakda sa, jaise ghaas jal jaaye.
Sone jaisi kaya jar gayi, koi na aaya paasa."**

Even the closest family members, who once surrounded the person, eventually leave the cremation ground, never looking back. The home that was once filled with laughter and love is now empty. The belongings left behind are searched and divided among heirs, but the one who accumulated them is nowhere to be found.

"Ghar ki riyas dhoondhan lagi, dhoondhi phiri chahu desha."

Sant Kabir, in his profound wisdom, cautions against blind attachment.

"Kehat Kabir suno bhai saadho, chhod jagat ki aasha."

No one stays forever. No one can accompany another beyond this life. Just as one arrives alone, one must depart alone. Bhagavān Krishna imparts this same truth to Arjuna, offering a lesson that is eternal and beyond sorrow.

The impermanence of life and the inevitability of death are truths that wise souls accept. While relationships give meaning to human existence, they are transient. The only lasting reality is the self, which transcends these fleeting connections.

2.14

**mātrāsparsāstu kaunteya, śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkhadāḥ,
āgamāpāyino'nityāḥ(s), tāmstitikṣasva bhārata. 2.14**

O son of Kuntī, the contacts between the senses and their objects, which give rise to the feeling of heat and cold, pleasure and pain etc., are transitory and fleeting; therefore, Arjuna, endure them.

In the Bhagavad Gītā, Śrī Krishna imparts profound wisdom to Arjuna:

The senses and their objects bring experiences of cold and heat, pleasure and pain. These sensations are fleeting, arising and passing away like waves in the ocean. Therefore, one must learn to endure them with equanimity.

At first glance, this verse may seem ordinary, but it carries deep insight. The enlightened sages and masters have interpreted it in ways that reveal a new perspective on life.

Śrī Krishna introduces a unique understanding—He refers to all sensory experiences as "mātrā-sparsā", the touch of sensory objects. Here, "sparsā" (touch) does not merely refer to physical contact but to the way all five senses engage with the world.

For instance, when food is consumed, the tongue comes into contact with taste. When a loud sound strikes the ear, it causes pain—sound itself has touched the sense organ. Similarly, the eyes are affected by intense light; staring at the midday sun or the sparks of a welding machine for too long can cause damage. This, too, is a form of touch. The sense of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and even thought—all experience the world through contact, through **sparsā**.

Śrī Krishna emphasizes that it is not the object itself but its intensity—its quantity—that determines whether it brings pleasure or suffering.

Take salt, for example. It is neither inherently good nor bad. When added in the right proportion, it enhances the taste of food. If excessive, it ruins the dish; if too little, it leaves it bland. The same applies to sugar in tea—too much makes it undrinkable, and too little makes it tasteless. Even fragrance, when applied in excess, becomes overpowering rather than pleasant.

The key lies in balance.

This applies not just to food and fragrance but to every aspect of life. People desire wealth, strength, beauty, and comfort in abundance. Yet, just as an excess of salt or sugar ruins a dish, excess in life also leads to suffering.

Consider the changing temperatures—at **25°C**, the body feels comfortable. If it drops to **18°C**, it feels cold; if it rises to **32°C**, it feels warm. At **43°C**, stepping outside becomes unbearable. The temperature itself remains a fact of nature, but its fluctuation affects the body's perception of comfort and discomfort.

Many individuals rely on air conditioners, setting them at excessively low temperatures—**18°C** or below. Over time, their bodies become accustomed to artificial cooling, making them hypersensitive to even slight warmth. If the AC were instead set at **26-27°C**, the body would naturally adapt to moderate temperatures, making **32°C** bearable and reducing discomfort. It is not the environment that troubles people but their conditioning.

Krishna explains that "**śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkhadāḥ**"—the experiences of heat and cold, pleasure and pain—are all temporary. "**Āgamāpāyino'nityāḥ**"—they come and go; they do not last. **One must learn to endure them with patience and understanding.**

This concept is beautifully illustrated through an encounter in the cold mountains of Nainital. A traveler, wrapped in multiple layers of clothing, gloves, and a woolen cap, observed the local residents dressed in light attire despite the freezing temperatures. Curious, he asked them how they managed to endure the cold. They replied that they had no choice but to adapt.

One man shared his unique method: during peak winter nights, when warmth was hard to find, he would remove his shirt and expose himself to the freezing air for 15-20 minutes. His body would adjust to the extreme cold, and upon wearing the same shirt again, it would feel as warm as a sweater.

This experience mirrors the wisdom of the Bhagavad Gītā—discomfort only exists relative to our conditioning. When one learns to tolerate hardships, they lose their power to disturb the mind.

Śrī Krishna's teaching is profound: all sensations—pleasure and pain, comfort and discomfort—are impermanent. The wise do not chase after fleeting pleasures or fear temporary discomforts; they cultivate balance and endurance.

For instance, when food is consumed, the tongue experiences taste. A loud sound can cause discomfort, affecting the ears. Bright light can strain the eyes, just as a pungent smell can overwhelm the nose. Even thought processes have their own sensory engagement. The key realization here is that **it is not the object itself but its intensity that determines whether it brings pleasure or suffering.**

A striking example of this wisdom can be found in the customs of Tibetan monks. In certain regions of Tibet, an ancient and formidable practice exists—one that might seem perilous to outsiders. When a newborn enters the world, instead of a warm embrace, the infant is taken to a glacial stream, where the freezing waters cleanse the newborn of its afterbirth. These waters, often at temperatures as low as -20°C, pose a severe test of endurance. Many infants do not survive this ritual. Yet those who do emerge with an extraordinary resilience that lasts a lifetime. Their bodies adapt to extreme cold, allowing them to walk through the harsh Tibetan winters clad in nothing but a simple robe, unaffected by temperatures that would be unbearable to others.

Krishna explains that "**śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkhadāḥ**"—the experiences of heat and cold, pleasure and pain—are transient. "**Āgamāpāyino'nityāḥ**"—they come and go; they do not last. True wisdom lies in enduring them with patience and understanding.

This insight extends beyond physical endurance to the perception of wealth and happiness. The measure of contentment is not universal; it is relative to one's circumstances. A man in debt may find immense joy in receiving 500 rupees, while another, possessing five million, remains unsatisfied, envying someone with fifty million. A person with a house may despair over its location, yearning for a more prestigious neighborhood. Even the one who owns a luxurious penthouse may feel inadequate without a private villa. **The nature of human suffering does not change—only its reasons do.**

Osho once narrated an amusing yet profound tale about the Turkish mystic, Mulla Nasruddin. One day, as Nasruddin walked through the marketplace, he saw a man weeping inconsolably, while another tried to comfort him. Curious, Nasruddin inquired about the matter. The comforter explained that his friend was on the verge of suicide—his wife had given him 200 rupees to buy goods, but he had lost 100 of them. Fearing his wife's wrath, he had resolved to end his life.

Nasruddin, ever the wit, confidently declared that he could make the man laugh. The comforter scoffed, doubting how a man so engulfed in sorrow could possibly be made to smile. Nasruddin proposed a wager—if he succeeded in making the man laugh, the comforter would owe him 200 rupees. The deal was struck.

Without another word, Nasruddin grabbed the weeping man's shopping bag and ran. Shocked, the man momentarily forgot his grief and chased after Nasruddin, shouting, "My bag! My bag!"

Nasruddin was swift, darting through alleys and streets, forcing the man to pursue him. After a long chase, Nasruddin finally placed the bag on the ground and stepped aside. The man rushed forward, grabbed the bag, and clutched it to his chest with immense relief, exclaiming, "At least I got this back! I thought I had lost everything!"

The comforter, astonished, realized what had happened. Nasruddin turned to him and said, "**See? I did nothing but change his sorrow. His grief transformed, and now he feels happiness.**"

This is precisely what happens in life. **Happiness and sorrow are not absolute; they are relative and ever-changing.** People spend their days shifting from one worry to another, from one desire to another, believing that a change in circumstances will bring lasting joy. But Śrī Krishna's wisdom remains unwavering—everything is fleeting.

"Nothing can stay forever." The wise do not chase ephemeral pleasures or fear transient pains; they cultivate balance and endurance, embracing life as it flows, just like the monks who withstand the glacial waters of Tibet.

Happiness and sorrow are inevitable aspects of life. When one asks how suffering can be transformed, the answer lies not in its eradication but in changing its nature. By altering the kind of sorrow one experiences, suffering ceases to be painful, and in that transformation, joy emerges. This is the wisdom that saints impart, reshaping affliction rather than eliminating it. As the Bhagavad Gita states, "**Sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā lābhālābhau jayājayau**"—happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat must be treated with equanimity.

Many question why misfortune befalls even the most righteous individuals. They may read the Gita, perform rituals, donate generously, speak the truth, and treat others with kindness, yet they are not exempt from suffering. The reason is simple: past karmas must bear fruit. No matter how virtuous one's present actions, the consequences of past deeds cannot be avoided. Bhagavān advises, "**Tāṁs titikṣasva Bhārata**"—learn to tolerate.

Tolerance, or **titikṣā**, is a vital principle for enduring the ups and downs of life. It is not mere endurance born of compulsion but an acceptance filled with serenity. A mother who sleeps in the wet spot while placing her child in the dry part of the bed does not feel burdened—she does so with love, without complaint. Similarly, students must embody **titikṣā**. The ancient maxim states:

Kāka-cheṣṭā, bako-dhyānam, svāna-nidrā, alpāhārī, gṛha-tyāgī—vidyārthī pañchalakṣaṇam.

The student should have the effort of a crow, the focus of a heron, the alertness of a dog, eat sparingly, and be detached from worldly comforts. Just as a crow tirelessly seeks food without giving up, a student must persistently strive for knowledge. Like the heron that stands on one leg, patiently watching for its prey, a student must cultivate deep concentration. Sleep should be as light as a dog's, always aware of its surroundings. Overindulgence in food clouds the intellect, so one must eat moderately. Finally, attachment to home comforts weakens resolve—true learning often requires leaving behind familiar surroundings, as seen in the gurukul tradition.

Athletes, too, endure extreme conditions. Cricketers stand for hours in the scorching sun, resisting thirst until the scheduled drinks break. Workers in corporate settings learn to accept their bosses' reprimands because "Boss is always right." Farmers toil under the sun and rain, and merchants bear losses with resilience. Even monks undergo rigorous trials before attaining initiation—only after years of fasting, silence, and austerities are they accepted into sacred orders.

Life's adversities are inevitable, but one's response determines their impact. Some magnify minor inconveniences into great suffering, dwelling on past grievances for years. Others, despite experiencing loss, move forward with grace. The difference lies in **titikṣā**. There is a crucial distinction between mere endurance and true **titikṣā**. Forced endurance carries resentment, but **titikṣā** is effortless, devoid of complaint. A mother caring for her child does not begrudge her sacrifices; she accepts them as natural.

Tolerance reduces the magnitude of suffering. Those who lack **titikṣā** perceive their troubles as immense, while those who cultivate it find their burdens lightened. They understand that neither pleasure nor pain is permanent—**āgamāpāyino' nityāḥ**—all experiences are transient. This realization dissolves attachment to fleeting joys and fears of inevitable sorrows.

A sage once advised a woman concerned about her daughter's hardships in her marital home. He predicted a year of suffering. When the woman accepted this, he reassured her that after a year, she would no longer perceive it as suffering. The lesson was clear: **titikṣā** transforms pain into something bearable, then into something insignificant.

Bhagavān describes **titikṣā** as a form of penance: "**Tapah**"—true austerity is to endure with contentment. The great queen Kunti even prayed for suffering, for in her trials, she found remembrance of Bhagavān. Suffering brings awareness; awareness fosters wisdom. One who embraces **titikṣā** transcends suffering, navigating life's storms with unwavering serenity.

2.15

**yaṃ(m) hi na vyathayantye, puruṣaṃ(m) puruṣarṣabha,
ṣamaduḥkhasukhaṃ(n) dhīraṃ(m), so'mṛtatvāya kalpate. 2.15**

Arjuna, the wise man to whom pain and pleasure are alike, and who is not tormented by these contacts, becomes eligible for immortality

The one who remains unaffected by the dualities of pleasure and pain, who perceives them with equanimity, is truly steadfast. Such a person, possessing patience and fortitude, becomes worthy of liberation.

2.16

**nāsato vidyate bhāvo, nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ,
ubhayorapi dṛṣṭo'ntaḥ(s), tvanayostattvadarśibhiḥ. 2.16**

The unreal has no existence, and the real never ceases to be; the reality of both has thus been perceived by the seers of Truth.

That which is unreal has no existence, and that which is real never ceases to be. The wise, who perceive the truth, have concluded this distinction between the transient and the eternal.

This verse is a milestone in Advaita Vedanta. Without understanding it, the essence of Advaita cannot be grasped. It proclaims that the unreal has no existence, meaning that anything separate from the eternal reality of Sat-Chit-Ananda—the Supreme Consciousness—does not truly exist. Similarly, the real, the eternal, can never cease to exist. This profound truth is realized only by those who have attained self-knowledge, the true tattva-jnanis (knowers of the ultimate reality).

The deeper meaning of this verse can be explored infinitely. It holds the essence of the non-dual philosophy, making it a subject of extensive contemplation and study.

2.17

**avināśi tu tadviddhi, yena sarvamidaṃ(n) tatam,
vināśamavyayasyāśya, na kaścitkartumarhati. 2.17**

Know that alone to be imperishable, which pervades this universe; for no one has power to destroy this indestructible substance.

Know that which pervades all existence to be indestructible. No one can bring about the destruction of this eternal, imperishable reality.

Everything that is visible in this world—the body, the mountains, the rivers, the land, even the sky—is transient. Nothing remains forever. Each has a lifespan—some things last a hundred years, others a thousand, some a million or even a billion years—but eventually, all come to an end.

However, amidst all that is perishable, **there exists the eternal essence—the unchanging truth that resides within.** This Supreme Reality, the sat within all beings, is beyond decay and destruction. It is this indestructible essence, the true Self, that remains forever.

2.18

**antavanta ime dehā, nityasyoktāḥ(ś) śarīriṇaḥ,
anāśino'prameyasya, tasmādyudhyasva bhārata. 2.18**

All these bodies pertaining to the imperishable, indefinable and eternal soul are spoken of as perishable; therefore , Arjuna, fight.

All embodied beings dwell in perishable bodies, while the true Self within is eternal, indestructible, and beyond comprehension. Therefore, O Bharata, fulfill your duty and engage in battle without hesitation.

2.19

**ya enaṃ(ṽ) vetti hantāraṃ,(ṽ) yaścainaṃ(m) manyate hatam
ubhau tau na vijānīto, nāyaṃ(m) hanti na hanyate.2.19**

Both of them are ignorant, he who considers the soul to be capable of killing and he who takes it as killed; for verily the soul neither kills, nor is killed.

The one who considers the Self as the slayer and the one who thinks it is slain are both ignorant of the truth. In reality, the Self neither kills nor can it be killed.

2.20

**na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin,
nāyaṃ(m) bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ,
ajo nityaḥ(ś) śāśvato'yaṃ(m) purāṇo,
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre. 2.20**

The soul is never born, nor it ever dies; nor does it become after being born. For, it is unborn, eternal, everlasting and primeval; even though the body is slain, the soul is not.

The Self is never born, nor does it ever die. It does not come into being and then cease to exist. It is unborn, eternal, timeless, and ancient. Even when the body is destroyed, the Self remains untouched and undying.

2.21

**vedāvināśinaṃ(n) nityaṃ(ṽ), ya enamajamavyayam,
kathaṃ(m) sa puruṣaḥ(ph) pārtha, kaṃ(ñ) ghātayati hanti kam.2.21**

Arjuna, the man who knows this soul to be imperishable, eternal and free from birth and decay-how and whom will he cause to be killed, how and whom will he kill ?

The one who truly understands the Self as eternal, indestructible, unborn, and unchanging—how can such a person kill anyone, O Partha, or cause anyone to be killed?

2.22

**vāsāṃsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya,
navāni gṛhṇāti nara'parāṇi,
tathā śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇā-
nyanyāni saṃyāti navāni dehī. 2.22**

As a man shedding worn-out garments, takes other new ones, likewise, the embodied soul, casting off worn-out bodies, enters into others that are new.

Just as a person discards old, worn-out garments and wears new ones, the embodied soul leaves behind an aged body and takes on a new one.

If one mourns the loss of the body, it is not a valid reason for sorrow. Some may accept that the soul is eternal and indestructible, yet grieve over the departure of the physical form. However, this sorrow is misplaced. The body is temporary, just like a garment. No one wears the same piece of clothing for a lifetime. Over time, clothes become worn, torn, and unfit for use. When that happens, they must be replaced with new ones.

In the same way, the body undergoes wear and tear. Minor damages can be repaired—if a tooth breaks, it can be fixed; if an organ fails, it can be replaced. Medical advancements allow for transplants and treatments, prolonging life. However, there comes a time when repairs and replacements are no longer possible, and the body must be abandoned entirely.

Some garments last only a short while, while others endure for years. Similarly, some bodies perish quickly, while others persist for decades. Regardless of their duration, all must eventually be left behind.

Just as one does not grieve over discarding old clothes, one should not grieve over the loss of the body. The soul simply moves forward, adopting a new form, continuing its journey. This cycle is inevitable and unchangeable. Recognizing this truth allows one to transcend sorrow and embrace the eternal nature of existence.

With the sentiment in heart, let all who seek refuge chant in unison, immersing themselves in divine remembrance:

"Hari Sharanam, Hari Sharanam, Hari Sharanam..."

May the grace of Yogeshwara Śrī Krishna Chandra forever guide the way.

Questions and Answers

Malay Ji

Q: In verse 2.14, the term **mātrā-sparsāḥ** is mentioned. Does it mean that all sensory experiences feel pleasant in moderation, or are you suggesting something else?

A: The essence of this verse is that the senses perceive pleasure and pain based on the intensity of experiences. If the intensity is too little or too much, satisfaction is not achieved. However, constantly chasing greater sensory pleasures leads to suffering. It is essential to regulate and limit indulgence. For example, people always desire more—a bigger house, better amenities, and endless upgrades. But no material possession ever brings lasting happiness. One must reflect on whether such pursuits truly lead to fulfillment. Those who seek happiness in external objects only trap themselves in an endless race, never finding true contentment.

Q: Can you explain verse 2.16 (**nāsato vidyate bhāvo...**) in detail?

A: This verse distinguishes between the eternal (Sat) and the perishable (Asat). **Sat** refers to that which never ceases to exist, whereas **Asat** refers to that which is bound to end. Asat does not mean falsehood; rather, it signifies impermanence. The Supreme Being is omnipresent and unchanging, making it Sat. In contrast, everything in the material world is transient—limited by space and time. The body, the elements, and nature itself are ever-changing and perishable. This is why death is merely a change of **name, dress, and address**—the soul remains the same, only its form and location change. That which remains unchanged is Sat, while everything subject to transformation is Asat.

Chetan Ji

Q: Sometimes we are advised to fight for our duty, while at other times, we are told to cultivate patience and tolerance. How do we know when to act and when to remain silent?

A: In most situations, tolerance is the wiser choice, as reacting impulsively often leads to unnecessary conflict. Many times, after engaging in an argument, one regrets speaking when silence could have prevented escalation. In rare cases, speaking up is necessary, but in most instances, avoiding disputes leads to greater peace. The key is to exercise wisdom—knowing when to respond and when to remain silent. Unnecessary arguments disturb inner peace. People often worry about what others will think if they remain silent, but true peace lies in prioritizing one's own well-being over external opinions. If anger is controlled rather than allowed to dominate, one can maintain balance. Reacting with mindfulness prevents unnecessary conflict and leads to a more peaceful life.

Bजारंग Ji

Q: Can the Hindi translation of the Ramcharitmanas be read without taking a bath?

A: Yes, reading the translation is permissible. However, the sacred text itself should be kept separately in a designated place for reverence. If one wishes to read it formally for **pārāyaṇa** (ritual recitation), certain guidelines should be followed, but for general reading, there are no restrictions.

The session concluded with prayers and chanting Hanuman Chalisa.



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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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