

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 18: Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/MSN5C4IQqNw>

Take the final leap into divine love, where Dharma, Karma, and Jñāna all merge into Bhakti.

The **Chapter 18** of Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā is **Mokṣa Sannyāsa Yoga: The Yoga of Renunciation and Surrender**

The sacred ritual of lighting the Dīpam at the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān marked the auspicious beginning of our journey into the timeless wisdom of the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā. The gentle glow of the flame, accompanied by heartfelt prayers, filled the atmosphere with Bhakti and reverence. Vishu greetings were offered, along with reflections on the deeper significance of dedicating the harvest—the fruits of our karma—to Śrī Viṣṇu Bhagavān, the Supreme Divine.

Vāsudevasutaṁ Devaṁ, Kaṁsacāṇūramardanam

Devakīparamānandaṁ, Kṛṣṇaṁ Vande Jagadgurum

I bow in reverence to Śrī Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa—the son of Vasudeva, the vanquisher of Kaṁsa and Cāṇūra, the supreme delight of Devakī, and the universal teacher, Jagadguru.

With humble prostrations at the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa and our beloved Swamiji, we now continue our Vivechana.

In today's Vivechana, we step into the concluding section of Mokṣa Sannyāsa Yoga, Chapter 18. In our last session, we reflected on two profound verses—18.64 and 18.65—which form part of Bhagavān's most intimate teaching.

**sarvaghyatamaṁ bhūyaḥ śṛṇu me paramaṁ vacaḥ
iṣṭo'si me dṛḍham iti tato vakṣyāmi te hitam (18.64)**

"Hear once again My supreme instruction, the most confidential of all. I reveal this out of great love for you, for you are very dear to Me."

This verse marked a turning point—where Śrī Kṛṣṇa, no longer speaking merely as the teacher but as the ever-loving Bhagavān, unveils His most intimate message.

***man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru
mām evaiṣyasi satyaṁ te pratijāne priyo'si me (18.65)***

“Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, worship Me, and bow down to Me. Doing so, you shall certainly come to Me. This is My solemn promise to you, for you are dear to Me.”

This is the essence of Bhakti Yoga—a call to loving remembrance, devotion, and surrender. Having unfolded the deepest secret, Bhagavān now prepares to give the final teaching—the crown-jewel of the Gītā.

Let us now delve into the most famous and transformative verse of the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā—Sloka 66.

18.66

**Sarvadharmānparityajya, māmekaṁ(m) śaraṇaṁ(m) vraja,
ahaṁ(n) tvā sarvapāpebhyo, mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ. 18.66**

Resigning all your duties to Me, the all-powerful and all supporting Lord, take refuge in Me alone; I shall absolve you of all sins, worry not.

- **sarva-dharmān** — all varieties of dharmas
- **parityajya** — abandoning
- **śaraṇaṁ** — refuge
- **pāpebhyaḥ** — from sinful reactions
- **mokṣayiṣyāmi** — shall liberate
- **mā** — do not
- **śucaḥ** — fear

After imparting profound spiritual instructions across the eighteen chapters of the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, Śrī Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa now reveals the most intimate and ultimate truth—**sarva-guhyatamaṁ vacaḥ**—His supreme instruction. This verse is the essence of the Gītā, the crown jewel, the final word in spiritual surrender.

From Karma Yoga to Karma Sannyāsa

Until now, Śrī Kṛṣṇa had been guiding Arjuna to perform his Kṣatriya-dharma, to engage in the battle with the body while anchoring the mind in devotion. This is Karma Yoga—uniting action with inward surrender.

But now, Bhagavān offers a higher path—Karma Sannyāsa, the renunciation of all material dharmas in favor of pure and undivided surrender to Him alone. This is not inaction, but the highest action, born of love and trust.

One may naturally wonder: “If I abandon my prescribed duties, won’t I incur sin?” Śrī Kṛṣṇa anticipates this and assures Arjuna:

“Do not fear. I will liberate you from all sinful reactions.”

Understanding Dharma—Material and Spiritual

The term dharma comes from the root dhṛi, meaning to uphold or that which supports. It encompasses duties, responsibilities, and conduct appropriate to one’s identity.

There are two kinds of dharmas:

1. Material Dharma (Apara Dharma):

Based on identification with the body. It includes duties toward family, society, profession, and one's role in the varṇāśrama system—be it as a Brahmana, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, or Śūdra; Brahmachārī, Gṛhastha, etc.

2. Spiritual Dharma (Para Dharma):

Based on the true self—the ātman. Here, one's only duty is loving service to Bhagavān, for He is the soul's sole Father, Mother, Friend, and Beloved.

To abandon material dharma while remaining on the bodily platform leads to sin due to dereliction of duty. But to abandon it for the sake of spiritual dharma, for surrendering at the lotus feet of Bhagavān, is not only free of sin—it is the highest good.

Debts and Their Resolution

The Śrīmad Bhāgavatam explains that a person born into the world carries five debts:

- To the **Devas** (celestial beings),
- To the **Rṣis** (sages),
- To the **Pitrs** (ancestors),
- To other humans, and
- To all living beings.

The varṇāśrama duties are designed to help repay these debts. However, complete surrender to Bhagavān dissolves them all—just as watering the roots of a tree nourishes every branch and leaf. Serving Bhagavān is the supreme service.

Hence, there is no fault, and certainly no sin, in renouncing material duties when one is established in spiritual surrender.

Śāstra and Itihāsa - Affirming the Teaching

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam declares:

"The Vedas prescribe numerous duties. But those who perceive their limitations and renounce them for exclusive devotion to Me—I consider them the best among sādhakas."

In the Rāmāyaṇa, Lakṣmaṇa expresses this state of surrender:

"O Lord, I do not recognise any teacher, father, or mother. You alone are my refuge, the savior of the fallen and the knower of hearts."

Similarly, Prahlāda proclaims:

"I do not know any mother, father, or relative—Bhagavān is everything to me."

Such utterances reflect the spirit of this verse—where love for Bhagavān transcends all other ties.

Progressive Revelation in the Gītā

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's teachings to Arjuna unfold in a gradual ascent:

1. Karma (Dutiful Action):

sva-dharmam api chāvekṣhya na vikampitum arhasi (2.31)

"Considering your duty as a warrior, you should not waver."

Initially, Arjuna was advised to uphold his duty based on his social role.

2. Karma Yoga (Action with Devotion):

tasmāt sarveṣhu kālēṣhu mām anusmara yudhya ca (8.7)

"Always remember Me and fight."

This was a middle path—external action with internal renunciation.

3. Karma Sannyāsa (Renunciation and Pure Surrender):

sarva-dharmān parityajya... (18.66)

Now, Arjuna is called to act not as a warrior, but as Bhagavān's instrument—his fight is no longer a duty but an expression of surrender.

Why Did Śrī Kṛṣṇa Not Say This Earlier?

One may ask—why did Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa withhold this teaching until the very end?

The answer lies in readiness.

In Chapter 5, Verse 2, He had said:

***sannyāsaḥ karma-yogaśḥ cha niḥśreyasa-karāv ubhau
tayos tu karma-sannyāsāt karma-yogo viśiṣhyate***

“Both renunciation and Karma Yoga lead to liberation, but Karma Yoga is superior.”

At that point, Arjuna, overcome by grief and confusion, was unfit for renunciation. He needed to first act, to purify his mind through Karma Yoga. Only after that purification could the truth of total surrender be revealed.

Thus, this verse is not a contradiction of earlier teachings, but their consummation—a final leap into divine love, where Dharma, Karma, and Jñāna all merge into Bhakti.

18.67

**idaṃ(n) te nātapaskāya, nābhaktāya kadācana,
na cāśuśrūṣhave vācyaṃ(n), na ca mām(m) yo'bhyasūyati. 18.67**

This secret gospel of the Gītā should never be imparted to a man who lacks in austerity, nor to him who is wanting in devotion, nor even to him who is not willing to hear; and in no case to him who finds fault with Me.

- **idam** — this
- **atapaskāya** — to those who are not austere
- **abhaktāya** — to those who are not devoted
- **kadācana** — at any time
- **aśhuśrūṣhave** — to those who are averse to listening (to spiritual topics)
- **vācyaṃ** — to be spoken
- **abhyasūyati** — is envious

In the previous verse (18.66), Śrī Bhagavān revealed the highest truth—complete surrender to Him as the sole path to liberation. Yet, immediately after giving this most intimate teaching, He offers a serious caution: it must not be shared indiscriminately.

This verse emphasizes **adhikāri-bheda**—the importance of assessing the eligibility of the listener before imparting sacred wisdom. Not everyone is fit to receive or digest this confidential knowledge.

The Four Disqualifications

Śrī Kṛṣṇa outlines four traits that disqualify a person from receiving this supreme instruction:

1. Atapaskāya – Those who are not austere: Such individuals are not engaged in tapasya—discipline, self-restraint, or purification. Spiritual knowledge demands a foundation of inner refinement.

2. Abhaktāya – Those who are not devoted: Without bhakti—even a trace of it—the teachings of surrender appear burdensome, or worse, irrational. The ego resists what the heart does not revere.

3. Aśhuśrūṣhave – Those who are unwilling to listen: A closed heart and a distracted mind cannot receive the divine. Śravaṇa—receptive and reverent listening—is the first step in transformation.

4. Yo mām abhyasūyati – Those who are envious of Me: The Gītā is Kṛṣṇa-kathā—spoken by Bhagavān Himself. Those who are envious or dismissive of Him will twist its meanings and degrade themselves in the process.

Qualification for Surrender

The previous verse instructed that if one gives up all material dharmas for loving surrender to Bhagavān, there is no sin. But this principle applies only to those who are truly established in bhakti. If someone prematurely abandons their duties without the inner foundation of surrender, they risk becoming neither here nor there—losing their standing in both material and spiritual spheres.

Thus, karma sannyāsa—the renunciation of all duties—is not for everyone. It requires maturity, detachment, and above all, guidance from a Guru, who alone can discern one's readiness. Just as a student cannot skip directly to graduation without going through the earlier grades, so too must a sādḥaka progress through the sequential paths of karma, karma yoga, and only then reach the peak of karm sannyāsa.

For the vast majority, karma yoga—performing one's prescribed duties with devotion—is the appropriate sādḥana. That is why Śrī Kṛṣṇa warns that this highest instruction should not be lightly spoken to anyone and everyone.

The Danger of Misapplication

If such teachings are imparted to those unqualified, not only will they fail to benefit, but may even become offenders by reacting with derision or disbelief. Bhagavān is not concerned with intellectual brilliance; He seeks purity of heart and readiness of spirit.

The Padma Purāṇa underscores this point:

“By instructing the faithless or the envious in transcendental knowledge, one causes them to commit offenses against Bhagavān.”

Thus, Śrī Kṛṣṇa lovingly cautions Arjuna—and through him, all future teachers of the Gītā—to discern the fitness of the recipient before passing on the sacred flame of this divine knowledge.

18.68

**ya imaṃ(m) paRāmaṃ(ñ) guhyaṃ(m), madbhakteṣvabhīdhāsyati,
bhaktiṃ(m) mayi parāṃ(ñ) kṛtvā, māmevaiṣyatyaśaṃśayaḥ. 18.68**

He who, offering the highest love to Me, preaches the most profound gospel of the Gītā among My devotees, shall come to Me alone; there is no doubt about it.

- **paramam** — most
- **guhyam** — confidential knowledge

- **mat-bhakṭeṣu** — among My devotees
- **abhidhāsyati** — teaches, explains
- **bhaktim** — devotion
- **parām** — supreme, transcendental
- **kṛtvā** — doing, rendering
- **eṣyati** — will attain
- **asaṁśayaḥ** — without doubt

Śrī Bhagavān shifts from caution to blessing, declaring the glories of those who share this wisdom with love and discernment.

The Supreme Service: Sharing the Gītā

After cautioning that this supreme wisdom must not be indiscriminately shared (18.67), Śrī Bhagavān now glorifies those rare devotees who do share it—with love, discretion, and sincerity. Such a person, He says, performs not just a meritorious act, but the highest act of devotion—parā bhakti. They are guaranteed to attain Him—without doubt.

This verse highlights a powerful truth:

To help someone turn toward Bhagavān is greater than turning toward Him alone.

Greater than Receiving is Giving

Receiving the opportunity to engage in devotion is itself a rare and sacred blessing. But helping others find that path—guiding them to Bhagavān—is a yet higher privilege, one that draws Bhagavān’s special grace.

That is why those who share the wisdom of the Gītā, whether through teaching, guiding, or simply inspiring others, become especially dear to Him.

This is exemplified beautifully in the selfless service of many seekers in Gītā Pariwar, who dedicate themselves to spreading the timeless message of the Gītā with deep bhakti. For them, this is not mere instruction—it is seva at the feet of Bhagavān. And in this seva, they receive more than they give.

By Teaching, You Learn More

It is often said: “To teach is to learn twice.” Those who have been teaching the Gītā for years will often share this insight—

“Only after we started teaching did we truly start understanding the Gītā.”

This is not coincidence—it is the grace that flows when we serve others with the intent of uplifting them spiritually. As we give, we grow. As we offer, we receive.

Saint Kabir’s Insight

This truth echoes in the simple yet profound words of Sant Kabir:

“Dān dene se dhan kam nahī hotā,

Jal lene se nadi sūkhat nahī,

Yeh main jhooth na bol rahā hū,

Jag dekhe to sach mānī.”

“Wealth does not diminish by charity; a river does not dry up though people draw water from it. I do not speak without proof—observe the world and see it for yourself.”

So it is with knowledge, time, love, and seva—the more we share, the more we are blessed.

This verse is not merely praise—it is an invitation. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is calling us to participate in His work. Those who teach the Gītā are not just speaking words; they are carrying the divine light forward, making it available to other hearts.

Such a devotee becomes Bhagavān’s own instrument—a living bridge between the soul and the Supreme.

18.69

**na ca tasmānmanuṣyeṣu, kaścīnme priyakṛttamaḥ,
bhavitā na ca me tasmād anyāḥ(ph) priyataro bhuvi. 18.69**

Among men there is none who does Me a more loving service than he; nor shall anyone be dearer to Me on the entire globe than he.

- **manuṣyeṣu** — among human beings
- **kaścīn** — anyone
- **priya-kṛt-tamaḥ** — more dear in service
- **bhavitā** — will be
- **tasmāt** — than them
- **anyāḥ** — another
- **priya-taraḥ** — dearer
- **bhuvī** — on this earth

Śrī Kṛṣṇa continues to reveal how uniquely dear such a teacher becomes to Him.

The Supreme Beloved of Bhagavān

Śrī Kṛṣṇa expresses His heartfelt gratitude and divine affection for those who share the wisdom of the Bhagavad Gītā. Amongst all humans, no one is dearer to Him than the one who spreads this transcendental knowledge. And such a person will remain eternally dear to Him—none shall surpass them in His affection.

This is not just poetic praise—it is a profound truth. Among all the gifts one can offer in this world—food, money, shelter, or help—nothing matches the gift of spiritual knowledge. Why? Because while worldly gifts serve for a time, divine wisdom transforms the soul for eternity.

From Learner to Torchbearer

You began your journey with Geeta Pariwar, learning Adhyāya 12 (Bhakti Yoga) and Adhyāya 15 (Puruṣottama Yoga). And today, you stand at the culmination of that journey—the 18th chapter is nearing completion. What a sacred pilgrimage this has been—months of dedication, reflection, and transformation.

Ask yourself:

What has changed in me?

What has shifted in my mind, my vision, my inner world?

Surely, both you and those around you can sense it. The change that the Bhagavad Gītā brings is not superficial. It is inevitable—śraddhā and śaraṇāgati unlock its transformative power. This is not merely academic learning; it is an inner awakening.

The Story of King Janaka and Ashtavakra

When King Janaka received divine wisdom from Guru Ashtavakra, he said:
“O Gurudev, the knowledge you have given me is so invaluable—I feel deeply indebted. What can I offer you in return?”

Ashtavakra smiled and replied:

**“Nothing in this material world can repay the debt of spiritual wisdom. But there is one way to honor it:
If you ever find someone who thirsts for this knowledge, share it with them.”**

That is the true guru-dakṣiṇā. And that is what Śrī Kṛṣṇa is declaring here:

“The one who shares My Gītā with others is the most beloved to Me.”

Why Gītā Pariwar Seva Is So Joyful?

On a lighter note—have you ever wondered why Gītā Pariwar members serve so enthusiastically? Whether it's becoming a trainer, vivechak, tech volunteer, document coordinator, caller, or anything else—they jump into seva with joy.

Why?

Because they have understood this secret:

Serving the message of Gītā is serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa directly.

And when Bhagavān says, **“No one is dearer to Me than one who shares this knowledge,” we all want to become that most beloved devotee.**

This longing—to become dear to Bhagavān—fuels the flame of selfless service.

A Word of Caution: The Right Attitude in Seva

However, this exalted seva must be done with humility, not pride.

Those who share this knowledge should never think:

“I am doing something great.”

Rather, the right bhāva is:

“I am but an instrument (**nimitta-mātra**) in the hands of Bhagavān. Whatever I say, whatever I share, flows only by His grace.”

True teachers of the Gītā speak not from ego but from gratitude—knowing that the chance to serve in this way is Bhagavān's gift, not their achievement.

18.70

**adhyeṣyate ca ya imaṃ(n), dharmyaṃ(m) saṃvādamāvayoḥ,
jñānayajñena tenāham, iṣṭaḥ(s) syāmiti me matiḥ. 18.70**

Whosoever studies this sacred dialogue of ours in the form of the Gītā, by him too shall I be worshipped with Yajña of Knowledge; such is My conviction.

- **adhyeṣyate** — studies
- **dharmyam** — sacred, righteous
- **saṃvādam** — dialogue
- **āvayoḥ** — of ours (between Me and you)
- **jñāna-yajñena** — by the sacrifice of knowledge

- **iṣṭaḥ** — worshipped
- **matiḥ** — opinion or conviction

Bhagavān further reveals His reverence for those who even study this sacred dialogue with devotion. HE has repeatedly guided Arjuna to surrender not just his actions, but also his buddhi—his intellect—to Him. Consider these verses:

***tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu mām anusmara yudhya ca
mayyarpita-mano-buddhir māmevaiṣhyasyasaṁśayam (8.7)***

“Therefore, always remember Me and also fight. With mind and intellect surrendered to Me, you shall certainly come to Me—of this, there is no doubt.”

***mayy eva mana ādhatsva mayi buddhiṁ niveśaya
nivasiṣyasi mayy eva ata ūrdhvaṁ na saṁśayaḥ (12.8)***

“Fix your mind on Me alone, and surrender your intellect to Me. Thereafter, you shall live in Me alone—without doubt.”

This is not a rejection of the intellect. Rather, it is an invitation to offer our intellect in service to Bhagavān. We study the Gītā, understand His will, and apply our reasoning in alignment with His divine vision. That is jñāna-yajña—the yajña of knowledge.

Now consider:

Is there any yajña easier and more effective than reading the Bhagavad Gītā daily, contemplating a few verses, and using our intellect to absorb and live its wisdom? Bhagavān Himself declares this study as an act of worship—He accepts it as an offering.

Yet we hesitate. “Every day? Gītā daily? That’s hard.” But is it really?

Let us talk about the power of small changes—atomic habits.

The Power of Atomic Habits

The word "atomic" has two meanings:

- Very small, like an atom.
- Capable of immense energy, like an atomic bomb.

“Atomic habits” are small actions we do every day that have the power to transform our lives over time.

The Power of Atomic Habits: A Story of Extraordinary Transformation

We often think that change—especially spiritual change—demands grand gestures, sweeping overhauls, or dramatic renunciations. But what if the greatest transformations are hidden in the smallest adjustments? What if real success lies not in thinking big, but in starting small?

Let us look at a true and remarkable story from the world of sports. In the early 2000s, British cycling was in shambles. For nearly 100 years, they had remained embarrassingly mediocre. Since 1908, British cyclists had won just one gold medal at the Olympics. At the world’s most prestigious cycling competition, the Tour de France, they had never won—not a single event—in over a century. Their reputation was so poor that top European bike manufacturers refused to sell them bicycles. They feared that if other professionals saw British riders using their bikes, it would harm their brand’s reputation.

Then, in 2003, the British Cycling Federation hired a man named Dave Brailsford as its new Performance Director. He brought with him a completely unconventional approach—one that would revolutionize not just British cycling, but the world of high performance itself.

His philosophy? Something he called the "**Aggregation of Marginal Gains.**"

What did it mean? He explained it this way:

"The whole principle came from the idea that if you broke down everything you could think of that goes into riding a bike, and then improved each thing by just 1%, you would get a significant increase when you put them all together."

It was deceptively simple. Find tiny areas for improvement—however insignificant they seemed—and keep stacking those small gains until they created exponential results.

So, what did they do?

- They redesigned the bike seats to make them more comfortable.
- They rubbed alcohol on the tires for better road grip.
- Cyclists wore electrically heated shorts to keep their muscles at optimal temperature.
- They used biofeedback sensors to see how each rider's body responded to different workouts.
- They tested fabrics in wind tunnels and switched to more aerodynamic racing suits.

But they didn't stop there.

Brailsford and his team ventured into areas that most others wouldn't even consider part of performance:

- They tried different massage gels to find the one that led to the fastest muscle recovery.
- They hired a surgeon to teach the athletes how to wash their hands properly, reducing the risk of infection.
- They researched and provided the ideal pillows and mattresses for each cyclist, ensuring the best possible sleep.
- They even painted the inside of the team truck white, so that they could easily spot and eliminate any speck of dust that might compromise the delicate mechanics of a high-performance bike.

Each change was tiny—almost laughably small. But when added together? The results were extraordinary.

In just five years, the British cycling team dominated the 2008 Beijing Olympics, winning 60% of the gold medals available in track cycling. By the time the 2012 London Olympics arrived, they had raised the bar even higher—setting 9 Olympic records and 7 world records. That same year, Bradley Wiggins became the first British cyclist to win the Tour de France. The following year, his teammate Chris Froome won it again—and then again in 2015, 2016, and 2017. In just six years, the British had captured five Tour de France victories—after more than a century of none.

Between 2007 and 2017, British cyclists won:

- 178 world championships
- 66 Olympic and Paralympic gold medals
- And became one of the most successful teams in cycling history

What was the secret behind this miraculous turnaround?

Not a miracle. Not a dramatic breakthrough.

But small, thoughtful improvements, every single day.

Applying This to Our Spiritual Lives

This story isn't just about cycling. It's about the *science of transformation*.

We often ask: “How can I read the *Bhagavad Gītā* every day? It seems too big. Too serious. Too intense.”

But what if we applied the same philosophy?

- What if we simply read one verse a day?
- What if we reflected on just one idea every morning?
- What if we woke up 15 minutes earlier to make time for śravaṇa (listening), manana (reflection), or japa?

These are atomic spiritual habits. And Bhagavān Śrī Krishna says that even this—a small study of the *Gītā*—is worship.

adhyeṣyate ca ya imam dharmyaṁ samvādam āvayoḥ jñāna-yajñena tenāham iṣṭaḥ syām iti me matiḥ (18.70)

“He who studies this sacred dialogue of ours, worships Me through the sacrifice of knowledge—this is My firm conviction.”

He is not asking us to renounce the world or perform elaborate rituals. He is asking for our intellect, our sincerity, and our steady effort—however small.

Just as tiny changes brought Olympic gold to an ordinary team, tiny habits can bring extraordinary depth to our spiritual life.

So let us begin. One verse. One reflection. One offering of the intellect.

That itself is jñāna-yajña—a daily sacrifice made not with fire, but with viveka and śraddhā.

As Bhagavān says—

jñāna-yajñena tenāham iṣṭaḥ syām iti me matiḥ

“By this sacrifice of knowledge, I am worshipped. Such is My conviction.”

Let this conviction become ours too.

18.71

śraddhāvānanasūyaśca, śṛṇuyādapi yo naraḥ, so'pi muktaḥ(ś) śubhāṁlokān, prāpnuyātpuṇyakarmaṇām. 18.71

The man who listens to the holy *Gītā* with reverence, being free from malice, he too, liberated from sin, shall reach the propitious worlds of the virtuous.

- **śraddhā-vān** — faithful
- **anasūyaḥ** — without envy
- **śṛṇuyāt** — listen
- **naraḥ** — a person

- **muktaḥ** — liberated
- **śubhān** — the auspicious
- **lokān** — abodes
- **prāpnuyāt** — attain
- **puṇya-karmaṇām** — of the pious

“Even the person who merely listens to this knowledge with faith and without envy shall be liberated and attain the auspicious realms attained by the virtuous.”

Not everyone has the intellectual capacity to grasp the profound depths of the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. How much of this wisdom one can truly digest depends largely on past saṁskāras—the impressions of previous births. And yet, Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa reassures that even those who may not fully understand, but listen with śraddhā (faith) and without envy, will attain purification and auspicious results.

Bhagavān, seated within all beings, recognizes sincere effort. He is not looking for brilliance, but for bhāva—the inner feeling of reverence and openness. Faithful listening, even without intellectual grasp, draws His grace. The following story from the life of Ādi Śaṅkarācārya illustrates this beautifully.

Sananda Becomes Padmapāda - When Śraddhā Blooms into Miracles

Sananda, a humble and illiterate disciple of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarācārya, could not comprehend his Guru’s discourses the way other students did. Yet, he never missed a single session, always sitting with rapt attention and unwavering śraddhā.

One day, while he was washing his Guru’s clothes across a river, class was about to begin. The disciples urged, “Guruji, please begin the lesson.” Śaṅkarācārya replied, “Let us wait—Sananda is not here.”

They objected, “But Guruji, he does not understand anything!”

Śaṅkarācārya said, “True, but he listens with great faith. I do not wish to disappoint such a heart.”

To demonstrate the power of śraddhā, Śaṅkarācārya called out, “Sananda, come here!” Without hesitation, Sananda ran across the river. And as the story goes, lotus flowers appeared beneath his feet, supporting him as he walked across the water. On reaching the other bank, a beautiful stuti—a spontaneous hymn in sophisticated Sanskrit—flowed from his mouth in praise of his Guru.

The astonished disciples watched as Sananda, who was considered unlearned, became transformed through faith. Henceforth, he was named Padmapāda—“the one with Lotus-feet.” He would go on to become one of the four main pillars of Śaṅkara’s discipleship, alongside Sureshwarācārya, Hastāmalaka, and Totakācārya.

When Faith Is Real, Even a Fake Guru Can’t Block Its Power

While the Gītā emphasizes intelligent faith, this next folk story shows that even when faith is misplaced—but pure—it can still yield astonishing results:

Once, a fraudulent sadhu came to a village. He would sit beneath a banyan tree in a yogic posture, pretending to be a great ascetic. The innocent villagers, unable to discern his true character, revered him, offered him food, and sought his blessings.

One poor villager approached him with folded hands and said, “Sadhu Mahārāj, please give me some siddhi—some mystical power.”

The fake sadhu, playing along, said, “You must serve me for 12 years with full devotion. Then you will receive a rare siddhi.”

The villager agreed and spent 12 years in seva—cooking, cleaning, massaging, and tending to every need of the so-called sadhu.

After 12 years, he again asked, “Sadhuji, may I now receive that siddhi?”

The sadhu, still pretending, said, “Yes, you now possess it. You can walk on water!”

The villager believed him completely. Full of faith, he ran to the riverbank, followed by the whole village. Bowing to his ‘Guru’, he placed one foot on the river—and, to everyone’s astonishment, began walking effortlessly across the water.

Even the sadhu was stunned but concealed his surprise. In his pride, he thought, “If this villager can walk on water by serving me, I must be even greater!” He declared, “Now see how your Guru walks!” and stepped into the river... and immediately sank.

What was the difference?

The sadhu had no śraddhā. The villager, despite serving a fraud, had real and innocent faith—and that śraddhā alone had the power to uplift.

The Centrality of Śraddhā in the Gītā

However, Bhagavad Gītā does not recommend blind or unintelligent faith. Rather, it exhorts us to engage our buddhi—our intellect—and then place faith after due discrimination.

At the conclusion of the 17th chapter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says:

***aśraddhayā hutam̐ dattam̐ tapas taptam̐ kṛitam̐ cha yat
asad ity uchyate pārtha na cha tat pretya no iha*** (Gītā 17.28)

“Whatever act of sacrifice, charity, or austerity is performed without faith is termed Asat—it is useless both in this life and the next.”

Thus, while true śraddhā can perform miracles, even in the absence of understanding, acts done without faith are barren—even if outwardly impressive.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa assures Arjuna that even the act of listening to the Gītā, if done with śraddhā and a pure heart, can purify the soul and lead to liberation. It is not intellectual brilliance that opens the gates of grace, but faithful surrender, the humility to listen, and the willingness to transform.

18.72

**kaccidetacchrutaṃ(m) pārtha, tvayaikāgreṇa cetasā,
kaccidajñānasaṃmohaḥ(ph), pranaṣṭaste dhanañjaya. 18.72**

Have you, O Arjuna, heard this gospel of the Gītā attentively? And has your delusion born of ignorance been destroyed, O Dhanañjaya, conqueror of riches?

- **kachchit** — whether
- **etat** — this
- **śrutam** — heard
- **pārtha** — O Pārtha (Arjuna), son of Pṛthā
- **tvayā** — by you
- **eka-agreṇa chetasā** — with a concentrated mind
- **kachchit** — whether
- **ajñāna** — ignorance
- **sammohaḥ** — delusion
- **pranaṣṭaḥ** — destroyed
- **dhanañjaya** — O Dhanañjaya (Arjuna), conqueror of wealth

After delivering the complete wisdom of the Gītā—from karma, bhakti, and jñāna to the subtle nature of guṇas, svadharma, and the supreme path of surrender—Śrī Kṛṣṇa now turns to Arjuna with a gentle yet profound question - *“O Arjuna, have you listened to this with a focused mind? Has your ignorance and confusion been dispelled, O Dhanañjaya?”*

It is natural for a true teacher, having shared the highest truths, to check in with the student: “Did you truly hear what I said? Was your mind present and focused? Has your confusion cleared?”

This verse reflects Kṛṣṇa’s role as the ideal Guru—not only delivering knowledge but also ensuring its assimilation. The inquiry is not one of doubt but of care and concern. If Arjuna had not yet understood, Bhagavān was ready to explain it all over again.

This is the hallmark of a compassionate teacher—who is not interested in merely completing a syllabus but in ensuring the transformation of the student’s heart.

Arjuna responds in the next verse (18.73). Let us see how the once-confused warrior—paralyzed on the battlefield—now finds clarity and strength.

18.73

arjuna uvāca
naṣṭo mohaḥ(s) smṛtirlabdhā, tvatprasādānmayācyuta,
sthito’smi gatasandehaḥ(kh), kariṣye vacanaṃ(n) tava. 18.73

Arjuna said:

Kṛṣṇa, by Your grace my delusion has been destroyed and I have gained wisdom. I am free of all doubt. I will do your bidding.

- **arjunaḥ uvācha** — Arjuna said
- **naṣṭaḥ** — dispelled
- **mohaḥ** — illusion
- **smṛitiḥ** — memory (inner clarity or awareness)
- **labdhā** — regained
- **tvat-prasādāt** — by Your grace
- **mayā** — by me
- **achyuta** — O Achyuta (Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the infallible one)
- **sthitaḥ asmi** — I am now situated (firmly established)
- **gata-sandehaḥ** — free from all doubts
- **kariṣye** — I shall act

- **vachanam tava** — according to Your command

At the beginning of the Gītā, Arjuna stood paralyzed by grief and confusion. Overwhelmed by attachment and sorrow, he had dropped his bow and arrows and sat down in despair:

visrija sa-śharaṁ chāpaṁ śhoka-saṁvigna-mānasaḥ (1.47)

“He cast aside his bow and arrows and sat down, his mind overwhelmed by grief.”

He had declared he saw no remedy for the inner sorrow that was withering his senses:

na hi prapaśhyāmi mamāpanudyād yach-chhokam uchchhoṣhaṇam-indriyāṇām (2.8)

But now, after hearing the entire wisdom of the Bhagavad Gītā—karma-yoga, bhakti-yoga, jñāna, and the supreme mystery of surrender—Arjuna emerges transformed. His confusion has vanished. His intellect is steady. He is ready to act—not by impulse, but in alignment with the Divine Will.

And yet, Arjuna attributes this transformation not merely to Kṛṣṇa’s teaching, but to Kṛṣṇa’s grace:

tvat-prasādāt mayāchyuta — “By Your grace, O Achyuta.”

This is crucial. Material knowledge can be acquired by effort and transaction. **But spiritual knowledge—the kind that liberates—descends through grace. It is not the result of intellectual brilliance, but of śraddhā (faith), vinaya (humility), and bhakti (loving surrender).**

Approaching the Gītā with pride—thinking “I will judge it,” or “I will evaluate its worth”—will only veil its inner meaning. For 5,000 years, innumerable people have read and written commentaries on the Gītā. But how many have truly become like Arjuna—transformed by its essence?

True understanding is not a mere intellectual achievement. It is a gift—a revelation that blossoms when the seeker approaches Bhagavān with reverence and surrender.

The speaker recalls how, some years ago, a few students from Level Four had written books on the Bhagavad Gītā. They had sent their work, eager for feedback and commentary. But it brought to mind a deeper question—not to judge, but to reflect: Has the process of writing and interpreting the Gītā transformed them inwardly? Has it led them toward the kind of inner awakening that Arjuna experienced?

If not, then it is clear—spiritual knowledge requires more than scholarship. It needs divine grace.

Therefore, we must not merely study the Gītā—we must invoke Bhagavān’s grace through a heart full of faith. Then, like Arjuna, we too may say one day:

“My delusion is destroyed. I am no longer confused. I will follow Your word.”

18.74

sañjaya uvāca

**ityahaṁ(m) vāsudevasya, pārthasya ca mahātmanaḥ,
saṁvādamimamaśrauṣam, adbhuṭaṁ(m) romaharṣaṇam. 18.74**

Sañjaya said:

Thus I heard the mysterious and thrilling conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the high-souled Arjuna, son of Kuntī.

- **sañjayaḥ uvācha** — Sanjay said
- **vāsudevasya** — of Vāsudeva (Śrī Krishna)
- **pārthasya** — of Pārtha (Arjuna)
- **mahā-ātmanaḥ** — the great-hearted one / noble soul
- **sañvādam** — dialogue / conversation
- **aśhrauṣham** — I have heard
- **adbhutam** — wonderful / astonishing
- **roma-harṣhaṇam** — thrilling, causing the hair to stand on end

Sañjaya, the divine seer and narrator of the Mahābhārata, now shares his own reflections on the sacred dialogue he has witnessed. He speaks with awe and reverence. He concludes his recounting of the Bhagavad Gītā by expressing the profound impact it has had on him. Though he was not physically present on the battlefield, he was granted divine vision by the sage Vyāsa to witness and relay the events to King Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

Sañjaya describes the conversation between Śrī Krishna, the son of Vasudeva, and Arjuna, the son of Pṛthā, as *adbhutam*—extraordinary and wondrous. He refers to Arjuna as *mahātmā*—a noble soul—because Arjuna has, through humility and surrender, become fit to receive and assimilate the deepest spiritual truths. He has not only heard Bhagavān’s words, but also resolved to live by them.

Sañjaya adds *roma-harṣhaṇam*—the dialogue was so spiritually charged and divine that it made his hair stand on end. This is not mere literary flourish. According to Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu*, such symptoms—hair standing on end, trembling, tears, choking of voice—are signs of *bhāva*, the awakening of ecstatic devotional sentiments (*bhakti-bhāva*). Sañjaya is overcome not just as a witness, but as a participant in the devotional atmosphere invoked by the Gītā.

One might ask: how did Sanjaya hear this intimate conversation occurring far away on the battlefield? He anticipates this question and will answer it in the next verse.

Thus, Sanjaya’s testimony adds another layer of sanctity to the Gītā. He is not merely a neutral reporter but a transformed soul, moved by what he has witnessed—a transformation echoing that of Arjuna himself. In this way, the Gītā’s divine impact reverberates through all sincere listeners, across time.

18.75

Vyāsaprasādācchrutavān, etadguhyamaḥam(m) param, yogaḥ(m) yogeśvarātkṛṣṇāt, sāksātkathayataḥ(s) svayam. 18.75

Having been blessed with the divine vision by the grace of Śrī Vyāsa, I heard in person this supremely esoteric gospel from the Lord of Yoga, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, imparting it to Arjuna.

- **vyāsa-prasādāt** — by the grace of Veda Vyāsa
- **śhrutavān** — have heard
- **guhyam** — secret
- **param** — supreme
- **yogaḥ** — Yoga (the science of union with the Divine)
- **yoga-īśhvarāt** — from the Lord of Yog
- **kṛṣṇāt** — from Śrī Krishna
- **sāksāt** — directly
- **kathayataḥ** — speaking

- **svayam** — Himself

Sañjaya now reveals the source of his divine insight. He humbly acknowledges that it was only by the grace of his Guru, Veda Vyāsa, that he was able to hear this most **guhyam param yogam**—the supremely secret doctrine of Yog. This was no ordinary conversation, and it was not accessed by ordinary means. The transmission of such sacred knowledge requires prasāda—grace.

Śrī Krishna, described here as Yoga-Īśvara (the Master of Yog), imparted this supreme knowledge directly, **svayam kathayataḥ sākṣhāt**—in person, in real-time. Sañjaya’s experience was not secondhand or symbolic; through the yogic vision granted by his Guru, he perceived the live dialogue unfolding between Śrī Krishna and Arjuna on the battlefield.

This verse reflects the deep guru-shiṣya tradition embedded in the Indian spiritual ethos. Without the mercy of a qualified Guru, the gates to divine understanding remain closed. Sañjaya does not credit his own intelligence or capacity. Instead, he attributes everything to the prasāda of Vyāsa—who was not only the compiler of the Mahābhārata but also a partial incarnation of Bhagavān himself.

Vyāsa had access to all realities—past, present, and future—and so could witness and include in his composition both dialogues: the one between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, and the one between Sañjaya and Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

This verse also reminds us that divine knowledge is not merely studied—it is received. It is not merely acquired—it is bestowed, when the heart is prepared by humility, faith, and the grace of Guru and Bhagavān.

18.76

rājansaṁsmṛtyasaṁsmṛtya saṁvādamimamadbhutam, keśavārjunayoḥ(ph) puṇyam(m), hṛṣyāmi ca muhurmuḥ. 18.76

Remembering, over and over, that sacred and mystic conversation between Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, O King! I am thrilled again and yet again.

- **rājan** — O King (Dhṛtarāṣṭra)
- **sansmṛitya sansmṛitya** — repeatedly remembering, again and again
- **saṁvādam** — the conversation, dialogue
- **imam** — this
- **adbhutam** — astonishing, wonderful
- **keśava-arjunayoḥ** — between Keśava (Śrī Krishna) and Arjuna
- **puṇyam** — sacred, meritorious
- **hṛṣyāmi** — I rejoice, I feel joy
- **muḥ muḥ** — again and again

Sañjaya now begins to reflect on what he has just narrated. He addresses Dhṛtarāṣṭra as Rājan, and speaks not with dry objectivity, but with spiritual rapture. As he repeatedly recalls the divine, astonishing dialogue between Keśava and Arjuna, his heart overflows with joy—**hṛṣyāmi muḥ muḥ**—“I rejoice again and again.”

This joy is not born of ordinary recollection. The dialogue he remembers is no ordinary conversation, but puṇyam adbhutam saṁvādam—sacred and wondrous in nature, carrying the fragrance of eternity.

Sañjaya had the rare privilege of witnessing a divine līlā—the Supreme Bhagavān, taking the humble role of a charioteer, delivering eternal wisdom to His devotee in the midst of the world's greatest battlefield. This was a moment where dharma, jñāna, and bhakti all converged in the form of the Gītā.

This verse is also a powerful reminder of the spiritual potency of remembrance (**smaraṇa**). Just as Sañjaya experiences **ananda** through repeatedly recalling the Gītā's teachings, so too can we immerse ourselves in that divine joy by regularly revisiting and reflecting upon its words. The act of recollecting sacred wisdom is itself a form of bhakti, a devotional engagement that gradually transforms the heart.

18.77

tacca saṁsmṛtya-saṁsmṛtya, rūpamatyadbhutaṁ(m) hareḥ, vismayo me mahānrājan, hr̥ṣyāmi ca punaḥ(ph) punaḥ. 18.77

Remembering also, again and again, that most wonderful form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, great is my wonder and I am thrilled over and over again.

- **sansmṛitya sansmṛitya** — remembering again and again
- **rūpam** — the form (cosmic form)
- **ati-adbhutam** — most wonderful, astonishing
- **hareḥ** — of Bhagavān Hari (Śrī Krishna)
- **vismayaḥ** — amazement, wonder
- **mahān** — great
- **rājan** — O King (Dhṛtarāṣṭra)
- **hr̥ṣyāmi** — I rejoice, I am thrilled with joy
- **punaḥ punaḥ** — over and over again

Sañjaya continues in a state of spiritual elation, now recalling not only the dialogue, but the **aścharya rūpa**—the astonishing Viśvarūpa or Universal Form of Bhagavān Hari that Arjuna was blessed to behold. This cosmic vision, a dazzling manifestation of the totality of existence in one divine form, left a deep imprint on Sanjaya's inner being.

He declares: "**sansmṛitya sansmṛitya rūpam atyadbhutam hareḥ...**" — "As I remember, again and again, that most wondrous form of Śrī Hari, a great awe and joy arise in me repeatedly."

Although Arjuna alone was granted direct vision of this cosmic form, Sanjaya, through the grace of his Guru Ved Vyāsa and the divine faculty he received, was able to perceive and internalize the same. His astonishment (**vismayaḥ mahān**) is not mere curiosity—it is the trembling of the heart touched by the Infinite.

He had not strived for it, yet by the rarest **kṛpā** (grace), he became a witness to the eternal līlā. This speaks to a profound truth of the spiritual path—sometimes, unasked grace flows to us. And when it does, if we hold it with **shraddhā** (faith) and allow it to deepen into bhakti, it becomes a turning point in our sādhana.

Sañjaya's repeated remembrance is itself a form of smaraṇa-bhakti. He is not simply narrating facts to Dhṛtarāṣṭra; he is being transformed by the very act of remembering. The Gītā itself, seen through this lens, is not just a book of instruction—it is a living spiritual current, capable of stirring the soul and awakening the heart to divine joy.

We now move to the final verse, 18.78, the majestic conclusion of the Bhagavad Gītā.

18.78

yatra yogeśvaraḥ(kh) kṛṣṇo, yatra pārtho dhanurdharaḥ, tatra śrīrvijayo bhūtiḥ(r), dhruvā nīrtirmatirmama. 18.78

Wherever there is Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yoga, and wherever there is Arjuna, the wielder of the Gāṇḍīva bow, goodness, victory, glory and unfailing righteousness will surely be there : such is My conviction.

- **yatra** — wherever
- **yoga-īśvaraḥ** — Śrī Krishna, the Bhagavān of Yog
- **kṛṣṇaḥ** — Śrī Krishna
- **yatra** — wherever
- **pārthaḥ** — Arjuna, the son of Pṛithā
- **dhanuḥ-dharaḥ** — the supreme archer
- **tatra** — there
- **śrīḥ** — opulence
- **vijayaḥ** — victory
- **bhūtiḥ** — prosperity
- **dhruvā** — unending
- **nītiḥ** — righteousness
- **matih mama** — this is my opinion

Sanjaya concludes by saying that he is firmly convinced that wherever there is Śrī Krishna, the Bhagavān of all Yoga, and wherever there is Arjuna, the supreme archer, there will certainly be unending opulence, victory, prosperity, and righteousness.

With this conclusive pronouncement, the Bhagavad Gītā comes to a close. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, gripped by anxiety over the fate of his sons, receives from Sañjaya a decisive answer—the outcome of this war does not rest upon numbers or worldly calculations, but upon Dharma and Divine Presence.

Where Bhagavān stands, along with His surrendered devotee, there lies the assurance of all that is auspicious—victory (**vijayaḥ**), glory (**śrīḥ**), prosperity (**bhūtiḥ**), and eternal righteousness (**dhruvā nītiḥ**). This is the eternal truth Sanjaya affirms with unwavering conviction: wherever the Supreme Lord and His devotee are aligned in purpose, the triumph of Dharma is inevitable.

Bhagavān is the sovereign Lord of the cosmos—self-effulgent, beyond comparison. As Arjuna himself proclaimed earlier:

tatraika-sthaṁ jagat kṛtsnaṁ pravibhaktam anekadhā

“I see the entire universe abiding in You, yet divided in many forms.” (11.13)

The Bhagavān requires no aid to manifest His glory. He only seeks a willing instrument—a heart that surrenders. When such a soul arises, like Arjuna, it becomes the channel through which the majesty of Bhagavān shines forth.

Sañjaya, deeply moved, is not merely recounting the events—he is overwhelmed. He has heard the Gītā with singular attention and witnessed the cosmic form, the divine dialogue, and the transformation of Arjuna. Though Śrī Krishna addressed Arjuna, three individuals effectively received the message: Arjuna, Sañjaya, and Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

- Arjuna, being sāt̥tvic, surrendered completely and was liberated immediately.
- Sañjaya, though primarily rājasic, experienced intense joy and devotional exhilaration—his receptivity heightened by the grace of Maharshi Vedavyāsa.
- Dhṛtarāṣṭra, steeped in tāmas, remained unchanged. Even after hearing the divine message, his attachment to his sons overpowered wisdom and clarity.

Sañjaya clearly declared that the Pāṇḍavas would be victorious. Yet Dhṛtarāṣṭra clung to his hopes and, as a result, was consumed by grief when the inevitable unfolded—he lost all his hundred sons. It was his misfortune that he heard the Bhagavad Gītā yet did not truly listen. Hearing without transformation is the great tragedy of the tāmasic disposition.

The essential message is this:

Mere listening to the Gītā does not bring about transformation.

- For the tāmasic person, there is little benefit unless they begin to rise from delusion.
- The rājasic individual may still progress if they strive to purify their intellect and cultivate faith.
- The sāt̥tvic person will resonate with the message instantly and, like Arjuna or at least like Sañjaya, taste the bliss of divine alignment.

Thus ends the eighteenth adhyāya of the Bhagavad Gītā—a journey from confusion to clarity, from despair to devotion, from bondage to liberation.

After Journeying Through All 18 Chapters of the Bhagavad Gītā—What Have We Truly Learned?

As we reach the conclusion of our journey through the eighteen chapters (adhyāyas) of the Bhagavad Gītā, it is time to pause and ask:

“What have I really gained from this sacred wisdom? What are the key takeaways I can carry forward in my day-to-day life?”

We have studied the Gītā verse by verse, dwelled on its profound meanings, and reflected on its implications. But the true success lies not in reciting it fluently, nor in memorising its verses, but in living its message.

Let us now distil some essential life-changing lessons from the Gītā—lessons that are relevant for everyone, whether one is a student, a professional, a leader, a seeker, or a homemaker. The Gītā teaches us not just philosophy, but how to live with clarity, courage, and purpose in the midst of life's complexities.

Takeaway 1: Focus on Action, Not on Results

***karmaṇy-evādhikāras te mā phaleṣhu kadāchana
mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr mā te saṅgo 'stvakarmaṇi (2.47)***

“You have a right to perform your prescribed duties, but not to the fruits of your actions. Never consider yourself the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to inaction.”

This is perhaps the most foundational message of the Gītā. It teaches us to focus on what is in our control—our actions—and not obsess over what is not—the outcomes.

The outcome of our work is influenced by many factors. Śrī Krishna elaborates in Chapter 18:

pañchaitāni mahā-bāho kāraṇāni nibodha me

“Understand, O mighty-armed Arjuna, that there are five factors involved in the accomplishment of

every action...”

(18.13-14)

These five causes are:

- **Adhiṣṭhānam - the physical base (body/mind)**
- **Kartā - the doer**
- **Karaṇam - the instruments (senses, organs)**
- **Cheṣṭā - various efforts**
- **Daivam - divine will or grace**

Your effort is only one part of the result. So, perform your karma with excellence, but detach from the anxiety of success or failure. And never fall into inaction (akarma) just because the work is hard or results are unpredictable. Śrī Krishna firmly cautions: Do not give up effort. Stay engaged.

Takeaway 2: Be Fearless—You Are the Eternal Ātman

***na jāyate mriyate vā kadāchin
nāyaṁ bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ
ajo nityaḥ śhāśhvato 'yaṁ purāṇo
na hanyate hanyamāne śharīre (2.20)***

“The soul is never born, nor does it die. It is unborn, eternal, imperishable, and timeless. It is not destroyed when the body is destroyed.”

The Gītā reveals the greatest spiritual truth—we are not the perishable body, but the imperishable self (ātman). This realisation alone can free us from the greatest fear that grips humanity: the fear of death.

Yes, every body must perish—some sooner, some later—but you, the witnessing consciousness within, are unborn and undying. Knowing this liberates the mind from attachment and fear. It brings courage, serenity, and inner stability. It removes hesitation and hesitation-born failure. When the fear of death dies, you truly begin to live.

3. True Discipline Means Mastery of the Mind, Not Just the Senses

***karmendriyāṇi sanyamya ya āste manasā smaran
indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā mithyāchāraḥ sa uchyate (3.6)***

Merely restraining the body while the mind continues to dwell on sense objects is self-deception. Śrī Kṛṣṇa warns us that this is mithyāchāra—hypocrisy.

You may not act on your desires externally, but if your mind is constantly entertaining them, the inner pollution remains.

For example, a person may appear austere—fasting, silent, withdrawn—but internally may be fantasising about food, pleasures, or sensual objects. This is not renunciation; this is mental indulgence masked by physical restraint.

Thus, mano-nigraha (mind control) is more vital than indriya-nigraha (sense control). Outward restraint is meaningful only when it reflects inward purity. Let our external actions be in harmony with the thoughts we nourish within.

4. Lust is the Root of All Sin—Recognise It as the Real Enemy

***kāma eṣha krodha eṣha rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ
mahāśano mahāpāpmā, viddhyenamīha vairiṇam (3.37)***

Arjuna asks, Why does a person commit sin, even unwillingly, as if driven by force? Śrī Kṛṣṇa replies—it is kāma (lust), born of rajo-guṇa, that propels a person into wrongdoing.

Kāma, when unfulfilled, gives rise to krodha (anger). When fulfilled, it leads to attachment and further entanglement. In both scenarios, it is destructive.

Therefore, kāma is not just a desire—it is a form of inner compulsion, a force that binds and blinds.

Kṛṣṇa calls this force mahāśanaḥ (all-devouring) and mahā-pāpmā (great sinner). Recognise it as the real enemy within.

5. Lust, Anger, and Greed—The Triple Gateways to Hell

***tri-vidhaṁ narakasyedaṁ dvāraṁ nāśhanam ātmanaḥ
kāmaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas tasmād etat trayam tyajet (16.21)***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa identifies three powerful forces that lead to a person's self-destruction:

- **Kāma (lust)** – insatiable craving for pleasure or objects.
- **Krodha (anger)** – arising from unfulfilled desires.
- **Lobha (greed)** – the constant hunger for more.

These three vices are not just psychological traits—they are gateways to naraka (hell), blocking spiritual evolution and destroying inner peace.

Lust gives rise to greed when we want more and more by any means. When these cravings are thwarted, they turn into anger. This cycle destroys the mind's balance and clouds the intellect.

True spiritual progress begins by closing these three doors. This means uprooting desires at their source and cultivating contentment, patience, and self-control.

6. Learn to Tolerate—Nothing in This World is Permanent

***mātrā-sparśhās tu kaunteya śhītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ
āgamāpāyino 'nityās tāns-titikṣhasva bhārata (2.14)***

The world is in a constant state of flux. Pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, success and failure—none of these are permanent. They come and go, just like seasons. Kṛṣṇa urges Arjuna to tolerate these temporary fluctuations with calmness and patience.

Do not get elated when joy comes, and do not get disheartened when pain arrives. Both are fleeting.

These fluctuations arise from māyā, Bhagavān's divine energy composed of the three guṇas. It is difficult to overcome, but those who surrender to Him rise above it effortlessly.

Hence, the lesson is twofold:

- Titikṣā (forbearance) in the face of impermanence.
- Śaraṇāgati (surrender) to Bhagavān as the means to transcend Māyā.

7. The Mind Can Be Controlled by Practice and Detachment

***asanshayaṁ mahā-bāho mano durnigrahaṁ chalam
abhyāsenā tu kaunteya vairāgyeṇa cha grihyate (6.35)***

Arjuna openly admits that the mind is restless and unstable, and controlling it seems as difficult as controlling the wind. Śrī Kṛṣṇa acknowledges this, but assures that with:

- Abhyāsa (consistent spiritual practice), and
- Vairāgya (detachment from worldly attractions),

even this turbulent mind can be brought under control.

The mind may wander, but do not worry. Bring it back, again and again—this is abhyāsa. Let go of emotional dependence on fleeting pleasures—this is vairāgya.

Together, practice and detachment form the two-pronged strategy to master the mind. This teaching is central to both Yoga and Vedānta.

8. Be Like the Ocean—Stable and Undisturbed Amid Desires

***āpūryamāṇam achala-pratiṣṭham
samudram āpaḥ praviśhanti yadvat
tadvat kāmā yaṁ praviśhanti sarve
sa śhāntim āpnoti na kāma-kāmī (2.70)***

Desires will constantly arise, just like rivers continuously pouring into the ocean. Yet, the ocean remains full, still, and undisturbed. Similarly, the wise person remains inwardly calm, despite the flow of desires and external stimuli.

It is not that the sage has no thoughts or sensory contact—but he is unmoved by them.

Such inner steadiness leads to true peace (śhānti). On the other hand, those who chase after every desire (kāma-kāmī) never find fulfillment.

This verse teaches us:

- Thoughts will come—don't panic.
- Desires will arise—don't act on all of them.
- Learn to regulate the mind and senses, rather than being controlled by them.

Let your mind serve your goal, not sabotage it. Master the inner ocean.

9. Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga Together—Remember Me and Do Your Duty

***tasmāt sarveṣhu kāleṣhu mām anusmara yudhya cha
mayyarpita-mano-buddhir mām evaiśhyasyasanśhayam (8.7)***

This verse is beloved by many because it perfectly blends Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga. Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa says:

“Therefore, at all times, remember Me and also perform your prescribed duty. With your mind and intellect offered to Me, you will surely come to Me—of this, there is no doubt.”

This is not just a war-time instruction to Arjuna; it is an eternal principle for all seekers. We may not fight a battlefield war, but we do have duties—professional, personal, and spiritual.

This verse teaches us to:

- Remember Bhagavān constantly (mām anusmara), and
- Perform our duties sincerely (yudhya cha).

By merging remembrance of the Divine with active engagement in life, we walk the path of Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga simultaneously.

Action with remembrance becomes worship. Life itself becomes sādhanā.

10. Surrender is the Supreme Dharma

***sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śharaṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣhayiṣhyāmi mā śhuchaḥ (18.66)***

This is the climactic instruction of the entire Gītā—a call to complete surrender.

“Abandon all varieties of dharma and surrender unto Me alone. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.”

The word “sarva-dharmān parityajya” must be properly understood. Dharma here refers to material dharmas—worldly duties that bind one to relative identities (family, society, profession, etc.). Kṛṣṇa does not ask us to abandon righteousness, but to transcend the lower identities when the call of the highest spiritual dharma arises.

- Material dharma binds to saṁsāra (worldly cycle).
- Spiritual dharma liberates through śharaṇāgati (surrender).

Examples like Prahlāda and Lakṣmaṇa show how one can relinquish material obligations for the sake of Paramātman.

When the heart is truly surrendered, Bhagavān takes full responsibility for our liberation—“mā śucah”—Do not grieve.

Final Appeal - Make the Gītā Your Daily Companion

“The 18th chapter of the Gītā ends, but your journey with the Gītā must begin anew—every single day.”

Dear seekers, a kind request to you:

- If you cannot read all 18 chapters, read 9.
- If not 9, read 6.
- Or even 3 chapters.
- If that feels difficult, then read just 1 chapter daily.
- And if even that seems a lot—contemplate 1 single śloka per day.

Even one śloka a week, when deeply contemplated, can transform your life.

This is not mere reading—this is manana, deep inner reflection. Let the Bhagavad Gītā speak to your life, every day. That is how we truly study it—not by merely flipping pages, but by letting it change our minds and hearts.

***May Śrī Kṛṣṇa bless you with clarity, strength, and devotion.
Jai Śrī Kṛṣṇa.***

Questions and Answers

Rajendra Chauhan ji

Q: Sri Krishna had given a promissory note in shloka 66, that if one surrenders to HIM completely, he will be liberated from all sins. Then, why did the Pāṇḍavas go to Kedarnath and do penance for the brahma hatya they did by killing their gurus Dronacharya, Bhīṣma Pitāmaha, and their cousins? Why did they get liberation from Siva ji?

A: The Pāṇḍavas had the mental guilt of killing their gurus, although they had no other way to establish dharma. Brahma hatya is a bhavana; bhavana comes second to kartavya karma. They did their kartavya karma by killing the opposite army, and inevitably had to vanquish their gurus also. One who does the kartavya karma will not be punished. Yet, they felt guilty, and hence did penance at Kedarnath, and got Siva ji's boon of liberation. Siva ji, Vishnu Bhagavān and Sri Krishna are not different entities - they are one and the same Paramātmā. As Sri Krishna promised in the 66th shloka, they got liberated ultimately.

Vijaya Ramesh ji

Q: Why is it said that we should read the shlokas 11.36 - 44 daily?

A: These shlokas are called Kshama prarthana shlokas. They were recited by Arjuna who sought pardon from Sri Krishna when he realised that he had misbehaved with Sri Krishna assuming HIM to be his friend. On realising HIS Paramātmā reality, he sought pardon. Similarly, one can recite these shlokas daily to seek pardon from Paramātmā.

Suchitra Rau ji

Q: Can I register again from level 1 to continue this journey of learning Gītā?

A: Yes, you can register from whatever level you want, once you complete one round of L4.

**Om tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyāṃ(m)
yogaśāstre śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṃvāde mokṣasannyāsayogonāma
aṣṭādaśo'dhyāyaḥ**

Thus, in the Upaniṣad sung by the Lord, the Science of Brahma, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, ends the eighteenth chapter entitled "The Yoga of Liberation through the Path of Knowledge and Self-Surrender."



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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|| OM ŚRĪKṚṢṆĀRPAṆAMASTU ||