

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 4: Jñāna-Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/eCyI8GyDVMM>

## Śhraddhā (Faith) the Foundation for Acquiring True Knowledge (Jñāna).

**Chapter 4** of the Bhagavadgītā is **Jñāna-Karma-Sannyāsa Yoga - The Yoga of Knowledge, Action, and Renunciation.**

This chapter offers a comprehensive explanation of action (karma), renunciation of action (sannyāsa), and knowledge (jñāna).

Today's session began with the traditional lighting of the lamp followed by obeisance to Śrī Bhagavān, Bharat Maa, VedaVyasa ji and Gurudev.

This chapter emphasises that merely performing actions does not lead to the realisation of the Supreme; rather, it is by bringing that understanding into our conduct, following what we have truly grasped, and uniting our thoughts, words, and deeds we can attain the Divine.

**Sannyāsa means “samyak-nyāsa”, or, proper renunciation**, i.e., letting go after carefully analysing which actions are appropriate. With the help of knowledge, we can determine which actions to perform and which to renounce. Knowledge helps us recognise which actions are truly beneficial (śreyaskara) for us. **Once those beneficial actions are performed, giving up their fruits is true renunciation!**

In the previous three sessions, we saw that Bhagavān told Arjuna that earlier HE had shared this Yoga with Vivasvan the Sun God; who further passed it to Manu and, Manu shared the same with Ikshvaku. Then, through tradition, this wisdom was passed on to saintly kings. Knowledge is never truly destroyed, but over time, it becomes nearly lost. People forget it. Hence, to restore understanding among people, Bhagavān once again imparted this knowledge to Arjuna, and through him intended it for the welfare of the entire creation.

Bhagavān is unborn. HE explained in detail how HE incarnates whenever Dharma is in danger, and how HE acts for the protection of Dharma. HE described how HIS birth and actions are Divine.

Then HE explained how one should recognise action within inaction, and, inaction within action:

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।  
स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥ 4.18॥

*He who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction, he is wise among men; he is a true yogi and a performer of all actions.*

HE also described how to make all our actions like a yajña (sacrifice), and how to live a yajña-centric life. HE spoke of various forms of yajñas:

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति ।  
शब्दादीन्विषयानन्य इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति ॥ 4.26॥

*Some offer the senses such as hearing into the fire of restraint. Others offer the objects of the senses, like sound, into the fire of the senses.*

Here, the yajña of offering sense-objects like sound into the senses, and the senses into the fire of restraint, is described.

Further, HE said:

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथापरे ।  
स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥ 4.28॥

*Some perform sacrifice with wealth, some with austerity, others through the yoga of meditation; still others through study of scriptures and acquisition of knowledge, all performed by self-disciplined seekers.*

**Self-study / svādhyāya refers to the study done by oneself in pursuit of knowledge.** To truly attain something meaningful, one must also observe certain disciplines or vows (vratas).

Yoga begins with *Yamas* and *Niyamas*

- **Yamas:** Non-violence, Truth, Non-stealing, Celibacy, and Non-possessiveness
- **Niyamas:** Cleanliness, Contentment, Self-study (svādhyāya), and Austerity (tapas)

Following these *yamas* and *niyamas* and progressing toward Self-knowledge is also considered a form of yajña.

#### 4.32

**evaṃ(m) bahuvidhā yajñā, vitatā brahmaṇo mukhe,  
karmajānviddhi tānsarvān, evaṃ(ñ) jñātvā vimokṣyase. 4.32**

Many such forms of sacrifice have been set forth in detail in the Vedas; know them all as involving the action of mind, senses and body. Thus, knowing the truth about them you shall be freed from the bondage of action (through their performance).

All these different kinds of sacrifice (**bahu-vidhā yajñā**) have been described (**vitatā**) in the Vedas (**brahmaṇo mukhe**). Know them as originating from different types of work (**karma-jān**); this understanding ((**jñātvā**)) cuts the knots of material bondage (**vimokṣyase**).

**Brahmaṇo mukhe means "as stated in the Vedas."** The Vedas describe many types of Yajñas, but to perform a Yajña, one must act. Therefore action (karma) is essential. **Bhagavān says that all Yajñas**

arise from karma.

Understanding this, when a person performs various Yajñas in life, they become free from the bondage of karma. This means that to become free from the bondage of actions, one must engage in action itself. **If we perform our duties with the spirit of Yajña in our hearts, liberation is certainly possible.** For this, there is no need to go elsewhere, it can be achieved right here, through sincere and dedicated action.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj used to say:

“हे राज्य व्हावे ही तर श्रींची इच्छा आहे!”

"It is His (Divine Supreme's) wish that this kingdom should be established!"

In the next verse HE explained the superior most type of Yajña.

4.33

**śreyāndravyamayādyajñāj, jñānayajñaḥ(ph) parantapa,  
sarvaṁ(ṇ) karmākhilam(m) pārtha, jñāne parisamāpyate. 4.33**

Arjuna, sacrifice through Knowledge, is superior to sacrifice performed with material things. For all actions without exception culminate in Knowledge, O son of Kuntī.

Herein Bhagavān addressed Arjuna as Parantapa (subduer of enemies) and Pārtha (son of Kuntī); and explained to him that sacrifice performed in knowledge (**jñāna-yajñaḥ**) is superior and beneficial (**śhreyān**) to any mechanical material sacrifice (**dravya-mayād**). Although all sacrifices of work (**sarvaṁ karmākhilam**) culminate (**parisamāpyate**) in knowledge (**jñāne**).

**adhyātma-jñāna-nityatvaṁ tattva-jñānārtha-darśanam |  
etaḥ jñānam iti proktam ajñānam yad ato'nyathā || 12 ||**

Constancy in Self-knowledge, perception of the end of true knowledge — this is declared to be knowledge and what is opposed to it is ignorance.

Śrī Bhagavān assured that all selfless actions (yajñas) performed with understanding and devotion become sacred offerings. These acts purify the mind and free one from the bondage of karma. Highlighting the supreme value of knowledge, HE declared that **jñāna-yajña - the offering made through knowledge - is the highest form of sacrifice.** This is because it deeply transforms the doer, leading directly to self-realisation. **Through such knowledge, one is united with the ParaBrahmā and ultimately liberated from the cycle of birth and death.**

Sant Dnyaneshwar Mauli says:

जेथ प्रवृत्ति पांगुळ जाहली । तर्काची दिठी गेली ।

जेणे इंद्रियें विसरलीं । विषयसंगु ॥१६२॥

[Having obtained this], mental activity is impaired, the power of reason loses its insight, and the senses forget the contact with the objects of sense.

Mauli says further:

मनाचें मनपण गेलें । जेथ बोलाचें बोलकेंपण ठेलें ।

जयामाजी सांपडलें । ज्ञेय दिसे ॥१६३॥

The mind can no longer function, words lose their power of expression and, when a man reaches this

state, he finds that which he desires to know.

Next HE explained how to attain this knowledge.

#### 4.34

**tadviddhi praṇipātena, paripraśnena sevayā,  
upadekṣyanti te jñānaṃ(ñ), jñāninastattvadarśinaḥ. 4.34**

Understand the true nature of that Knowledge by approaching seers of Truth. If you prostrate at their feet, render them service, and question them with an open and guileless heart, those wise seers of Truth will instruct you in that Knowledge.

In this verse Śrī Bhagavān explains the process of attaining true Knowledge (Jñāna). HE emphasised the need for a genuine connection with spiritual masters (Jñānins) who have directly realised the ultimate Truth.

HE advised to learn (**viddhi**) the Truth (**tat**) by approaching a spiritual master (**praṇipātena**). To humbly inquire (**paripraśnena**) from him with reverence, and by rendering service (**sevayā**) unto him. Such enlightened Saints (**jñāninaḥ**) can impart (**upadekṣyanti**) knowledge (**jñānaṃ**) unto you (**te**) because they have seen the Truth (**tattva-darśinaḥ**).

To attain true knowledge, one must completely surrender at the feet of the Guru. Bhagavān did not immediately begin imparting wisdom to Arjuna in Chapter 1, when Arjuna laid down his weapons, overwhelmed by sorrow, and refused to fight against his own kith and kin. In Chapter 2, Bhagavān first rebuked Arjuna for his misplaced weakness:

**क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते (2.3)**

*O Parth, do not yield to this unmanliness. It does not befit you. Give up this petty weakness of heart and arise, O vanquisher of enemies.*

Only when Arjuna fully surrendered and pleaded for guidance did Bhagavān accept him as a disciple and begin to reveal the sacred wisdom of the Gītā:

**शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् (2.7)**

*I am Your disciple, surrendered unto You. Please instruct me decisively as to what is truly beneficial for me.*

In the same spirit, Bhagavān later advised seekers to approach realised masters (**tattva-darśinaḥ**) with humility, by prostrating, asking sincere questions, and serving them with a pure heart and a clear, receptive mind.

Swami Vivekananda followed this path earnestly. He searched for a true, realised master for years. When he finally met Śrī Ramakrishna Paramahansa, he waited patiently and tested him, ensuring he was indeed a self-realised saint. Only after he was satisfied, did he accept him as his Guru.

The term "**tattva-darśinaḥ**" refers to those who have the vision to perceive reality beyond the physical senses, or, those who see with the **jñāna-chakṣu** (eyes of knowledge). For example, while one can feel the presence of air and say, "this is air," it requires deeper knowledge to recognise its components - oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, etc.

The word "**tat**" refers to **That - the Paramātmā, the Parabrahma.**

The suffix "**tva**" (as in matṛtva, motherhood) refers to **the essence or state of being**.

**Thus, understanding *Tat-tva* means grasping the essence or the nature of the Supreme Being, the ParaBrahma.**

4.35

**yajjñātvā na punarmoham, evaṃ(m) yāsyasi pāṇḍava,  
yena bhūtānyaśeṣeṇa, drakṣyasiātmanyatho mayi. 4.35**

Arjuna, when you have achieved enlightenment, ignorance will delude you no more. In the light of that knowledge, you will see the entire creation first within your own Self, and then in Me (the Oversoul).

Bhagavān assured Arjuna that by following this path and having achieved enlightenment (**jñātvā**) from a Guru, one will no longer (**na punar**) fall into delusion (**moham**). In the light of that knowledge (**yena**), one will see (**drakṣyasi**) that all living beings (**aśheṣheṇa bhūtāni**) are but parts of the Supreme (**atho mayi**), and are within HIM (**ātmani**).

Once such pure knowledge (jñāna) is attained, ignorance can never return. The entire world, both living and non-living will be seen as existing within the Self. With this realisation, duality (*bheda dṛiṣṭi*) will dissipate. The boundaries of 'mine' and 'others' dissolve. The pain of others will touch the heart deeply, and their joy will naturally bring happiness. One begins to see the world within and simultaneously perceives the presence of Paramātmā in all living beings.

Śrī Bhagavān assured Arjuna that true knowledge eradicates ignorance, dispels delusion, and leads to a profound realisation of the oneness of all existence. This verse emphasises the power of enlightenment to transcend illusion, revealing the indivisible unity between the individual, the cosmos, and the Divine.

A Sanskrit Subhashita illustrates:

**सज्जनस्य हृदयं नवनीतं यद्वदन्ति कवयस्तदलीकम् ।  
अन्यदेहविलसत्परितापात् सज्जनो द्रवति नो नवनीतम् ॥**

He said the heart of saints is softer than butter. While butter melts when heated, the hearts of saints melt without any external force, simply by witnessing the sorrow of others.

This is because they do not perceive any separation between themselves and others. The dualistic vision (*bheda dṛiṣṭi*) is absent in them. For them, every being is a reflection of the Self and of Paramātmā.

The touching anecdote from the life of Śrī Ramakrishna Paramahansa beautifully illustrated the oneness he experienced with all beings - a true mark of realised knowledge.

Even in the intense physical suffering of throat cancer, when he could no longer eat his favourite sweet, *sandesh*, he did not express sorrow or longing. Instead, when his disciples felt sad seeing his condition, he gently consoled them saying: "**Why do you grieve? I am tasting the *sandesh* through your tongues.**"

A mother's love is one of the purest, most natural expressions of oneness in the worldly realm. When a mother sees her child well-fed, her own hunger fades. If the child is in pain, she feels it more deeply than her own. She does not see the child as separate; her joy and sorrow are merged with the child's.

**This is the same unity in seeming duality that saints experience with all beings. That is why we say Dnyaneshwar Mauli (mother).**

**4.36**

**api cedasi pāpebhyaḥ(s), sarvebhyaḥ(ph) pāpakṛttamaḥ,  
sarvaṁ(ñ) jñānaplavenaiva, vṛjinaṁ(m) santariṣyasi. 4.36**

Even if you were the most sinful of all sinners, this Knowledge alone would carry you, like a raft, across all your sins.

Bhagavān said there are no prequalifications required to reach this state of spiritual knowledge. HE declared that if (**chet**), even (**api**) one is considered sinful (**pāpa-kṛit-tamaḥ**) of all (**sarvebhyaḥ**) sinners (**pāpebhyaḥ**), he can cross over (**santariṣyasi**) this ocean of material existence (**vṛjinaṁ**) by seating in the boat of divine knowledge (**jñāna-plavenaiva**).

He assures that no matter how sinful or unworthy one might feel due to past actions, the light of Knowledge, once realised, can carry one across the turbulent ocean of karma to liberation.

Dnyaneshwar Mauli puts it beautifully:

जरी कल्मषाचा आगरु । तूं भ्रांतीचा सागरु ।  
व्यामोहाचा डोंगरु । होउनी अससी ॥१७२॥  
तन्ही ज्ञानशक्तिचेनि पाडें । हें आघवेंचि गा थोकडें ।  
ऐसें सामर्थ्य असे चोखडें । ज्ञानीं इये ॥१७३॥

Though thou shouldst be a mine of sins, an ocean of confusion, a mountain of infatuation, yet all this will be insignificant before the pure power of wisdom, so great is it.

**One may be perplexed as to what does Bhagavān truly want?**

- **Performing one's Kartavya Karma** (righteous duty),
- **Living life as a Yajña** (selfless offering), and
- **Attaining Jñāna** (self-knowledge) through surrender to a Guru.

We need to understand that these are not separate paths. They are interconnected steps in spiritual evolution. However, **true liberation comes only through Jñāna - realising the Self, seeing Paramātmā in all, and transcending duality.**

In the 6th chapter Bhagavān explained that the realised saints have a vision more powerful than the present day X-rays. They have the ability to perceive the Atma tattva in all living beings.

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।  
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥ 6.29॥

*The true yogis, uniting their consciousness with God, see with equal eye, all living beings in God and God in all living beings.*

In the next verse HE explained that HE never loses sight of those who perceive HIM everywhere.

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।  
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ 6.30॥

*For those who see Me everywhere and see all things in Me, I am never lost, nor are they ever lost to Me.*

Bhagavān repeatedly emphasised that **faith (Śraddhā)** is essential for receiving and realising true knowledge (jñāna). Those without faith - **ajñānīs**, or the ignorant are not receptive to this higher wisdom, no matter how clearly it is explained.

**अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।**

**नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥ 4.40॥**

Persons who possess neither faith nor knowledge, and who are of a doubting nature, suffer a downfall. For the skeptical souls, there is no happiness either in this world or the next.

I was iterated that faith (śraddhā) and blind faith (andhā-śraddhā) are fundamentally different and must not be confused. **While Faith is conscious and discerning, Blind Faith is irrational acceptance without reflection.**

**4.37**

**yathaidhāṃsi samiddho'gniḥ(r), bhasmasātkurute'rjuna,  
jñānāgniḥ(s) sarVākarmāṇi, bhasmasātkurute tathā. 4.37**

For, as the blazing fire reduces the fuel to ashes, Arjuna, even so the fire of Knowledge turns all actions to ashes.

Just as (**yatha**) a blazing (**samiddhah**) fire (**agnih**) consumes wood (**edhānsi**) completely, leaving only ashes (**bhasma-sāt**), similarly (**tathā**), Knowledge (**jñānāgniḥ**) eradicates all accumulated karma (**sarva-karmāṇi**), both good and bad, liberating the soul from its binding effects.

Bhagavān elucidated that just as offerings poured into the fire are reduced to ashes, so too are all actions (karmas) consumed in the fire of true knowledge.

This powerful metaphor illustrates that **spiritual wisdom is the supreme purifier**. While rituals, yajñas, and practices hold value, **it is knowledge (jñāna) alone that has the capacity to completely burn away the binding effects of past deeds.**

Through such transformative knowledge, a seeker becomes free from karmic entanglements and escapes the cycle of birth and death.

**4.38**

**na hi jñānena sadṛśaṃ(m), pavitrāmiha vidyate,  
tatsvayaṃ(m) yogasaṃsiddhaḥ(kh), kālenātmani vindati. 4.38**

In this world there is no purifier as great as Knowledge; he who has attained purity of heart through prolonged practice of Karmayoga, automatically sees the light of Truth in the self in course of time.

Bhagavān said there is nothing as (**sadṛśaṃ**) purifying (**pavitram**) as divine knowledge (**jñānena**) in this world (**iha**). One who has attained purity of mind (**sansiddhaḥ**) through prolonged practice of Yoga (**tatsvayaṃ yoga**), receives (**vindati**) such knowledge within the heart (**ātmani**), in due course of time (**kālena**).

**The company of realised masters (Tatva-darshis) is essential for the awakening of true**



**knowledge.** Though knowledge already exists within each of us - "**Every soul is potentially divine**", as Swami Vivekananda said, this inner light remains veiled by ignorance. It is through the guidance, presence, and grace of a Guru that this hidden knowledge is kindled and brought to the surface.

**Actions performed in the spirit of Karma Yoga purify the inner instrument (antahkaraṇa), gradually revealing the knowledge already present within.** This inner awakening does not occur instantly, it is the result of consistent and selfless action performed without attachment to outcomes.

An apt example is the glass chimney of an old oil lantern. Over time, it gathers soot, and the light within grows dim. Yet the flame is always there. By cleaning the glass, the brightness is restored. In the same way, **Karma Yoga** cleanses the mind and heart of impurities like ego, desire, and attachment. As the inner being becomes purer, the light of knowledge (jñāna), already glowing within, begins to shine forth clearly.

Dnyaneshwar Mali says:

एथ ज्ञान हें उत्तम होये । आणिकही एक तैसें कें आहे ।  
जैसें चैतन्य कां नोहे । दुसरें गा ॥१७९॥

Wisdom is the highest thing, for what can equal it? As spirit is one without a second, so also is wisdom.

In the next verse Bhagavān declared that Shradhā is an essential tool to perceive the knowledge within.

#### 4.39

**śraddhāvāṇlabhate jñānaṁ(n), tatparaḥ(s) saṁyatendriyaḥ,  
jñānaṁ(m) labdhvā parāṁ(m) śāntim, acireṇādhigacchati. 4.39**

He who has mastered his senses, is exclusively devoted to his practice and is full of faith, attains Knowledge; having had the revelation of Truth, he immediately attains supreme peace in the form of God-realization.

Those whose faith is deep (**śhraddhāvān**), and who have practiced controlling (**sanyata**) their mind and senses (**indriyaḥ**), attain (**labdhvā**) divine knowledge (**jñānaṁ**). Through such transcendental knowledge (**jñānaṁ**), they attain (**adhigachchati**) everlasting supreme (**parāṁ**) peace (**śhāntim**) without any delay (**achireṇā**).

**Faith is the foundation for acquiring any kind of knowledge - worldly or spiritual.**

Without faith, true learning is impossible. Take for instance a geometry class: it begins with the definition of a “point”—an entity with no length, breadth, or thickness. This cannot be seen or proven tangibly, yet a student who accepts it in faith can go on to learn the vast science of geometry.

Similarly, in science, we accept that an atom contains a nucleus with protons and neutrons, and electrons revolving around it—though most of us have never seen these particles ourselves. We understand and use this knowledge based on faith in the scientists and their discoveries.



In the same way, **Bhagavān stated that only those with Śhraddhā (faith) can attain true knowledge (jñāna).**

One day, Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa asked his disciple whether there was sugar in his house. The disciple immediately replied, “No, there isn’t.” Swami Ramakrishna then gently instructed him to go back home and check. On returning, the disciple admitted that there indeed was some sugar at home.

Thakur smiled and said, and told him that if he did not even care to verify the presence of sugar in his own house, how would he ever find God?”

This simple yet powerful incident illustrates that **spiritual realisation requires more than blind acceptance or casual belief.** It demands sincerity, curiosity, and inner seeking. **One must be willing to search within,** just as one would search the house thoroughly when truly desiring something.

Śraddhā (faith), controlling the senses, and walking the path of Yoga are essential disciplines for realising the Supreme Truth. Without these, the seeker may read sacred texts like the Bhagavad Gītā but will struggle to experience their transformative power. This is why Gurudev strongly emphasises:

**“Geetā padhein, padhāyen aur jīvan me lāyen”**

"Study the Gītā, teach the Gītā, and bring its teachings into your life"

- Studying the Gītā sharpens the intellect and nurtures faith.
- Teaching it to others strengthens understanding and commitment.
- Living its teachings purifies the heart, aligns action with dharma, and gradually leads to Self-realisation.

By sincerely walking this threefold path with discipline and devotion, one begins to internalise Gītā’s wisdom.

A poet very eloquently portrayed his faith and surrender to Paramātmā.

कर प्रणाम तेरे चरणों में, करता हूँ अब तेरे काज  
कर पूर्ण तेरे कर्मों को, नियुक्त होता हूँ मैं आज।

Dnyaneshwar Mauli wrote

ज्ञान हृदयी होता स्थिर । फुटे शांतीच अंकुर ।  
मग आत्मबोधाचा विस्तार । होतो पार्था ॥  
तो जेथे जेथे पाहील । तेथे शांतीच आढळेल ।  
आपपरभावही नुरेल । शांतीत त्या ॥

*When knowledge becomes steady in the heart, a sprout of peace begins to grow. Wherever such a person looks, he sees only peace. Then, O pārtha (Arjuna), the realization of the Self expands. The distinction between self and others disappears in that peace.*

When a person gains true spiritual knowledge, inner peace is quickly established. Along with this peace, the ego-based distinction between “me” and “others” dissolves. This is showcased in the

following verse which explains that people with a limited mindset differentiate between their own and others, but those with a broad, magnanimous vision consider the whole earth as one family.

अयं निजः परो वेति गणना लघुचेतसाम्।

उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्॥

*This one is mine, and that one is a stranger such thinking belongs to narrow-minded people. But for those with noble and generous hearts, the whole world is one family (vasudhaiva kutumbakam).*

**Such seekers, endowed with unwavering faith and equanimity, attain supreme peace (parāṁ śhāntim) instantly.**

4.40

**ajñāścāśraddadhānaśca, saṁśayātmā vinaśyati,  
nāyaṁ(m) loko'sti na paro, na sukhaṁ(m) saṁśayātmanaḥ. 4.40**

He who lacks discrimination, is devoid of faith, and is at the same time possessed by doubt, is lost to the spiritual path. For the doubting soul there is neither this world nor the world beyond, nor even happiness.

Further Bhagavān said, persons who possess neither faith (**āśhraddadhānah**) nor knowledge (**ajñah**), and who are of a doubting nature (**saṁśhayātmā**), suffer a downfall (**vinaśhyati**). For the skeptical souls (**saṁśhayātmanaḥ**), there is no happiness (**sukhaṁ**) either in this world (**loka**) or the next (**parah**).

**Those who constantly doubt can never be truly happy.** Śrī Bhagavān teaches that strong faith and wisdom bring peace and joy, while doubt causes confusion and sorrow.

4.41

**yogasannyastakarmāṇaṁ(ñ), jñānasañchinnasaṁśayam,  
ātmavantaṁ(n) na karmāṇi, nibadhnanti dhanañjaya. 4.41**

Arjuna, actions do not bind him who has dedicated all his actions to God according to the spirit of Karmayoga, whose doubts have been dispelled by wisdom and who is self-possessed.

The Supreme told Arjuna that actions do not bind (**karmāṇi nibadhnanti**) those who have renounced karmas in the fire of Yoga (**yoga-sannyasta-karmāṇaṁ**), whose doubts (**saṁśhayam**) have been dispelled (**sañchhinna**) by knowledge (**jñāna**), and who are situated in knowledge of the Self (**ātmavantaṁ**).

Actions performed with the spirit of Karma Yoga, ie., dedicated to Bhagavān, guided by knowledge, and done with mastery over the mind, body, ego, and senses; do not create bondage. Such a seeker, free from attachment to results, gradually exhausts the accumulated karmic balance from the past, and since new karmas are no longer binding, the account of karma becomes neutral. **In this purified state, liberation (moksha) is naturally attained.**

**tasmādajñānasambhūtaṃ(m), hr̥tsthaṃ(ñ) jñānāsinātmanaḥ,  
chittvainaṃ(m) saṃśayaṃ(m) yogam, ātiṣṭhottīṣṭha bhārata. 4.42**

Therefore, Arjuna slashing to pieces, with the sword of knowledge, this doubt in your heart, born of ignorance, establish yourself in Karmayoga in the shape of even-mindedness, and stand up for the fight.

Śrī Bhagavān concluded this discourse, by drawing Arjuna's attention back to the essence of **Karma Yoga** - selfless action performed with the right understanding. After explaining the liberating power of knowledge and the spirit of sacrifice (yajña), HE encouraged Arjuna to act not out of desire or ego, but with surrender and equanimity.

HE said therefore (**tasmād**), with the sword (**āsinā**) of knowledge (**jñāna**), cut asunder (**chittva**) the doubts (**saṃśayaṃ**) that have arisen because of ignorance (**ajñāna-sambhūtaṃ**) in your heart (**hr̥it-sthaṃ**). O Bharata, establish (**ātiṣṭha**) yourself in karma yoga (**yogam**). Arise (**uttīṣṭha**), stand up, and take action!

The **sword of knowledge has the power to cut through all doubts, which arise from ignorance**. Time and again, Bhagavān encouraged Arjuna to rise above confusion and sorrow, and to **establish himself in Karma Yoga** - the path of selfless action, and to **perform his duty** without attachment to the outcome.

Arjuna, being a Kṣatriya (warrior), was born to uphold Dharma through righteous action. Bhagavān never desired the destruction caused by war, but HE emphasized the importance of **performing one's kartavya karma (duty) with clarity, detachment, and surrender**.

This divine counsel given to Arjuna is meant for all of us. In our own lives, we are Arjuna, faced with dilemmas and doubts. Bhagavān urges us to act rightly, rooted in Dharma and guided by knowledge, rather than being paralysed by fear, attachment, or indecision.

Arjuna finds himself caught between two callings (a) to seek knowledge through the shelter of realised saints, and, (b) to perform his duty as a warrior by fighting the war, as instructed by Bhagavān. This inner conflict leads him to ask yet another clarifying question at the beginning of the next chapter, seeking to resolve his doubt fully.

The session concluded by humbly offering the entire discourse at the Lotus Feet of Śrī Bhagavān. OM TAT SAT.

### Question and Answers

#### Kshama Ji

**Question:** In the last session, while explaining the 24th verse, you said that while performing any yajna at home, meditating on this mantra is beneficial. I did not understand this properly.

**Answer:** Any action we do, which is necessary and appropriate, is itself a yajna. The verse means:

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम्।  
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥

That which is used to offer into the fire is Brahman, the offering is also Brahman, the fire is Brahman, the

one offering is Brahman, and the act of offering itself is Brahman! The one whose mind is absorbed in such Brahman-centred actions, the fruit he gains too is Brahman alone.

In Chapter 15, Bhagavān said:

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः।  
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम्॥

When we eat, we chew and swallow the food, but we do not consciously digest it. Bhagavān says HE becomes the Vaishvanara Agni (digestive fire) and digests the food. So, we must eat with the feeling of offering it to that divine fire. “Eating is not just feeding the stomach; it is a sacred yajna.”

### Jetha ji

**Question:** Who exactly is Bhagavān Śrī Rāma, Śrī Krishna, śiva, or Vishnu?

**Answer:** Bhagavān or **Paramātmā is pure energy, pure consciousness, and this energy is full of knowledge.** Electricity is also energy, but it lacks awareness of its function. It only operates based on the appliance it powers.

In contrast, **Paramātmā is conscious energy**, present everywhere and in everyone. When it manifests in a specific form for a specific purpose, we call it an **avatāra**. The Supreme Soul is **unborn and eternal**.

We refer to HIM by different names given by mankind based on HIS function:

- **Brahmā** – Creator
- **Vishṇu** – Sustainer
- **śiva** – Dissolver

Though HE is **nirguṇa (attribute-less)** and **nirākāra (formless)**, HE manifests as **saguṇa (with attributes)** and **sākāra (with form)** because we being in **Deh budhhi**, it is easy for us to relate to HIM in HIS sākāra form.

### Pushpalata ji

**Question:** How can we practically perform our daily actions as yajña, as instructed in this chapter?

**Answer:** A homemaker can maintain a sacred atmosphere at home, just like in a temple. While cooking for the family and guests, she should feel she is preparing naivedya for Bhagavān. Any righteous job we do for a living must be seen as a duty entrusted by HIM. After performing any righteous action, we should offer both the action and its fruit to HIM.

### Kalpana ji

**Question:** Are nishkāma karma, karma yoga, and akarma the same?

**Answer:** Yes. All of them involve no expectation of personal gain.

- **Akarma** - Action done naturally without intent, like breathing or sleeping. No personal desire is involved.
- **Nishkāma karma** - Actions done deliberately and selflessly, like helping or sacrificing, with no

expectation of rewards.

### Priya Ji

**Question:** Is it true that one cannot attain knowledge without a Guru? If yes, what traits should we look for in a Guru? And can we accept someone as a Guru without meeting them?

**Answer:** Yes, it is true that a Guru is essential for attaining true knowledge. A realised saint, not merely someone with mystical or magical powers, should be sought as a Guru. The Guru must be compassionate, loving, and firmly established in the Truth. While one can accept a Guru in the heart and be inspired from afar, it is not the ideal path. Sitting at the lotus feet of a living Guru and receiving knowledge directly from him is far more beneficial, as it allows for personal guidance, correction, and deeper transformation.

### Ramprasad ji

**Question:** If we perform yajña by eating in a sāt̥tvic way with devotion, is it necessary to do physical yajña with fire and offerings?

**Answer:** Rituals (karma-kaṇḍa) have their own importance. But every day, performing sāt̥tvic actions with a spirit of offering to Bhagavān is itself a form of yajña.

### Charandas ji

**Question:** What is the difference between jñāna (knowledge) and vijñāna (realised knowledge)?

**Answer:** There are different levels of knowledge:

1. **Basic knowledge** – Gained by seeing or observing objects (e.g., iron or wood).
2. **Science (vijñāna)** – Understanding physical phenomena, from atoms to the universe.
3. **Spiritual knowledge (jñāna) – Self-knowledge**, understanding "Who am I?"

As Swami Samarth Ramdas said: "**True knowledge is to realise the Divine within and to become one with HIM**". Knowing that we are not just the body, but the Self—that is jñāna.

**Om tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām(m)  
yogaśāstre śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṁvāde jñānakarmasannyāsayogonāma  
caturtho'dhyāyaḥ**



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**Jai Shri Krishna!**

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar – Creative Writing Department

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