

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 5: Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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True Renunciation is Inner Detachment: The Unity of Karma-Sannyāsa and Karma-Yoga

Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga – Chapter 5 of the Bhagavad Gītā- **The Yoga of Renunciation of Action and the Yoga of Knowledge**

The discourse commenced with the auspicious lighting of the deepa (lamp), a symbol of divine light and spiritual illumination. As the gentle flame flickered, heartfelt prayers were offered at the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān, our Gurus, and Mā Sharadā, invoking their blessings and grace.

सदा शिव समारंभां व्यास शंकर मध्यमाम् ।
अस्मदाचार्य पर्यन्तां वन्दे गुरु परंपराम् ॥
वन्दे गुरु परंपराम् । जय श्रीकृष्ण ।

Introduction to the Fifth Chapter - Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga

Today, we enter into the study of the Fifth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā, titled Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga—the Yoga of Renunciation and Action.

Throughout the Gītā, we repeatedly come across four key terms: Karma Yoga, Jñāna Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Karma-Sannyāsa Yoga. The Fifth Chapter explores Karma Yoga in depth, but from the refined perspective of renunciation—Sannyāsa. Though Karma Yoga was already extensively explained in Chapter 3, here Bhagavān explains the connotation of Sannyāsa, and how it harmonizes with Karma.

What is Karma Yoga?

As taught in Chapter 3:

“Śrī-Kṛṣṇasya prītyartham vṛttivad ahaṁ karomi” –

“Whatever I do, from morning to night, I offer it as dedicated service to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

This is the essence of Karma Yoga—performing all actions as a servant of the Lord, without personal

desire, dedicating all fruits to Him.

Chapter 4: Jñāna-Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga

There, Bhagavān introduced the idea of renunciation of action with knowledge—a higher refinement of Karma Yoga. Two kinds of Sannyāsa were discussed:

Vidvat Sannyāsa – renunciation born of Self-knowledge

Avidvat Sannyāsa – renunciation without such realization

A true Vidvat Sannyāsī knows:

“I am not this body, not this mind, not this intellect—I am Brahman, the eternal Self.”

He or she has realized the mahāvākyas like Tat Tvam Asi and Aham Brahmasmi. This knowledge is not merely read in books—it is directly realized in the heart.

Example: Rājā Janaka

Even after attaining Brahma-Jñāna, saints like King Janaka continued to act in the world. Why? Because their Prārabdha Karma (karma allocated for this lifetime) was still being exhausted.

Vedānta teaches that we have three types of karma:

- **Sañcita** Karma – the accumulated karma of countless past lives
- **Prārabdha** Karma – the portion of karma that has begun to fructify in this life
- **Kriyāmāṇa** Karma – the new karma being generated in the present

When one realizes the Self:

- Sañcita Karma is burnt to ashes by the fire of Jñāna
- Kriyāmāṇa Karma ceases, for the Jñānī no longer acts with personal desire
- Yet Prārabdha Karma must still be lived through, until the body falls

So, when a Jñānī continues to act in the world, it is not binding action, but Jñāna-Pūrvaka Karma-Sannyāsa—renunciation of action through wisdom.

What About Us - The Seekers?

For most of us, the deep conviction that “I am not the body” has not yet arisen. We still operate with identification to name, form, ego, and desires. That is why we practice. Some aspirants, having cultivated qualities like dama, uparati, and titikṣā, take formal Sannyāsa to intensify their pursuit of liberation.

But whether clothed in orange or not, what matters is the inner Sannyāsa. Not all who wear the marks of a renunciate are established in Self-knowledge. Some may still be Karma-Sannyāsīs in practice, on their journey toward realization.

And what about householders like us who have not taken external Sannyāsa but are sincerely seeking? We are also Karma Yogīs—trying to live in this world, perform our duties, and seek inner freedom.

That is why we have joined Gītā Pariwār, to discover:

- Who am I?
- From where have I come?
- What is the purpose of this life?
- Why am I here?

These questions mark the beginning of true Sādhana.

Thus, in this chapter, Śrī Bhagavān lovingly explains the nature of Karma-Sannyāsa—renunciation in spirit, while performing action outwardly. He clarifies the distinctions and unity between Karma Yoga and Jñāna Yoga and guides Arjuna—and through him, all of us—on the path toward liberation.

5.1

arjuna uvācha
sannyāsaṃ(ñ) karmaṇāṃ(ñ) kṛṣṇa, punaryogaṃ(ñ) ca śaṃsasi,
yacchreya etayorekaṃ(n), tanme brūhi suniścitam. 5.1

Arjuna said :Kṛṣṇa, you extol Sāṅkhyayoga (the Yoga of Knowledge) and then the Yoga of Action. Pray, tell me which of the two is decidedly conducive to my good.

Arjuna's Question and the Dilemma of Choice:

At the very beginning of the fifth chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā, Arjuna poses a question that arises from a deep inner conflict:

“O Kṛṣṇa, You earlier glorified the renunciation of action (karmanām sannyāsam) and again praised Karma Yoga, the path of selfless action. Among these two, which is superior? Kindly instruct me decisively.”

This question is not without context. Back in the second chapter—Sāṅkhyā Yoga, which emphasizes Jñāna Yoga or the path of knowledge—Śrī Bhagavān had spoken highly of renunciation, suggesting that one should give up all actions born of desire and establish oneself in the knowledge of the Self. From this, it appeared that renouncing action was being endorsed.

However, in the third chapter, Bhagavān strongly emphasized Karma Yoga—performing one’s duties without attachment. He even presented it as superior to renunciation for most seekers. This created an apparent contradiction in Arjuna’s mind. First, renunciation was praised, and then action was. Arjuna became confused.

Hence, he now asks: if both renunciation (Sannyāsa) and Karma Yoga have been praised, which one is truly superior for his spiritual growth?

His choice of words is significant—“yat śreyah”—meaning, “that which is ultimately beneficial and auspicious for me.” Arjuna is not asking for what is pleasing or convenient (preyas), but for what is truly good and conducive to liberation (śreyas). This distinction is also highlighted in the Kaṭhapaniṣad, where two paths are discussed:

- **Preyas** – that which is pleasant
- **Śreyas** – that which is truly beneficial, though not always pleasant at first

For example, a child may desire ice cream even during winter—that is preyas, guided by personal liking. But from the standpoint of health and long-term well-being, it may not be good. Śreyas represents what is right and wholesome, regardless of preference.

Arjuna’s humility and sincerity as a disciple shine through. He says, in essence:

“O Bhagavān, do not tell me what I may like. Tell me what is good for me. Whatever You instruct, after careful and decisive consideration (suniścitam), that I shall follow.”

Thus, Arjuna is not acting out of rebellion or avoidance. He is a true seeker, seeking guidance from his Guru, Bhagavān Himself. He acknowledges that his understanding is incomplete and requests a clear, conclusive direction between these two options:

- **Sannyāsa** – Renunciation of action after Self-realisation
- **Karma Yoga** – Performing one's duties with detachment, as a spiritual practice

This forms the basis of the fifth chapter, Karma Sannyāsa Yoga—the Yoga of Renunciation and Action—where Bhagavān harmonizes the essence of both paths and offers clarity to the sincere seeker

5.2

śrībhagavānuvāca sannyāsaḥ(kh) karmayogaśca, niḥśreyasakarāvubhau, tayostu karmasannyāsāt, karmayogo viśiṣyate. 5.2

Śrī Bhagavān said :The Yoga of Knowledge and the Yoga of Action both lead to supreme Bliss. Of the two, however, the Yoga of Action, being easier of practice, is superior to the Yoga of Knowledge.

Śrī Bhagavān's Clarification - Karma Yoga vs. Karma Sannyāsa

As soon as Arjuna asks his question in verse 5.1, Śrī Bhagavān begins His reply—not by offering a long explanation, but by giving a direct answer:

Both renunciation of action (karma-sannyāsa) and karma-yoga (selfless action) lead to the highest goal (niḥśreyasa). But among the two, karma-yoga is superior to karma-sannyāsa—for you.

At first glance, this might seem to contradict earlier teachings, but Bhagavān immediately addresses Arjuna's confusion. Arjuna is mistaken in thinking that karma-sannyāsa (renunciation of action) and karma-yoga (action with detachment) are entirely separate or contradictory. Bhagavān clarifies: they are not inherently different in their goal—both can lead to liberation (mokṣa), but they are suitable for different types of seekers, based on their stage of spiritual evolution.

This is the key point: **No path is absolutely better for everyone; its effectiveness depends on where the seeker stands.**

It's like someone asking, "Should I go left or right?" The only valid response is: "Tell me where you are right now—then I'll tell you which direction to take." Answers in spiritual life are contextual, not universal. That's where most conflict arises—we assume our perspective is the only right one and expect it to apply to everyone.

So why does Bhagavān say karma-yoga is superior?

Because for Arjuna, who has not yet attained Brahma-jñāna and who still carries responsibilities as a warrior, karma-yoga is the right path. If someone like Ādi Śaṅkarācārya had asked this same question—being already established in Self-knowledge—the Lord might well have replied that karma-sannyāsa is better suited.

So Śrī Kṛṣṇa is speaking to Arjuna where he is. Since Arjuna is a seeker, not yet Self-realised, He advises him to act—to walk the path of karma-yoga, offering all actions without attachment. It is through such purified action that one gradually becomes ready for renunciation in the true sense.

In fact, Bhagavān uses the word ubhau—meaning “both”—to indicate that **karma-yoga and karma-sannyāsa both ultimately lead to the same goal**: niḥśreyasa, or liberation. Just as two roads may lead to the same destination, these two paths, though externally different, share the same end.

But among the two, karma-yoga is better for you, Arjuna—not absolutely, but relatively, given your current condition.

We are, in many ways, like Arjuna. We talk a lot about renunciation and knowledge, but we haven’t actually realised the Self. Therefore, the path of karma-yoga—acting in the world with surrender and detachment—is the most suitable and transforming for us.

In this chapter, Bhagavān will continue to glorify karma-yoga, especially to ensure that Arjuna becomes ready to rise and fight. Like a parent pacifying a child who is crying for something unsuitable, He presents karma-yoga as something even more rewarding—**reassuring Arjuna that it is not a compromise, but a complete and noble path**.

5.3

**jñeyah(s) sa nityasannyāsī, yo na dveṣṭi na kāṅkṣati,
nirdvandvo hi mahābāho, sukhaṁ(m) bandhātpramucyate. 5.3**

The Karmayogī who neither hates nor desires should ever be considered as an ever renunciant. For, Arjuna, he who is free from the pairs of opposites is easily liberated from bondage.

Bhagavān’s Teaching on the True Renunciate

In this verse, Śrī Bhagavān further deepens the definition of a sannyāsī, making it clear that one doesn’t become a renunciate merely by giving up external actions or becoming a monk. Instead, the true renunciate is the karma-yogī—the one who continues to perform duties without hatred or desire.

Who is the true renunciate (nitya-sannyāsī)?

Bhagavān says:

“Yo na dveṣṭi na kāṅkṣati”

He who neither hates (na dveṣṭi) nor desires (na kāṅkṣati).

- **Na dveṣṭi**: He harbors no hatred—towards people, situations, duties, or challenges.
- **Na kāṅkṣati**: He does not crave or desire worldly pleasures, positions, or outcomes.

This person is inwardly renounced even if outwardly engaged in action. That is why karma-yoga, when practiced with this mindset, becomes equal to or greater than external sannyāsa. Bhagavān wants Arjuna—and us—to understand that it is not physical renunciation but inner freedom that truly matters.

What happens to such a person?

“Nirdvandvaḥ hi mahābāho”

Such a person becomes free from dualities—pleasure and pain, success and failure, honor and insult, gain and loss.

These dualities (dvandvas) are what bind the mind to the world. When we are happy only in pleasant situations and miserable in difficulties, we become slaves to external circumstances. But a true yogī

remains equanimous, neither elated nor dejected—he is nirdvandvaḥ, untouched by opposites.

The result:

“Sukhaṁ bandhāt pramucyate”

Such a renunciate is easily liberated (sukham pramucyate) from bondage (bandhaḥ)—the binding identification with body, ego, and world.

Here, bandha refers to the bondage of saṁsāra—the cycle of birth and death, of attachments and identifications. When one becomes nirdvandvaḥ, freedom from saṁsāra becomes natural and effortless.

5.4

**sāṅkhyayogau pṛthagbālāḥ(ph), pravadanti na paṇḍitāḥ,
ekamapyāsthitaḥ(s) samyag, ubhayorvindate phalam. 5.4**

It is the ignorant, not the wise, who say that Sāṅkhyayoga and Karmayoga lead to divergent results. For, one who is firmly established in either, gets the fruit of both which is the same, viz., God-realization.

"Only the childish speak of Sāṅkhya (Jñāna Yoga) and Karma Yoga as being different; not the wise. One who properly follows even one of these paths attains the result of both."

Now, what is Bhagavān saying here?

He says that the question “Which is better — Karma Yoga or Jñāna Yoga (renunciation of action)?” is itself immature. Such distinctions are made only by the bālāḥ — the unripe, the spiritually childish. These are not literal children, but people who lack scriptural insight, who have not studied the Upaniṣads, who have not realised the Self. They see Karma Yoga and Jñāna Yoga as separate and opposed. But paṇḍitāḥ, the truly wise ones, do not speak this way.

Why? Because the destination of both paths is the same — Self-realisation, or Brahman-realisation.

Bhagavān is clarifying that it is not the path that matters as much as the depth and sincerity of your practice. If you deeply and properly follow even one path — ekam api āsthitaḥ samyak — sincerely and thoroughly, without superficiality or contradiction, then you will attain the same phala (fruit), the fruit of Self-knowledge.

Suppose someone says they follow Karma Yoga while participating in Gītā Pariwār study circles — “I do not desire results, I do everything as a yajña.” But outside of that space, they begin desiring praise, rewards, recognition, or wealth then it is not true Karma Yoga. Bhagavān says: **“samyak”** — practice must be thorough, consistent, integrated into your whole life — whether in your home, work, temple, or street. Only then does it purify your mind.

What happens through Karma Yoga?

Your mind (**chitta**) becomes purified (**śuddha**). And only when your mind is pure that is free from **rāga** (attachment), **dveṣa** (hatred), **kāma** (desire), **krodha** (anger), **lobha** (greed), **moha** (delusion), **mada** (pride), and **mātsarya** (jealousy) — will **jñāna** (true knowledge) arise naturally. **The knowledge is already within you — you don’t need to “go get it.” You only need to remove the covering of impurities. Then jñāna shines forth.**

This is real sādhanā — not merely holding a mālā in your hand while the mind is still filled with worldly desires.

If you have both mālā and desires, you cannot grow spiritually.

That is why Bhagavān gently says: if you are more inclined toward Karma Yoga — action in a spirit of yajña and tyāga — that's perfectly fine. If you want to walk the difficult path of Jñāna Yoga and renounce karma altogether, you may, but know that it is much more difficult (as He will say later in 5.6: "**duḥkham āptum ayogatah...**"). For that, too, you must first prepare the mind through Karma Yoga.

So ultimately, Bhagavān is saying: Don't get caught up in comparing paths. Walk the one you are truly ready for — with full dedication — and you will attain the highest.

5.5

**yatsāṅkhyaiḥ(ph) prāpyate sthānaṃ(n), tadyogairapi gamyate,
ekaṃ(m) sāṅkhyāṃ(ñ) ca yogaṃ(ñ) ca, yaḥ(ph) paśyati sa paśyati. 5.5**

The (supreme) state which is reached by the Sāṅkhyayogī is attained also by the Karmayogī. Therefore, he alone who sees Sāṅkhyayoga and Karmayoga as identical so far as their result goes, sees truly.

Bhagavān is continuing the same idea from the previous verse. He says: "Whatever state or destination is attained by the Sāṅkhyā — the Jñāna Yogī — that same state is also attained by the Karma Yogī."

In other words, the final goal — Self-realisation, liberation — is the same for both paths.

So whether you choose the path of Jñāna Yoga, which involves renunciation, contemplation, and direct pursuit of Self-knowledge, or you walk the path of Karma Yoga, performing actions selflessly without attachment to the fruits, both paths ultimately lead to the same realization.

Bhagavān then says something very powerful:

"He who sees Sāṅkhyā and Yoga as one, truly sees."

(yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati)

This phrase means: The one who sees this unity — who understands that these two are not in opposition but are complementary, not contradictory but converging — such a person alone truly "sees."

The word **paśyati** doesn't just mean to see with the eyes. In Sanskrit, it comes from the root **drś**, which also refers to spiritual insight or knowledge. So here, Bhagavān is saying: true understanding lies in recognising the essential oneness of the paths.

It is not a matter of external actions or labels — "I am a renunciate" or "I am a householder" — but of how sincerely and deeply you walk your path.

- If a Karma Yogī purifies the mind through selfless action and attains knowledge, he reaches the same state as the Jñāna Yogī.
- If a Jñāna Yogī directly realises the Self, he too reaches that same state.

So what matters is not which path you walk, but how rightly you walk it.

This verse calls for maturity. The spiritually immature argue over which path is superior; the mature see their unity.

5.6

sannyāsastu mahābāho, duḥkhamāptumayogataḥ, yogayukto munirbrahma, nacireṇādhigacchati. 5.6

Without Karmayoga, however, Sāṅkhyayoga i.e., renunciation of doership in relation to all activities of the mind, senses and body is difficult to accomplish; whereas the Karmayogī, who keeps his mind fixed on God, reaches Brahma in no time, Arjuna.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is making a clear and practical statement here. He says:

"Sannyāsa — renunciation — is difficult to attain without Yoga."

Let's understand this deeply. The word **"ayogataḥ"** means "without Yoga", and in this context, it especially refers to Karma Yoga — the path of selfless action, discipline, and purification of the mind through dedicated performance of one's duties.

Bhagavān is warning against a superficial or premature renunciation.

Imagine someone who has never engaged in sādhana — has never practiced japa, dhyāna, or simple Karma Yoga — suddenly deciding to renounce everything and go straight to the Himalayas, thinking they are ready for Jñāna Yoga or total renunciation.

Would such a person succeed?

Very unlikely. Even sitting in padmāsana for an hour isn't easy unless the body and mind have been trained over time. True renunciation is not an escape — it is a culmination. It requires great strength, clarity, and self-mastery — all of which are cultivated gradually through Karma Yoga.

That's why Bhagavān says:

"Sannyāsa is duḥkham āptum — very difficult to truly attain — for one who has not gone through Yoga."

Without purifying oneself through Karma Yoga, true inner renunciation will remain just a theory.

On the other hand, Bhagavān says:

"But the one who is yoga-yuktaḥ — firmly established in Karma Yoga — that person becomes a muni."

Muni means one who reflects deeply (**mananāt muniḥ**). Such a seeker listens (**śravaṇa**), contemplates (**manana**), and meditates (**nidhidhyāsana**). They don't just accept knowledge blindly; they ask, reflect, and test everything through reason and experience.

In the Indian tradition, knowledge is never forced. It's not about dogma. The seeker is encouraged to explore, question, and validate through experience.

That's why we have so many philosophical systems — the **Ṣaḍ Darśanas**, each offering different

perspectives. Because every person has a different temperament, worldview, and readiness, no one path fits all.

This inclusive approach is beautifully captured in the Vedic statement:

“Ekam sat viprā bahudhā vadanti” —

"Truth is one, but the wise express it in many ways."

Some follow **Advaita** (non-dualism), others **Dvaita** (dualism), some prefer **Śūnyavāda** (emptiness), and so on. All aim for the same truth — but by different routes.

So the message of this verse is clear:

Do not attempt renunciation without preparation. Begin with Karma Yoga — live in the world, serve selflessly, purify yourself — and through that, become strong enough for true renunciation and Jñāna.

Only such a prepared seeker, who has walked the path of Karma Yoga with discipline, becomes a true muni, and quickly attains Brahman (Self-realisation).

So, Bhagavān is saying:

"Sannyāsa is difficult to attain without Yoga (discipline in action), O mighty-armed. But one who is Yoga-yukta — disciplined in Karma Yoga — and becomes a muni (a contemplative sage), quickly attains Brahman."

- **"Yoga-yuktaḥ"** means one who is engaged in Karma Yoga — performing duties selflessly, with dedication and inner discipline.
- **"Viśuddhātmā"** refers to someone whose inner being — the mind and heart — has been purified through this practice.
- **"Muniḥ"** means one who engages in manana — deep reflection. They don't just listen passively, but actively think, inquire, and seek inner clarity.

Such a person, who is both engaged in Karma Yoga and committed to inner inquiry, will **“acireṇa adhigacchati”** — attain the highest Truth, without delay.

In essence, Bhagavān is teaching us:

If you sincerely follow Karma Yoga in your daily life and engage in deep reflection (manana), you will not be far from the ultimate goal. You will attain Brahman, the highest reality, without much delay — swiftly and surely.

This verse beautifully connects right action with right reflection, and shows how the journey becomes rapid and fruitful when both are present.

5.7

**yogayukto viśuddhātmā, vijitātmā jitendriyaḥ,
sarvabhūtātmabhūtātmā, kurvannapi na lipyate. 5.7**

The Karmayogī, who has fully conquered his mind and mastered his senses, whose heart is pure, and

who has identified himself with the Self of all beings (viz., God), remains untainted, even though performing action.

Yoga-yuktaḥ - One United with Yoga

A yoga-yuktaḥ is one who lives a life of Karma Yoga — doing all actions selflessly, offering every karma to Bhagavān, without desire for personal gain.

And what is Karma Yoga?

It is action performed with samatva — even-mindedness. As Bhagavān says earlier:

“Samatvaṁ yoga ucyate” – Equanimity is called Yoga. (Gītā 2.48)

In this state of samatva, we become impartial and equal toward all — friend or foe, success or failure, praise or blame. When we act with this evenness, dedicating every thought and action to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, it becomes true Yoga.

Our body too becomes an instrument of Bhagavān — "not mine, but His."

When ego (ahaṅkāra), possessiveness (mamatva), and identification with the body fall away, this equanimity becomes natural. This is when real Yoga begins.

Viśuddhātmā - One with a Purified Mind

“Ātmā” here refers not to the pure soul, but to the mind, as seen from context. The soul is ever pure and cannot be further purified. So viśuddhātmā means the mind has become free from selfishness, raga-dveṣa (likes and dislikes), and desires. This happens through constant Karma Yoga and surrender to Bhagavān.

Vijitātmā - One Who Has Mastered the Mind

Again, “ātmā” here refers to the mind, not the soul. The soul does not need to be controlled — it is the inner controller itself. Vijitātmā means one who has brought the mind under their direction — no longer ruled by impulses or moods.

Jitendriyaḥ - One Who Has Conquered the Senses

There are ten indriyas — five jñānendriyas (organs of knowledge) and five karmendriyas (organs of action). Sometimes the mind is also counted as an indriya, making eleven (ekādaśa indriyas). Control over these senses — jñānendriyas, karmendriyas, and the mind — is essential for spiritual progress.

Sarva-bhūtātma-bhūtātmā - Seeing the Self in All Beings

This phrase describes the state of samadarśana — equal vision. Such a yogi sees the same divine essence (Paramātmā-tattva) in all beings — whether human, animal, object, or circumstance. Everything is pervaded by the same consciousness.

Kurvann api na lipyate - Acting Yet Unattached

Even while doing all actions, such a person remains untouched by them. Why?

Because he has no attachment to the results (karma-phala). He acts only as an offering to Bhagavān — for the sake of dharma, not personal gain. Therefore, no bondage of karma arises. He does not accumulate new saṁskāras (impressions), nor is he subject to rebirth.

Why Do We Get Rebirth?

Rebirth happens because:

- We act with desire (kāma),
- We seek results (karma-phala),
- These results bind us to future experiences,
- Thus, to exhaust those results, we take birth again.

But if we act only for Bhagavān, with no attachment to fruits, then:

- We perform action,
- But remain untouched,
- No karma gets accumulated,
- And we are freed from the cycle of birth and death.

True Liberation (Mokṣa) Here and Now

Mokṣa is not something that comes only after death.

Mokṣa means freedom — freedom from desire, freedom from attachments, freedom from the tyranny of mind and senses. When this happens, we live joyfully in this very world, free and at peace.

Such a person becomes:

- The happiest person on Earth,
- Beyond pleasure and pain,
- Always absorbed in the Self and in Bhagavān.

This is the true meaning of Karma Yoga, as taught in the Gītā.

5.8, 5.9

**naiva kiñcitkaromīti, yukto manyeta tattvavit,
paśyañśṛṇvansprśaṅjighran, naśnangacchansvapañśvasan. 5.8
pralapanvisṛjangṛhṇan, nunmiṣannimiṣannapi
indriyāṇindriyārtheṣu, vartanta iti dhārayan. 5.9**

However, the Sāṅkhyayogī, who knows the reality of things, must believe that he does nothing, even though seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating or drinking, walking, sleeping, breathing, speaking, answering the calls of nature, grasping, and opening or closing the eyes, holding that it is the senses alone that are moving among their objects.

A person who is established in Yoga—deeply united with Bhagavān—and who has realised the Tattva (the truth of the Self and the Supreme), understands one profound truth:

"I do not do anything."

Even while seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing, speaking, releasing, accepting, opening or closing the eyes, they know:

"It is the senses interacting with their respective objects only. I, the Self, am not the doer."

Key Ideas Explained:

1. "Naiva kiñcit karomi iti" - "I do nothing at all":

This is not arrogance or escapism. This is the vision of the Tattva-vit—one who knows the eternal Self (Ātman) and the Supreme (Paramātmān). They see themselves not as the body, not as the senses, not as the mind, but as the witness, the unattached consciousness.

2. Indriyaṇi indriyārtheṣu vartanta - "Senses engage with sense objects":

What appears as "doing" is just the interaction of the senses (like the eyes, ears, hands) with their objects (forms, sounds, tasks). It's Prakṛti, the field of nature, operating through Guṇas (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas).

- The Self is **Akartā**—the non-doer.
- The Self is **Asaṅga**—unattached.

3. Real Karma-Yoga is rooted in this wisdom:

When a person performs all actions without ego and without doership, dedicating everything to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they remain untouched by Karma—just as the lotus remains untouched by water.

Even while doing everything, they are not entangled.

This is the highest stage of Karma-Yoga, where action happens, but the actor disappears.

4. Practical Implication for Sādhakas (spiritual aspirants):

- Don't stop your actions. Instead, drop the ego behind the action.
- Recognise: "This is not me doing; this is Bhagavān's energy working through me."
- Perform every action as a sacred offering—with no attachment to results, and with the clear understanding: "I am not the doer; I am the witness."

5.10

**brahmaṇyādhāya karmāṇi, saṅgaṃ(n) tyaktvā karoti yaḥ,
lipyate na sa pāpena, padmapatramivāmbhasā. 5.10**

He who acts offering all actions to God, and shaking off attachment, remains untouched by sin, as the lotus leaf by water.

Explanation and Insight:

1. "ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि"—Dedicating all actions to Brahman:

This means offering every action — whether mundane or spiritual — to Paramātmā, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, without ego, without personal claim. You perform your duties as an instrument of the Divine, with a bhāva of surrender.

"I am not the doer — I offer everything to the Supreme."

2. "सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा"—Abandoning attachment:

This is non-attachment to the results of actions — not acting for personal gain, praise, success, or recognition. You are emotionally free from outcomes and identities that bind.

3. "करोति यः"—Yet, such a person still acts:

True renunciation is not giving up action, but giving up ego and attachment while performing action. The realized person continues to act in the world, fulfilling duties sincerely.

4. "स पापेन न लिप्यते " – Such a person is not tainted by sin:

Even if engaged in worldly activities, this person remains inwardly pure, because they are not acting

out of selfishness. They don't accumulate karma-bandhana (binding results), nor are they touched by pāpa (sin).

5. Simile: "पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा" – Like a lotus leaf in water:

This is the masterstroke of the verse — a vivid image from nature. The lotus leaf, though surrounded by water, never gets wet. Water rolls off its surface.

Similarly, a Yogī, firmly rooted in knowledge and surrender, lives amidst the world — in action, in society, in responsibilities — but remains inwardly detached and untouched by its impurities.

Essence:

If you:

- Offer your actions to Brahmān (Bhagavān),
- Renounce attachment to results,
- Fulfill your duties sincerely,
- Then, like the lotus in water,

You remain in the world, yet untouched by it.

You act, but are not bound.

You live, but are free.

5.11

**kāyena manasā buddhyā, kevalairindriyairapi,
yoginaḥ(kh) karma kurvanti, saṅgaṁ(n) tyaktvātmaśuddhaye. 5.11**

The Karmayogīs perform action only with their senses, mind, intellect and body as well, without the feeling of mine in respect of them and shaking off attachment, simply for the sake of self-purification.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa says:

“The yogīs perform karma—through body (kāyena), mind (manasā), and intellect (buddhyā), and even through the senses (kevalair indriyaiḥ)—without any attachment (saṅgaṁ tyaktvā), only for the sake of purification of the self (ātma-śuddhaye).”

This verse answers a natural question:

If yogīs dedicate all their actions to Paramātmā and renounce all desire for the fruits of action, then why do they continue to act? What purpose does karma serve for them?

Bhagavān explains that they still act—but not for personal gain.

They act:

- with the body – kāyena
- with the mind – manasā
- with the intellect – buddhyā
- and through the senses – kevalair indriyaiḥ, purely, without personal motive.

Why do they act?

Only for **ātma-śuddhi**—to purify the inner self.

They let go of all attachments—**saṅgaṁ tyaktvā**—and perform their duties as an offering to Bhagavān.

Even we, as sādhakas, can observe how often inner impurities like īrṣyā (jealousy), lobha (greed), moha (delusion), mada (pride), and matsara (envy) arise within us. Even if we don't want these feelings, they appear from within. So how do we overcome them?

By doing karma-yoga—by performing actions without attachment, with a pure intention, offering everything to the Lord.

So Bhagavān says:

yoginaḥ karma kurvanti saṅgaṁ tyaktvātmaśuddhaye -

The yogīs act without attachment, solely for the purification of their own inner being.

Lesson for Us:

Let us also try to become yogīs.

Even if we are not perfect yet, let us constantly remind ourselves:

"I am a yogī. I perform my duties not for name, fame, or results—but for self-purification. I offer every action to Bhagavān."

If we think this way, if we affirm this mindset, it starts to become our reality.

As we know from the śāstra, **"yad bhāvam tad bhavati"** – As one thinks, so one becomes.

So let this be our attitude:

"I am performing my karma for ātma-śuddhi, without attachment."

This is the spirit of a true karma-yogī.

The session concluded, and the forum was opened for questions and answers.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Subodh ji

Question: What is the difference between Karma-Yoga and Jñāna-Yoga?

Answer: In the Bhagavad Gītā, Sāṅkhya-Yoga and Jñāna-Yoga both refer to the path of knowledge leading to liberation, and are essentially used interchangeably.

P.B. Anjaneyulu ji

Question: What is the difference between Prārabdha Karma and Sañchita Karma?

Answer: Sañchita Karma is the total accumulated karma from all past lives.

Prārabdha Karma is the portion of that karma chosen for this life, which has already started giving results.

Sañchita is like a stored bank balance, while Prārabdha is what's currently being spent — already in effect and cannot be avoided.

Sanjay Panwar ji

Question: You mentioned the five Jñānendriyas (sense organs) and five Karmendriyas

(organs of action) in between — could you please explain them clearly once again?

Answer: We have five Jñānendriyas: eyes (sight), ears (hearing), nose (smell), skin (touch), and tongue (taste) — they receive knowledge from the outside.

And five Karmendriyas: hands (action), feet (movement), mouth (speech), pāyu (excretion), and upastha (reproduction) — they perform actions in the world.

The session concluded with offering heartfelt **prayers at the lotus feet of Śrī Hari**, followed by the recitation of the **Hanumān Chālīsā**.



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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