

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 18: Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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Understanding the Spirit of Surrender in Action: Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Reveals the Role of the Body, the Doer, the Senses, the Effort, and the Divine Will in Every Karma

The name of **Chapter 18** of the Bhagavad Gītā is **Mokṣha Sanyās Yoga - Yoga through the Perfection of Renunciation and Surrender**

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

**Vasudeva Sutam Devam, Kansa Chāṇūra Mardanam,
Devakī Parama Ānandam, Kṛṣṇam Vande Jagadgurum.**

**Yogeśam Saccidānandam, Vāsudeva Rājapriyam,
Dharma Saṁsthāpakam Vīram, Kṛṣṇo Vande Jagadgurum.**

Śrī Guru Caraṇa Kamalabhyo Namaḥ.

By the exceedingly auspicious grace of Bhagavān, all have been blessed with a rare and sacred fortune — the awakening of a deep inclination toward the Bhagavad Gītā. This divine opportunity sanctifies human life, guiding one toward its highest goal and ensuring the welfare of both *īha-loka* and *para-loka* — this world and the next.

Many have now begun not only to read the Bhagavad Gītā but also to learn its correct pronunciation, to recite its verses, and even to memorize them. Several have gone further — listening to its meanings through *vivechanas* and attempting to live by its teachings. Gradually, an awareness has begun to arise — how can these principles be brought into daily conduct? Such *sajagata* or inner alertness is itself a mark of divine compassion.

Perhaps these tendencies have arisen from merits (*sukṛti*) accumulated in this life or in many lives

before. Perhaps they have come through the graceful glance of some saint or great soul upon us in a forgotten birth. Whatever the cause, one thing is certain — we have been chosen by Bhagavān to engage with the Gītā.

The Gift of Satsanga and the Awakening of Viveka

It is said in the *Rāmācharitmānas*:

बड़ें भाग मानुष तनु पावा। सुर दुर्लभ सब ग्रंथन्हि गावा ॥
साधन धाम मोच्छ कर द्वारा। पाइ न जेहिं परलोक सँवारा ॥

“Great indeed is the fortune of attaining a human birth, rare even for the celestial beings,” sing all saints.

Yet even more rare than human birth is *satsanga* — association with the righteous and the wise.

बिनु सतसंग बिबेक न होई। राम कृपा बिनु सुलभ न सोई ॥

“Without **satsanga**, there can be no awakening of discrimination (**viveka**), and without the grace of Bhagavān Rāma, **satsanga** itself is not attained.”

True *viveka* cannot awaken merely through reading books or performing rituals in isolation. The presence of *satsanga* — the company of the noble, the virtuous, and the spiritually awakened — is essential. But such *sanga* too is not attained by one’s own intellect. The human mind, left to its own tendencies, often runs toward distractions — towards trivial entertainment, idle talk, or endless scrolling through worldly diversions. It is only through the unseen grace of Bhagavān that the mind finds joy in the company of the good and the holy.

Those who taste the bliss of *satsanga* or the joy of Gītā *vivechan* will surely share it with others. Yet not everyone will respond. Some may politely agree but never come. Thus, when one begins to experience genuine *rasa* — joy and attraction — in *satsanga* and in the Gītā, it is not to be taken lightly. It is Bhagavān’s special grace — **Rāma kṛpā binu sulabha na soi**.

The Assurance of Spiritual Welfare

Therefore, it must be firmly believed that Bhagavān’s grace is upon us, for without it, no one could be drawn into the study of the Gītā. Those who have been chosen to read it are indeed *kṛpā-pātra* — recipients of divine compassion. Having entered this sacred field, their spiritual welfare (*kalyāṇa*) is assured.

The saints have said: one who has once connected his heart to the Gītā can never truly fall. His downfall is impossible. Pūjya Swāmī Ji Maharaj has declared — if a person continues to read the Gītā until his final breath, his next birth will certainly be that of a human being. There is no cause for fear.

Bhagavān Himself has promised in the Gītā:

“**śucīnām śrīmatām gehe yoga-bhraṣṭo’bhijāyate.**”

“The one fallen from Yoga is born again in the house of the pure and the prosperous.”

So, one should not worry about what lies ahead. All that is required is to hold firmly to the hem (*palla*) of the Gītā — never to let go. If the love that has now begun remains till the last breath, liberation is assured.

जैसी प्रीती आरम्भ में
वैसी अन्त तक होये।

चला जाए बैकुण्ठ को
पल्ला न पकड़े कोई।

The Essence of the Eighteenth Chapter

The present reflection continues upon the eighteenth chapter — the very essence of the Gītā, which Jñāneśvar Maharaj has described as “*Ek adhyayi Gita*” The chapter opens with Arjuna’s question about the distinction between **tyāga** (renunciation) and **sannyāsa** (abandonment).

The two words appear similar but differ in their meaning. Essentially, *tyāga* pertains to two things — *padārtha* (objects) and *kriyā* (actions). One may renounce an object or an action, saying, “*I will not do this,*” or “*I will not use that.*” Yet in the Bhagavad Gītā, both *tyāga* and *sannyāsa* refer to actions, not objects.

Bhagavān does not advocate the abandonment of action itself. Rather, He teaches the renunciation of attachment to the fruit (*phala-tyāga*). One may not be able to give up the fruit, but one can give up the *desire* for the fruit (*phalecchā-tyāga*).

Misguided Comparisons of Good Deeds

In today’s world, the mind is easily influenced by misleading ideas — spread widely through various platforms. Often, such posts compare two good actions, attempting to make one appear inferior. For example, “*Would you take a sick person to the hospital or go to the temple?*” “*Would you feed a poor child or offer milk to Śiva?*”

Such comparisons mislead and weaken one’s resolve toward spiritual practice. There is no need to compare two righteous acts. Both should be performed — each in its rightful place and time. One may feed the poor with one’s own share and also offer to Śiva what belongs to Him.

But when people say, “*Why bathe or worship daily? What difference does it make to Bhagavān?*” or quote,

“मन चङ्गा तो कठौती में गङ्गा।

“*Man changā to kaṭautī meṅ Gaṅgā,*” they forget the context and depth of that statement.

The Story of Sant Ravidas and “*Man changā to kaṭautī meṅ Gaṅgā*”

Those words were spoken by the great saint Sant Ravidas — a realized soul, not an ordinary devotee. He was not merely a *sādhaka* but a *siddha*, the revered Guru of Mirabai herself.

Ravidas Ji was a *chamār* by caste — one who made and repaired footwear. One day, while he sat at his work, a man came hurriedly, requesting that his torn sandal be quickly repaired, for he was late for his *Gaṅgā-snāna*. Ravidas Ji promptly repaired it and handed it back, receiving a small coin — a *ḍhela* — as payment. He humbly requested the man, “*Brother, when you go to Gaṅgā, please offer this coin to Her, saying it is from Ravidas.*”

The man agreed, but after his bath and offerings, he remembered the coin and mockingly said, “*This is from a cobbler named Ravidas.*” As he was about to place it in the water, a hand emerged from the Gaṅgā to receive it. The man was astonished. In the next instant, the same divine hand returned from the waters, offering a golden bangle studded with jewels, saying, “*Give this to My devotee Ravidas as My gift.*”

Amazed, the man thought to himself, “*Such a jewel should not be wasted on a poor cobbler. I shall*

sell it.” But no jeweller could value it. It was beyond price, and he was advised to take it to the king.

The king, struck by its brilliance, decided to purchase it. Yet when he showed it to the queen, she said, “Why only one? Bring the pair.” The king returned, demanding the second bangle. When the man failed to produce it, he was accused of theft and threatened with death unless he brought its pair.

Terrified, he went to the Gaṅgā and prayed. The divine voice of Gaṅgā said, “Go to Ravidas; only he can help you.” Ashamed but helpless, he went and fell at Ravidas Ji’s feet, confessing everything. Ravidas Ji, the embodiment of compassion, assured him that he was not angry. The man begged him to help, saying Gaṅgā Herself had directed him.

Ravidas Ji then sat before his wooden bowl — his *kaṭautī* — and invoked the Gaṅgā with pure faith: “O Mother Gaṅgā, this man is in distress; kindly remove his suffering.” At once, from that very bowl, the divine hand of Gaṅgā emerged again, holding the matching golden bangle. Ravidas Ji handed it to the man, who returned it to the king but accepted no wealth in return.

From that day, the saying arose — “**Man changā to kaṭautī meṅ Gaṅgā.**”

But one must remember — these words apply only to one whose mind is truly pure — free from deceit, falsehood, and ill will; one who can love even those who wrong him, and who can return good for evil. Only such a heart is *man changā*.

The False Pride of Being “Self-Made”

Today, many take pride in saying, “I am self-made.” Pūjya Swāmī Ji often admonishes this expression. No one is truly self-made. Every life is shaped by the unseen kindness and help of countless others — teachers, parents, friends, well-wishers — many of whom never expected anything in return.

True humanity lies in *kṛtajñatā* — gratitude. To forget those who have helped us is to lose our very humanness. Those whose hearts remain grateful stay humble, and humility keeps the mind pure.

The Three Types of Renunciation

Bhagavān teaches that while *niṣiddha* (forbidden) and *kāmya* (desire-driven) actions must indeed be renounced, *niyata karma* (prescribed duty) should never be abandoned. Many say, “We will bathe mentally, worship mentally.” But such *manasika* acts are valid only for one who can also sustain himself on *manasika bhojana* — mental food!

One must never forsake one’s prescribed duties. Bhagavān declares:

**“Niyatasyāstu sannyāsaḥ karmoparataḥ,
moha-tas parityāgaḥ tāmasaḥ parikīrtitaḥ.”** (18.7)

One who abandons *niyata karma* out of delusion (*moha*) — saying “I will not bathe, I will not worship, I will not obey my parents, I will not perform my vow” — commits *tāmasa tyāga*.

Interestingly, in all other contexts of the Gītā, when Bhagavān speaks of the three *guṇas*, He lists *sāttvika*, *rājasa*, and *tāmasa* in that order. But here, while describing *tyāga*, He begins with *tāmasa*. Saints have reflected deeply upon this.

When it comes to *grahaṇa* — receiving — one must begin with *sattva*; but when it comes to *tyāga* — giving up — one must begin with *tamas*. The first renunciation to be made is that of *tamas* — lethargy, delusion, and ignorance.

**duḥkhamityeva yatkarma, kāyakleśabhayāttyajet,
sa kṛtvā rājasam(n) tyāgaṃ(n), naiva tyāgaphalam(m) labhet. 18.8**

Should anyone give up his duties for fear of physical strain, thinking that all actions are verily painful—practising such Rājasika form of renunciation, he does not reap the fruit of renunciation.

Bhagavān explains that when a person abandons his duties merely out of fear of physical discomfort—believing that all action is nothing but sorrow—such renunciation is **rājasa tyāga**, a renunciation born of passion, and it yields no true fruit.

Earlier, it was mentioned that one type of *tyāga*, or renunciation, arises from ignorance—when a person of deluded understanding (*mūḍha buddhi*) gives up his prescribed duties altogether. The second kind, described here, is *rājasa tyāga*, which stems from selfishness and the desire to avoid hardship.

Bhagavān uses a very apt term—**kāya-kleśa-bhayāt tyajet**—to describe those who forsake action due to fear of bodily discomfort. Out of reluctance to trouble the body, they renounce their duties. This tendency, rooted in *rājoguṇa*, becomes an obstacle to spiritual growth.

Even after years of practice—reciting *japa*, observing disciplines, and performing *pūjā*—such individuals make little spiritual progress, for they continue to protect the body from every strain. The one who constantly avoids *kāya-kleśa*—who refuses to bear any inconvenience to the body—cannot advance on the spiritual path. As long as there is attachment (*mamatā*) to the body, detachment from it can never arise.

An illustrative example is often recalled from the life of Professor Shiv Narayan Gandhi of Prayāg University. Though not related to Mahatma Gandhi, he was deeply devoted to him and had adopted his ideals. He was a remarkable teacher—if ever a student lied, he would strike himself with a stick rather than punish the student. He had also undertaken the *asvāda-vrata*—the vow of tastelessness—following Gandhi’s principle: never to eat again what pleased the tongue once.

There is an incident involving the British journalist Louis Fischer, who had come from America to interview Gandhi in Wardha. His intent was not pure—he wished to expose Gandhi, as his journalism often aimed to uncover the weaknesses of public figures. During their conversation, it was time for the midday meal. Manu Behn informed Gandhi that lunch was ready. When Fischer asked where Gandhi would dine, she replied, “*Here itself.*” Fischer insisted on joining him, saying, “*Then I too will eat here.*” Gandhi agreed pleasantly, and two plates were brought—one for him, one for the guest.

However, Fischer noticed that the items on Gandhi’s plate differed from his own. Annoyed, he protested, “*I have dined with presidents and prime ministers, but I have never experienced such discrimination—where the host and the guest are served different food. This is unacceptable.*”

Manu Behn, who was present, gently explained, “*It is not discrimination, but consideration. What Bapu eats, you would not enjoy.*” Fischer retorted, “*How can you know what I would like or dislike? I insist on eating exactly what Mr. Gandhi is eating.*” After much persistence, Gandhi smiled and said, “*Alright, please serve Mr. Fischer the same food.*”

Soon, Fischer’s plate was replaced with the same items that lay before Gandhi. Gandhi took a piece of dry millet bread (*bājre kī roṭī*), dipped it into a bitter neem chutney—without salt—and began to eat it

cheerfully. Fischer followed suit. But the moment he tasted it, tears welled up in his eyes. Manu Behn softly said, “I told you—you will not like it. It is very bitter.” Fischer replied, “I am not crying because it is bitter. I am crying because I cannot believe that the man about whom the whole world speaks eats such food.”

That was Gandhi’s regular meal—dry millet bread and neem chutney without even a grain of salt. Imagine how bitter it must have been! Yet he had taken a vow of *asvāda*—to restrain the senses and discipline the body.

Such *tapas*, such austerity, prepared him for the supreme remembrance of Bhagavān. When the bullet struck him, and the word “Rām” arose from his lips, it was not accidental. That sacred utterance emerged from a lifetime of spiritual practice and self-restraint.

It is said:

जन्म जन्म मुनि जतनु कराहीं। अंत राम कहि आवत नाही॥
janma janma muni jatan karā, anta Rām kahi āvat nāhī.

Even after countless births of effort, sages find it difficult to utter the Divine Name at the final moment. Gandhi could do so because of lifelong *sāadhanā* and restraint.

Therefore, one must cultivate *titikṣā*—the virtue of endurance—described by Ādi Śaṅkarācārya as part of the *ṣaṭ-sampatti*, the sixfold wealth of spiritual discipline. *Titikṣā* means forbearance amidst heat and cold, hunger and thirst, pleasure and pain, favourable and unfavourable conditions.

Modern comfort has made people fragile. If electricity fails for a few minutes, impatience arises immediately. The mind revolts even at small discomforts. But one should sometimes practice endurance deliberately—turn off the fan or air-conditioner for a while, even when power is available; refrain from eating a favourite dish even when it is served; skip tea or sweets occasionally. By such small acts of self-restraint, the body learns to bear discomfort, and attachment to it gradually loosens.

If the body is always pampered—given every comfort and luxury—its attachment only deepens, and so does attachment to the world. Where there is *mamatā* for the body, there can be no experience of Bhagavān.

Renunciation (*tyāga*) must therefore not be of the action itself, but of attachment to its results. The fruits of action cannot be avoided—a seed sown will inevitably sprout, an examination attempted will yield marks. What must be renounced is not the result, but the desire for it—the *phala-buddhi tyāga*. Only such wise renunciation leads to liberation.

18.9

**kāryamityeva yat karma, niyataṃ(ñ) kriyate’rjuna
saṅgaṃ(n) tyaktvā phalaṃ(ñ) caiva, sa tyāgaḥ(s) sāttviko mataḥ. 18.9**

A prescribed duty which is performed simply because it has to be performed, giving up attachment and fruit, that alone has been recognized as the Sāttvika form of renunciation.

Bhagavān explains that the performance of prescribed duties with the attitude of “**kāryam iti eva**”—“*this is my duty*”—while renouncing attachment and the desire for results, constitutes *sāttvika tyāga*, or renunciation in the mode of goodness.

The essence of this teaching is that no action itself is to be renounced, nor any object of the world. One must continue to perform all *niyata karma*—duties enjoined by the scriptures—but without attachment (*saṅga tyaktvā*) and without expectation of fruit (*phala tyāga*).

The tendency to ask, “*What will I gain by doing this?*” remains only until one has not tasted the joy of the action itself. Once the inner delight of *karma* awakens, the question of reward loses meaning.

When one chants *bhajans*, must one always think, “*What will I get from this?*” Isn't the joy of *bhajan* itself enough? When one studies the *Gītā*, must one still wonder, “*What benefit will it bring?*” The very act of studying, the bliss that arises while listening or reading, is itself the reward.

In the **Mahābhārata**, there is a beautiful dialogue between Yudhiṣṭhira and Draupadī. Draupadī once asked a question: “*What will happen if I do this?*” Yudhiṣṭhira replied, “*Dharma is not to be practiced for the sake of pleasure or to escape sorrow. It is to be practiced because it is Dharma. To question what will or will not happen as a result is the vision of the timid, of the self-centered. One must act simply because it is right to act.*”

The true joy lies in the act of duty itself—the quiet satisfaction it brings to the heart. When one reads the *Gītā*, there is joy in that very act. Yet people often think, “*By studying the Gītā, I will earn merit; I will attain heaven.*” But the joy one feels in studying the *Gītā*—is that joy not enough?

Similarly, while singing *kīrtan* or engaging in service (*seva*), there is an immediate sense of happiness. But instead of relishing that joy, the mind clings to the idea of results—*punya* or praise. Bhagavān teaches *saṅgaṃ tyaktvā*—“*do not cling.*”

Even in noble work, one must remain unattached. Perform every duty with naturalness (*sahajatā*). Let it be so that Bhagavān gets it done through you. If it happens—wonderful; if it doesn't—wonderful still.

Attachment to roles or identities, even in service, can quietly bind the seeker. For instance, one may think, “*I am always a trainer,*” or “*I will always remain in this position.*” But these too should change with time. Even in spiritual institutions, attachment to the role or title can entangle the mind.

Once, someone asked a revered teacher, “*How can we distinguish between a **sāttvika** and a **rājasa** action? They often appear the same.*” The teacher gave a profound answer: “*After performing an auspicious deed or an act of service, if your heart feels joy, peace, and contentment, it is **sāttvika**. If instead you feel restlessness, tension, or dissatisfaction, it is **rājasa**.*”

Both kinds of people—those with *rājasic* and *sāttvika* tendencies—engage in service. But in *rājasic* service, there is strain and agitation at the beginning. One worries excessively about results, becomes anxious if things don't go as planned, and feels inner turmoil. This is the mark of *rājasa*.

On the other hand, when service becomes effortless—when one serves naturally, without pride or attachment—that is *sāttvika*. Even while serving an institution or community, the focus should not be on oneself or one's name, but on the greater good—on Bhagavān's work manifesting through the collective.

For instance, one might distribute blankets to the needy during winter. It may begin with pure inspiration, but when praise follows, the ego begins to cling—“*I will do this every winter; I must continue.*” Yet such insistence itself becomes attachment.

True *tyāga* lies not in giving up action, but in giving up attachment—to the act, to its fruit, and to one’s role in it. Bhagavān therefore tells Arjuna—perform your *kartavya karma* with steadfastness, joy, and freedom from attachment. That alone is *sāttvika tyāga*.

18.10

na dvestyakuśalaṃ(ñ) karma, kuśale nānuṣajjate, tyāgī sattvasamāviṣṭo, medhāvī chinnaśayaḥ. 18.10

He who has neither aversion for action which is leading to bondage (□□□□□) nor attachment to that which is conducive to blessedness (□□□□□)- imbued with the quality of goodness, he has all his doubts resolved, is intelligent and a man of true renunciation.

Bhagavān describes here the true nature of a *tyāgī*, one who has attained inner clarity and the light of *sattva*. Such a person neither dislikes *akuśala karma* (actions that appear unpleasant or inauspicious) nor clings to *kuśala karma* (actions that seem noble and virtuous). He remains free from attachment in both cases, established in wisdom and purity.

This is a most significant teaching—rare and unique, found only in the Bhagavad Gītā. A person established in this wisdom does not reject a seemingly unpleasant action, nor does he become bound by pleasant ones. The essence is: when a particular action is one’s *kartavya*—one’s duty—it must be done, irrespective of whether it appears *kuśala* or *akuśala*.

For example, touching blood is considered impure, an *akuśala karma*. Yet, when someone is injured on the road and needs help, carrying that person to the hospital—even if one’s hands and clothes become stained with blood—is the right action. Refusing to help in the name of purity is not *sāttvika*; it is a mere pretence of *sattva*. A truly *sāttvika tyāgī* will not hate even an *akuśala karma* if it is a duty, nor will he cling to a *kuśala karma* merely because it seems pleasant or praiseworthy.

This principle is subtle and profound. Ordinary people are not the subject here; even good and noble individuals often become attached to *kuśala karma* and reject *akuśala karma*. Bhagavān says such aversion and attachment are both errors. “**Na dvesti akuśalaṃ karma**”—do not hate unpleasant action. “**Kuśale nānuṣajjate**”—do not be attached to pleasant action.

When one’s *kartavya* requires it, even seemingly *akuśala karma* must be performed. King Harishchandra, in upholding *dharma*, sold his wife and son. Was that not *akuśala karma*? Yet it was his *kartavya*. Similarly, Bhagavān Śrī Rāma renounced Sītā Jī, the very one for whom He had crossed the vast ocean to Lanka. Was that not *akuśala karma*? Yet, there was no attachment to what was *kuśala*, nor aversion to what was *akuśala*. The key lies in performing one’s duty without being bound by personal preference or aversion.

Such clarity is possible only when *viveka*—discriminative wisdom—has awakened. Bhagavān says, such a person is **medhāvī chinnaśayaḥ**—a wise one, free from doubts. When the light of *sattva* dawns within, all confusion disappears. Everything becomes crystal clear—what is right, what is wrong, what must be done.

The *sāttvika tyāgī* is never confused. Just as one instantly knows two plus two is four without calculation, so too the wise one naturally knows what must be done, without inner debate. When *sattva* is fully illumined, the intellect (*medhā*) shines with such clarity that all actions are guided effortlessly by righteousness.

Bhagavān Śrī Rāma's life exemplifies this state. He never paused to deliberate between right and wrong—His every act flowed from divine clarity. When Ahalyā sat turned to stone, Bhagavān did not think, "Should I touch her or not?" He simply touched her, and she was redeemed. When the time came to strike down Mārīcha, Rāvaṇa, or any of the *asuras*, He did not need analysis; His *medhā* was naturally aligned with *dharma*.

Such is the nature of the *tyāgī*—one who performs his *kartavya karma* without attachment or aversion.

The life of Hanumān Ji stands as the most radiant example of this principle. Throughout his life, Hanumān Ji never stepped back from duty, nor was He ever bound by its fruits. During the mission to cross the ocean to Lanka, a hundred valiant *vānaras* gathered on the seashore. All were mighty—Jāmbavān, Aṅgada, Nala, Nīla, Mainda—but Hanumān Ji, the youngest in rank, sat silently in a corner. For hours the assembly discussed who could cross. Each spoke of his own strength. Only when Jāmbavān Ji addressed Hanumān did He rise humbly and act.

का चुप साधि रहेहु बलवाना।

पवन तनय बल पवन समाना।

Hanumān Ji said nothing until asked. The moment His *guru* Jāmbavān Ji reminded Him of His true power, He expanded into His divine form—

"कनक भूधराकार सरीरा।

समर भयंकर अतिबल बीरा।।"

Kanaka bhūdhara kāya sharīra,

sumira bhayankara ati balavīra.

With one leap, He crossed the ocean, accomplished the task, and returned victorious. Yet upon His return, He did not rush to Bhagavān Rāma. He went first to Sugrīva, acknowledging the hierarchy and his role as Sugrīva's subordinate. Even after performing the greatest deeds—finding Sītā Jī, burning Lanka, carrying Sanjīvani—Hanumān Ji never once said "I did this." He never attached Himself to His actions or their results.

This is the true *tyāgī*—one who performs every *kartavya* selflessly, asking only one question: *Will this please Bhagavān?* If it pleases Bhagavān, it must be done; if not, it must be left undone.

Hanumān Ji, Bhagavān Rāma, and Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa—all lived lives of perfect clarity and simplicity, untouched by confusion. Even in the midst of the gravest challenges, they remained *sahaja*—utterly natural and serene.

When Indrajit bound Hanumān Ji with the Brahmāstra, Hanumān Ji could have easily freed Himself.

Yet He thought,

जौ न ब्रह्मसर मानउँ महिमा मिटइ अपार ॥

"Jo na brahma-sar māno mahimā miṭai apār"—if I do not honour this Brahmāstra, its sanctity will be diminished. Thus, He allowed Himself to be bound and taken. Even when the children of Lanka mocked and threw stones at Him, He remained calm and unshaken. Such is the serenity of the *tyāgī*.

True *sattva* expresses itself as *sahajata*—naturalness. It is the effortless equanimity that arises when the mind is pure and free. To remain unagitated in any circumstance, to perform one's duty without attachment or aversion—that is the essence of *tyāga*.

Kabīr Dās Ji beautifully expresses this state in his bhajan:

साधो सहज समाधि भली

साईं ते मिलन भयो जा दिन ते सुरत न अंत चली

आँख न मूँदूँ कान न रूँधूँ काया कष्ट न धारूँ
खुले नैन में हैस-हैस देखूँ सुंदर रूप निहारूँ ॥1॥ साधो

कहूँ सो नाम, सुनूँ सो सुमिरन, जो कुछ करूँ सो पूजा
गृह उद्यान एक सम देखूँ भाव मिटाऊँ दूजा ॥2॥ साधो

जहाँ-जहाँ जाऊँ सोई परिक्रमा जो कुछ करूँ सो सेवा
जब सोऊँ तब करूँ दण्डवत, पूजूँ और न देवा ॥3॥ साधो

शब्द निरंतर मनुआ राता, मलिन वचन का त्यागी
बैठत-उठत कबहूँ न बिसरे, ऐसी तारी लागी ॥4॥ साधो

कहे 'कबीर' यह उनमुनि रहनी सो परगट कर गाई
सुख-दुख के इक परे परम सुख, तेहि में रहा समाई ॥5॥ साधो



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**“Sādho sahaja samādhi bhali re,
sāhitya milana bhayo jadin te, sūrat na ant chali.
Sādho sahaja samādhi bhali.”**

Kabīr says, “For me, samādhi no longer requires effort. I do not need to close my eyes to see Bhagavān. **Khule naina main hans hans dekhūñ sundar rūpa nihāru**—With open eyes I behold His beautiful form everywhere.”

He continues,

**“Kahu so nāma sunu so sumiran,
jo kuchu karu so pūjā.”**

—Whatever I speak becomes His Name; whatever I hear becomes remembrance of Him; whatever I do becomes worship.

This is *sahaja samādhi*—the spontaneous state of union where one lives in constant remembrance.

Lālā Jī Mahārāj, a saintly soul among the Sūfīs, also embodied this simplicity. His *guru* once spoke of *unmuni rahani*—a state where one transcends even the urge to sleep, eat, or speak. It is the serene absorption where the heart remains awake while the world fades away. Once, when Lālā Jī and a fellow disciple reached their Guru’s abode after a storm, they saw him sitting motionless, half in *samādhi*. Lālā Jī quietly turned away, saying, “We shall not disturb him today.”

The next week, when they returned, the Guru embraced him, saying, “Lālā, you understood. That day I was absorbed in the Divine. Had you approached, that thread would have broken.” Such is *unmuni rahani*—the inward stillness born of *sahajata*.

Kabīr Dās Ji again says:

**“Kahē Kabīr yeh unmuni rahani,
sukh-dukh ke ek pare,
param-sukh teh meñ rahā samāi.”**

When one becomes natural and simple, untouched by pleasure and pain, absorbed in the supreme joy—that is *sahaja samādhi*.

Thus, the *tyāgī* described in Verse 18.10 lives in this state of clarity, simplicity, and balance—never averse to *akuśala karma*, never attached to *kuśala karma*, ever established in the serene light of *sattva*.

18.11

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

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

Bhagavān further explains that as long as one lives in the body, it is not possible to renounce all action entirely. One may renounce the fruits of action, but not action itself. The true *tyāgī* performs his duties selflessly, without expectation of reward.

Even the most enlightened beings—Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Bhagavān Rāma, Hanumān Ji—continued to act tirelessly for the welfare of the world. What distinguishes them is not the absence of action, but the absence of ego and attachment within action.

Therefore, *karma-phala-tyāga*—renouncing the desire for results—is the true spirit of renunciation. This marks the culmination of *sāttvika tyāga*, where every action becomes a pure offering, free from self-interest.

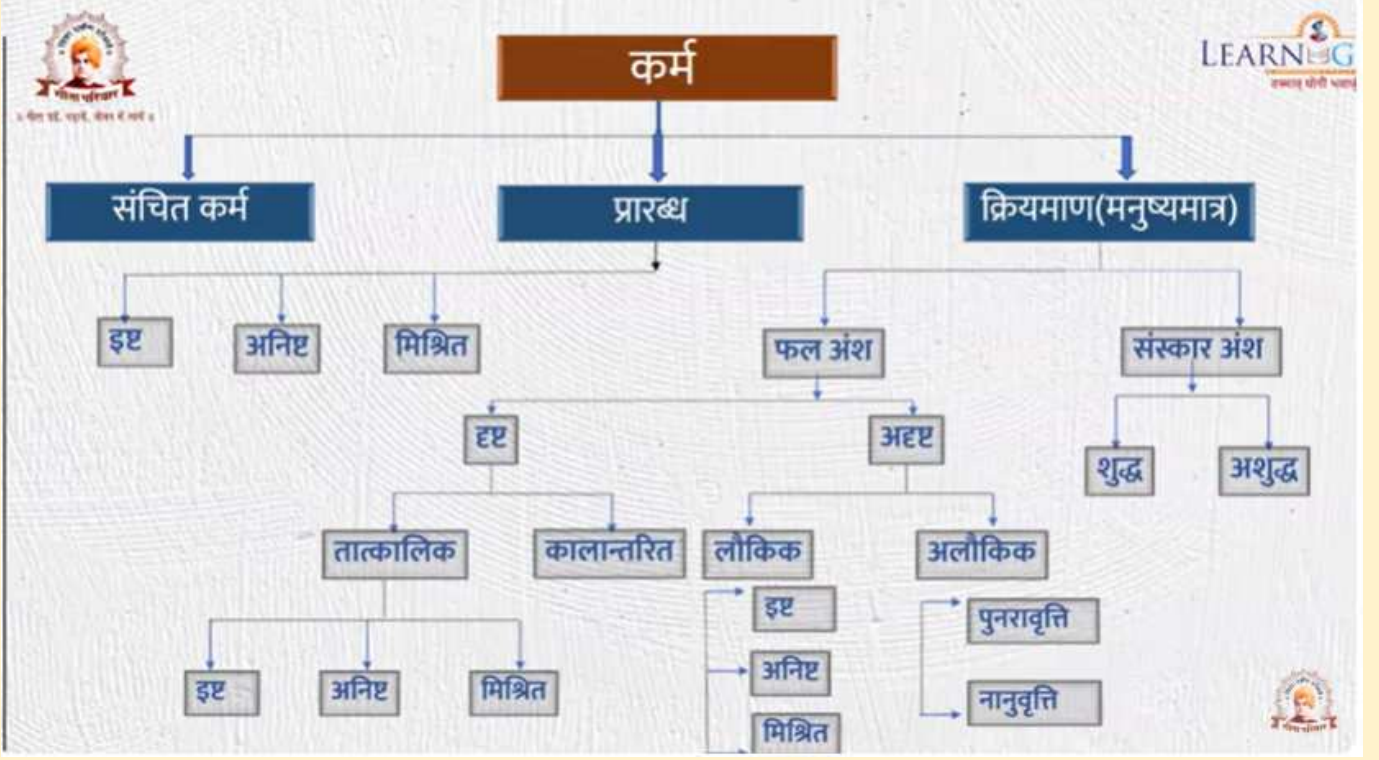
18.12

**aniṣṭamiṣṭaṃ(m) miśraṃ(ñ) ca, trividhaṃ(ñ) karmaṇaḥ(ph) phalam,
bhavatyatyāgināṃ(m) pretya, na tu sannyāsināṃ(ñ) kvacit. 18.12**

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

Bhagavān explains to Arjuna that those who do not renounce the fruits of their actions inevitably experience three types of results—*aniṣṭa*, *iṣṭa*, and *miśra*—after death. But those who give up attachment to the results of their actions remain untouched by any of these outcomes.

To understand this, one must first comprehend the structure of *karma* and its *phala* (fruits). Every action yields three kinds of results: *sañcita phala*, *prārabdha phala*, and *kriyāmāṇa phala*.



Sañcita phala refers to the accumulated results of actions performed over countless lifetimes—both merits (*puṇya*) and demerits (*pāpa*). It is like a collection of fixed deposits one has made in a bank—some for two years, some for five, some for ten. Together, they form the total account of one’s deeds.

Prārabdha phala is that portion of the accumulated karma which manifests in the present birth.

Kriyāmāṇa phala is the result of the actions being performed in this very life—new merits or demerits that are being created now.

Only human beings can perform *kriyāmāṇa karma*. Among the eighty-four lakh species, it is only the human birth that provides this privilege. All other beings—be they animals, birds, or celestial entities—merely exhaust their *sañcita* and *prārabdha karmas*. They cannot create new ones. Humans, however, experience past results while simultaneously generating new karmas.

Now, *prārabdha karma* bears three types of results: *iṣṭa*, *aniṣṭa*, and *miśra*.

Iṣṭa means the desirable or pleasant results—such as wealth, family, a comfortable home, good health, or success.

Aniṣṭa refers to the undesirable ones—failure, illness, loss, or disappointment.

Miśra is a blend of both—pleasant and unpleasant together. For example, one may get married, which seems auspicious, but the spouse may turn out to be quarrelsome or addicted to vices—thus making it *miśra phala*.

Then comes *kriyāmāṇa phala*—the outcome of present actions. This has two aspects: **phala-aṃśa** (the result portion) and **saṃskāra-aṃśa** (the impression portion).

Even a child’s inclination towards certain activities reveals the *saṃskāra-aṃśa* from past deeds. Some children love listening to Gītā discourses from a young age, while others prefer playing games. Each action imprints *saṃskāras* on the mind, forming habits and tendencies.

The *phala-aṃśa* itself has two forms: **dr̥ṣṭa** (visible) and **adr̥ṣṭa** (invisible).

- **Dr̥ṣṭa phala** is immediately seen. For instance, when one drinks a glass of glucose, instant energy is felt.
- **Adr̥ṣṭa phala** is unseen but certain. Good deeds never go in vain, even if the results are delayed. Bhagavān’s justice is silent but unfailing—“Bhagavān kī lāṭhī meṃ āvāz nahīm hotī.”

The *dr̥ṣṭa phala* may be **tāt-kālik** (immediate) or **kāl-āntarī** (delayed). Drinking juice yields instant energy, but consuming ghee or milk strengthens the body gradually over years. Similarly, yoga and exercise may not show immediate benefits, but they ensure good health later in life. Conversely, vices such as smoking may seem harmless at first but cause grave harm over time.

The *adr̥ṣṭa phala* is of two kinds—**laukika** and **alaukika**.

- The *laukika* (worldly) results again fall under *iṣṭa*, *aniṣṭa*, and *miśra*.
- The *alaukika* (otherworldly) results either lead the soul towards rebirth or liberate it from the endless cycle of **punarapi jananam punarapi maraṇam punarapi janani jāthare śayanam**.

As for the *saṃskāra-aṃśa*, it can be of two types—**śuddha saṃskāra** (pure impression) and **anuradha saṃskāra** (impure impression).

To illustrate this, an incident is remembered. A revered father, who was both a *Bhāgavata kathākār* and a learned *paṇḍit*, was once approached by a man seeking to conduct his son’s marriage ceremony within two hours, offering double the usual *dakṣiṇā*. The *paṇḍit* calmly refused, saying, “*This cannot be done.*” When asked why he would not accept double payment for lesser time, he explained, “*Performing a ritual hastily may not harm me materially, but it will corrupt my saṃskāra. Once I begin to compromise, that habit will form. I cannot allow my purity of conduct to diminish for the sake of money.*”

Every action thus leaves an imprint within us. A child who daily bows to his father develops such refined *saṃskāras* that he will never be able to raise his voice against him. Even if anger arises, the *saṃskāra* of reverence restrains him.

Hence, Bhagavān declares that those who do not renounce the fruits of actions are bound to experience *iṣṭa*, *aniṣṭa*, and *miśra phala*. But those who perform their duties without attachment to results—*karma-phala-tyāgīs*—are freed from all consequences.

The lives of Rāja Hariścandra, Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhagavān Rāma, and Bhagavān Śrī Krishna exemplify this truth. Their lives were filled with challenges, adversities, and mixed results. From birth to death, they faced innumerable trials—yet never strayed from righteousness. Their purity of *saṃskāras* remained untainted, guiding every decision. They never chose a wrong path, not even once. And that unwavering integrity is what made them immortal in the hearts of generations.

A beautiful illustration conveys this principle. A Guru wished to choose between two disciples to

succeed him. He gave each three rupees and said, “Spend one rupee in a way that benefits here (ih), one rupee that benefits there (par), and one rupee in a way that benefits neither here nor there. Do not ask any questions; return after an hour.”

The first disciple ate food worth one rupee, donated one rupee for charity, and brought one rupee back. He explained that the rupee spent on himself was “neither here nor there,” the one donated was “for there,” and the one returned was “for here.”

The second disciple did the same initially—ate for one rupee, donated one rupee—but threw the third rupee into the river. When asked to explain, he said, “The rupee I spent on food was for here, the donation was for there, and the one I cast into the river was for neither here nor there.” The Guru blessed him with the seat of succession.

The difference lay in understanding. The first interpreted “here” as the Guru’s āśrama, while the second understood “here” as human life itself. The subtlety of perception made all the difference.

Bhagavān’s teaching, thus, unfolds with depth—*karma* must never be abandoned, but attachment to *karma-phala* must. The one who renounces the fruits while performing duties with purity and detachment becomes truly liberated.

18.13

pañcāitāni mahābāho, kāraṇāni nibodha me, sāṅkhyae kṛtānte proktāni, siddhaye sarvākarmaṇām. 18.13

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

Bhagavān Śrī Krishna begins by revealing a profound insight into the working of all actions. He says that for the accomplishment of any karma, there are five essential causes. This sacred principle, He declares, has been explained in the science of Sāṅkhya, which teaches the path to liberation through wisdom and detachment.

pañcāitāni mahābāho, kāraṇāni nibodha me, sāṅkhyae kṛtānte proktāni, siddhaye sarva-karmaṇām. (18.13)

“O mighty-armed one,” Bhagavān says, “know from Me these five causes for the accomplishment of all actions.”

He then elaborates upon these five factors:

18.14

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

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

“The body or base of action (adhiṣṭhāna), the doer (kartā), the various instruments (karaṇa), the

diverse efforts (ceṣṭā), and the divine element (daiva) — these are the five causes of every accomplished act.”

At first glance, these verses might seem simple. Yet, they encapsulate one of the deepest insights of the Gītā. Bhagavān unfolds a divine science of karma — a formula that applies equally to worldly life and spiritual pursuit. Whether one is engaged in business, study, household life, or sādhanā, these five factors are indispensable. If even one is missing, the action remains incomplete and its success uncertain.

The first factor is **adhiṣṭhāna** — the foundation or purpose of action. Before beginning any task, one must be clear about the goal. What is the purpose behind what we are doing? Most people, Bhagavān implies, simply live by imitation — studying because others study, marrying because others marry, building homes because others do so, running businesses because their families did. Life goes on in imitation, without introspection. But without clarity of purpose, success in any karma is impossible. One may perform the external act, but the true accomplishment — the inner fulfillment — will remain absent.

The second factor is **kartā**, the doer. Every action requires an agent — someone to take responsibility for its performance. Even if the purpose is noble and the vision is clear, without someone to execute it, the plan remains only a thought. For instance, if there is a great initiative to spread the message of the Gītā across the world, it needs devoted individuals to carry it forward. Without such kartās, the work cannot be accomplished.

The third is **karaṇa**, the instruments or means. Purpose and doer alone do not ensure success. One must also have the proper resources — the tools, materials, and facilities needed for execution. A merchant cannot run a shop without capital. A student cannot pursue a profession without education or training. A household cannot function without the necessary provisions. Even for spiritual practice, one needs the means — scriptures, a peaceful environment, and guidance. Without the appropriate karaṇas, actions remain incomplete.

The fourth is **ceṣṭā**, the effort or endeavor. One may have purpose, person, and tools, but without sincere effort, nothing fructifies. A shopkeeper who opens his store at noon instead of morning, an employee who takes frequent leaves, or a couple who marries but refuses to cultivate harmony — none will find success. Consistent, devoted effort is the pulse of karma. Even in the spiritual field, one who desires to become a Gitāvṛtta must attend classes, practice regularly, and make genuine effort. A few minutes of distracted reading will not bring mastery. It is only through disciplined and heartfelt ceṣṭā that progress becomes possible.

Finally comes **daiva**, the unseen divine element — destiny, providence, or prārabdha. Sometimes, even after perfect preparation and effort, unforeseen circumstances intervene. A businessman may lose his goods in an unforeseen event; an aspirant may face obstacles beyond control. Prārabdha plays its role. Yet, saints teach that even destiny can be softened or overcome by sincere effort. When prārabdha obstructs, ceṣṭā can compensate. Just as Sāvitrī, through her unwavering determination, brought back the life of Satyavān, so too can resolute effort transform destiny.

Thus, these five — **adhiṣṭhāna, kartā, karaṇa, ceṣṭā, and daiva** — are the essential causes behind every karma. Without their harmonious union, no action can reach completion.

Bhagavān’s message is timeless: in every field of life — worldly or spiritual — purpose must be clear, the doer dedicated, the means sufficient, the effort sincere, and the grace of destiny acknowledged. Together, they bring success; in their absence, even great endeavors falter.

As the session concluded, devotees joined together in *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, chanting “*Hari śaraṇam, Hari śaraṇam...*” in deep reverence and joy.

It happened to be **Devotthāna Ekādaśī** — the sacred day marking the awakening of the devas after their divine slumber. On this auspicious occasion, contemplation on the eighteenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā became all the more sanctified.

The reflection ended with heartfelt greetings to all seekers and a gentle reminder of the upcoming **Gītā Jayanti Mahotsava**, to be celebrated from 15th November to 31st December, with online Gītā Parāyaṇa and Olympiad. All were invited to participate joyfully and register at jayanti.gita.com, making the celebration a collective offering at the feet of Bhagavān.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Arun Ji

Q: You mentioned that *niyata karmas* (prescribed duties) should neither be abandoned nor clung to. How can both be done at the same time?

A: For example, I may have a strict routine of daily *pūjā* at 9 a.m. But suppose I am on my way and witness an accident. I will immediately set aside my routine and help the injured person reach the hospital, performing my *pūjā* later, without any inner disturbance or regret that my usual time was delayed. That absence of agitation is what it means not to be attached to *karma*.

If a higher or more urgent duty arises, one should be able to naturally prioritize it over the lesser one, without inner conflict. Those who are extremely rigid with their rules often suffer mental unrest when circumstances compel them to deviate from their fixed routine. But true discipline includes this effortless adaptability.

Q: What exactly is *sat-saṅga*? How does one find it? And are these Vivechan sessions a form of *sat-saṅga*?

A: Indeed, this is *sat-saṅga*. Your Gītā class is *sat-saṅga*. Whenever people gather together with a pure intent to cultivate *sāttvika* qualities, that is *sat-saṅga*. Wherever discussions of Bhagavān take place, that is *sat-saṅga*. Wherever people come together to uplift their lives and turn their focus from the world toward the Divine, that too is *sat-saṅga*.

Among all such gatherings, your Gītā classes are a wonderful example — where 40 or 50 people including trainers, TCs, and GCs sit together with noble, *sāttvika* feelings. Merely being among such people enhances one’s own *sāttvika* tendencies. One can feel how their purity rises simply by joining these classes and listening to the Vivechans.

Durga Ji

Q: Is *Jñāneśvarī* a commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā? Is the meaning the same?

A: Yes. *Jñāneśvarī* is the Marathi commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā written by Jñāneśvar Mahārāj. The original 700 shlokas were expanded into about 10,000 *ovīs* (Marathi poetic verses). The Hindi translation published by Pūjā Prakāśan is based on these *ovīs*. I have personally seen the concise *Jñāneśvarī* published by Pūjya Swāmījī, and it appears authentic. However, the accuracy of the full Hindi version can best be verified by someone well-versed in both Marathi and Hindi.

Q: You earlier mentioned five factors responsible for the accomplishment of any *karma*. The first, *adhiṣṭhāna*, you said, refers to purpose. But isn’t purpose the same as desire for the fruit (*phala icchā*)?

A: No, purpose and fruit-desire are entirely different. *Adhiṣṭhāna* means the reason — “Why am I doing this?” Whereas *phala icchā* means “What will I get out of it?”

For example, if I take a patient to the hospital because I want the patient to recover — that is my

adhiṣṭhāna, the purpose of my action. But if I think, “He will appreciate me for this,” that is *phala icchā*, desire for recognition or reward. The two are distinct. Purpose concerns duty and intention; *phala icchā* concerns expectation and outcome.

Shreeram Ji

Q: On the cover page of Gītā book, there is a picture of Bhagavān Krishna with a tortoise near Him. What does the tortoise symbolize?

A: That image refers to a teaching from the sixth chapter — *kūrmaṅgāni sarvaśaḥ*. Bhagavān advises the *sādhaka* to withdraw his senses like a tortoise drawing its limbs within its shell. The tortoise extends its limbs only when necessary and retracts them otherwise. Similarly, a *sādhaka* should not allow his senses to wander indiscriminately — he must restrain them, discerning where to go, what to see, what to touch, and what to consume. Thus, the tortoise in the picture is a symbol of sense-control and self-discipline.

Q: What does *karma-siddhi* mean?

A: *Karma-siddhi* means the successful completion or fulfillment of an action — when a *karma* achieves the very purpose for which it was undertaken. In other words, when an act becomes meaningful and its objective is realized, it is said to have attained *karma-siddhi*.

Rajnish Ji

Q: My question is related to *phala icchā* (desire for fruits). During *pūjā* or *yajña*, one of the components is *prārthanā* (prayer). Many mantras include requests — for example, “śraddhā, medhā, yaśā, prajñā, vidyā, puṣṭi dehi.” Since we are asking for something, doesn’t that make it *phala icchā*?

A: In *yajña* and *devatā-upāsanā*, *phala icchā* has been accepted as part of the *vidhāna* itself. It is not condemned but is considered *rājasa* in nature — binding to the world of results.

However, when one’s aspiration shifts from worldly gain to divine attainment, the same mantras take on a higher meaning. For instance, when the priest chants, “āyusya, vidyā, yaśo, balam,” one may inwardly pray, “bhakti dehi, bhakti dehi.” Then, regardless of the outer words, the inner intent transforms the *karma* into *bhakti*.

Thus, what matters most is *bhāvanā* — the inner attitude. The same mantra may yield different results depending on one’s intent. The *Vedas* prescribe these prayers so that the *devatās* may bestow the corresponding fruits. But such actions remain *rājasa* and transient.

When one begins to feel, “I do not wish even for *sāttvika* fruits; I seek only Bhagavān,” one’s disposition slowly evolves toward *niṣkāma bhakti* — desireless devotion.

Even when you utter mantras like “rūpam dehi, jayam dehi, yaśo dehi,” you are indeed asking for something. But if your heart keeps repeating “bhaktim dehi,” it is that pure *bhāvanā* which sanctifies your act.

Q: And if we pray for someone else — say, for a loved one’s well-being — does that also count as *phala icchā*?

A: Yes, it still involves *phala icchā*, though of a subtler kind. If the prayer is for someone entirely unrelated to you, it can even become *niṣkāma* — without self-interest. But when it concerns one’s own family — a child, spouse, or close relative — some personal attachment remains.

Still, one should not forcefully suppress such feelings. Spiritual evolution unfolds gradually. One must move from *tāmasa* to *rājasa*, from *rājasa* to *sāttvika*, and eventually toward *niṣkāma*. Desirelessness cannot be artificially created — it matures naturally over time. One cannot merely decide, “From today, I will have no desires.” The state of *niṣkāmatā* arises slowly, as the heart becomes pure and content.

The session concluded with a heartfelt prayer followed by the chanting of the Hanumān Chālīsā.



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You have enjoyed this vivechan writeup! In spite of intense editing and proofreading, errors of grammar, as also of omission and commission may have crept in. We appreciate your forbearance.

Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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