



ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 18: Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/XD8OkxcO8oU>

Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas in Action: The Science of Karma Components

Chapter 18 of Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, *Mokṣha Sannyāsa Yoga - The Yoga of Renunciation and Surrender*

The discourse begins with the ceremonial lighting of the Dīpam (lamp) at the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān, invoking His divine grace and filling the gathering with devotion and reverence.

Bowing in Reverence to the Guru — The Eternal Source of Wisdom

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।

गुरुः साक्षात् परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्री गुरवे नमः ॥

ॐ कृष्णाय वासुदेवाय हरये परमात्मने ।

प्रणतः क्लेशनाशाय गोविन्दाय नमो नमः ॥

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं ।

व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना मध्ये महाभारते ॥

अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीमष्टादशाध्यायिनीम् ।

अम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्गीते भवद्वेषिणीम् ॥

In our previous session, we reflected upon how the eighteenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā serves as the grand summary of the entire dialogue. Every concept that was earlier presented now returns with greater clarity, precision, and depth, for the benefit of sincere seekers of knowledge.

It is for this reason that Sant Jñāneśwar Mahārāj lovingly calls this chapter the

"एक अध्यायी गीता"

"Eka Adhyāyī Gītā"

a Gītā in itself, containing the distilled essence of all eighteen chapters.

We also noted that, in one sense, the Gītā had already reached its climax in the fifteenth chapter. The sixteenth and seventeenth chapters may be viewed as appendices, dealing with the practical distinctions between the divine and demoniac tendencies, and with the different modes of faith. Then, in the eighteenth chapter, Arjuna begins by asking Śrī Kṛṣṇa a subtle question, the distinction between Sannyāsa (renunciation of action) and Tyāga (renunciation of the fruits of action).

In response, Parameśvara first presents the four viewpoints of various thinkers, in an entirely objective and detached manner. After laying out these perspectives, He then declares His firm conclusion that Yajña (sacrifice), Dāna (charity), and Tapaḥ (austerity) must never be abandoned. These disciplines alone purify the mind and uplift the seeker toward higher realms of spirituality.

But why do people renounce actions? Often, it is for the wrong reasons. Some give up their duties out of sheer laziness or greed for a comfortable lifestyle. This is Tāmasika tyāga. Imagine a mother neglecting to cook for her children, preferring instead to sit absorbed in television or her mobile phone; this is a striking example of tāmasika neglect of duty.

Others abandon actions because of discomfort or pain. This is Rājasa tyāga. A person who rushes through a yajña or havan just to escape the smoke, or someone who refuses to observe an Ekādaśī fast because he cannot tolerate hunger pangs, these illustrate the rajasic tendency.

But what, then, is Sāttvika tyāga? Here lies the heart of the teaching. Verse 9 of this chapter is especially exalted. Our Swamiji often remarks that if one truly understands this śloka, one is uplifted for many births to come! The śloka declares that **Niyatam Karma**, one's prescribed duty, must never be abandoned.

One should strive to act in the spirit of sāttvika sannyāsa, renouncing attachment and the desire for fruits, while faithfully performing one's duty. The life of Śrī Rāma offers the most luminous example.

On one evening, He was joyfully informed of His impending coronation, and preparations began for His anointment as king. Yet the very next morning, He was told of His exile for fourteen years. Without the slightest hesitation, without a trace of resentment or sorrow, Śrī Rāma accepted both situations alike, with the same calm dignity. For Him, both the throne and the forest were duties assigned by dharma, and He embraced exile as readily as He had accepted kingship.

Śrī Sītā Mā also revealed the same spirit. She saw it as her dharma to be by the side of her husband, whether in the palace or in the forest. Without a second thought, she renounced the luxuries of royal life and accompanied Rāma into the hardships of exile, regarding it as her rightful duty as a wife.

Śrī Lakṣmaṇa too displayed the same noble attitude. For him, service (seva) to his elder brother was the highest duty. He voluntarily renounced his comforts and followed Rāma into the forest, dedicating himself wholeheartedly to their care and protection.

Thus, in one single incident, we witness how Rāma, Sītā, and Lakṣmaṇa each exemplify sāttvika sannyāsa, performing their prescribed duty with steadfastness, free from attachment, and without expectation of reward.

Reflect on Śrī Rāma's conduct: without hesitation, He accepted the exile of fourteen years, simply to honour His father's word. This is the very spirit of Niyatam Karma. It is the karma chosen for us by dharma itself. If we are parents, raising our children with care becomes our niyatam karma. If we are teachers, imparting knowledge to students with sincerity is our niyatam karma. If we are soldiers, defending the nation selflessly is our niyatam karma.

In essence, Dharma is nothing mysterious; it is simply “*that which is right for us, here and now.*” It is what we are expected to do, and it must be performed with wholehearted dedication, as if it were the only task left in life.

But the Gītā reminds us of two essential preconditions:

- **Saṅgaṃ tyaktvā** — giving up attachment to the action itself.
- **Phalaṃ tyaktvā** — giving up all longing for the results of action.

Śrī Rāma exemplified this spirit. He neither clung to His karma nor desired its fruits. He did not expect praise, nor lamented the loss of royal comforts. This is where our modern difficulty arises; we tend to cling tightly to our positions, posts, and privileges. The Gītā’s teaching is clear: it is not the karma that must be renounced, but the attachment to its fruits.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa then proceeds to describe the qualities of Sāttvika tyāga in the following verses, guiding us to adopt the sāttvika spirit in every aspect of life. But to truly imbibe sāttvika qualities, we must first understand their very nature, something that the rest of this chapter will beautifully unfold.

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 (द्वेषः) nor attachment to that which is conducive to blessedness (संयुक्तः)- imbued with the quality of goodness, he has all his doubts resolved, is intelligent and a man of true renunciation.

- **Akuśalaṃ karma** - unfavourable tasks
- **Kuśalaṃ karma** - favourable tasks

Why does a task appear unfavourable? The reasons are:

- It feels inconvenient or unpleasant.
- One lacks the necessary expertise.
- It seems unrewarding, offering neither recognition nor tangible benefit.

On the other hand, a task becomes favourable when:

- It is easy and convenient.
- The doer possesses skill and expertise in it.
- It promises reward, recognition, or fame.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains that one who has not renounced attachment (an atyāgī) naturally prefers favourable tasks and avoids unfavourable ones. But a true tyāgī, one who has relinquished attachment to action itself, does not discriminate in this way. He neither dislikes the unpleasant nor clings to the pleasant. Such a person, says the Gītā, is beyond doubt (chinnaśayaḥ), wise (medhāvī), and fully pervaded by the quality of sattva (sattvasamāviṣṭaḥ).

Jñāneśvar Mahārāj beautifully illustrates this state by comparing the tyāgī to flowing water. Just as water moves through the channels of a field without preference or bias, nourishing every crop alike, the tyāgī allows actions to flow through him, untouched by attachment or aversion.

18.11

na hi dehabhṛtā śakyaṃ(n), tyaktuṃ(ñ) karmānyaśeṣataḥ, yastu karmaphalatyaḡī, 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.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes a decisive statement that it is impossible for an embodied being (dehabhṛtā) to completely give up action. This truth was already emphasised earlier in Chapter 3:

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।

कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥ ३.५ ॥

“No one can remain without performing action even for a single moment. Everyone is helplessly driven to act, being bound by the guṇas born of prakṛti.”

Thus, renunciation does not mean inactivity. Action is inevitable as long as one lives in a body. What can truly be renounced, however, is the attachment to the results of those actions. Though one must inevitably bear the fruits of one’s deeds, one need not be bound by them.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa uses the metaphor of sowing seeds: just as the seeds we plant must sprout and yield fruit, so too our actions bear results. Righteous and noble deeds yield auspicious outcomes, while wrongful actions bring painful consequences.

Here, Kṛṣṇa is not offering a superficial moral suggestion, but presenting a profound and detailed analysis of the nature of karma and its results, an insight that becomes clearer in the very next śloka.

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.

Every action, whether simple or complex, inevitably yields results. These can broadly be classified into three categories:

- **Aniṣṭam (undesirable):** for example, scoring poorly in an exam.
- **Iṣṭam (desirable):** exceeding expectations and securing excellent marks.
- **Miśram (mixed):** performing well in some subjects but poorly in others.

Such results apply to the atyāgī, one who is attached to the fruits of his actions. For him, the outcomes of karma continue to bind, even extending beyond this lifetime. Indeed, our present blessings, such as the opportunity to study the Gītā, are themselves the fruit of virtuous deeds from past lives.

In contrast, the tyāgī or sannyāsī, one who has relinquished attachment to the fruits, is not bound by results. While actions still occur, their outcomes no longer hold sway over him. Freed from this bondage, he moves towards liberation.

This underscores the importance of becoming a sannyāsī not merely in outer form, by donning the ochre robe or retreating from society, but in the inner spirit. True renunciation lies in cultivating the sāttvika tyāga: performing righteous duties without expectation of reward, and maintaining **samatva-bhāva**, equanimity in all circumstances. Such an inward renunciate is the real sannyāsī, liberated

even while engaged in the world.

18.13

pañcāitāni mahābāho, kāraṇāni nibodha me, sāṅkhye 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.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa now leads Arjuna to a very important subject. Having explained the principles of **karma-mīmāṃsā**, how actions bind, and the distinction between what is to be done (kārya) and what is to be avoided (akārya), He proceeds to give a detailed analysis of how all activities in this universe actually come into being.

Up until this point, the emphasis was on the doer's orientation: whether he is an atyāgī (attached) or a tyāgī (renunciate), and how his attitude towards results determines bondage or freedom. Now Kṛṣṇa widens the vision. He points out that no action is ever an isolated affair, dependent on a single individual's effort. Once a karma is undertaken, several factors immediately come into play, influencing and shaping its completion.

The wise, those well-versed in Vedānta, recognise that the five fundamental components (pañca kāraṇāni) are indispensable for the accomplishment of any action. Awareness of these prevents arrogance in success and despair in failure, for the doer realises that he is but one among many contributors in the vast web of action.

Addressing Arjuna as Mahābāho, "*O mighty-armed one, master of great strength*", Śrī Kṛṣṇa acknowledges his unmatched prowess and skill in action. Yet, this very epithet carries an instruction: even the strongest and most capable must recognise that their personal strength alone does not determine the outcome of an action. By highlighting this, Kṛṣṇa prepares Arjuna to transcend ego and see himself as an instrument (nimitta-mātra) in the cosmic order, guided by these fivefold causes.

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.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa now reveals the five indispensable components (pañca kāraṇāni) that govern the completion of any action. These factors make us realise that no task is ever accomplished by the doer alone; rather, it is the harmonious coming together of multiple forces, human, material, and divine, that leads to fruition.

Adhiṣṭhānaṃ (the place or field of action)

This refers primarily to the body, the essential base without which no activity can take place. Just as a play requires a stage, all karma requires the body as its field of performance. The body is not only the vessel but also the ground where desires, thoughts, and actions manifest.

Kartā (the doer)

The kartā is the individual ego (ahaṅkāra), the sense of “I” that identifies itself with the body and claims ownership of action. In truth, the Ātman is ever pure, like unalloyed gold, untouched by any activity. But when it enters a body, it becomes the jīvātman, as if gold is mixed with alloys to give it form and shape. This contamination arises from prakṛti (nature) and its three guṇas, which condition the soul’s expression in embodied life. Thus, while the real self is beyond action, the embodied being identifies as the doer.

Karaṇam (the instruments)

The karaṇas are the sense organs and bodily faculties that serve as instruments for action. The eyes, hands, speech, and other faculties are the tools through which intentions are carried out. Just as a craftsman requires proper tools to create, the doer depends upon these instruments to perform any task.

Ceṣṭā (effort)

No karma is complete without the element of personal effort. Both physical labor and mental application are necessary to drive action towards success. This highlights the importance of diligence, perseverance, and conscious striving in human life. Even with the right body, ego, and tools, without consistent effort, no goal can be reached.

Daivam (the divine factor/destiny)

The final component is the unseen hand of the Divine, daiva. This includes the cumulative effects of past karmas, which act either as facilitators or obstacles, and the blessings earned through present sādhanā (spiritual practice). Importantly, destiny is not the sole determinant of success. It forms only one-fifth of the entire equation. Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s teaching is clear: instead of blaming fate for our failures, we must focus on effort, purity of intention, and disciplined practice, for these create the conditions where grace can manifest.

These five components do not operate only at the individual level but extend to families, organisations, and society as a whole.

Example 1: Farming

- **Adhiṣṭhānam** = The farmland
- **Kartā** = The farmer
- **Karaṇam** = Plough, seeds, irrigation tools
- **Ceṣṭā** = Daily toil of sowing, watering, and protecting crops
- **Daivam** = Natural forces like rainfall, sunlight, or drought

Even if the farmer works tirelessly, the yield ultimately depends on whether nature blesses him with timely rains.

Example 2: Learn Geeta Program

- **Adhiṣṭhānam** = The platform of Learn Gītā itself
- **Kartā** = The faculties and sādhakas who take responsibility
- **Karaṇam** = Online platforms, devices, and teaching resources
- **Ceṣṭā** = The dedicated efforts of sevikas, sevakas, and learners
- **Daivam** = The grace of God, without which no session can run smoothly and no seeker can truly receive the wisdom

Here too, while careful planning, effort, and resources are indispensable, it is ultimately divine will

that enables the knowledge of the Gītā to flow seamlessly to seekers across the world.

Thus, these five factors serve as a reminder of humility. The doer alone cannot claim absolute credit for success, nor should he sink into despair at failure. The wise person recognises the interplay of these forces and learns to offer the fruits at the feet of the Divine, walking the path of sāttvika tyāga.

18.15

śarīravāñmanobhiryat, karma prārabhate naraḥ, nyāyyaṃ(m) vā viparītaṃ(m) vā, pañcaite tasya hetavaḥ. 18.15

These five are the contributory causes of whatever actions, prescribed or prohibited, man performs with the mind, speech and body.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa further elaborates that the five essential components of action are at play in all types of activities, whether **noble (nyāyyaṃ) or evil (viparītaṃ)**. These actions are accomplished through the three channels of human expression: **body (śarīra), speech (vāk), and mind (manas)**.

These three are the subtle instruments through which intentions are translated into action. For example, the desire to study the Bhagavad Gītā arises first in the mind. You then express it in speech by sharing your wish with a friend. Finally, using the body, you register for the class and begin attending. Thus, every karma finds its outlet through this triad.

Earlier, in the 17th chapter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa explained how to refine and sanctify these three instruments through the discipline of tapas, austerity.

Śārīra Tapas (discipline of the body):

**devadvijaḡuruprājña pūjanaṃ śaucamārjavam |
brahmacaryamahimsā ca śārīraṃ tapa ucyate || 17.14 ||**

Reverence to the divine, to the wise, to teachers and elders, along with purity, uprightness, self-control, and non-violence, constitute the austerity of the body.

Vāñmaya Tapas (discipline of speech):

**anudvegakaraṃ vākyaṃ satyaṃ priyahitaṃ ca yat |
svādhyāyābhyasanaṃ caiva vāñmayaṃ tapa ucyate || 17.15 ||**

Speech that does not agitate others, that is truthful, pleasing, beneficial, and supported by scriptural recitation, is said to be austerity of speech.

Māñasa Tapas (discipline of the mind):

**manaḡ prasādaḡ saumyatvaṃ maunamātmavinigrahaḡ |
bhāvasaṃśuddhiritetat tapo māñsamucyate || 17.16 ||**

Serenity of mind, gentleness, silence, self-control, and purity of thought are regarded as the austerity of the mind.

If one employs body, speech, and mind in this spirit of tapas, then every karma, whether small or great, becomes a sāttvika act, a means of inner elevation. The same parameters, however, are also employed in ignoble tasks. For instance, the construction of destructive weapons also requires thought (mind), planning and communication (speech), and execution (body). The difference lies not

in the instruments but in the orientation of the will behind them.

At this juncture, a natural question arises: **What is the role of the Ātman in these processes?**

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is emphatic; the Ātman is untouched. It remains ever-neutral, ever-detached, merely witnessing the play of prakṛti and its guṇas. Just as the sun illuminates all actions without itself being involved, the Ātman silently pervades every activity without being tainted by it. The doer (kartā), the body, the senses, the effort, and destiny together create karma, but the Ātman shines beyond karma, unchanging, unbound, and pure.

18.16

**tatraivaṃ(m) sati kartāram, ātmānaṃ(ñ) kevalaṃ(n) tu yaḥ,
paśyatyakṛtabuddhitvān, na sa paśyati durmatiḥ. 18.16**

Notwithstanding this, however, he who, having an impure mind, regards the absolute, taintless Self alone as the doer, that man of perverse understanding does not view aright.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa now highlights the fundamental difference in perception between an enlightened jñānī and an ignorant person who identifies with the body and ego.

The unenlightened, due to limited understanding (**akṛtabuddhitvāt**), wrongly assume that the Ātman itself is the doer. Their thought process is clouded by ahaṅkāra—the false identification with the body-mind complex.

But what, in truth, is the role of the Ātman?

A simple analogy clarifies this: Imagine working in a well-lit room. The light enables you to work, but the light itself does not perform the work. In the same way, the Ātman illumines the body and mind, making all activity possible, yet remains untouched and uninvolved.

Consider another example: the Sun shines impartially on everything. If its reflection on water dazzles your eyes and causes discomfort, the Sun itself is not responsible for that effect. Likewise, the Ātman never acts, nor bears responsibility for the results of action. All activity is a manifestation of Prakṛti alone.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa had already explained this truth earlier:

**prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ |
ahaṅkāravimūḍhātmā kartāham iti manyate || (3.27)**

“All actions are performed by the guṇas of Prakṛti. But the one deluded by ego thinks, ‘I am the doer.’”

It is this false superimposition, born of ignorance, that binds us. The ego-driven person (durmatiḥ) imagines the Self to be acting, while in reality the Self is only the silent witness, ever pure, ever free.

The jñānī, on the other hand, sees clearly that actions belong to Prakṛti and its guṇas. He recognises that the Ātman neither acts nor causes action, and therefore remains unbound by karma. This clarity of vision is what liberates him, while others continue to oscillate in bondage under the illusion of doership.

18.17

**yasya nāhaṅkṛto bhāvo, buddhiryasya na lipyate,
hatvāpi sa imāṃlokān, na hanti na nibadhyate. 18.17**

He whose mind is free from the sense of doership, and whose reason is not affected by worldly objects and activities, does not really kill, even having killed all these people, nor does any sin accrue to him.

The Vision of the Enlightened Intellect

What is the vision of those whose intellect is truly awakened? Sri Krishna explains that such people do not carry the ego of being the doer (**nāhaṅkṛto bhāvaḥ**), nor is their intellect stained or tainted by attachment (**buddhir yasya na lipyate**). As a result, they are never bound by the consequences of their actions (na nibadhyate).

Even if such a person were to perform an act as grave as slaying others (**hatvāpi sa imāṃlokān**), he remains untouched by sin. At first glance, this may sound shocking. How can even killing not bring sin? But we must remember the context: the Bhagavad Gītā is being spoken on the battlefield. Arjuna's heart was troubled by the thought that fighting against his own kinsmen would lead him to terrible sin. To free him from this misconception, Sri Krishna reassures him: if he performs his duty as a warrior, without ego and without malice, he will not incur sin.

Consider the role of an executioner. When he carries out the sentence of death passed by a judge, he is not guilty of murder, he is merely fulfilling his duty. However, if he were to kill someone out of personal vengeance or hatred, then he would indeed be guilty of a crime. The same applies to soldiers who defend their country. They do not act out of personal enmity; they act in obedience to their duty. Therefore, they are not morally tainted by the act of killing the enemy in war.

This is the profound distinction Bhagavān reveals: sin is not in the act itself, but in the intention behind it. Actions born out of ego, ignorance, or selfishness bind us. Actions born out of clarity, without attachment and performed as duty, do not bind.

Thus, Sri Krishna teaches us to cultivate an intellect that can discriminate between right and wrong, between duty and desire. Only such an awakened intellect, free from the clouds of ignorance, can protect us from mistakes and their karmic consequences.

Swamiji reminds us that the surest way to refine our intellect is through constant study of the scriptures, for they alone awaken true wisdom. Jñāneśwar Mahārāj beautifully compares the Mahābhārata to a vast garden, filled with trees of eternal wisdom, from which seekers can pluck the sweetest fruits of knowledge.

Bhagavān, step by step, provides us with this divine guidance: by purifying our intellect and removing the ego of doership, we can act freely in the world yet remain untouched by the binding power of karma.

18.18

jñānaṃ(ñ) jñeyaṃ(m) pariñātā, trividhā karmacodanā, karaṇaṃ(ṅ) karma karteti, trividhaḥ(kh) karmasaṅgrahaḥ. 18.18

The Knower, knowledge and the object of knowledge-these three motivate action. Even so, the doer, the organs and activity-these are the three constituents of action.

Bhagavān explains that three impulses (**karmacodanā**) inspire any action to occur:

- **Jñānaṃ** – the knowledge of how to perform the action
- **Jñeyaṃ** – the object or goal of the action
- **Pariñātā** – the knower, the one who performs the action

Consider a simple example: a child decides to make tea for himself.

- The tea itself, which he wants to prepare, is the jñeyaṃ (object of knowledge).
- Knowing the process of making tea, how to boil water, and steep the tea leaves, is jñānaṃ (knowledge).
- The child who possesses this knowledge is the pariñātā (the knower).

At this stage, the action has not yet occurred. The presence of these three elements alone does not guarantee the act; they represent the potential for action. When the desire is translated into physical activity, these impulses transform into the constituents of action (**karmasaṅgraha**):

- **Jñānaṃ becomes karaṇaṃ** – the instruments or means used to perform the act.
- **Jñeyaṃ becomes karma** – the act itself, the manifestation of the goal.
- **Pariñātā becomes kartā** – the doer who executes the act.

Thus, the initial inspiration, arising from knowledge, object, and knower, manifests as tangible action. The subtle becomes manifest, and the potential for karma is realized in the world.

18.19

jñānaṃ(ñ) karma ca kartāca, tridhaiva guṇabhedataḥ, procyate guṇasaṅkhyāne, yathāvacchṛṇu tānyapi. 18.19

In the branch of knowledge dealing with the Guṇas or modes of Prakṛti, knowledge and action as well as the doer have been declared to be of three kinds according to the Guṇa which predominates in each; hear them too duly from Me.

The constituents of action, jñānaṃ (knowledge), karma (the act), and kartā (the doer), operate under the influence of Prakṛti and are naturally shaped by the three guṇas (**tridhaiva guṇabhedataḥ**).

According to the science of Sāṃkhya-darśana, each of these elements can manifest in three distinct types:

- **Sāttvic** – pure, harmonious, and illuminating
- **Rājasik** – active, restless, and driven by desire
- **Tāmasik** – inert, deluded, and obstructive

These classifications explain the varying quality of every action and the disposition of the doer. Bhagavān will elaborate on this in the upcoming shlokas, providing a systematic understanding of how the gunas shape knowledge, actions, and actors in the world.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Reenu Dhawan ji

Q: When and how does ahamkāra (the sense of 'I am the doer') arise, and why do we feel that 'I have done this, I have done that'? I don't understand this clearly.

Ans: This is similar to the question Arjuna asked in the Third Chapter: if we already know what is right and what we should do, why do we still make mistakes?

The answer is that this ahamkāra arises because of kāma (desire) and krodha (anger), which are manifestations of rajas. Rajas is present in us because of our past karma, and when the rajasic tendencies are stronger than sattva, we tend to make mistakes. Along with this comes the feeling: "I did it," "I am the doer." This is the ego (ahamkāra), which is rajasic in nature.

To overcome this, we need to surrender and pray, gradually moving one step beyond the influence of rajas.

Q: Even when we do meditation or japa, if the mind keeps thinking, "I have to do this, then this, then this," is that also Rajas?

Ans: Yes, Rajas is active, that is why we need patience, practice, and concentration. If everyone could truly focus in this way, everyone would gradually become free from ahamkāra.

The discourse concluded with a prārthanā (prayer) offered at the padakamala (lotus feet) of Śrī Hari, followed by the recitation of the **Hanumān Chalisa**.



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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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