

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 12: Bhakti-Yoga

2/2 (Ślōka 11-20), Saturday, 14 February 2026

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/e88r7yn44m4>

## Bhakti Yog - The path of loving surrender

The session began with humble salutations at the sacred lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, followed by the auspicious ceremony of deepa prajwalan.

Vivechankar commenced the session with Guru Vandana, offering heartfelt salutations at the sacred feet of the revered Guru.

*Gurur Brahmā Gurur Viṣṇuḥ Gurur Devo Maheśvaraḥ* □

*Guruḥ sākṣāt Parabrahma tasmai Śrī Gurave namaḥ* □

The Guru is Brahmā, the creator.

The Guru is Viṣṇu, the preserver.

The Guru is Maheśvara (Shiva), the destroyer.

The Guru is verily the Supreme Brahman Himself.

Salutations to that Supreme Guru.

The chintan of the twelfth Adhyaya has been underway since last week. In the previous session, nearly ten shlokas were reflected upon. Before moving forward today, it helps to pause and revisit the context to clearly understand what is unfolding. Once again, attention turns to the profound questions that Arjuna humbly places before Bhagavān.

Arjuna humbly asked Bhagavān, “Who is the highest Yogi? Who is the **Yogavettā** (true knower of Yoga)? Who is most dear to You?”

He then placed two paths before Bhagavān. One is the devotee who worships in the **saguṇa-sākāra** form — who performs mūrti-pūjā, lovingly adorns the Deity, and constantly delights in beholding and glorifying the Bhagavān's divine form. Arjuna asked, “Among these two, who is more dear to You? The one who follows the path of **Bhakti Mārga** (the path of devotion), or the one who follows the path of **Jñāna Mārga** (the path of knowledge)? The one who worships Your personal form in Saguṇa Sākāra (with attributes and form), or the one who believes in and contemplates the **Nirguṇa Nirākāra** (without attributes and without form)?”

Bhagavān gave a very spontaneous reply. **He said that those who walk on the path of Bhakti**

***Yoga (the Yoga of devotion), who worship Him with love and faith, are most dear to Him and are considered the highest Yogī (spiritual practitioner united with the Divine).***

However, later, balancing His statement, Bhagavān also clarified that those who follow the path of Jñāna Yoga also ultimately reach Him. But this path is more difficult — **Kleśodhikataras Teṣām** (greater is the hardship for them). It involves more effort and is a more challenging path for embodied beings.

The path of Bhakti Mārga (the path of devotion) is very easy and simple. Therefore, the Yogis who walk on the path of devotion are called the highest Yogīs (spiritually elevated seekers). They are very dear to Me, says Bhagavān, because they place complete trust in Me and surrender themselves by sitting in My boat.

Last week's, reflection upon the story of Kevaṭa Prasaṅga (the episode of the boatman), and the divine discourse of Śrī Śaraṅānanda Jī Mahārāj (a revered saint). Through these, the teaching of Bhagavān was explored and understood:

**Mayyeva mana ādattsva, mayi buddhiṃ niveśaya** (Fix your mind on Me alone and surrender your intellect to Me).

Bhagavān says, offer your intellect into Me, and invest your mind in Me. When both your mind and intellect are fully absorbed in Me, and you move forward in life with this surrender, then—

**Atha ūrdhvaṃ na saṁśayaḥ** (thereafter, there is no doubt about your upward progress). Your elevation, your growth, your success — all are certain. There is absolutely no doubt about it.

Then Bhagavān said further:

**Yathā cittaṃ samādhātuṃ na śaknoṣi mayi sthiram** (If you are not able to steadily fix your mind on Me).

Before giving an easier method, Bhagavān first encouraged effort. He said, at least begin. Make some sincere attempt. Do some **cintana** (deep reflection). Sit down with a **mālā** (prayer beads) in your hand. Try to concentrate on your breath. Along with your breathing, gently move each bead of the mālā and begin taking the **Bhagavat Nāma** (the Divine Name of the Lord). At least start. Make an effort so that both your mind and intellect slowly become united and focused.

Then Bhagavān says:

**Abhyāsa-yogena tato mām icchāptuṃ Dhanañjaya** (Through the Yoga of constant practice, O Dhanañjaya, you will be able to attain Me). By the power of Abhyāsa Yoga (the path of repeated spiritual practice), you shall surely reach Me. There is no doubt about this, O Dhanañjaya.

Bhagavān addressed Arjuna as **Dhanañjaya** (the conqueror of wealth). The name Dhanañjaya comes from Arjuna's past, when he defeated many kings and accumulated great wealth in order to establish his own kingdom. Because he conquered and gathered vast treasures, he came to be known as Dhanañjaya.

But here, Bhagavān is speaking of a very different kind of wealth. This is not material wealth. This is the divine treasure that Mīrābāī Too sang about: **Rāma-ratana-dhana pāyo** (I have received the jewel-like wealth of the Lord's Name). That is the real wealth — the treasure of devotion, the wealth of the Divine Name, the inner spiritual richness. And when Bhagavān is explaining how to attain this supreme treasure, it is natural that the name Dhanañjaya comes from His lips — but now the conquest is not of outer riches, but of spiritual wealth.

Then Bhagavān continues with compassion. He explains that if even this is not possible—if steady

practice and deep devotion through **Navadhā Bhakti** (the nine forms of devotion) cannot be undertaken—what should be done? Step by step, Bhagavān makes the path simpler and more accessible.

Bhagavān says:

**Abhyāse'py asamartho'si** (If you are unable even to practice steady spiritual discipline),

**Mat-karma paramo bhava** (then become one who performs actions for Me),

**Mad-artham api karmāṇi kurvan siddhim avāpsyasi** (by doing actions for My sake, you shall attain perfection).

Bhagavān explains that if sitting for long hours in **abhyāsa** (spiritual practice) is not possible, if chanting the Divine Name continuously is difficult, if sitting before Bhagavān and synchronizing the breath while repeating Bhagavat Nāma does not help the mind concentrate, then there is no need to worry. "I will show an even easier path," says Bhagavān. If practicing in that way is not possible, then any work being done can be offered to Bhagavān. All actions can be performed as an offering to Bhagavān.

When waking from sleep, let the first thought be: "O Bhagavān, You have awakened me again today. How much grace You have shown! Today again comes the opportunity to do Your work." While cleansing the body, hold this feeling in the heart: "Bhagavān resides in my heart. This body is the temple in which He dwells. By cleaning this body, I am cleansing the temple of Bhagavān." With this sacred attitude, perform daily duties such as bathing and personal care. When eating, feel: "This is first offered to Bhagavān as bhoga (sacred offering), and then received as **prasāda** (divinely blessed food)." while walking let the thought arise "I am going out to do **Parikramā** (circumambulation of the Lord)." In this way, every ordinary action of life becomes sacred.

Reflection upon a beautiful verse from **Śiva Mānas Pūjā** (mental worship of Lord Śiva), composed by Ādi Śaṅkarācārya. The verse says:

**Ātmā tvam̐ Girijā matiḥ saharāḥ prāṇāḥ śarīraṁ gṛham**

(You are my very Self; my mind is Pārvatī; my life-breaths are Your attendants; this body is Your temple.)

The attitude Bhagavān desires manifests in every action. While cooking, one thinks: "I am preparing prasāda to offer to Bhagavān." While running a shop, one sees every customer as Bhagavān Himself and serves sincerely, understanding that serving them equals serving Him. Every action unfolds with divine awareness. A teacher observes the children before them as young Bāla Krishna. Teaching begins with the feeling of lovingly serving and pleasing Bhagavān Himself through each child. Working with the feeling of **samarpana bhāva** (the attitude of surrender and offering), then one truly lives the teaching of:

**Mat-karma Paramo Bhava** (become one whose actions are dedicated to Me). Whatever action one performs happens with the understanding: "This work belongs to Bhagavān. It is done for Him." Throughout the day, whatever words arise before one, they are heard with the feeling: "These are also Bhagavān's bhajana. Through these voices, He alone speaks."

As the beautiful devotional lines express:

*"Whatever I hear throughout the day, may I understand it as Your praise alone.*

*Let my mind remain absorbed in You, and may it experience deep joy."*

*"You alone pervade everywhere, O Hari. This entire world exists in You.*

*Fill my heart with this feeling, so that whoever I meet, I behold only You in them."*

Whomever one meets, one recognizes Bhagavān's form in that person and interacts as if meeting Him alone.

When this **bhāva** (sacred attitude) enters life, then ordinary work becomes worship, and daily living becomes continuous devotion. Every action becomes **Mat-karma**. And through such dedication, Bhagavān assures, one will surely attain **siddhi** (spiritual perfection).

Does this also seem difficult? It is not so difficult — one only needs to try and see. **Śabarī Mātā** exemplified this perfectly. That is why Bhagavān blessed her with **Navavidhā Bhakti**, (the nine forms of devotion). Bhagavān Śrī Rāma Himself explained the ninefold devotion to Śabarī. She did not perform great austerities or engage in scholarly debates. She simply lived with pure devotion, saw Bhagavān in everything, and waited with unwavering faith. Her life itself became an offering.

Śabarī was the daughter of a tribal chief. Her father was the head of the Bhil community. One day, he brought home several little lambs — small baby goats. They were so tiny and adorable. Little Śabarī, only seven or eight years old, was very happy to have them around. She loved them immediately and began playing with them. From morning till evening, she would spend her time with those little lambs, laughing and running around with them.

Seeing her play like this, one day her father said casually, "Play with them, for they are guests for a few days. Their meat will be served to all the guests during your marriage." Śabarī was shocked. She asked in surprise, "Their meat will be served at my wedding?"

Her father replied, "Of course! I have attended many weddings and eaten at them. At your wedding, I will have to invite everyone and serve them food. That is why these lambs have been brought. Slowly they will grow up, and at the time of your marriage, they will be useful."

Hearing this, Śabarī became deeply disturbed. Her heart was shaken. She began to worry, "Because of me, these innocent little lambs will be sacrificed. I am the reason they will be killed." Day and night, this thought troubled her. She felt as if she herself was guilty. "If my wedding means their death, then it is better that I run away," she decided. In the middle of the night, Śabarī quietly woke up. Gently she opened the door and slipped away without making any sound.

She began running into the forest. All through the night she ran. She did not even feel afraid of wild animals or the darkness of the jungle. Her love and compassion for the lambs were greater than her fear. As dawn began to break and morning light appeared, Śabarī climbed up a tree and hid among its branches. She knew that someone would come searching for her. Her father would surely send people to look for her.

And exactly what she had feared happened. As soon as morning came, the search for Śabarī began. The people of the Bhil community spread out in all four directions, calling loudly, "Śabarī! Śabarī! Where are you?" Hearing their voices, Śabarī held her breath and remained hidden in the tree. When they came near the very tree she was sitting on, she became completely still. She did not let even the sound of her breathing be heard. She did not move even slightly. She stayed there quietly until they finally went away.

All day long she remained on that tree — without water and food. She stayed hidden until sunset. And after it became dark again, she climbed down and began running once more.

The next morning, before sunrise, she again climbed a tree to hide. As the sun began to rise, she noticed some movement nearby. In the distance, there was an **āśrama** — it was the āśrama of **Mataṅga Ṛṣi**. She saw people engaged in different activities. Some were sweeping the ground. Some were collecting flowers. Some were making garlands. Some were washing clothes. Others were bringing water from the river. Śabarī thought, "These people look kind and gentle. Perhaps I should stay in this āśrama." Gathering courage, the small, tired child went toward the āśrama. She asked softly, "May I stay here?"

The disciples were surprised to see a little tribal girl standing there. They took her to Mataṅga Ṛṣi. "This little girl is asking whether she can stay here," they said. Mataṅga Ṛṣi looked at her with compassion and said gently, "Yes, child, you may stay here. But tell me, where have you come from?"

What is your father's name?"

Śabarī folded her hands and said, "Please do not ask me about my father. If he finds out that I am here, he will come to take me back. And then the little lambs will be killed because of me. Please have mercy on me. Let no one know my name. Allow me to stay here. I will do all the work. I can sweep very well. I will wash clothes. I will make garlands. I will do every service. Just let me remain here." Seeing her sincerity and innocence, Mataṅga Ṛṣi allowed her to stay.

Śabarī began living in the āśrama. She served with dedication and humility. Years passed. Then one day, Mataṅga Ṛṣi gathered all his disciples and said, "The time for my **samādhi** (final meditative departure from the body) has come. If you have any questions in your heart, ask them now."

One by one, the disciples began asking their questions. Some asked about **Nyāya Śāstra** (logic and philosophy), some about **Vyākaraṇa Śāstra** (grammar), some about the Vedas, and others about the Purāṇas. Little Śabarī, only nine or ten years old, sat quietly at the back. She listened, but she did not understand any of it. After everyone had finished, Mataṅga Ṛṣi looked at her and said gently, "Śabarī, my child, you must also have something to ask. If there is anything in your heart, ask now." Śabarī folded her hands and said innocently, "What should I ask? I do not know anything." The sage encouraged her, "Ask whatever is in your heart." After a moment of silence, she asked softly, "Guruji... will I ever see Bhagavān? Will Bhagavān ever meet me?"

Mataṅga Ṛṣi smiled. "Yes, child. Bhagavān will meet you. In fact, your destiny is so blessed that Bhagavān Himself will come searching for you in this very āśrama." Hearing this, Śabarī was overwhelmed with joy. She began dancing like a mad girl, repeating, "Bhagavān will come here? He will come to meet me?"

Soon after giving this blessing, Mataṅga Ṛṣi entered samādhi (final meditative departure from the body). After his departure, one by one, all the disciples left the āśrama. Only Śabarī remained. She was just ten years old, alone in the āśrama. But she remembered the words of her Guru: "**Bhagavān will come here.**" **So she thought, "If Bhagavān is coming here, I must remain here."**

She began sweeping the paths of the āśrama every day. While sweeping one day, a thought arose in her mind:

"How foolish I am! I did not ask Guruji whether Bhagavān will come from the east or from the west. I have cleaned only the eastern path. What if He comes from another direction?"

So she cleaned all the paths around the āśrama — from every direction. Then she went to the river. She stepped into the water and filled pots with clean water. She thought, "When Bhagavān comes, there must be pure water ready." Then another thought came: "It is winter. The days are cold. How can I wash His feet with cold water? I should warm it."

So she gathered firewood, lit a fire, and kept water ready to be warmed.

At night, another thought troubled her. "What have I done? I did not even ask whether Bhagavān will come in the morning or at night. What if He comes at night and finds me sleeping? He is so compassionate — He will not wake me. He may simply return. Then how will I see Him?" From that day onward, Śabarī decided not to sleep deeply. She stayed awake at night, waiting with alertness and longing.

Night after night, day after day, she waited — with faith, innocence, and unwavering love.

Two days passed.

Four days passed.

A month passed.

Months passed.

Years passed.

But Śabarī's daily routine never broke. Every day she went to the river, brought water, and kept it ready. The water was kept warm all the time — day and night — because she did not know when Bhagavān would arrive. She collected fruits daily. The sweetest fruits she kept aside for the Lord. She would taste them only to check whether they were sweet enough. Whatever little she tasted became her own food. She had no time to cook for herself. When she went to the river to bring water, that itself became her bath. She had no separate time for personal comfort or rituals. Her entire life had

only one purpose — to prepare for the arrival of Bhagavān.

The nearby forest dwellers began calling her mad. “She has gone crazy,” they said. “All day long she keeps chanting ‘Rām, Rām, Rām’ and keeps waiting. Who knows when this Rām will come?”

At that time, even Rāma had not yet appeared publicly in the world. And still, she was waiting. Every day she made flower garlands. Every day she cleaned the seat for Bhagavān. She would arrange the āśrama as if He were coming that very day. She kept everything fresh and beautiful. Slowly, wrinkles began to appear on her face. Her hair began to turn white. Her body grew old. But Bhagavān did not come. Yet her **Guru-bhakti** (devotion to her Guru) and her **śraddhā** (deep faith) never weakened. She knew with certainty: “Bhagavān will come. He must come. My Guru has said so.”

Morning and evening, day and night, she kept chanting: “Rām... Rām... Rām...” And then, one day, during His exile, Śrī Rāma entered the forest searching for Sītā. Someone said to Him, “*You must go to Śabarī’s āśrama. She has been chanting Your Name for years. She has been calling You. You must go.*”

And so, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, while searching for Sītā, arrived at the āśrama of Mataṅga Ṛṣi to meet Śabarī.

When Śabarī saw them, she was overwhelmed. For a moment she wondered, “Is this another vision? Is this just my imagination again?” She rubbed her eyes, as if to make sure. *No — this was not imagination.*

Before her stood Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa in their radiant, ascetic form. Her Śrī Rāma for whom she had waited her entire life... was finally standing before her.

Śabarī ran and fell at the feet of Śrī Rāma in overflowing joy. Tears began to flow from her eyes. Drop by drop, they fell upon His feet. Rāma gently lifted her up and said, “Śabarī, will you not take Me inside?” She suddenly realized and said, “Oh! I forgot! Please come, Bhagavān, please sit. I have kept warm water ready for You. I do not even know for how many years this water has been kept warm. Let me wash Your feet.”

Śrī Rāma smiled and said, “Śabarī, what need is there? Your tears were so warm and filled with love — they have already washed My feet. There is no need for any further **pāda-prakṣālana** (ceremonial washing of the feet).”

Śabarī then offered Him a garland of flowers. She brought fruits kept carefully in a leaf bowl. They were not just berries — there were many kinds of forest fruits. They were not “tasted leftovers” in the ordinary sense. The sour or unripe fruits she had already thrown away or eaten herself. That was her only food. The sweet fruits — those that she had carefully tasted to ensure their sweetness — she had saved for Śrī Rāma.

With trembling hands and overflowing love, she began feeding her Bhagavān. Śrī Rāma kept eating the fruits. Again and again He felt, “Such sweetness... I have tasted this only when My mother fed Me with her own hands.” He remembered Mother Kauśalyā, Mother Kaikai. He remembered the love of His mothers in Ayodhyā. Tears filled His eyes as well.

Then Śabarī folded her hands and said, “Bhagavān, please grant me one blessing. When I was very young, my Gurujī left his body. I did not ask him anything then. **Today I only wish to ask You — what is bhakti?** Please explain devotion to me.”

By now, many forest dwellers had gathered there. They had heard that something extraordinary was happening in Śabarī’s āśrama. “Those radiant, divine beings have come to her hut,” they said. The moment she had waited for all her life had arrived, and the whole forest seemed to witness it.

**Śrī Rāma looked at her with deep affection and said, “Śabarī, what can I teach you about bhakti? You yourself are living devotion.”** Yet, for the sake of the world, He explained the path of **Navavidhā Bhakti** — the nine forms of devotion.

1. Śravaṇa (listening to Bhagavān’s glories),
2. Kīrtana (singing His praises),
3. Smaraṇa (remembering Him),

4. Pāda-sevana (serving His feet),
5. Arcana (worship),
6. Vandana (offering prayers),
7. Dāsya (servitude),
8. Sakhya (friendship), and
9. Ātma-nivedana (complete self-surrender) —

These are the nine forms of devotion that Bhagavān described.

Once, a question was asked to Swamiji: “When Śabarī herself was such a great devotee, why did Bhagavān explain **Navavidhā Bhakti** (the ninefold devotion) to her?” Swamiji’s answer filled hearts with awe. He said, “That teaching was not for Śabarī. It was for the forest dwellers who had gathered there. They needed to understand the greatness of devotion. Śabarī was only the instrument.” Then, with even greater tenderness, he added, “*The teaching of Navavidhā Bhakti was actually a certificate of honor bestowed upon Śabarī. Bhagavān was publicly acknowledging her devotion.* By explaining the nine forms of bhakti in her presence, He was declaring to the world that she had fulfilled them all.” Bhagavān accepted her devotion and honored her. Having received the Lord’s grace, Śabarī completed her life there itself. Her story became immortal, shining forever in the pages of the Rāmāyaṇa..

If such devotion arises in someone, then that devotee becomes a **Nitya-yukta Upāsaka** (one who is constantly united with the Lord and steadily engaged in worship).

But if this is not possible for some... if even this kind of steady abhyāsa (spiritual practice) feels difficult...

Then Bhagavān says further:

## 12.11

**athaitadapyaśakto'si, kartuṁ(m) madyogamāśritaḥ,  
sarVākarmaphalatyāgaṁ(n), tataḥ(kh) kuru yatātmavān. 12.11**

If, taking recourse to the Yoga of My realization, you are unable even to do this, then, subduing your mind and intellect etc., relinquish the fruit of all actions.

If even this feels difficult for them... if they feel they do not have the strength to dedicate every action directly to Bhagavān... if even that seems beyond them...

Then Bhagavān says, at least do this:

**Sarva-karma-phala-tyāgaṁ tataḥ kuru yatātmavān**

(Renounce the fruits of all actions, with self-discipline and awareness.)

Keep doing the work, but along with that, give up attachment to the results. What does 'renouncing the fruits' really mean? It does not mean that results will not come. Results will certainly appear. If a mango seed is planted, mangoes will grow. If a babool (acacia) is planted, thorns will appear. That is the law of karma — it is fixed. The problem begins when work is done with the feeling: 'These mangoes must come. The result must be obtained.' If the fruit comes, there is happiness. If it does not come, there is disturbance. Instead, keep a loving attitude toward the plant. Care for it with sincerity. Do the work with dedication, but without expectation.

***Sarva-karma-phala-tyāga means renouncing the expectation of the fruit — not the fruit***

**itself.**

Do not perform actions driven by anxiety for results. When expectation is given up, slowly and naturally, the inner self becomes lighter. The personality becomes steady and mature. Then nothing feels impossible. Continue acting, but drop the demand. Then Bhagavān teaches the method for calming the mind. The mind jumps again and again. The mind becomes restless. Sleep does not come. Peace does not stay. Bhagavān says — give up just one thing, and tremendous inner strength will be discovered.

**12.12**

**śreyo hi jñānamabhyāsāj, jñānād dhyānam(ṽ) viśiṣyate,  
dhyānātkarmaphalatyaḡaḥ(s), tyāḡacchāntiranantaram.12.12.**

Knowledge is better than practice without discernment, meditation on God is superior to knowledge, and renunciation of the fruit of actions is even superior to meditation; for, peace immediately follows from renunciation.

Bhagavān says:

**Śreyo hi jñānam abhyāsāt** (Knowledge is superior to mechanical practice.)

Practice done without understanding — without knowing the inner essence — is good, but higher than that is **jñāna** (true knowledge), knowledge that is understood and experienced.

**Jñānād dhyānam viśiṣyate** (Meditation is superior even to knowledge.)

Merely studying, reading, or memorizing is helpful. But better than intellectual knowledge is **dhyāna** (deep meditation), where the mind becomes absorbed and steady.

**Dhyānāt karma-phala-tyāḡaḥ** (Renunciation of the fruits of action is superior even to meditation.)

Even greater than meditation is giving up the craving for the fruits of action — the expectation of results.

And then Bhagavān makes a very powerful statement:

**Tyāḡāt śāntir anantaram** (From renunciation comes peace — immediately thereafter.)

The moment one gives up the desire for the fruit of action, peace enters one's life.

This is a very great teaching. If one seeks peace in life, it is necessary to renounce the expectation of results. Letting go of demands and insistence brings calm. Expectation is the root of sorrow and restlessness. The more expectations are held — from people, from situations, even from Bhagavān — the greater the disturbance becomes. When expectation is dropped, whatever arises is experienced as grace. In that state, the joy felt becomes indescribable.

That is why Bhagavān says:

**Tyāḡāt śāntir anantaram** — from renunciation comes immediate peace. And not just momentary peace — continuous peace, flowing again and again.

When this occurs, something beautiful awakens within a person. A natural bhakti-bhāva (devotional feeling) enters the heart. As devotion truly takes root, it begins to reflect outwardly — in the face, in actions, in speech, and in behavior. It shines through words and conduct. When this devotional attitude becomes visible, the bhakta-lakṣaṇas (qualities of a true devotee) begin to manifest. Then Bhagavān describes the qualities of a true devotee.

## 12.13

### **adveṣṭā sarvabhūtānām(m), maitraḥ(kh) karuṇa eva ca, nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ(s), śamaduḥkhasukhaḥ kṣamī. 12.13**

He who is free from malice towards all beings, friendly and compassionate, and Free from the feelings of 'I' and 'mine', balanced in joy and sorrow & forgiving by nature.

## 12.14

### **santuṣṭaḥ(s) satataṁ(ṡ) yogī, yatātmā dṛḍhaniścayaḥ, mayyarpitamanobuddhiḥ(r), yo madbhaktaḥ(s) sa me priyaḥ.12.14.**

The Yogī who is Ever-concentrated and mentally united with Me, nay, who has subdued his mind, senses and body, has a firm resolve, and has surrendered his mind and reason to Me—that devotee of Mine is dear to Me.

Now Bhagavān begins with:

**Adveṣṭā sarva-bhūtānām** — one who has no hatred toward any living being.

This means becoming completely free from **dveṣa** (hatred or ill-will). Not even a trace of bitterness toward anyone. Saints are like this. Hatred does not enter their hearts.

During college days, Swamiji used to stay at a house, accompanied by one or two assistants. One day, after a discourse, some devotees placed money on the sacred book as an offering. One of the attendants collected the money and put it into his pocket. After some time, it was noticed that he took money from one pocket and shifted it into another. Quietly, he was followed home. Upon arrival, only one pocket was emptied and the money handed over, while the other pocket remained untouched. It became clear that something was wrong.

Privately, Swamiji was informed: “There is money in his other pocket too. He took it from there. He is a thief. He is not a good person.” Swamiji calmly replied, “Oh? Is that so? Call him.”

The attendant came forward. Swamiji gently asked, “Son, is everything fine at your home? Is there any financial difficulty? Do you need money? If you need something, tell me.” Then Swamiji took the money that had been offered and placed it back into the attendant’s hands. “Keep this. Send it home. It will be useful,” he said.

Shock followed. Anger, punishment, or scolding had been expected. Instead, kindness was given. Later, reflection arose. The difference between Swamiji and the Vivechankar was this: Swamiji was **Adveṣṭā**—free from hatred—while the observer had learned to not react with judgment and resentment.

Bhagavān says:

**Adveṣṭā sarva-bhūtānām** (One who has no hatred toward any living being.)

The word **bhūta** means a living being — any creature. So **sarva-bhūtānām** means “toward all beings.”

Not just toward human beings, but even toward a lizard, there should be no hatred. Even toward a snake, there should be no hatred. Whatever animal or creature it may be, the heart should remain free from ill-will. Along with this comes **Maitraḥ karuṇa eva ca** (Friendly and compassionate toward all). There should be a (feeling of friendship) **maitrī** and (compassion) **karuṇā** toward every being.

This means no one should be harmed unnecessarily. If an insect is crawling, it should not be immediately crushed with a slipper out of irritation. Even that creature has a right to live. Wherever possible, life should be allowed to continue. Friendship should extend to all, and compassion should be practiced for all. Through thoughts, words, and actions, no being—whether animal, bird, insect, or human—should be hurt because of one’s deeds.

Then Bhagavān says:

**Nirmamaḥ nirahaṅkāraḥ** (Free from possessiveness and free from ego.)

This constant feeling—“I did this, I achieved this, this is because of me”—is **ahaṅkāra** (ego). It must slowly leave a person. **Nirahaṅkāra** (freedom from ego) means freedom from that sense of “I” and “mine,” understanding instead that one is only an instrument. A person who is truly free from ego is spiritually mature.

Then Bhagavān says:

**Sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ kṣamī** (One who remains equal in sorrow and joy, and who is forgiving.)

How can someone remain equal in happiness and sorrow? Both happiness and sorrow come from outside. One morning, for example, a person had to bathe in cold water. When the cold water first touched the body, it felt uncomfortable for two minutes. Hesitation arose—first putting in a hand, then slowly adjusting. But after four or five minutes, once a few pots of water had been poured, the same cold water that had felt painful began to feel refreshing. What was discomfort a few minutes earlier became enjoyment.

Sorrow, too, is temporary. Even the greatest sorrow—the loss of a loved one—feels unbearable at first. But with time, even that grief softens. One year, two years, three years—and slowly it becomes lighter. If such great sorrow can reduce over time, then what is called “pain” is not permanent. If it can go away after two years, it can begin to dissolve even now—if acceptance arises in the heart.

The key is acceptance. When a person says, “I accept this,” the intensity reduces. Instead of resisting what comes, simply accepting it fully brings peace. A person who lives in this way naturally becomes **kṣamī** (forgiving), because he understands that just as his own reactions are temporary, so are others’ mistakes.

That is why Bhagavān says:

**Santuṣṭaḥ satataṁ yogī** (The yogī remains ever content.)

Such a person remains inwardly content—not because life is always pleasant, but because he has learned to accept both pleasure and pain as passing experiences. Contentment does not mean inactivity; it means inner stability.

A small practice can help cultivate this. For one whole day, a person should try not to speak anything negative: “This was not good,” “That was not proper,” “This should have been better.” Whatever comes, remain content. If there is no salt in the vegetable, still remain content and eat it. Nothing happens if one day is spent eating food without salt. If guests are coming, it is appropriate to quietly and gently tell the cook, “A little salt will make it better.” That is fine. But if the mind becomes disturbed only because there is no salt, that is the problem. (Contentment) **Santuṣṭatā** must be natural and steady.

Then Bhagavān says:

**Yatātmā dṛḍha-niścayaḥ** (Self-controlled and firm in resolve.)

One whose mind is disciplined and whose determination is firm. Firm in the resolve: “I will attain Bhagavān. I will realize Him.”

Like Śabarī — years passed, her hair turned white, her body aged, but her resolve did not shake. “Śrī

Rāma will come. He must come.” That is **ḍṛḍha-niścaya** — unshakeable conviction.

Then Bhagavān says again:

**Mayy arpita-mano-buddhiḥ** (One who has offered both mind and intellect unto Me.)

Offer both the manas (mind) and the buddhi (intellect).

When work begins with both mind and intellect aligned, success is certain. To attain **Bhagavān** is the greatest victory. *Bhagavān wanted to give Arjuna victory.* That is why He said: **Tato yuddhāya yujyasva naivaṁ pāpam avāpsyasi** (Therefore arise and fight; thus you shall not incur sin). “Fight, Arjuna. That is your duty. You are a **kṣatriya** [warrior class]. There is no sin in performing your righteous duty.”

But why was Arjuna hesitating? Because his mind was disturbed. His mind had fallen into **moha** (delusion, attachment). *Therefore, Bhagavān instructs him: Unite mind and intellect. Let both be aligned with the Divine.* When mind and intellect are surrendered to the Divine, action becomes pure. And when action becomes pure, victory—inner and outer—is inevitable.

Such a devotee, Bhagavān says:

**Yo mad-bhaktaḥ sa me priyaḥ** (That devotee of Mine is dear to Me.)

Not merely the one who performs rituals, but the one whose mind and intellect are offered fully.

## 12.15

**yasmānnavijate loko, lokānnavijate ca yaḥ,  
harṣāmarṣabhayodvegaiḥ(r), mukto yaḥ(s) sa ca me priyaḥ 12.15**

He who is not a source of annoyance to his fellow-creatures, and who in his turn does not feel vexed with his fellow creatures, and who is free from delight and envy, perturbation and fear, is dear to Me.

A true devotee is one from whom no being feels hurt, and who, in turn, is not disturbed by anyone. One who becomes angry over small matters, who is excessively elated in happiness, or deeply shaken in sorrow is still governed by circumstances. But a devotee becomes **samadrṣṭi** — balanced and steady.

**Harṣa** means extreme elation.

**Amarṣa** means deep resentment or intolerable agitation.

Between these two extremes lies inner steadiness. Freedom from **harṣa** (overexcitement), **amarṣa** (resentment), **bhaya** (fear), and **udvega** (anxiety or agitation) makes one dear to Bhagavān.

Human nature is often reactive. The mind becomes conditioned: “The moment that person appears, my blood pressure rises.” Why? Because **dveṣa** (hatred) has been allowed to grow. Therefore, one must become adveṣṭā — free from hatred.

Life is very short. There is already so little time to love, yet so much is wasted in hatred. No being should remain in the heart as an enemy. If the thorn of hatred remains lodged within, then at the final moment of life that very face may arise before the mind.

There was once a person who constantly spoke ill of his own brother. At every meeting, he repeated how he had been cheated and wronged. For years they fought in court over a small amount of money. He had the strength and capacity to forgive, but instead of removing the thorn from his heart, he

pressed it deeper. The real suffering was not the loss of money — it was the hatred he nurtured. Removing that inner thorn is essential.

Bhagavān declares:

**“Nirvairah sarva-bhūteṣu yaḥ sa mām eti Pāṇḍava.”**(11.55)

(O Arjuna, the one who is free from enmity toward all beings comes to Me.)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructs Arjuna: “Fight — but without hatred.”

Duryodhana and the others were (aggressors) **ātātāyī**. They committed grave injustice and humiliation. As a kṣatriya, it was Arjuna’s duty to uphold dharma and punish wrongdoing. But not out of revenge. Not out of personal hatred. Rather, out of **kartavya-bhāva** — the spirit of duty.

Wrongdoing may need to be corrected. Justice may need to be upheld. But hatred must be removed from the heart. This is the subtlety of devotion.

If one is studying the Gītā, then at the very least this much must be practiced — the removal of the thorn from the heart. Otherwise, that thorn will remain embedded within.

No one knows when death will arrive. There is no guarantee of time. And if even a single thorn of hatred remains in the mind at the final moment, that very impression can cling to the subtle body. The mind carries its tendencies forward.

Unresolved resentment... unfinished revenge... inner bitterness — these can become seeds for another birth. The soul may once again seek a womb, a family, or circumstances where that same enmity continues to unfold.

One may imagine the loss inflicted upon oneself by holding on to hatred. It appears as though another person is being punished, but in reality, one is binding oneself.

That is why Bhagavān says:

**12.16**

**napekṣaḥ(ś) śucirdakṣa, udāsīno gatavyathaḥ,  
sarvārambhaparityāgī, yo madbhaktaḥ(s) sa me priyaḥ. 12.16**

He who wants nothing, who is both internally and externally pure, is wise and impartial and has risen above all the distractions, and who renounces the sense of doership in all undertakings—such a devotee of Mine is dear to Me.

One should come out of expectations. “This is what I expect from my daughter-in-law... this is what I expect from my daughter... They should take care of me. They should become the support of my old age. I did so much for them — what are they doing for me?” Such thoughts must be dropped. One has done one’s duty; let others do theirs. Peace should not be bound to anyone’s behavior.

Expectation is a subtle chain. The moment a person expects, they begin to measure. The moment they measure, they begin to feel hurt. And the moment they feel hurt, joy disappears.

Instead, one should prepare wisely. In youth, arrangements for old age should be made. One should stand on one’s own feet as long as possible. Then, if children serve, it will feel like grace — not obligation. Whatever comes as grace gives joy; whatever is demanded rarely gives happiness.

One must learn to live in joy. There is nothing greater in life than inner joy. In the second chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā, Bhagavān teaches that to become **sthita-prajña** — one of steady wisdom — one must walk the path of inner serenity. Joy is medicine for sorrow.

As the Gītā says:

**prasanna-chetasah āśu buddhiḥ paryavatiṣṭhate (2.65)**— When the mind is cheerful and serene, the intellect quickly becomes steady. When the mind is cheerful, the intellect becomes steady. When the intellect is steady, decisions become right. When decisions are right, life becomes victorious. The Bhagavad Gītā is the scripture of victory.

Therefore, Bhagavān teaches one to become:

1. **anapekṣah** — free from expectation
2. **śuciḥ** — pure, inwardly and outwardly clean
3. **dakṣah** — skillful, alert, efficient
4. **udāsīnah** — balanced, impartial, inwardly steady

Udāsīnah does not mean sad or depressed. Bhagavān never teaches sadness; He teaches joy. *Udāsīnah means established in samatva — equanimity, evenness of mind.*

Life will bring many forms of sorrow — **vyathā** (pain, distress). But the Gītā says to become: **gata-vyathah** — one who has gone beyond sorrow, not dwelling on pain. One should not sit holding onto past hurts but move forward. Bhagavān has given every person an inbuilt eraser — the power of **vismaraṇa** (forgetfulness). Just as pencil marks are erased, unnecessary mental impressions must also be erased. Not everything deserves to be stored in the heart. Forgetting what is not spiritually useful is wisdom.

Finally, He Gītā says:

**sarvārambha-parityāgī** — one who has renounced the egoistic sense of authorship in all undertakings.

“This is my doing. I did this.” — this is **ahaṅkāra**, the false sense of doership. What is the use of such pride? One is not the ultimate doer; one is an instrument.

Thus, one should live as: **anapekṣah** (without expectation), **śuciḥ** (pure), **dakṣah** (alert and capable), **udāsīnah** (balanced), **gata-vyathah** (free from dwelling in sorrow), **sarvārambha-parityāgī** (free from egoistic doership), remain **prasanna** — cheerful and joyful. Joy is not optional in spiritual life; it is foundational. Whatever has been done through one’s hands should be understood as made to happen by Him. One is merely a **nimitta** — an instrument in the hands of the Divine.

When this feeling becomes natural, the burden of ego drops. One continues to work with the sacred attitude of being a nimitta. Such people are very dear — those who are not harsh, not self-centered, not ego-driven, but who live in humility, balance, and quiet joy.

**12.17**

**yo na hr̥ṣyati na dveṣṭi, na śocati na kāṅkṣati,  
śubhāśubhāparityāgī, bhaktimānyaḥ(s) sa me priyaḥ. 12.17**

He who neither rejoice nor hates, nor grieves, nor desires, and who renounces both good and evil actions and is full of devotion, is dear to Me.

One who does not become overexcited in joy is described as **na hr̥ṣyati** — one who does not get elated. At the slightest gain, ordinary people may begin celebrating excessively or showing off — “Look at my bungalow, look at my car.” But the true devotee remains steady and composed.

Such a person is **na dveṣṭi** — free from hatred. No trace of bitterness or enmity is allowed to remain in the heart.

He or she is **na śocati** — does not grieve unnecessarily. Bhagavān even instructs Arjuna not to grieve over death, for whoever is born must one day die. Therefore, one rises above sorrow with understanding.

The devotee is also **na kāṅkṣati** — free from craving and constant expectation. Life is not lived in restless desire for what has not yet come.

Further, such a person is **śubhāśubha-parityāgī** — one who has renounced attachment to both good and bad results. This can seem difficult to understand: how can one renounce both auspicious and inauspicious outcomes? Bhagavān clarifies this through His instruction to Arjuna: **tato yuddhāya yujyasva** — “Therefore, arise and prepare for battle.”

In ch 11, Bhagavān declares:

**droṇaṁ ca bhīṣmaṁ ca jayadrathaṁ ca  
karṇaṁ tathānyān api yodha-vīrān  
mayā hatāms tvaṁ jahi mā vyathiṣṭhā  
yudhyasva jetāsi raṇe sapatnān (11.34)**

*“Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Jayadratha, Karṇa, and other brave warriors have already been slain by Me. You merely become the instrument. Do not grieve. Fight, and you shall conquer your enemies in battle.”*

Arjuna is thus instructed to perform what outwardly appears to be an inauspicious act — fighting and killing in war. Yet when such action is performed purely as duty, without ego, attachment, or personal motive, it becomes inwardly renounced. That is the true meaning of śubhāśubha-parityāgī — going beyond attachment to both good and bad outcomes.

Such a devotee is **bhaktimān** — full of devotion. And of such a person Bhagavān declares: **sa me priyaḥ** — “That devotee is very dear to Me.”

**12.18**

**śamaḥ(ś) śatrau ca mitre ca, tathā mānāpamānayoḥ,  
śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkheṣu, śamaḥ(s) saṅgavivarjitaḥ. 12.18**

He who deals equally with friend and foe, and is the same in honour and ignominy, who is alike in heat and cold, pleasure and pain and other contrary experiences, and is free from attachment.

One who sees enemy and friend alike, and remains steady in honor and dishonor — **sama-śatrau ca mitre ca** — is a person established in true equanimity. Such a one has learned to look upon both enemy and friend with balance. How does this become possible? It happens when the feeling of hostility no longer arises in the heart.

With **kartavya-bhāva** — the spirit of duty — one may even fight. There is a right to fight for **dharma**, for justice, for principles. The Bhagavad Gītā does not forbid fighting; in fact, it instructs Arjuna to fight. But while fighting, one must not nourish **vaira-bhāva** — a feeling of personal enmity

— toward anyone.

When a criminal like Kasab is given capital punishment, the judge who pronounces the sentence does not act out of personal hatred. He acts from a sense of justice. He understands that if such a person is left free, more innocent lives may be lost. Therefore, **deha-daṇḍa** (capital punishment) is given. Bhagavān does not hold such a judge guilty, because the punishment was delivered in **kartavya-bhāva**, in the spirit of duty. When punishment is administered in this spirit, the action does not remain **aśubha** (inauspicious or sinful); it becomes **śubha** (righteous and proper).

Even an act as severe as killing may become righteous when it is performed purely as duty, without personal motive. The judge acts with **nirveda** — detachment, without inner involvement — not with hatred. That is why he can sleep peacefully at night. But if someone harms another without just cause, sleep will not come easily. Unnecessary violence disturbs the conscience.

However, such authority is not given to individuals. The right to punish belongs to lawful institutions — to the police and to the courts — not to private persons. One cannot justify personal aggression by saying, “Bhagavān has told us to take up arms, so let us attack anyone we wish.” That is not His teaching.

Bhagavān says: **śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkheṣu samaḥ** — remain balanced in heat and cold, pleasure and pain — **saṅga-vivarjitaḥ** — free from attachment. In happiness and sorrow, in gain and loss, one who remains **samaḥ** (equal-minded), free from **saṅga** — the possessive feeling of “This is mine” — is truly detached. To release that clinging attachment is to become **saṅga-vivarjitaḥ**.

Such a person, steady, detached, and free from hostility, is dear to Bhagavān.

Bhagavān also says:

## 12.19

### **tulyanindāstutirmaunī, santuṣṭo yena kenacit, aniketaḥ(s) sthīRāmatiḥ(r), bhaktimānme priyo naraḥ. 12.19**

He who takes praise & criticism alike, and is given to contemplation and is contented with any means of subsistence available, entertaining no sense of ownership and attachment in respect of his dwelling-place and is full of devotion to Me, that person is dear to Me.

If one becomes disturbed by criticism, then where is one’s steadiness? The person who rises above **nindā** (criticism) and **stuti** (praise) remains truly balanced. When someone praises him — places a garland around his neck, offers a bouquet, wraps a shawl over his shoulders, or speaks highly of him — he feels very happy. And when someone insults him, he becomes sad. But the one who remains **tulya** (equal and balanced) in both situations — that person is steady. If someone criticizes him and he still smiles, he is strong.

Once, a small boy came crying. The boy said, “He teased me.” He asked, “Did you get irritated?” The boy replied, “Yes.” He said, “Then you lost. If you had not become irritated, he would have lost. He teased you so that you would react. Your irritation was his victory. If you want to win, you must stop reacting. Next time he teases you, just respond calmly.”

The boy said, “He called me an elephant.” The child was a little overweight. He told him, “Just say, ‘I come from a well-fed home,’ and see what happens.”

The next week, the boy came running to him at school. He said, “Sir, what you said — it works!” He asked, “What did I say? I forgot.” The boy replied, “I answered, ‘I come from a well-fed home.’ His face became so small. He lost. I won.”

If one becomes irritated by *nindā* (criticism), one is losing. One must learn how to win. The Bhagavad Gītā teaches victory. Therefore Bhagavān says:

**tulya-nindā-stutiḥ maunī** — equal in criticism and praise, inwardly silent.

**santuṣṭaḥ** — content in every situation.

**aniketaḥ** — without attachment to residence or home. (Niketa means house; one who is unattached even to one’s own dwelling is called *aniketaḥ*.)

Just like Bhagavān Śaṅkara. On Mount Kailāsa there is immense wealth — even Kubera was astonished upon seeing it. Yet Bhagavān Śiva does not live in attachment to that palace. He goes and sits in the cremation ground — *aniketaḥ*, unattached to any fixed abode. That is why one of the names of Lord Śiva is *Aniketa* (the Unattached One).

The whole family — *Pārvatī*, *Gaṇeśa*, and *Kārtikeya* — are adorned with crowns of gold and jewels. But Bhagavān Himself wears a garland of skulls, a **rudrākṣa-mālā** (garland of sacred beads), and a serpent around His neck. No attachment. No **saṅga** (clinging attachment). Completely **saṅga-vihīna** (free from attachment). Fully **santuṣṭaḥ** (content). **Aniketaḥ** (unattached). **Sthira-matiḥ** (one whose mind and intellect are steady).

Those whose **mati** (understanding) has become steady, whose **buddhi** (intellect) is firm — such people are very dear to Him.

**bhaktimān me priyaḥ naraḥ** — the devoted person is dear to Me.

And in the final verse, Bhagavān says...

## 12.20

**ye tu dharmyāmṛtamidaṁ(ṡ), yathoktaṁ(m) paryupāsate,  
śraddadhānā matparamā, bhaktāste'tīva me priyāḥ.12.20.**

Those devotees, however, who partake in a disinterested way of this nectar of pious wisdom set forth above, endowed with faith and solely devoted to Me, they are extremely dear to me.

But those who take refuge in Him — those devotees who follow this **dharmya-amṛtam** (the righteous nectar of dharma), **yathoktam** (exactly as spoken), **idam yathoktam** (this teaching as it has been declared), and who **upāsate** (worship, follow, and live by it), walking on that path with faith — **śraddadhānāḥ** (full of faith), **mat-paramāḥ** (taking Him as the Supreme Goal) — such devotees become very dear to Him.

**Bhaktāḥ te atīva me priyāḥ** — Such devotees are extremely dear to Bhagavān.

## Question and Answers

### 1. Purvi ji

Q: I understood that to attain Bhagavān there are three paths — karma (action), bhakti (devotion), and jñāna (knowledge). Bhagavān has said that those who practice bhakti (devotion) are most dear to Him. But when I began to understand the Gita more deeply, I saw that the Gita was spoken when

Arjuna had given up his weapons, and Bhagavān instructed him to perform karma (action). Bhagavān inspired Arjuna to act. So logically, should not those who perform karma (action) be more dear to Bhagavān?

Then why does Bhagavān say that those who practice bhakti (devotion) are most dear to Him? Why does this seem like a contradiction?"

**A:** Absolutely not. In the Gita, Bhagavān teaches that you must perform all karma (actions), but renounce the phala (results) of those actions. By renouncing the results and offering them to Him, one becomes perfect. To reach the highest goal, there are three paths: karma-yoga (the path of selfless action), bhakti-yoga (the path of devotion), and jñāna-yoga (the path of knowledge). If you look at these three paths externally, they may seem to move in different directions — as if one goes from east to west and another from west to east. But their destination is the same — the peak. Which path you take depends on where you are standing. Arjuna stands as a warrior, a kṣatriya (member of the warrior class). Therefore, Lord Krishna teaches him accordingly and inspires him toward karma-yoga (selfless action). But whether you follow karma-yoga, bhakti-yoga, or jñāna-yoga, in the end all reach the same summit. All travelers, though coming from different directions, arrive at the same peak. And the most beautiful truth is this: whether you begin with karma-yoga or jñāna-yoga, as you approach the summit, the path gradually becomes one. In the end, it becomes bhakti-yoga (the path of loving devotion).

That is why Sri Krishna especially glorifies bhakti-yoga.

Śabarī was performing karma (action), but her action was ahaituka (without selfish motive, causeless). There was no svārtha (self-interest) in what she did. Because of that, her action did not remain mere karma (ordinary action); it became karma-yoga (selfless action offered to the Divine). There is a difference between karma (action) and karma-yoga (selfless action). Karma done with selfish desire binds. Karma-yoga is niṣkāma (without personal desire) and free from svārtha (selfishness). That is why that path too ultimately leads toward the Infinite.

**Q:** When I was young, I used to do a lot of bhakti (devotion). Later, after understanding the Gita, I felt that God inspires us to do karma (action), so I began to believe more in karma. I still do devotion, but now I focus more on action. When I was more into devotion in my younger days, I used to cry a lot, even over small things. But now, after following the path of action more seriously, I do not cry as much. So my question is: Is this change because I have grown older? Or does the spiritual path we follow — bhakti or karma — influence our personality and emotions?

**A:** Usually with age people become more emotional. As they grow older, they may cry more easily. But what is happening in your case is different. You have understood karma-yoga (the path of selfless action). It is not just karma (action). When the word yoga (union with the Divine) is added to karma, the action becomes free from selfish motive. It becomes niṣkāma karma (desireless action). There is no svārtha (self-interest) in it. You begin to take joy in the action itself. Naturally, your mati (understanding) becomes steady. Being overly sentimental, becoming too emotional, crying over everything — you slowly rise above that. You offer all actions and all their phala (results) to Bhagavān. You say, "This is Your will. I accept it naturally." This is sahaja-svīkāra (natural acceptance). When this feeling of acceptance comes into the mind, control over emotional impulses increases. The buddhi (intellect) begins to guide the manas (mind). Your viveka (discrimination, wisdom) becomes deeper. And naturally, excessive crying stops on its own. You are moving in the right direction. Continue walking steadily on this path.

**Q:** Last time you said that one should not get angry. But now, even Bhagavān got angry — on Śiśupāla and on Aśvatthāmā. And we are ordinary humans. Naturally, we feel anger at times. Sometimes, when reasoning or explaining does not work, a single expression of anger seems to make things happen. So what should we think about this?

**A:** It may seem that Bhagavān got angry, but actually, Bhagavān did not get angry — He only performed the drama of anger (krodha-nāṭaka). You may have heard how people describe Śiva — one

moment He is terrifying (abhayaṅkara), the next moment He is the destroyer (pralayaṅkara). Does that mean He really gets angry? No. Even when He performs tāṇḍava (cosmic dance), He is called Naṭarāja — the supreme actor. There is a big difference between acting anger and actual anger. When we lose our temper, the krodha (anger) inside us erupts: Face turns red, Hands and legs tremble, Blood pressure rises, Pulse races, But when a mother pretends to scold a child, her heart is full of prema (love). She is not angry in reality; she raises her voice or widens her eyes as a drama, so the child improves. Through krodha-nāṭaka (the drama of anger), people can be corrected. But real anger (krodha) harms. You are trapped within yourself, unaware of what you are saying, and it only creates suffering. So, when Bhagavān displayed anger in the past — like with Śiśupāla — that was krodha-nāṭaka, not real anger. This is very important to understand: just because Bhagavān acted angry does not give us the right to be angry. Many other things that Bhagavān did are beyond us. He said to us: akrodha (non-anger). Control your anger. Do not imitate Him superficially — “Bhagavān played the flute, so I will stand on one leg and play the flute too.” That is not the point. Anger is harmful: It brings you near the doors of hell, It harms your health, Raises blood pressure, Affects sugar levels, Bhagavān has given many ways to overcome anger. The most important is the path of yoga (ṣaṣṭha-adhyāya onward).

Even when Bhagavān ultimately killed Śiśupāla, He had controlled Himself a hundred times before. On the hundred-and-first occasion, He acted because He knew it was enough. We should understand this: just because Bhagavān acted does not mean we have the right to act in anger.

Controlling anger is essential. Last week, I asked you to observe your own anger. If you did, that is good. If not, start now. Even if your anger arises occasionally, it can harm you. The way to control it is yoga — controlling your breath. Through prāṇāyāma, control over anger comes naturally.

## 2. Nandkishor Ji

Q: Reacting to stimuli is the natural quality of all living beings. We know that in human s there are always nine permanent bhāvas (emotions): rati (pleasure, love), utsāha (enthusiasm, energy), krodha (anger), dveṣa (hatred, dislike), viṣmaya (wonder, amazement), nirveda (detachment, disinterest), hāsya (laughter, joy), bhayānaka (fear, terror), karuṇya (compassion, pity), When a stimulus arises, reacting to it is the sahaja svabhāva (natural tendency) of the living being. But to remain: tulya-nindā-stutiḥ (balanced in criticism and praise), maunī (inwardly silent), santuṣṭaḥ (content), yena kenacit sthiramatiḥ (steady-minded in any situation), bhaktimān me priyaḥ (a devotee dear to Me)—while facing stuti (praise) and nindā (criticism), śīta (cold) and uṣṇa (heat), or friend and enemy with equal understanding — is extremely difficult.

**A:** Reacting is one thing, and responding is another. There is an important difference between reaction (pratikriya) and response (pratisaṃkṣepa). A reaction is given without thinking. A response is given after careful thought and understanding. That is why, in the next chapters, Bhagavān teaches that when you begin your sādhana (spiritual practice), you should: Sit straight, Control your prāṇā (breath, inhalation and exhalation), When these controls become established, you naturally begin to respond instead of react. Responding is natural, but our duty as humans is to use our viveka (discernment, wisdom). It is very important to awaken this viveka and keep it active. This awakening of discernment and steady awareness is called yoga.

When we walk on this path, we can, following Bhagavān’s instructions, overcome the sahaja-bhāvas (natural instincts) given to us by our tri-guṇātmak prakṛti (three-gun nature).

## 3. Arun Ji

Q: When Bhagavān says, “I have already killed everyone, now you just fight,” it does not literally mean He has killed people. What does it really mean?

**A:** Last week I explained this: when Bhagavān says, “I have already killed them,” it does not literally mean that Kṛṣṇa killed them Himself. Throughout the Mahābhārata, whenever a statement is made by Bhagavān, it is often written as Vāsudeva uvāca (“Vāsudeva said”). Vāsudeva, the son of Vasudeva, refers to Kṛṣṇa Himself. But in the eighteen chapters of the Bhagavad Gita, it is written Bhagavān

uvāca (“The Lord said”) instead of Vāsudeva uvāca. This shows that the divine truth (bhagavat-tattva) was revealed through the lips of Kṛṣṇa. So when it says Bhagavān uvāca, it means the Lord — the controller of the past, present, and future — is speaking. Bhagavān knows everything: Who will die, and when, What is someone’s prārabdha (destined portion of karma), The time of death for every person is already known to Bhagavān.

For example, when Kṛṣṇa went to Duryodhana’s court to reason with him, Duryodhana did not understand and even tried to bind the Lord.

As Ramdhari Singh Dinkar beautifully wrote in his poem: when Duryodhana tried to bind Him, Bhagavān assumed His Virāṭa-rūpa (universal form). Duryodhana could not bind Him. At the same time, Bhagavān told Duryodhana: the bodies lying scattered — your body will be among them. This was a prediction: Duryodhana’s death was certain. Bhagavān, in His Bhagavat form, always knows past, present, and future. So when Bhagavān says:

māyā hetān svam jarimāviśiṣṭaḥ yuddha-svajeṭa asti (I have already killed them), it means: their death is determined by niyati (divine destiny). They are destined to die, and you just act — that is the intended meaning.

#### 4. Subhash Ji

Q: I have memorized the entire Bhagavad Gita, all eighteen chapters, second chapter, etc. I am learning from what you are doing; I am at Level One. My question is: what I used to do earlier — should I stop everything now and only listen to Suvarna Ji’s videos and practice speaking for the future? Or should I continue doing what I used to do earlier and also do this new practice at the same time — combining both together?

**A:** This is a very good question. Even what I memorized as a child — when I speak now, like the shlokas I just recited — there is a possibility of mistakes. This is because what I memorized back then has become more permanent in my speech, and therefore there is no real mistake in it. If I adjust the anusvāra (nasal sound) in pronunciation, there is no grammatical error either. But a better version exists — the one with more precise pronunciation. Now that we are formally learning in the Gita family, we are making an effort to pronounce every anusvāra correctly. If an anusvāra is pronounced slightly differently than the best version, it is not a problem. Grammatically it is still correct. The effort is simply to move toward more purity in pronunciation. The more accurately we pronounce the mantras, the more benefit we receive from them. The Bhagavad Gita is the word of Bhagavān Himself, so naturally these words become mantras. When we speak the Gita correctly, many defects within us are automatically reduced. For example: yesterday a woman came and said her cancer was healed. Another woman, who had been paralyzed for 28 years, said that after speaking the Gita for one and a half years, her face even improved. Many people who could not speak before have started speaking. The power of correct mantra pronunciation is such that it even removes inner faults. So continue the effort to be correct. But if mistakes happen, do not feel guilty. Bhagavān is very forgiving and only loves. Even if your pronunciation is not perfect, He will love it — just like a mother loves a child even if the child speaks incorrectly. So trust that even if your pronunciation has mistakes, Bhagavad Gītā Māta (the Gītā as Mother) will still love you.

#### 5. Jyotimay Ji

Q: I am a person in the force; seeing blood does not disturb me. I have seen a lot in my work. But last Sunday, I saw a situation — a snake had caught a woman (madam). I was thinking of freeing her, but someone said, “It is the snake’s food.” I was confused: should I rescue her or not? I could not decide that night. Please clarify this for me.

**A:** This is the cycle of creation (sṛṣṭi-cakra), and it will continue endlessly. Every living being acts according to its own nature. Especially, all animals — except humans — do not kill unnecessarily. No animal kills for no reason.

A lion, for example, will remain calm if it is not hungry; it does not attack anyone unnecessarily. Their role is to maintain the cycle of creation. We should not interfere in that. But if a human attacks someone without duty, out of hatred or malice, causing unnecessary harm, then it becomes our responsibility to stop them. For example, on the border, if a terrorist crosses and you shoot to protect your duty — you have acted correctly; there is no fault there. In your case with the snake: a frog being caught by a snake is part of the natural cycle. There is no reason for you to interfere. If your mind is upset or you feel very emotional, that is different — but then going and killing the snake would create more problems. Killing the snake to save the frog would be taking one life to save another, which disturbs the natural balance. So this is all a matter of viveka (discernment). Use your wisdom to decide. Observe the situation carefully. Respond only when it is necessary and appropriate. In the situation you saw, the best action was not to react at all.

We conduct classes for prisoners. One day, during a Zoom meeting with prisoners from many jails, a prisoner said to me: “Very good, you have taught us the Bhagavad Gītā.” At that moment, I realized that some people think: the Gītā teaches us to destroy enemies, so one might even start thinking of harming others. I told him: “Brother, you are misunderstanding. Studying the Bhagavad Gītā does not mean that while reading it you start harming anyone. That is not its purpose.” The Gītā was given to Arjuna, who was standing on the battlefield as a kṣatriya (warrior). A kṣatriya has the authority to deliver punishment in battle, according to duty. But you are not a kṣatriya today. Today, the modern kṣatriyas are the police or our soldiers. They have the right to fight or act as per their duty. If you want to act, you must follow proper channels — you can file a complaint, go to court, or take legal action. If, instead, the thought of harming someone comes in your mind, it shows that the seed of resentment (bair) has entered your heart. This bair ka kāñṭhā (thorn of resentment) will not let you sleep peacefully. Until this thorn is removed, you cannot live happily.

Understand this well: Bhagavān Himself says — nirvṛta-starū bhūd-deśu yastamāmeti pāṇḍava—so you should also try to become detached. This is the most important lesson for you from Bhagavān. The prisoner’s eyes filled with tears, and he said: “I never thought of it that way; what you said is absolutely correct.”

So, it is very important to understand who has what authority, and to act only according to dharma and duty.

## 6. Sunita Dipti Ji

**Q:** When I was about twelve or thirteen, this question started arising in my mind — Who am I? We are born, we die, and this cycle continues. If we perform good karma, we may attain mokṣa (liberation) or union with Bhagavān. But even then, I wonder: what is our true existence? What are we really? Who are we? It seems like... we have no real existence.

**A:** The answer comes in short, but it is profound: We are nothing by ourselves. We are only a part of Bhagavān, a portion of the Paramātmā (Supreme Soul) present within us.

Adi Shankaracharya wrote a beautiful sutra about this: “I am neither the eyes, nor the ears, I am neither the nose nor the tongue, Neither the mind nor the intellect, Neither the ego nor the senses of action, Nor the senses of knowledge — then who am I?” The answer is: “Śivo’ham, Śivo’ham” — I am that Śiva, a small form of the Supreme, the divine essence within me. This is the true identity of the soul. But discovering this answer took long meditation and inquiry by the sages: They repeatedly asked, “Who am I? Who am I?” With every breath, the question arose, and gradually, the answer came: “I am That, I am That, I am That.” Then they questioned: “Am I this body? Am I the mind?” The answer was: No, not this, not this... Step by step, everything was eliminated, until the final truth remained: We are a part of the Supreme Soul, the true nature of the ātman. Śivo’ham, Śivo’ham — I am Śiva, the divine essence. You can hear the answer, but you cannot experience it fully until the Gita is lived in your life. That is why the Swamiji says: Read the Gita, teach it, and then bring it into your life. As the Gita becomes part of your life, the answer to “Who am I?” becomes clear and direct.

## 7. Pramod Ji

Q: In Sabari's marriage, she was serving meat to people at the wedding and then left the house. On the other hand, a robber (Valiya) was looting people to run his household. When he went home, people told him, "We are not participating in the bad karma you are doing; your actions are yours." Later, his mind changed, and he became Rishi Valmiki.

I am a little confused about this — could you please clarify?

**A:** After observing the situation, here's the thing about both of them: Śabarī is a small girl. When a small child thinks, emotions of apology or guilt naturally arise in her mind — like, "Oh, because of me, they are dying." Small children are very emotional (bhāva-abhiśva), and their feelings are naturally intense (saṃvṛddha). So for Śabarī, feeling this way is not wrong at all. If the men were being killed, Śabarī herself did not acquire any sin (pāpa); the sin would have belonged to their fathers. This is natural. Because of this delicate feeling (komal bhāva), Śabarī runs away.

Valya, who later becomes Valmīki, is mature (praudha) and understands the situation clearly. His feelings are different from Śabarī's. One cannot combine Śabarī's feelings with Valya's — both are separate (bhāva-alag).

Valya clearly understood that: "My fault is my own fault, and no one else is a participant."

Now, when Śabarī grows up, perhaps the situation would have been different. But as a child, this was her natural response. Also, consider that in Śabarī's life, her body itself might have been given by a yogi in her previous birth, who had unfinished karma and wanted to complete it through devotion (bhakti). So the feeling that arises in Śabarī's mind — reflecting many past-life sanskāras (mental imprints, or latent tendencies).

## 8. Daivam ji

Q: Can karma exist within bhakti?

**A:** Yes, it is absolutely possible. Also, keep this in mind: when any person is born, from birth to death, karma never leaves them. Even when you are sleeping, you are performing the karma of breathing. Right now, as you sit and listen, you are doing the karma of listening and the karma of sitting. So, every moment, you are performing some karma — there is no escape from karma. The key point is: when you connect your karma with Bhagavān's purpose, it becomes bhakti. For example: if you study only to be first in class, that is selfish, not bhakti. But if you study to please Bhagavān, thinking, "I will study well, and Bhagavān will be pleased," then that feeling transforms your study into bhakti. So every action can be turned into bhakti. This is exactly what Bhagavān says in the Gita: "Mat-karma paramaḥ bhava" — Begin performing actions for Me, and your welfare is assured.

## 9. Giriraj Ji

Q: How should we choose our guru? We do not understand this.

**A:** If there is a deep desire (utkāṣa icchā) in the mind to find a guru, then the guru will appear near you in some form. For now, Kṛṣṇa Mukunde, Jagatguru — that is, Kṛṣṇa as the world teacher — is guiding you, and the Bhagavad Gita itself is giving you guidance. The real human gurus, when they appear, come with their authenticity. Their arrival happens at the right time. As soon as the right time comes, you will receive your guru.

Meanwhile, continue to follow the path of the Gita with faith (śraddhā). The guru will eventually come near you automatically. Having a guru has a great benefit: we often walk in darkness, but the guru holds our hand and helps us move forward quickly out of that darkness. So, the advantage of having a guru is certainly very significant.

## Question

How will I understand "these are my gurus"?

## Answer

Keep one thing in mind: choose as your guru only those who are selfless (nirapekṣa). If someone comes with expectations (apekṣā), even small ones, they cannot be your guru — they are like a shopkeeper. You will recognize your true guru when you see a person who is highly spiritual but has no expectations, guides you with a selfless attitude, gives health, gives love, and supports your spiritual path. Such a person will naturally come close to you as your guru. But be careful: there are many traps and misleading people, so wait patiently, observe carefully, and only accept someone as your guru when all your doubts and problems are cleared. Until then, Bhagavān Himself is your guru.

## 10. Panduranga Ji

Q1: Can you briefly explain the difference between karma and karma-yog?

A: The difference between karma and karma-yoga is as follows: This is a beautiful question, and I'll take a little time to explain. In the third chapter, this is explained very clearly: Karma, vikarma, and akarma — three kinds of actions are described. Understanding the nature of karma is deep and subtle.

1. **Karma** (action done with some self-interest): Example: You do something because your intellect (buddhi) says do it, but your mind (manas) is reluctant — lazy, bored, or unwilling. But you do it anyway because there is some benefit or necessity — like going to work, running a shop, or doing a job because your payment depends on it. Here, some self-interest (swarth) is involved. That is karma.

2. **Vikarma** (wrong action): Here, the mind says do it, but the intellect says no, warning that it is wrong, unfit, or will harm your nature. Example: Watching random reels endlessly, where the mind wants to continue, but the intellect warns that this is wasting time or harming you. When mind dominates and intellect is dragged along, the action creates vices and defects. This is vikarma — actions leading to distortion.

3. **Akarma** (karma-yoga): Akarma doesn't mean doing nothing. It means acting without selfish expectation. You do the work, but the result is surrendered to God — "Whatever happens, I am happy with it." Here, self-interest is gone, and your actions are often for the welfare of others. When actions are done with this attitude of surrender, it becomes karma-yoga. So:

Karma = action with self-interest

Vikarma = action against intellect, causing harm

Akarma = selfless action, surrendered to God = karma-yoga

When in akarma, the intellect (buddhi) says "do it" and the mind (manas) willingly follows, then both mind and intellect are coordinated, and the action happens effortlessly. The one who practices karma-yoga (the karma-yogī) acts in akarma — here, mind and intellect move together in harmony. Because of this coordination and alignment, such a person attains victory and the grace of Bhagavān.

Q2: Bhagavān says, "I have already killed everyone; you just lift the daśaśakti and finish them off." So my question is — does Bhagavān also have ego (ahaṅkāra)? When Bhagavān says, "I am Bhagavān," is there ego even in Bhagavān?

**A:** When He says, "sarvadharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja" — "abandon all dharmas and take refuge only in Me" — it may seem like the greatest ego (ahaṅkāra). But He is not speaking as Kṛṣṇa the person; He is speaking as Bhagavattva, the Supreme Power. Through Kṛṣṇa's mouth, this divine, supreme reality is expressed. In the 15th chapter, you will understand what this Supreme Power really means. So the question of ego does not arise here.

## 11. Sunil Ji

Q:What is a shloka, what is a mantra, what is a tantra, and what is a yantra?

**A:** A mantra is something that, through tradition, has come down to us. These are already siddha (proven) because the rishis and sages experimented with them and perfected them. So, those mantras became siddha on their own and have been passed down to us. They became siddha

(perfected) and came down to us, like Om Namah Shivaya, or Śrī Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram, or Om Tryambakam Yajamahe Sugandhim mentioned in the Vedas. These are mantras that have already been perfected. Some mantras have been perfected by saints even in recent times. For example, in the last century, Sant Gajanan Maharaj used the “Gan Gan Ganat Bote” mantra. When a saint repeats a mantra again and again, that mantra also becomes siddha.

Once a mantra becomes siddha, it starts to produce results on the person who recites it. Similarly, the words of Bhagavan in the Gita themselves have become a mantra because they were spoken by God and later thousands of people repeated them many times, making them perfected.

The mantra you create by yourself will take a very long time to become siddha, because it hasn't been repeated as many times as the other established mantras. Perfecting it could take more time than one human life—90 years is not enough. Also, we are not saints, so we don't have the power to repeat a new mantra enough times to make it siddha.

Therefore, the best approach is to accept the siddha mantras that already exist, learn them from a guru, and recite them correctly. By doing this, you receive the perfected mantra, and its effects manifest in your life in the best way. This answers your first question.

**Shlokas** that are metrical or rhythmic—like the shlokas of the Bhagavad Gita—are called chhandabaddha. In the Vedas, there are ruchis, which may not follow a single meter or rhythm; they are in various meters.

**Mantras** may or may not be metrical, but when repeated continuously, they gain power and become effective as mantras. Similarly, other deities have **yantras**, which are symbolic diagrams representing their divine forms. For example, Śrī Yantra represents Goddess Lakshmi. A yantra is not the same as the verbal or literary form of a deity, like the Bhagavad Gita representing Lord Krishna's spoken words (vāk-maya form). The yantra is a visual representation of the deity, and its worship follows specific rituals. For instance, applying kumkum on the Shri Yantra is a prescribed method of worshipping Lakshmi. Proper worship of yantras yields significant spiritual benefits.

The difference between mantra, yantra, and tantra is important:

**Mantra:** Verbal repetition, recitation.

**Yantra:** Visual, geometric representation of the deity.

**Tantra:** A distinct and advanced knowledge system, obtained through rigorous practice. Tantra is powerful; if applied to good purposes, it is very beneficial. But if misused for selfish or harmful purposes, it becomes notorious. The essence is: tantra is a vast, potent science, and if studied and practiced carefully for its intended spiritual purpose, it yields great benefits. Misuse or casual practice can be harmful. That's why tantra education is not given casually, and one should not take it lightly.

Q2: We see how far the universe spreads out, but in reality, it seems everything is just matter—gas, metal, or something else. Where is God then? And here on Earth, we say there are seven levels above and seven below, making fourteen, but we haven't really measured them. How do we understand where God is in all this?

A: The answer is in the 15th chapter of the Gītā. Think of it like this: I'm wearing a watch. The watch has “Tata” written on it. Does that mean Tata personally made the watch, packed it, and assembled it? No. Tata is the company; the company has a plan, a process, a system, and through that system, the watch was created and reached us. Similarly, everything in the universe—the stars, planets, and all moving bodies—follows certain processes and laws. The reason everything moves and functions is because there is a cause behind it, just like Tata is behind the watch. Everything has a karma, a

reason, and an effect that is determined. The detailed explanation of where God resides and His true form is given in the 15th chapter. When you study that chapter carefully, you will understand it clearly. Keep your focus and continue studying.

## 12. Lata Ji

I studied the Bhagavad Gita and completed yoga training, and my mind feels very balanced. Seeing children doing advanced yoga at Vivas Yoga Shala inspires me. I feel young and capable, and I wonder if I can do something like your Gita revisions. Even when I see girls dancing Bharatanatyam, I feel I couldn't do that, but I feel I could do this. Why do I feel this way, and can I really do it?"

**A:** Chanchalam manah Krishna, prabhavati balavattaram, tasyaham nigraham manye, vayuriva sudushkaram."

Translation: "O Krishna, my mind is very restless, more difficult to control than the wind. How can I bring it under control?"

And Krishna replies:

"Asamsayam Mahabahu, tvaṁ yatamānam matam."

Translation: "Indeed, O mighty-armed Arjuna, your observation is correct—mind is restless and difficult to control. But there is one remedy: constant practice (abhyas). Keep trying; do not give up. With persistent effort, you can also achieve detachment (Vairāgya)."

So, like yoga asanas or chanting, controlling the mind may seem small at first, but with steady daily practice, even for short periods, one can reach mastery and eventually attain vairagya.

Key takeaway: Consistency in small efforts gradually trains the mind. Patience + practice = control and detachment.

The session concluded with prayers at the feet of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This was followed by the recitation of the Hanuman Chalisa.

**om tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu  
brahmavidyāyām(ṁ) yogaśāstre śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṁvāde  
bhaktiyogo nāma dvādaśo'dhyāyaḥ.**



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**Jai Shri Krishna!**

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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