

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 18: Mokṣa-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/oR8aZjkYY4E>

Follow your intuition to perform karma to perfection

The eighteenth chapter of Srimad Bhagavadgītā is called “**Moksha Sanyasa Yog**” — **The Yoga of Liberation and Renunciation.**

The session began with the auspicious lighting of lamps, followed by prayers and salutations to all. Jai Sri Krishna!

Last week, we reflected upon Part 4 of the eighteenth chapter of the Gītā, and today we continued our journey with Part 5 out of the six-part exploration. As we now approach the conclusion of this sacred learning journey, it feels as though we have begun to glimpse the Kalash, the sacred pinnacle atop the temple, reminding us that the final milestone is near and the temple of wisdom is almost within reach.

The speed towards completion has picked up pace irrespective of the tiredness of this mega journey. Seeing the pinnacle inspires one to bask in the bliss of having the darshan of the inner sanctum of the temple.

Let us pray to the Guru, without whose grace this sacred journey would be impossible.

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।

गुरुः साक्षात् परब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥

The Guru is Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva, verily the Supreme Brahman. I bow to that sacred Guru.

Salutations to all the Gurus, from AdiYogi Guru Maheshwar, Bhagavān Sri Krishna (Krishnam Vande Jagadgurum), the traditional lineage from Sri Adi Shankaracharya, and the Nath Parampara, an ancient Shaivite tradition focused on yoga, tantra, and self-realization.

We should remain completely devoted to the traditional lineages of our Gurus, whose wisdom has reached us through Sri Guru Govind Dev Ji Maharaj, whose divine capabilities continue to guide us on this path.

In the 45th verse discussed in our last session, we learned:

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः।

स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥18.45॥

“Being devoted to one’s own duty, a person attains complete success. Hear from Me how one devoted to one’s own duty achieves perfection.”

Bhagavān advised Arjuna to listen carefully to the mantra that leads one towards ultimate perfection. Around us, there are many who have attained the highest goal. The first step towards perfection is to diligently follow the nature of karma that arises from within one’s own self. Walking sincerely on the path of one’s innate duty leads to Yog and ultimately to perfection.

There is a difference between ‘karma’ and ‘karma yog.’

Actions performed for material wealth and worldly prosperity are called ‘karma,’ whereas actions performed for Paramātmā, without selfish expectation, become ‘karma yog.’

To transform our actions (karma) into karma yog, one only needs to change the intention of the mind. A teacher may be employed to teach and therefore receives a salary for the occupation. However, if the teacher possesses the noble feeling that he is serving Paramātmā, and that all children are forms of the Divine, then such action becomes a ‘yajna.’

There is a difference between ‘yajna’ and ‘dāna.’

Imparting knowledge as ‘dāna’ is one aspect, whereas imparting knowledge as ‘yajna’ is another. Teaching for the welfare of students is noble, but when the same act is performed as ‘jnāna yog’ or ‘jnāna yajna,’ it is no longer merely for the student, but as an offering unto Paramātmā. The essential spirit behind it is that knowledge is imparted as service to the Divine.

When students are envisioned as ‘Bāla Sri Krishna’ — Sri Krishna in child form — service naturally becomes sacred. Thus, imparting knowledge transforms into ‘jnāna yajna.’ To see the student merely as an individual and teach is ‘jnāna dāna’; but to see the student as Paramātmā and then impart knowledge is ‘jnāna yajna,’ considered the highest form of service.

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथापरे।

स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥14.28॥

“Some offer wealth as sacrifice, others austerity and yogic practices, while some, steadfast in their vows, offer self-study and knowledge as yajna.”

It is the perspective of the mind while performing actions according to one’s innate nature that leads towards perfection. This alone is karma yog, which ultimately takes one to the pinnacle.

The speaker narrated the story of a child deeply interested in drawing. During mathematics classes, the child would often sketch pictures on the back pages of his notebook. Teachers scolded him, and even his mother worried that he spent more time drawing than studying. However, the speaker perceived the child’s hidden potential and advised the parents to encourage and nurture his artistic gift instead of suppressing it.

Though initially unconvinced, the mother later witnessed how her child’s drawings consistently stood out during school exhibitions. The speaker guided the family towards institutions such as the National Institute of Design (NID) and NIFT. Eventually, the child gained admission to NIFT Patna. There, his

talent blossomed remarkably. He won prizes at state and national levels, receiving awards and recognition from distinguished dignitaries, including then Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Ji.

Later, the student pursued higher studies at IIT Guwahati and built a successful career, earning both professional recognition and financial stability. His innate skill, when properly identified and encouraged, became the source of his excellence and fulfillment.

Thus, when his pencil touched the paper, it became magic.

Once again, the verse stood proven:

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।
स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥18.45॥

“Being devoted to one’s own duty, a person attains complete success. Hear from Me how one devoted to one’s own duty achieves perfection.”

One must therefore recognize the innate abilities of children and encourage them appropriately, so that their hidden talents may blossom and lead them towards fulfillment and perfection.

18.46

**yataḥ(ph) pravṛttirbhūtānām(m), yena sarvamidaṁ(n) tatam,
sVākarmaṇā tamabhyarcya, siddhiṁ(m) vindati mānavaḥ. 18.46**

From whom all beings come into being and by whom the whole universe is pervaded, by worshipping Him through the performance of his own natural duties, man attains the highest perfection.

'Man reaches perfection by dedicating his actions to Bhagavān, Who is the source of all being, and fills everything.'

The natural proclivity when performed by dedicating actions to Paramātmā will naturally lead to no expectation of fruits of such actions.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥2.47॥

Your right is for action alone, never for the results. Do not become the agent of the results of action. May you not have any inclination for inaction.

When Bhagavān said this to Arjuna, HE did not mean that results for actions would not be obtained. HE was advised to continue doing his duty without expectation of the results, which would put him under stress.

People who work are under stress at times when they fail to receive the expectations of their actions. The 12th standard results were out. The newspaper carried articles of children committing suicide for not have received the expected results! How cheaply have we considered life based merely on 12st standard results!

The same day, a heartbroken child of the school approached the speaker. The child had got 72%. The speaker advised him to think over if he had put the maximum effort during the preparation for the exam. The child felt that with more effort from his side he would have got easily above 80%.

The speaker encouraged the child to put more effort the next time. Marks of class ten and twelve are not the determining factors of one's life. The innate skills should be brought out coupled with hard work. That is the mantra for perfection and achievement of one's goal. The associated hard work will be done happily without being prodded or reprimanded.

One will happily engage in activities that is to his liking and derive pleasure despite hours of work. Some become tired doing maths while on the contrary play football for hours together. This is because the skill is in playing football and hence does not mind the exhaustion and sweat, while half an hour of mathematics tires him completely.

That activity in which one tires is not his innate passion. In order to draw well, the lead from the pencil has to be brought out by sharpening the pencil. Similarly, the innate skill should be brought out to perform well. So it is important to know what passion resides within. Thus passion when stoked brings out the potential leading to perfection.

Thus, the recognition thereby achieved is far greater than mere marks in class ten or twelve. A child with a potential interest in music should be encouraged to channelize the potential by adequate training and practice. A child in the Speaker's school had passed a lot of music exams by the time he was in 12th standard. He got good marks and chose to do sound engineering at A R Rehman's college. Later, he got admission in a famous college in Spain.

His music was so good that the whole world recognized him!

18.47

**śreyānsvadharmo viguṇaḥ(ph), paradharmātsvanuṣṭhitāt,
svabhāvaniyataṃ(ñ) karma, kurvannāpnoti kilbiṣam. 18.47**

Better is one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than the duty of another well-performed; for, performing the duty ordained by his own nature, man does not incur sin.

'It is better to do one's own duty, however defective it may be, than to follow the duty of another, however well one may perform it. He who does his duty as his own nature reveals it, never sins.'

How to know what is the innate nature of karma that one should do. In an earlier verse Bhagavān had said:

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः।
तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम्॥4.13॥

The four divisions of society (the wise, the soldier, the merchant, the labourer) were created by ME, according to the natural distribution of Qualities and instincts. I am the author of them, though I MYSELF do no action, and am changeless.

There are four different parts. We should realize towards what tendency are our proclivities. One should understand the self and then proceed in that direction to attain the highest perfection. The innate nature of karma should be performed however defective it may be, as such karma would not entail sins.

Arjuna was a Kṣatriya and Bhagavān knew it. Right from childhood Arjuna focussed on archery and was taught by the greatest - Dronacharya. In the learning stages, the princes were asked by Dronacharya what they saw before they could take aim. Each replied what they saw viz tree, the branch of a tree where the parrot sat, a bunch of leaves, the parrot, etc. Only Arjuna was focussed as he saw only the eye of the

parrot which was the actual target. That was the Kṣatriya guna revealed by Arjuna!

The duty of a Kṣatriya is to protect the kingdom and fight for its cause by killing the traitors and terrorists. A Kṣatriya's job involves killing of the terrorists and Bhagavān told Arjuna to fight and destroy the traitors like Duryodhana. He along with Dushasana ill treated Draupadi by disrobing her in public. A Kṣatriya's duty is to annihilate such terrorists.

Thus by abiding the duties of a Kṣatriya, Arjuna was to kill such terrorists. They were already destined to die and Bhagavān wanted Arjuna to be an instrument for such action. Duryodhana was already destined to die. Bhagavān Sri Krishna went as a peace messenger on behalf of the pāṇḍavas to request Duryodhana to not go for war. He did not pay heed. Instead, he attempted to bind Sri Krishna by ropes. It was at that time Bhagavān took his '**Virat**'- huge form and envisioned Kurukshetra - the battlefield where dead bodies were seen.

All Arjuna had to do was to fulfill the task that was already envisioned by Bhagavān. It was not because Duryodhana was his enemy or because of injustice towards his wife Draupadi - it was a lesson for misbehaviour towards any woman. That is a Kṣatriya's duty and it was unfortunate that it was Duryodhana who was Arjuna's cousin whom he grew up with.

Without prejudice of friend or foe when Duryodhana was killed merely as an act of duty to protect the kingdom and its inmates, then such a killing would not incur sin.

गुरूनहत्वा हि महानुभावान्
श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके।
हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरूनिहैव
भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान्॥2.5॥

Rather than killing the noble-minded elders, it is better in this world to live even on alms. But by killing the elders we shall only be enjoying here the pleasures of wealth and desirable things drenched in blood.

This was Arjuna's feeling and in ch 18 verse 47, Bhagavān had assured that such an action would not incur sin. Dronacharya may be the guru of Arjuna but he stood with those who were a part of injustice and malice. Hence he should also be killed.

A child's mother may be hump backed and crippled. He will not leave her and run towards the most beautiful woman in the world. The child would only love his mother. Similarly, whatever may be the action (in the case of Kṣatriya - Killing of enemies); if that is one's duty or line of action; it should be performed, as it is for his own welfare.

However much ghee is regarded as the best, the fish has to swim only in water and not in ghee. The water is the source of life for the fish.

Ghee may be:

1. Good in terms of quality
2. It is costly
3. It is tasty

If the fish decides to live in ghee then its death is confirmed. One has to follow one's own line of duty and not be attracted towards that of others. Arjuna desired to leave his duty and live the life of a saint. Bhagavān advised him otherwise. One has to follow his '**swadharma**' - line of duty and his actions will not incur sin.

The insects which thrive in dirt cannot be placed in jaggery. They will perish. Similarly, Bhagavān told Arjuna that many people are bound to die by the battering of Arjuna's arrows. He was advised not to worry as being a Kṣatriya he was bound by his duty and he would only be following it. Hence he will not incur sin by killing men.

This was mentioned in chapter 3 as well:

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात्।

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः॥13.35॥

Better is one's own duty, though ill-done, than the duty of another well-performed. Better is death in one's own duty; the duty of another is fraught with fear.

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम्।

तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः॥12.37॥

If slain, you shall win heaven; or if victorious, you shall enjoy the earth. Therefore, arise, O Arjuna, resolve to fight.

18.48

**sahajaṃ(ñ) karma kaunteya, sadoṣamapi na tyajet,
sarvārambhā hi doṣeṇa, dhūmenāgnirivāvṛtāḥ. 18.48**

Therefore, Arjuna, one should not relinquish one's innate duty, even though it has a measure of evil; for all undertakings are beset by some evil, as is the fire covered by smoke.

'One should not relinquish one's works, O Arjuna, though it may be imperfect; for, all enterprises are enveloped by imperfections as fire by smoke.'

This is a verse with very profound meaning!

There is another meaning which says actions are ordained upon birth. It does not refer to the caste upon birth. At the time of birth one may have the DNA of the Mama who would be a trader while the father would be a doctor.

That which easily and naturally comes out as a tendency should be done. One would have all the qualities to perform such actions, hence it is advised to do. Even if one is not enabled to perform such actions, and would result in imperfections, it should not be abandoned.

The advise of Bhagavān is crystal clear without any room for doubt. All actions entail defects or imperfections. One may be rich and decide to not perform any action but only sleep. The evil thoughts in the dreams also can make one imperfect.

All actions have imperfections:

- In agriculture, while ploughing the land, a lot of insects and worms die under the plough.
- While cooking, one uses fire, due to which some insects die because of the heat.
- While walking, innumerable tiny beings get stamped and killed by our foot.
- In yajna and havan, the fire causes heat in which small insects die.
- Fire is considered sacred but it emanates smoke which limits its intensity.
- The cow is milked for commercial gains instead of feeding the calf.
- A teacher imparts knowledge for salary. In our culture it is not considered right to gain money for imparting knowledge.

We might be performing a yajna, but if the wood has moisture, it results in smoke which waters our

eyes. Hence, all actions have imperfections. Arjuna's duty of a Kṣatriya involves killing of people to restore order.

One should perform actions as one's duty and offer them to Bhagavān. This become yog and hence will not incur sin despite actions having imperfections.

18.49

**asaktabuddhiḥ(s) sarvatra, jitātmā vigataspr̥haḥ,
naiṣkarmyasiddhiḥ(m) paramāṃ(m), sannyāsenādhigacchati. 18.49**

He whose intellect is unattached everywhere, whose thirst for enjoyment has altogether disappeared and who has subdued his mind, reaches through Sāṅkhyayoga (the path of Knowledge) the consummation of actionlessness.

'He whose mind is entirely detached, who has conquered himself, whose desires have vanished, by his renunciation reaches that stage of perfect freedom where action completes itself and leaves no seed.'

It is a great thing to have no desires (greed, attachment, etc) for the self and thereby win over the mind. Such a person attains perfect freedom.

Bhagavān had earlier said:

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः।

कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत्॥16.21॥

This door of hell, which is the destroyer of the soul, is of three kinds-passion, anger and also greed. Therefore one should forsake these three.

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः।

महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम्॥3.37॥

Bhagavān Sri Krishna said, 'It is desire, it is aversion, born of passion. Desire consumes and corrupts everything. It is man's greatest enemy.'

One has to learn to control the senses. The sixth chapter extensively deals with the control of the senses.

- spr̥haḥ - desires
- jitātmā - who has subdued his self
- naiṣkarmyasiddhiḥ - the perfection consisting in freedom from action. The synonym is 'Akarma'.

One should know the difference between:

1. **Akarma - Action performed without expectation of the fruits which is totally selfless and hence 'naiṣkarma.' Karma yog without attachment. One can attain knowledge through karma yog. One can drown in a dream and find himself safe on awakening. It is only with the knowledge of the self, realization occurs. It is a matter of perception.**

Karma performed with imperfections when done selflessly is rid of sin and one should understand this. The kalash has been installed in the temple, the river Ganges merges with the ocean, and impurities removed from gold - all are purifying for the purpose of perfection.

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते।

तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥4.38॥

There is nothing in the world so purifying as wisdom; and he who is a perfect saint finds that at last in his own Self.

Knowledge of the self can only be experienced and not attained and is the highest goal of a human. With respect to actions, one should be selfless. Offer all the actions to Bhagavān without desiring any result for the self. One will always be rewarded more than expected; but expectation and attachment to the results, should be shunned.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥2.47॥

Your right is for action alone, never for the results. Do not become the agent of the results of action. May you not have any inclination for inaction.

A Babool tree (Gum Arabic tree) will not yield mangoes. Similarly, the fruits of actions are already decided. If one desires all the mangoes for the self and plants a mango sapling, then perhaps one may be disappointed. The results of actions are always sweet, but one should not yearn for it.

2. Vikarma - Action against the laws of nature or that which is forbidden.

3. Karma - Actions prescribed in the vedas and one's rightful duties resulting in welfare of all.

18.50

**siddhiṃ(m) prāpto yathā brahma, tathāpnoti nibodha me,
samāsenaiḥ kaunteya, niṣṭhā jñānasya yā parā. 18.50**

Arjuna, know from Me only briefly the process through which man having attained actionlessness, which is the highest consummation of Jñānayoga (the path of Knowledge), reaches Brahma.

'Understand for certain from HIM, in brief indeed, O son of Kunti, that process by which one who has achieved success attains Brahman, which is the Supreme consummation of Knowledge.'

Selfless action is the ultimate which leads to knowledge of the self thus realizing Brahman. This leads to moksha.

18.51

**buddhyā viśuddhayā yukto, dhṛtyātmānaṃ(n) niyamya ca,
śabdādīnviṣayāṃstyaktvā, rāga dveṣau vyudasya ca. 18.51**

Endowed with a pure intellect and partaking of a light, Sāttvika and regulated diet, living in a lonely and undefiled place, having rejected sound and other objects of sense,

The most important words used are:

- śabdādīn - sound and other
- viṣayān - sense-objects
- tyaktvā - relinquishing

'Being endowed with a pure intellect, and controlling oneself with fortitude, rejecting the objects-beginning from sound [Sound, touch, form and colour, taste and smell], and eliminating attachment and hatred;'

Bhagavān stressed the sound originating from the mouth and included the other senses like sight, hearing, smell, and touch as general. To control our words is the most difficult. We sometimes hurt others by use of forceful words. We should never bring agony to others by the use of our words.

Control of our words is a kind of penance (Tapa).

18.52

**viviktasevī laghvāśī, yatavākkāyamānaḥ,
dhyānayogaparo nityaṃ(m), vairāgyaṃ(m) samupāśritaḥ. 18.52**

having controlled the mind, speech and body by restraining the mind and senses through firmness of a Sāttvika type, taking a resolute stand on dispassion, after having completely got rid of attraction and aversion and remaining ever devoted to the Yoga of meditation,

"One who resorts to solitude, eats sparingly, has speech, body and mind under control, to whom meditation and concentration are ever the highest (duty), and who is possessed of dispassion;"

The demonic qualities as described in chapter 16 are hypocrisy, arrogance, pride, anger, harshness, ignorance, greed, and disregard for scriptures.

18.53

**ahaṅkāraṃ(m) balaṃ(n) darpaṃ(ñ), kāmaṃ(ñ) krodhaṃ(m) parigrahaṃ,
vimucya nirmamaḥ(ś) śānto, brahmabhūyāya kalpate. 18.53**

having given up egotism, violence, arrogance, lust, anger and luxuries, devoid of the feeling of meum and tranquil of heart-such a man becomes qualified for oneness with Brahma, who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss.

'That person, having discarded egotism, force, pride, desire, anger and superfluous possessions, free from the idea of possession, and serene, is fit for becoming Brahmān.'

One should transcend the demonic qualities and be dispassionate. The above three verses summarise the learning of the gītā in short. One should follow:

- **Yama - control of the senses.**
- **Niyama - follow principles and remove the demonic qualities of the self.**
- **Eating sparingly helps one to control the senses and objects of the world.**
- **Satvik concentration (dharana) helps one to control the mind.**
- **To be dispassionate. One should love but be controlled by wisdom and not have blind affection. Eg. that of king Drithrashtra towards his sons. Affection must be duty bound and not mere attachment. A mother who takes her child to task for committing mistakes is directed to bring her child in the right way. She does not hold grouse. Her wisdom enables her to check on her child so that he does not repeat such mistakes in future. Drithrashtra on the other hand was so overcome with**

affection that knowing fully well that his son Duryodhana was wrong, he did not make an effort to correct him, instead supported him throughout.

Thus Bhagavān described in detail the steps from **sadhana (practice) to siddhi (perfection)**.
What are they?

- To remain in solitude.
- Eat sparingly.
- To meditate and do yoga.

This leads to self realization.

18.54

**brahmabhūtaḥ(ph) prasannātmā, na śocati na kāṅkṣati,
śamaḥ(s) sarveṣu bhūteṣu, madbhaktiṃ(m) labhate parām. 18.54**

Established in identity with Brahma (who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss solidified), and cheerful in mind, the Sāṅkhyayogī no longer grieves nor craves for anything. The same to all beings, such a Yogī attains supreme devotion to Me.

'One who has become Brahmān and has attained the blissful Self does not grieve or desire. Becoming the same towards all beings, he attains Supreme devotion to HIM.'

If one has to attain Bhagavān then equanimity is to be practised.

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय।

सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥2.48॥

Perform all actions with mind concentrated on the Divine, renouncing attachment and looking upon success and failure with an equal eye. Spirituality implies equanimity.

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ।

ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥2.38॥

Holding pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat as alike, gear yourself up for the battle. Thus, you shall not incur any sin.

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः।

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ॥12.18॥

He to whom friend and foe are alike, who welcomes equally honour and dishonour, heat and cold, pleasure and pain, who is enamoured of nothing,

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी सन्तुष्टो येनकेनचित्।

अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः ॥12.19॥

Who is indifferent to praise and censure, who enjoys silence, who is contented with every fate, who has no fixed abode, who is steadfast in mind, and filled with devotion, such a one is MY beloved.

A yogi who observes equanimity in all situations and views all beings equally. So he is the closest to Bhagavān and wins HIS affection.

Thus, it is not necessary to sit and pray or sing praises of Bhagavān for hours together. It is rather important to train the mind to constantly be in touch with Bhagavān, which enables one eradicate all

bad thoughts and prejudices. This helps one to think and act in the welfare of all beings. Hence, one learns to see the dog and cow equally and becomes an ardent devotee of Bhagavān.

18.55

**bhaktyā māmabhijānāti, yāvānyaścāsmi tattvataḥ,
tato māṃ(n) tattvato jñātvā, viśate tadanantaram. 18.55**

Through that supreme devotion he comes to know Me in reality, what and who I am; and thereby knowing Me truly, he forthwith merges into My being.

'Through devotion, one comes to know HIM fully - who and what HE is in reality, who HE is and how HE is. Knowing HIM thus in truth, he forthwith enters into HIM.'

Though the path may be long and arduous, the realization happens within a fraction of a second. Controlling the mind, seeing all beings equally, and realizing Paramātmā will help attain moksha. We have to gradually progress to know the Supreme through any one of the ways- be in knowing Sri Rama, Bhagavān Sri Krishna, Shiv Ji, etc.

This was not Sri Krishna telling but Sri Krishna as Paramātmā in HIS highest yogic state. The core should be known. HE alone is the giver of light for the sun and moon. The entire universe is the result of HIS existence. Everything came from nothingness and hence the universe was created. Hence **'Shunya'** is the beginning from which expansion was possible.

Arjuna had to become 'Shunya' in order to see the cosmic form of Paramātmā.
The Shanti Mantra found in Isha Upanishad:

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

"Om. That is the Whole, this is the Whole; from the Whole, the Whole arises. Taking away the Whole from the Whole, the Whole still remains."

Thus, there are several galaxies and several suns, planets, stars, etc. So we have to rid the mind of ego which will then create the universe within and this enables one to know Paramātmā in HIS actual state. Knowing Paramātmā at HIS elemental level means being a part of HIM. A part of Paramātmā is in all beings and realizing this makes us a part of the whole (Paramātmā).

Bhagavān had said:

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः।
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति॥15.7॥

It is only a very small part of My Eternal Self, which is the life of the universe, drawing round itself the six senses, the mind the last, which have their source in Nature.

To know Paramātmā residing within, helps in merger with HIM and be a part of the grand whole. This can be achieved through devotion, and equanimity is the essence.

18.56

**sarVākarmāṇyapi sadā, kurvāṇo madvyapāśrayaḥ,
matprasādādavāpnoti, śāśvataṃ(m) padamavyayam. 18.56**

The Karmayogī, however, who depends on Me, attains by My grace the eternal, imperishable state,

even though performing all actions.

'Ever engaging in all actions, one to whom HE is the refuge, attains the eternal, immutable State through HIS grace.'

Thus by being in '**grihastashram**' - family life, we can perform rightful actions seeking refuge in Paramātmā. It is not necessary for us to go to Vrindavan or the Char Dham yatra. Wherever we are, it can be considered sacred. People are troubled by life and desire to go to Vrindavan. If one cannot handle life then it is a problem wherever one goes to. One should learn to be blissful within and create Vrindavan wherever they are.

- We should devote our lives to the work of Bhagavān.
- Perform karma yoga.
- Perform all actions and sacrifice the results of such actions.

We will receive divine grace and help in realizing the self. Thus Bhagavān kindled Arjuna who desired to run away from the battlefield. **The message of Bhagavān was not to quit but to awaken from within.**

18.57

**cetasā sarVākarmāṇi, mayi sannyasya matparaḥ,
buddhiyogamupāśritya, maccittaḥ(s) satataṃ(m) bhava. 18.57**

Mentally dedicating all your actions to Me, and taking recourse to Yoga in the form of evenmindedness, be solely devoted to Me and constantly fix your mind on Me.

'Mentally surrendering all actions to HIM and accepting HIM as the Supreme, have your mind ever fixed on HIM by resorting to the concentration of your intellect.'

Merely praying to Bhagavān for a few hours or praying and then performing sinful deeds is of no use. When one is engaged in work, one should be constantly engaged in the thought of Bhagavān. One should realize that all those whom one interacts with, are also a part of Paramatma. Anyone whom we deal with should be considered Bhagavān and that is the truth.

Tulsidas Ji sat and desired to apply sandal paste and tilak to Bhagavān. He did so to all those who came to him. He did so wondering when Bhagavān would come to him. One day, two young boys approached Tulsidas Ji and requested for application of tilak. Tulsidas Ji saw them as the bow wielding Sri Ram and Lakshman Ji!

When the desire is earnest it becomes a must for Bhagavān to appear! If we take one step, Bhagavān is ready to take ten steps for us. All one has to do is to offer the actions at HIS lotus feet without any expectation for the self. With equanimity, one can attain the highest yogic state. One should constantly engage in the thought of Bhagavān and disassociate from the self. All our actions have to be offered to Bhagavān.

Swami Akhandanand Saraswathi Ji wrote the prayer song:

प्रतिपल निज इन्द्रिय-समूह से जो कुछ भी आचार करूँ,
केवल तुझे रिझाने को, बस, तेरा ही व्यवहार करूँ।

Whatever I do every moment, I will behave only to please YOU.

Whatever I do I will carry only YOUR thought and see YOU in every being of this world.

Every moment, each action should be devoted to Bhagavān be it taking a bath.

- One should consider the body as a temple of Bhagavān and hence cleanse it.
- Eating food should be with the thought that one is offering it as prasād to Bhagavān.

Samarth Ramdas Ji had said:

उदरभरण नोहे जाणिजे यज्ञकर्म |

Eating food is not to merely fill the stomach. It should be considered as a holy yajna.

Every action should entail the thought of Bhagavān which results in moksha.

18.58

**maccittaḥ(s) sarvadurgāṇi, matprasādāttariṣyasi,
atha cettvamahaṅkārān, na śroṣyasi vinaṅkṣyasi. 18.58**

With your mind thus devoted to Me, you shall, by My grace overcome all difficulties. But, if from self-conceit you do not care to listen to Me, you will be lost.

'Focusing your thought on HIM, you shall, by HIS grace, cross over all difficulties. If, however, out of self-conceit, you do not heed HIM, you shall perish.'

Bhagavān had clearly stated that there is no other option but to seek HIS grace.

- Hence, one should see the world as pervaded by Paramātmā.
- All that one hears should be the praise of Bhagavān.
- Whatever one utters should be the sloka in praise of Bhagavān.
- Even walking should be considered as circumambulation (Pradakshina) of Bhagavān.

The last stanza of Shivamanasa stotra, composed by Adi Shankaracharya:

**Ātmā tvam Girijā matih saharāḥ prāṇāḥ śarīraṃ gṛhaṃ
Pūjā te viṣayopabhogarachanā nidrā samādhisthiḥ
Sañcāraḥ padayoḥ pradakṣiṇavidhiḥ stotrāṇi sarvā giro
Yadyatkarma karomi tattadakhilaṃ Śambho tavārādhnam.**

You (Shiva) are my Self (Ātmā), and my intelligence/mind (Matih) is Girijā (Parvati, consort of Shiva).

My life forces (Pranas) are your attendants, and my body is your abode (Temple).

All my experiences of the objective world (sensory pleasures) are your worship (pūjā).

My sleep is the state of Samādhi (intense meditation).

My walking/movement is the circumambulation around you.

All my words and speech are hymns praising you.

Whatever action I perform, O Shambho, it is all your worship alone.

If one is overcome by ego and decide to relinquish his actions then what happens? Bhagavān clearly explained in the following verse.

18.59

**yadahaṅkāramāśritya, na yotsya iti manyase,
mithyaiṣa vyavasāyaste, prakṛtistvām(n) niyokṣyati. 18.59**

If, taking your stand on egotism, you think, "I will not fight," vain is this resolve of yours; nature will

drive you to the act.

'If, in your self-conceit, you think, 'I will not fight,' your resolve is in vain. Nature will compel you.'

One cannot run away from one's duties. Arjuna would be compelled to fight as his innate nature would compel him to do so. The Kṣatriya within him would awaken him. So Bhagavān advised that it is only better for him to free himself of all attachments and perform his duty ie. wage war.

18.60

**svabhāvajena kaunteya, nibaddhaḥ(s) svena karmaṇā,
kartuṃ(n) necchasi yanmohāt, kariṣyasyavaśo'pi tat. 18.60**

That action, too, which you are not willing to undertake through ignorance you will perform, bound by your own duty born of your nature.

'O Arjuna, bound by your own duty born out of your own inner disposition, and having no control over your own will, you will be compelled to do that very thing which you now desire not to do through delusion.'

However much Arjuna desired to run away from the battlefield, his innate nature would force him to wage war. At that time all noble intentions would vanish and he would be compelled by stress owing to expectation of results. Selfish actions would thus incur sin. If Arjuna fought as per his duty, he would rid the world of sinful people who were already predestined and hence would not incur sin.

18.61

**īśvaraḥ(s) sarvabhūtānāṃ(m), hṛddeśe'rjuna tiṣṭhati,
bhrāmayansarvabhūtāni, yantrārūḍhāni māyayā. 18.61**

Arjuna, God abides in the heart of all creatures, causing them to revolve according to their Karma by His illusive power (Māyā) as though mounted on a machine.

'Bhagavān dwells in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna! HE causes them to revolve as it were on a wheel by HIS mystic power.'

Paramātmā is found in all as atma. Despite that, Duryodhana had performed sinful deeds. Why did Dushasana perform such sinful actions? The atma acts only as a witness as it is a part of Paramātmā. All actions are performed by the body with the help of the five senses and five organs of action, along with the mind, intellect, and ego.

Hence the atma residing within the terrorists bodies have to be freed. That was the duty of Arjuna in the battlefield of the great Mahabharata war.

18.62

**tameva śaraṇaṃ(ñ) gaccha, sarvabhāvena bhārata,
tatprasādātparāṃ(m) śāntiṃ(m), sthānaṃ(m) prāpsyasi śāśvatam. 18.62**

Take refuge in Him alone with all your being, Arjuna. By His mere grace you will attain supreme peace

and the eternal abode.

The words to remind of this verse are:

- **Tyaga shantim - one attains peace on the sacrifice of the ego and expectation of the results of actions.**
- **Tadanantaram - Thereafter.**

'Seek refuge in HIM alone, O Arjuna, with the whole of your being. By HIS grace, you shall find Supreme peace and eternal abode.'

Sri Krishna advised Arjuna to seek refuge in Paramātmā and there was no reference anywhere to HIS own self.

How to do it was described by Bhagavān in the following verses, which would be discussed in the next session.

The session thus ends with prayers.

Question & Answer Session:

Nikhil Ji

Question: How to find a guru and ishta devatta?

Answer: One need not go in search of a guru. Upon the right time one will find the guru. The desire once expressed will fructify. All one has to do is to discern carefully as there are many frauds.

While performing puja, one should observe where one truly derives happiness. One has to test and will be led in the right direction.

We can consider the Bhagavadgītā too as our guru. **'Krishnam vande jagadgurum.'** Sometimes we do not get answers to our questions. Hence a guru who understands our journey can help. A guru can help guide us in the right direction as a torch bearer. A true guru should not have any expectation but should only impart knowledge.

Poonam Ji

Question: Why does man commit sin despite the atma being as a witness within?

Answer: Ignorance shrouds knowledge. Despite CCTVs crimes are committed. When one is overpowered with the thought of theft, the burglar does perform the crime. Even the rich have the habit of stealing as a proclivity. Their wisdom fails them and they have no fear while committing the sin.

आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।

कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥3.39॥

O son of Kunti, Knowledge is covered by this constant enemy of the wise in the form of desire, which is an insatiable fire.

Just as the womb is covered by a sheath, so is the intellect and wisdom by ignorance.

Sadananda Mishra Ji

Question: Meaning of 'Swadharma?'

Answer: One should analyse to check what kind of activity does not entail tiredness. What activity gives pleasure? That should be found and that is one's 'Swadharma.' There are preconditions:

1. It should be as per our Śāstras. It should not be karma like playing cards.
2. Where is one's intelligence utilized the most. It is easily observed in children studying in classes 1 to 4. Be it debate, music, maths, art, physical activities, plays, dance, naturalistic intelligence, etc. There are 8 types of intelligences and children can be easily sorted under respective heads.

One should look back in life over the years to discern areas of interest. That action which brings happiness is one's call of duty.

Payal Ji

Question: The soldiers safeguarding our borders, do not incur sin?

Answer: No, as they are protecting their country and hence performing rightful action. Killing for self defense does not incur sin.

Rajshree Ji

Question: How can I approach Guru Govind Dev Ji Maharaj for mantra japa.

Answer: Chanting of mantras given by a guru is considered a form of yajna. Wait for an opportunity to meet him in your state.



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Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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