

## Review of first 3 chapters of Bhagavad Gita

### Chapter 1 Arjuna viśāda yoga (sorrow acts as catalyst)

- Sets the stage for the teaching
- First, Arjuna is chosen as a suitable student.
- Person looking for answers must be a good/ethical person
  - If not, correct your conduct first; make changes
  - “Good” person does not mean “happy” person
- The battlefield brings out a crisis in Arjuna’s life (life is a battlefield for us all)
- Up to then, he was able to handle the ups and downs in his life
- Gets to a place of impasse and crisis: a conflict he cannot resolve between:
  - *Dharma*, the right thing to do, and
  - Attachment to his loved ones and teachers
- This conflict turns into sorrow/depression, and he breaks down; he refuses to fight
- Chapter 1 is called
  - Yoga concerned with Arjuna’s sorrow.

### Chapter 2: Sāṅkhya yoga

Synopsis of the whole Gita (along with Ch. 18, a condensed form of entire teaching)

*Sāṅkhya* = *jñāna*

*Sāṅkhya* = counting; complete, accurate inventory/understanding of who you are (implies that we suffer because of not being aware (not counting) the assets we possess – *praptasya prapti*)

\*Lots of synonyms in the *Gita*. *Sāṅkhya* here is not the same as *Sāṅkhya* ‘school of thought’.

### **4 main segments of chapter 2:**

**V. 1-10: Arjuna śaraṇāgatih.** Intelligently seeking help. Arjuna **submits** to Kṛṣṇa and becomes his student, like a person w/illness asking for proper medical help.

- Kṛṣṇa approached by both Kṛṣṇa and Duryodhana (opposition leader) for help. Kṛṣṇa offers two things: his entire army or his counsel. Arjuna chooses first, since he was the first person Kṛṣṇa saw when he woke up. He chose Kṛṣṇa
  - We each have a choice: seek help of the world or seek the help of the self, which is the very nature of God. (*Satyam* rather than *mithya*)
- *Parīkṣya lokāṅkarmacitānbrāhmaṇo nirvedamāyānnāstyakṛtaḥ kṛtena / tadvijñānārthaṃ sa gurumevābhigacchetsamitpāṇiḥ śrotṛiyam brahmaṇiṣṭham* (Mandukya Upaniṣad, v. 12)
  - Examine what you’re doing in life and see where it’s gotten you. Then see it won’t lead to total happiness—you need to seek the help of a guru.

**V. 11-38 *Jñāna Yoga*.** Yoga of knowledge

- Role of knowledge in quest for happiness. Where *prāptasya prāpti* is seen—you have what it is you're seeking. There is nothing to be done, only something to be known.
- Kṛṣṇa's admonishment: V. 11 *aśocyān anvaśocastvaṃ prajñāvādāmśca bhāṣase gatāsūn agatāsūmśca nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ*
  - YOU are the problem. YOU are the solution.

**V. 39-53 *\*\*Karma Yoga*.** Yoga of action

- Eligibility of the student for knowledge is crucial.
- *Karma yoga* = to improve one's eligibility to understand

**V. 54-72 *Mokṣa*.** Attainment of freedom

- Result of all previous steps.
- *Mokṣa* doesn't come later. "Now" is the only reality.
- V. 54 Arjuna's question: What does the realized person look like? What does he do? Kṛṣṇa V55-72: that doesn't matter. It's all the internal view of limitlessness vs. unlimited

**Chapter 3 *Karma Yoga***

Begins w/Arjuna's doubt. Which is better: *karma yoga* or *jñāna yoga*?

- Kṛṣṇa: *jñāna yoga* is the best, but Arjuna go ahead and fight (do *karma yoga*.) This confuses Arjuna, who further inquires. (See v. 1)
- Kṛṣṇa gives answer to Arjuna's doubt in verse 3:
  - *Loke'smin dvidihā niṣṭhā purā proktā māyānagha jñānayogena sāṅkhyānām karmayogena yoginām*
  - Starts conversation on 2 elements of gaining *mokṣa*: *karma yoga* (active persons) and *jñāna yoga* (renunciates)
- Kṛṣṇa explains: advice has to keep the person in mind. Better for whom?
  - Is high school better or is college better?
  - If you're still struggling w/basic arithmetic, you can't just go to college

**Sequence connecting *karma yoga* and *mokṣa*.**

*Karma yoga*: The process to improve *jñāna yoga yogyatā prāptiḥ*



*Jñāna yoga yogyatā prāptiḥ*: For the eligibility of *jñāna yoga* attainment



*Jñāna yoga*: For the eligibility of (self) knowledge



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*Jñāna prāptiḥ*: Clear understanding of the self



*Mokṣa*: Attainment of liberation (from a sense of bondage)

**3 Main Segments** (segmentation thanks to Swami Paramarthananda)

**V. 1-20 *Karma yoga***

*Karma* = what to do                      *Yoga* = with what attitude to do it

Do things that are ethical, legitimate, that calm you down, that benefit lots of people

*Niṣkāma karma yoga* = charitable work, taking the focus away from your own ego

*Sakama karma yoga* = acting selfishly, for personal gain

Listen to classic music, read classical books—they've stood the test of time re:  
calming the mind

**V. 21-34 *Śrēṣṭha ācārah***

The conduct of a wise person

Close to *mokṣa* section of Ch. 2: Doesn't matter what the wise person looks like—he  
can have a beard, be a householder, etc.

**V. 35-43 *Kāma krodha jñāya***

Conquest over harmful desires and anger

Management of external things in one's life (job, family, etc.) is nothing compared to  
management of one's own thinking. **Focus on managing your own mind.**

See Ch. 13.7-11 (Also the subject of Swami Dayanandaji's *Value of Values*)