

Review: Structure of the Bhagavad Gita

Chapter 1: *Arjuna viṣāda yoga* (sorrow acts as catalyst): Sets the context

Chapter 2: *Sāṅkhya yoga*—overview of a person's life

Chapter 3: *Karma yoga*—*karma* to be used as a *yoga*

Chapters 4, 5, 6—focus moves from *karma* → *jñāna*

Chapter 4: *jñāna karma sannyāsa yoga*

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CHAPTER 4

3 Main Topics in Ch. 4 (but not the only ones):

1. *Avatāra rahasya* (v. 1-8)

Rahasya: the secret, something not understood

Avatāra: an incarnation of God

2. **Jñāna yoga* (main topic): the goal (*sādhya*) (v. 18-24)

- v. 24: Crux of *Vedānta*. An important, apparently contradictory verse: Those who see non-action in action and action in non-action are the wise ones

3. *Jñāna sādhanāni*: the means of knowing

Subtopics (3)

- 1. *Yajña*:** offerings. Attitude you must have to gain knowledge. Dedicated discipline, keeping in mind *Īśvara*'s role in your life

All but 1 of the *Yajñas* have 2 common ingredients:

- Discipline: This needs to be done, should be adhered to
- *Īśvara*/God. Without *Īśvara*, it becomes mere exercise

Extra *yajña* required in *jñāna yajña*, *yajña* of knowledge

- Discipline
- God
- **Living guru**

12 *yajñas* are mentioned in Ch. 4. Here are some:

- *Japa yajña*: chanting (silent or vocal, with others or alone)
- *Dhyāna yajña*: meditation, utilize *Īśvara* in your mind; *Patañjali yoga*
- *Upavāśya yajña*: fasting in service of *Īśvara* (some level of suffering involved—like with bodybuilders in the gym)
- *Yatra yajña*: pilgrimage

- Cleaning: “Cleanliness is godliness.” Space, body, car, mind.
- *Indriya yajña*: management of the most important tools you have been given—10 organs (5 *jñānendriya*, 5 *karmendriya*)
 - Too much movement shows lack of control. Have awareness of what your body and senses are doing
- *Viśaya yajña*: non-fascination with things; be aware of things pulling you
 - 99% of Sanskrit words have etymological meaning.
 - *Viśaya* = “things” also “one that binds you”
- *Dravya yajña*: charitable disposition; develop sense of “what am I giving?”
 - Life has cyclical pattern; balanced sense of giving and taking, like nature
- *Prānāyāma yajña*: breath control
 - Breath is gift of Īśvara that keeps you alive. Great place to start having awareness of presence of Īśvara
 - Observe exhalation and inhalation and make as even as possible
- *Svādhyāya yajña*: studying spiritual books; inquire
 - Listen to classical music, read classic books that has message that transcends the years
- ***Jñāna yajña**: *Most important. **Direct study/inquiry into your reality**, the truth of who you are. All others are indirect.
 - By teacher who has studied the matter in depth, leads by good example, who practices, and whom I trust and respect

Verse 33. Summarizes why *jñāna yajña* is the direct study. All the other *yajñas* end up in the *jñāna yajña*:

*śreyān dravya-mayād yajñāj jñāna-yajñaḥ parantapa
sarvaṁ karmākhilam pārtha jñāne parisamāpyate v. 33*

Verse 34. Relating to the teachings with wise teacher, study w/right attitude and commitment:

*tad viddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣhyanti te jñānam jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ v. 34*

***Unique importance of *jñāna*: v. 38** (Swami Dayananda emphasizes this)

➤ ***Na hi jñānena sadṛśam pavitrāmiha vidyate v. 38***

Compared to *jñāna yoga*, no other means purifies you as much; nothing compares with effectiveness of self-knowledge in giving you purity or happiness

2. ***jñāna mahimā***: greatness. Unless you understand why something's important in your life, you won't do it. v. 35-42
3. ***Jñāna phalam***: what is being achieved

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CHAPTER 5

Clarifies and solidifies the concepts of *karma yoga* (Ch. 3) and *jñāna yoga* (Ch. 4).
*5th Chapter is *Mananam-Specific*

Śravaṇam: create understanding of what's being said that you weren't aware of.
Covered in Chapters 3 and 4.

****Mananam***: start to examine the truth of what you're being told. Reconciling when there's a discrepancy (I'm a limited person w/problems vs. I'm an unlimited person w/no problems):

1. Go back to your own experiences
2. Change lifestyle. Completely go into understanding of new knowledge, forgetting about your old experiences
3. Look at veracity or non-veracity of knowledge, compare to your experiences, slowly submit your mind to the understanding of the knowledge by following the scriptures

Nididhyāsanam: Think about new knowledge in a meditative state, as it applies to you. Topic of 6th Chapter

Ch. 5 introduces the concept of *āśrama* (lifestyle/stages)

- A. *Gṛhastha āśrama*: life of a householder
- B. *Sannyāsa āśrama*: life of a renunciate
 - a. I resolve not to hurt anyone (words, deeds, body)
 - b. I will accept whatever is given to me (alms). I will not demand it.

3 Options:

1. Stay as householder (start family, pay for home, retire)
2. Straightaway become a renunciate from the beginning.
3. Be a householder for awhile, then become a renunciate (Swami TV)

Ch. 5 begins with confusion in Arjuna's mind: Shouldn't I become a renunciate? You have praised both—which is the better of the two?

Arjuna uvācha
sannyāsam karmaṇām kṛiṣṇa punar yogaṁ cha śansasi
yach chhreyā etayor ekaṁ tan me brūhi su-niścitam v. 1

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Both lead to liberation, but performance of action as *yoga* is better than renunciation of action.

*śhrī bhagavān uvācha
sannyāsaḥ karma-yogaś ca niḥśreyasa-karāvubhau
tayos tu karma-sannyāsāt karma-yogo viśiṣyate v. 2*

Kṛṣṇa answers: Please understand these are two things:

1. Āśrama:
 - a. *Gṛhastha* and
 - b. *Sannyāsa*
 - **You have a choice when it comes to which lifestyle you'll choose.**
2. *Yoga: karma yoga* and *jñāna yoga*
 - **You have no choice.** You must prepare for understanding before gaining knowledge. You have to do *karma yoga*

Both householders and renunciates have to do *karma yoga* (preparation) first and then do *jñāna yoga* (study).

Karma yoga in renunciation is more difficult. Swami's don't have a regular outlet for strong emotions.

2 classes of swamis:

1. *Vividiṣā sannyāsī*: (*veditum icchā*: The desire to know)
2. *Vidvat sannyāsī*: (the knower)

Kṛṣṇa says: Task of cleaning up your life is enormous and you're much better off staying a householder. Do not take to *sannyāsa* until you are ready.

The way to gain advantage of *sannyāsa* while a *gṛhastha*
Manage the intensity of your likes and dislikes.

Key thing to attain:

Understand that you are not the doer *akṛtrtvam*; yourself is *mithya*. You yourself have the status of dreamer.

You cannot say I am fully awake from dream by falsifying the dream but not falsifying the dreamer.

Don't take yourself so seriously. You do not realize: *Īśvara* is doing everything for you.

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Ch. 5 also:

Extols the virtue of knowledge and plants the seed for *nididhyāsanam* (Ch. 6)