



**BHAGAVAD GITA
STUDY GROUP**

THE CONTEXT OF BHAGAVAD GITA

- **Synthesis of all Vedas & Upanishads (Ancient Science)**
- **700 shlokas within 100,000 shlokas of the epic Mahabharata**
- **Mahabharata is the 5000 year story of two royal cousin families and the war between them; the battle of Dharma vs Adharma**
- **Krishna (Lord Vishnu as human incarnation) takes the charioteer position on the Dharmic Pandavas' side.**
- **Bhagavad Gita is Krishna's dialogue with Arjuna (or with us in our life battle) to describe who we are, why we are here, our Divinity and how to live a spiritual life (Gita Way of Living)**

BHAGAVAD GITA AS A SCRIPTURE

- **It is a dialogue between Teacher and Student; called Samvada**
- **Amenable to a collective healthy study format called Vada**
- **Need to avoid combative (jalpa) or antagonistic (vitanda) styles.**
- **Two types of subjects: siddha and sadhya-apple and apple pie**
- **Commentaries, translations and interpretations of Gita**
- **Universal values from Gita are better understood by applying them to personal situations in real time or in retrospect.**

FIVE CHAPTERS FROM EIGHTEEN AS CONDENSED BY JACK HAWLEY

- **Who am I? April 2 Session**
- **Why am I here? April 2 Session**
- **What is Divinity? April 9 Session**
- **How can we connect to Divinity? April 9 Session**
- **How do we live spiritually in a material world? April 16 & April 23**

WHO AM I?

- **We identify ourselves with body, mind, intellect and ego**
- **This is not real because we did not exist 100 years ago and will not exist 100 years from now.**
- **What is real is our SELF, the Atma which never is born or dead.**
- **This awareness, consciousness, soul, SELF, the Atman in the individual is the SELF, the Atman in all. We are part of the all pervasive Divinity. So, there is Divinity in all of us. We can sense it.**

WHY ARE WE HERE?

- **Live a fully active life not as a recluse but to leave this place better than we found it.**
- **Find Divinity in our worldly duties, doing our Dharma.**
- **We should excel one amongst the thousands to discover Divinity in all of us.**
- **Eventually, we work to become one with Divinity.**

WHAT IS DIVINITY?

- **We like to see God in human form whereas God is the infinite supreme.**
- **God exists in each of us as divine attributes. These attributes eventually lead to liberation.**
- **When our divine attributes fail to overpower Adharma, the infinite supreme God assumes an incarnation to reestablish Dharma**
- **The infinite supreme Divinity is the nature and spirit of the entire universe.**

WHAT IS DIVINITY

- **When we grasp this Divinity in all of us as a part of the infinite Divinity of the universe, we will conquer sorrow and become enlightened.**
- **Everything in the universe is Divinity; it is what holds the universe together and makes everything and every creature function.**
- **The supreme God is both manifested and unmanifested, formed and formless; exists everywhere.**
- **This ultimate Divinity dwells in each body as the soul, the Atma.**

HOW WE CAN CONNECT TO DIVINITY?

- **Love the Divine and the Divine in all**
- **First shift from ego self to Divinity self and then love Divinity in all. Divinity is perfect; by moving to Divinity, we live in God's world of perfection**
- **We become one with God, one with the universe and everything in it. We therefore will experience the joys and sorrows of all. We will be happier that way.**

HOW WE CAN CONNECT TO DIVINITY

Four ways to seek communion with Divinity

- **Worship God to alleviate agony, fears and adversity**
- **Seek happiness through worldly things such as health, wealth, family via spiritual means**
- **Seek knowledge and wisdom for spiritual advancement**
- **The wise ones know the existence of all pervasive Atma and seek nothing else**

HOW WE CAN CONNECT TO DIVINITY

- **Three ways of attaining union with Divinity**
 - **Bhakti YOGA: The path of devotion: total surrender to Divinity**
 - **Jnana YOGA: Total devotion to understanding Divinity**
 - **Karma YOGA: The path of selfless action; all worldly actions for Divinity sake**
- **Love Divinity in all: harbor no ill will and return love for hatred- be forgiving and contended.**

HOW WE CAN CONNECT TO DIVINITY

- **Learn to do worldly duties but be unattached to worldly things**
- **Learn not to agitate and accept the knocks of life as blessings in disguise**
- **Live your life with adoration of the Divine. You do everything not for the ego self but for the Divine.**
- **You thereby become a more godly person of wisdom united with the supreme**
- **Seek refuge in the Divine. You experience great peace of mind.**

HOW TO LIVE SPIRITUALLY IN A MATERIAL WORLD?

- **Begin by learning to overcome your thirst for pleasures; abandon all selfish desires.**
- **Union with Divinity is the ultimate goal.**
- **Diligently strive to overcome greed, fear and anger.**
- **Withdraw the senses from attractions of the world like the turtle pulls in its limbs.**
- **Become steady and even minded despite the constant flow of desires and attachments; you move from agony to bliss to illumined**

HOW TO LIVE SPIRITUALLY IN A MATERIAL WORLD

Through Selfless Action (Karma YOGA) you attain union with Divinity.

- When you do your activities with no desire for rewards, you can steady the mind and direct to Divinity.**
- Learn to be unattached to, or unaffected by, the results of your work, whether favorable or unfavorable.**
- Desire for the rewards of your acts brings worry about failing and robs your energy.**
- Without desire, you are more effective with inner peace.**

HOW TO LIVE SPIRITUALLY IN A MATERIAL WORLD

Through the law of sacrifice:

- Give more than you receive.**
- Sacrifice is sharing; it is the spirit of giving.**
- The whole life of selfless karma directed to Divine and humanity; you accrue no karma**
- Eat what you have to in the spirit of sacrifice (enough to nurture the body that sustains the Atma)**

HOW TO LIVE SPIRITUALLY IN A MATERIAL WORLD

- **Give more than you receive**
- **Sacrifice is not self neglect; it is sharing**
- **The entire life can be a sacrifice if directed to Divinity**
- **This Divine attitude to karma accrues no karma**
- **Eat food in the spirit of sacrifice**
- **Each selfless act by one and all is a contribution to the whole**

HOW TO LIVE SPIRITUALLY IN A MATERIAL WORLD

- **Pain and pleasure go together**
- **Be the same in both pain and pleasure**
- **Over time learn to handle victory and defeat the same; not elated by good fortune or depressed by misfortune**
- **Remain tranquil and centered in the Atma**
- **You become even minded and illumined**
- **Meditate deeply to gain freedom from worldly attachments; with thoughts fixed on the Divine, you overcome sorrow.**

HOW TO LIVE SPIRITUALLY IN A MATERIAL WORLD

- **The cycle of Birth and Death is inevitable; prepare for your death and birth. Next birth depends on how one's death is approached**
- **The three paths (Bhakti, Jnana and Karma) lead to salvation and oneness with Divinity; no more motivating force to create another birth**
- **Divinity is the cosmic unity amongst all of us; oneness with everyone and everything. Then, we can do no harm. There are no foes.**
- **Oneness with Atma cannot injure the same Atma in others**

HOW TO LIVE SPIRITUALLY IN A MATERIAL WORLD

- **Find happiness within you, not with the worldly pleasures**
- **The pleasure from worldly things are temporary and lead to misery**
- **Control desire, anger, pride, passion, jealousy and greed, you will find lasting happiness**
- **Happiness can flow only from within; from the Atma that is in you – self realization**
- **The bliss is in direct proportion to disentanglement from worldly attractions**

HOW TO LIVE SPIRITUALLY IN A MATERIAL WORLD

- **We are not the doers; we are the instrument of Divinity**
- **Learn to love Divinity in everything**
- **Seek refuge utterly in the Divine; no individuality independent of Divinity**
- **Total shelter leads to great peace of mind; less stress and suffering**
- **Walk the three paths: bhakti yoga, karma yoga and jnana yoga**



HOW TO LIVE SPIRITUALLY IN A MATERIAL WORLD