



॥ भगवद् गीता ॥

... Bhagavad Gītā ...

Chapter 6

AI Summary - Class 201

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Summary

Bhagavad Gītā and Patañjali's Yoga:

Introduction to Meditation Practices

Bahiraṅga sādhana and Antaraṅga sādhana

The spiritual journey involves two complementary types of disciplines:

- **Bahiraṅga sādhana:** General preparations and practices that create a foundation for spiritual life. These are broader disciplines observed throughout daily life.
- **Antaraṅga sādhana:** Specific disciplines practiced immediately before and during meditation. These are more focused and intensive practices.

Both types of sādhana work together to create the conditions necessary for successful meditation. The general disciplines prepare the practitioner's overall lifestyle and mindset, while the specific disciplines refine the meditation practice itself.

Krishna's Two Key Teachings on Meditation

In this part of the Bhagavad Gītā text, Krishna addresses two fundamental aspects of meditation:

1. **dhyāna svarupam:** The actual process and technique of meditation - how to meditate, what methods to employ, and the mechanics of the practice.
2. **dhyāna Palam:** The culmination or fruit of meditation - the results, outcomes, and ultimate goal achieved through consistent practice.



Patañjali's Ashtaṅga Yoga System

Two Components of Patañjali's System

Patañjali's yoga consists of two distinct parts:

1. **Meditation Practice:** The practical techniques and methods for achieving meditative states.
2. **Yoga śāstram (Yoga Philosophy):** The theoretical and philosophical framework underlying the practice.

Important distinction: While the Vedāntic tradition fully accepts and incorporates the meditation practices from Patañjali's system, it does not accept the philosophical component (Yoga śāstram) as it contradicts Vedic teachings. Vyāsācārya specifically rejected the yoga philosophy in his Brahma Sutra commentary.

Authorship and Compilation of Gītā

Understanding the origins of these teachings:

- **Original Teacher:** Lord Krishna taught these principles to Arjuna on the battlefield
- **Compiler:** Sage Vyāsa compiled and organized these teachings into the written text of the Bhagavad Gītā
- **Location in Text:** The sixth chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā specifically contains detailed yoga meditation methods

The Eight Limbs of Ashtaṅga Yoga

Overview and Significance

Ashtaṅga Yoga represents a comprehensive and holistic system for spiritual development. Śankarācārya himself acknowledged and valued these eight limbs, which integrate multiple dimensions of human personality:

- Physical body and health
- Energetic or pranic body
- Mental and emotional states
- Intellectual and cognitive faculties

The Eight Limbs Explained



Limb	Sanskrit Term	Description
1	Yama	Ethical restraints - things to avoid for a peaceful mind
2	Niyama	Positive observances - things to follow and cultivate

Yamas: The Five Ethical Restraints

Nature and Purpose of Yamas

Yamas are ethical and moral guidelines that profoundly influence one's lifestyle and emotional makeup. Unlike commandments that are imposed through authority, Yamas are taught through education and understanding. They represent things to avoid in order to maintain a peaceful, harmonious mind conducive to spiritual growth.

Comparison: Acharya Tadany compared Yamas and Niyamas to the 10 Commandments in their ethical function, but emphasized these are educational principles rather than imposed rules. They are understood and adopted through wisdom rather than fear or obligation.

The Five Yamas in Detail

1. Ahimsa (Non-Violence)

Definition: The avoidance of causing harm or injury to others; giving up violence at all levels.

Three Levels of Ahimsa:

- **Physical Level:** Avoiding physical harm, injury, or violence to any living being
- **Verbal Level:** Refraining from harsh, hurtful, or abusive speech
- **Mental Level:** Eliminating violent, harmful, or malicious thoughts

The Mirror Principle: Acharya Tadany explained a fundamental Vedic principle - "The world is a mirror." Any violence we direct toward the environment, other beings, or nature will eventually return to us. This understanding naturally leads to the abandonment of violence at all levels.

Practical Application: When one truly understands that harming others ultimately harms oneself, the motivation for violence dissolves. This isn't merely following a rule, but a deep recognition of interconnectedness and the law of cause and effect (karma).

2. Satya (Truthfulness)



3. Asteya (Non-Stealing)
4. Brahmacharya (Celibacy/Moderation)
5. Aparigraha (Non-Attachment/Non-Possessiveness)

Niyamas: The Five Positive Observances

While Yamas represent restraints (what to avoid), Niyamas are positive practices and observances (what to cultivate). Acharya Tadany mentioned that there are five Niyamas, though the detailed explanation was reserved for future classes.

Purpose: Niyamas complement Yamas by providing positive disciplines that build character, purify the mind, and create favorable conditions for spiritual progress.

Key Philosophical Insights

The World as Mirror Principle

This profound Vedic teaching illustrates the law of karma and interconnectedness:

- Every action creates a corresponding reaction
- Violence toward the environment returns to the perpetrator
- The external world reflects our internal state and actions
- Understanding this principle naturally leads to ethical behavior

This principle transforms ethics from external rules into internal wisdom. When we truly understand that harming others is harming ourselves, ethical behavior becomes natural rather than forced. (Acharya Tadany)

Integration of Personality Dimensions

Ashtaṅga Yoga's genius lies in its holistic approach:

- **Physical:** Through asana (postures)
- **Energetic:** Through pranayama (breath control)
- **Mental:** Through pratyahara and dharana (sense withdrawal and concentration)
- **Emotional:** Through yamas and niyamas (ethical living)
- **Intellectual:** Through understanding and discrimination



Relationship Between Traditions

Vedānta and Yoga: A Selective Integration

The relationship between Vedāntic philosophy and Patañjali's Yoga demonstrates sophisticated

Aspect	Vedāntic Position	Reason
Meditation Practices	Fully accepted and incorporated	Practical effectiveness and compatibility with Vedāntic goals
Yoga Philosophy (Yoga śāstram)	Rejected	Contradicts fundamental Vedic teachings; incompatible metaphysics
Eight Limbs System	Highly valued and taught	Comprehensive, practical, and effective for spiritual development

spiritual discernment:

This selective integration shows the wisdom of the tradition - taking what is valuable and effective while maintaining philosophical consistency with Vedāntic principles.

Practical Implications for Spiritual Practice

Building a Foundation

The teaching emphasizes that successful meditation requires:

1. Ethical foundation through Yamas and Niyamas
2. Physical preparation through proper posture and health
3. Energetic balance through breath work
4. Mental discipline through concentration practices
5. Consistent practice of both general and specific disciplines