



॥ भगवद् गीता ॥
... Bhagavad Gītā ...

Chapter 2

AI Summary – Class 39

Class Summary for Bhagavad Gītā 3, by Acharya Tadany Cargnin dos Santos

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Questions before class

Krishna's Three Perspectives to Convince Arjuna

In the Bhagavad Gītā, Krishna employs three distinct approaches to persuade Arjuna to engage in battle:

1. Philosophical Perspective (adhyātmika-dṛṣṭi) - Understanding the eternal nature of ātmā versus the temporary nature of the body (anātmā)
2. Ethical/Moral Perspective (dhārmika-dṛṣṭi) - Examining the righteous duty and moral obligations of a warrior
3. Worldly Perspective (laukika-dṛṣṭi) - Considering practical and social implications of action versus inaction

The Nature of ātmā (Soul)

Fundamental Characteristics

Property	Description
Eternal	ātmā exists beyond the boundaries of time - it has no beginning and no end
All-pervading	Like space, ātmā is present everywhere and is not confined to any particular location
Formless	ātmā has no physical shape, boundaries, or material characteristics





Indestructible	Cannot be destroyed, cut, burned, or affected by any physical means
The Observer	ātmā is pure consciousness - always the subject, never the object of knowledge

ātmā vs. Body and Mind

ātmā (Soul)

- Eternal and unchanging
- Independent existence
- Ultimate reality
- Source of consciousness
- Formless and all-pervading
- Cannot be perceived by senses

Body

- Temporary and perishable
- Dependent existence
- Subject to birth and death
- Physical and material
- Has form and boundaries
- Perceivable by senses

Mind

- Temporary and changing
- Dependent on ātmā
- Subject to modifications
- Subtle but still material
- Has thoughts and emotions
- Can be observed by external bodies

Key Analogies Used in the Teaching

The Space Analogy





Just as space is formless, all-pervading, and cannot be seen yet we accept its existence, similarly ātmā is formless and all-pervading. We cannot perceive it with our senses, but it is the fundamental reality underlying all existence. (Acharya Tadany)

The Photographer Analogy

A photographer taking a picture cannot appear in their own photograph as the subject. yet, no one denies the existence of the photographer. Similarly, ātmā as the eternal observer (consciousness) can never become an object of observation. Consciousness illuminates everything else but cannot be objectified itself. (Acharya Tadany)

The Glass and Metal Example

Acharya Tadany used the analogy of glass and metal to illustrate dependent versus independent existence:

- A glass has dependent existence - it depends on the material (metal, plastic, etc.) from which it is made
- The material has more fundamental existence than the form
- Similarly, the body and mind have dependent existence, while ātmā has independent, ultimate existence

Why ātmā Cannot Be Perceived

Acharya Tadany addressed the fundamental question of why we cannot see or perceive ātmā:

1. Formless entities cannot be seen because vision requires boundaries and shapes to distinguish objects
2. Physical objects are perceivable because they have defined forms and boundaries
3. ātmā, being formless and all-pervading like space, has no boundaries to be perceived
4. The absence of perception does not mean absence of existence - we accept space exists even though we cannot see it

The Principle of the Observer

Core Teaching: ātmā is never an object of knowledge but always the subject - the eternal observer. Just as the eye cannot see itself and consciousness cannot be objectified, ātmā remains forever as the witness of all phenomena. (Acharya Tadany)





Implications of This Understanding

- Since ātmā is the observer, it cannot be observed or known as an object
- All knowledge and experience happen within the field of ātmā's awareness
- The body, mind, and all external objects are observed by ātmā
- ātmā itself remains untouched and unchanged by any experience

Practical Application to Arjuna's Dilemma

Krishna's teaching leads to a crucial conclusion for Arjuna's situation:

Since ātmā is eternal, indestructible, and not an object that can be destroyed, Arjuna need not worry about "killing" others in battle. The eternal essence (ātmā) of all beings cannot be killed - only the temporary physical body undergoes change. Therefore, from the highest philosophical standpoint, there is no real killing or dying. (acharya Tadany)

The Path to True Security and Peace

Acharya Tadany emphasized a fundamental principle for finding lasting happiness: True security and peace can only be found by relying on the real substance (ātmā) rather than temporary or dependent things. When we base our sense of security on the body, possessions, relationships, or any changing phenomena, we inevitably experience anxiety and suffering because these are all impermanent. (Acharya Tadany)

Hierarchy of Reality

1. Ultimate Reality - ātmā (eternal, independent, unchanging)
2. Dependent Reality - Mind (temporary, dependent on ātmā)
3. Gross Reality - Body and Physical World (most temporary, dependent on both ātmā and mind)

Key Philosophical Insights

- **Distinction between Real and Unreal:** That which is eternal and unchanging is real; that which is temporary and changing is relatively unreal or has dependent existence





- **Source of Suffering:** Suffering arises from identifying with the temporary (body and mind) rather than recognizing our true nature as eternal ātmā
- **Nature of Consciousness:** Consciousness (ātmā) is self-luminous and does not depend on anything else to exist or to know
- **Transcendence of Duality:** From the perspective of ātmā, dualities like life-death, pleasure-pain, gain-loss are all temporary modifications in the realm of the body and mind

Essential Message: The core teaching of this class emphasizes that understanding the eternal, indestructible nature of ātmā liberates one from fear and attachment. By recognizing that our true self is beyond birth and death, beyond form and change, we can act in the world with wisdom and equanimity, free from the anxiety that comes from identifying with temporary phenomena. (Acharya Tadany)

