

GUNATRAYA VIBHAAG YOGA



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TO
LISTEN TO
THE
ENTIRE
CHAPTER-14
VERSES 1-27
OF
SHRIMAD
BHAGAVAD
GITA**

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The Summary of

Chapter 14

Gunatraya Vibhaag Yoga

(The Three Modes of Material Nature)

(A) The One-Line Summary of Chapter 14:

In this Chapter, Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna that the embodied souls are under the control of three modes of material nature, called Gunas, which include goodness (Sattva), passion (Rajas), and ignorance (Tamas), and how they act upon us, how one transcends them, and the symptoms of one who has attained the transcendental state.

(B) The Most Important Verses of Chapter 14:

Verse 5: *O mighty-armed Arjun, the material energy consists of three Guṇas (modes)—Sattva (goodness), Rajas (passion), and Tamas (ignorance). These modes bind the eternal soul to the perishable body.*

Verse 9: *Sattva binds one to material happiness; Rajas conditions the soul toward actions; and Tamas clouds wisdom and binds one to delusion*

Verse 20: *By transcending the three modes of material nature associated with the body, one becomes free from birth, death, disease, old age, and misery, and attains immortality.*

Verses 24 & 25: *Those who are alike in happiness and distress; who are established in the self; who look upon a clod, a stone, and a piece of gold as of equal value; who remain the same amidst pleasant and unpleasant events; who are intelligent; who accept both blame and praise with equanimity; who remain the same in honor and dishonor; who treat both friend and foe alike; and who have abandoned all desires – they are said to have risen above the three Guṇas.*

(C) The Verse-By-Verse Summary of Chapter 14:

The contents of the 27 verses of this chapter can be divided into the following 4 sections:

<u>The Topic</u>	<u>Verses</u>
1. Introduction	1-4
2. Analysis of the Gunas	5 - 18
3. Knowledge as the Means to Transcend the Guna.	19 - 20
4. Guṇatīta-Lakṣhaṇa and Sādhana.21 - 27

1. Introduction (Verses 1 - 4):

In the first two verses (V1,2) Lord Krishna praises Self-Knowledge to draw *Arjuna's* attention. It is the greatest knowledge which takes one to the greatest goal of liberation. By this knowledge, one attains the nature of God Himself and thus becomes free from birth and death.

In the next two verses (V3,4), Lord Krishna gives a brief account of creation. Blessed by the Lord (*puruṣha*), *prakṛti* gives birth to this universe. Thus, they are the universal parents from whom all things and beings originate.

2. : Analysis of the Gunas(Verses 5 - 18):

From the 5th to the 18th verse (V5-V18), Bhagavān makes an elaborate analysis of the three *guṇas* — *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. They are born of *prakṛti* and are responsible for the human bondage. The Lord analyses them from various angles which can be depicted in the form of a Chart, as shown:

No.	Topic	<i>Sattva</i>	<i>Rajas</i>	<i>Tamas</i>
1	<i>Lakṣhaṇam</i> (definition)	<i>Prakāśhātmakam</i> (of the nature of brightness) (V6)	<i>Rāgātmakam</i> (of the nature of delusion) (V7)	<i>Mohanātmakam</i> (of the nature of attachment) (V8)
2	<i>Bandhanaparakāra</i> (mode of binding)	<i>Jñānasaṅga</i> (by causing attachment to knowledge) (V6, 9)	<i>Karmasaṅga</i> (by causing attachment to activity) (V7, 9)	<i>Pramādasāṅga</i> (by causing attachment to indifference) (V8, 9)
3	<i>Liṅgam</i> (sign of predominance)	<i>Jñānavṛddhi</i> (increase of knowledge) (V11)	<i>Karmavṛddhi</i> (increase of activity) (V12)	<i>Pramādavṛddhi</i> (increase of indifference) (V13)
4	<i>Gati</i> (travel after death)	<i>Ūrdhvagati</i> (to higher <i>lokas</i>) (V14, 18)	<i>Madhyamagati</i> (To middle <i>lokas</i>) (V15, 18)	<i>Adhogati</i> (To lower <i>lokas</i>) (V16, 18)
5	<i>Phalam</i> (consequence in this life)	<i>Puṇya & Jñānam</i> (<i>Puṇya</i> and knowledge) (V16, 17)	<i>Duḥkham & Lobha</i> (sorrow and greed) (V16, 17)	<i>Ajñānam & Moha</i> (Ignorance and delusion) (V16, 17)

Even though all beings have the three *guṇas*, they differ because of the predominance of one *guṇa* over the other two.

3. Knowledge as the Means to Transcend the Guna (Verses 19 - 20):

In the 19th and 20th verses, Lord Krishna teaches the means of transcending the *guṇas*. The Lord points out that the transcendence is in the form of knowledge alone. The Self (*puruṣha*) happens to be already beyond the *guṇas* (*guṇātīta*). It is the body (*prakṛiti*) which has *guṇas*, doership, etc. Because of identification with the body alone, the Self (*puruṣha*) seems to have *guṇas*. Hence the only solution is to discriminate and own up the *guṇātīta puruṣha* as oneself (V19). Through this knowledge, one discovers oneself to be free from birth, death, etc. This is liberation (V20).

4. Guṇātīta-Lakṣhaṇa and Sādhana (Verses 21 - 27):

Arjuna asks Lord Krishna about the characteristics of a *guṇātīta* and the *sādhanā* to achieve this (V21). From the 22nd to the 25th verse, Lord Krishna answers the first question. *Guṇātīta* is one who is detached from *prakṛti*. He does not have I-notion in his body or my-notion in the world. Hence, he looks at the variations of *guṇas* objectively without reacting to them (V22). He remains unaffected by the opposite experiences of life like pleasure-pain, praise-censure, honor-dishonor, etc. They are the play of *prakṛiti* (V23, 24). Being full, he does not seek anything and therefore is free from selfish activities (V25). (Since a *guṇātīta* is invariably a wise man, this description tallies with the *sthitaprajña* portion of the 2nd chapter as well as the *parābhakta* portion of the 12th chapter). Lord Krishna concludes by prescribing *bhakti* as the *sādhanā* to achieve this goal. (Thus, the Lord answers Arjuna's second

question. By the grace of the Lord one gets a *guru*. Through the *guru*, one gets the knowledge which makes one *guṇātīta*). A *bhakta* becomes fit to attain *Brahman*'s nature (*guṇātītatvam*) which is immortality and absolute *ānanda* (V26, 27).