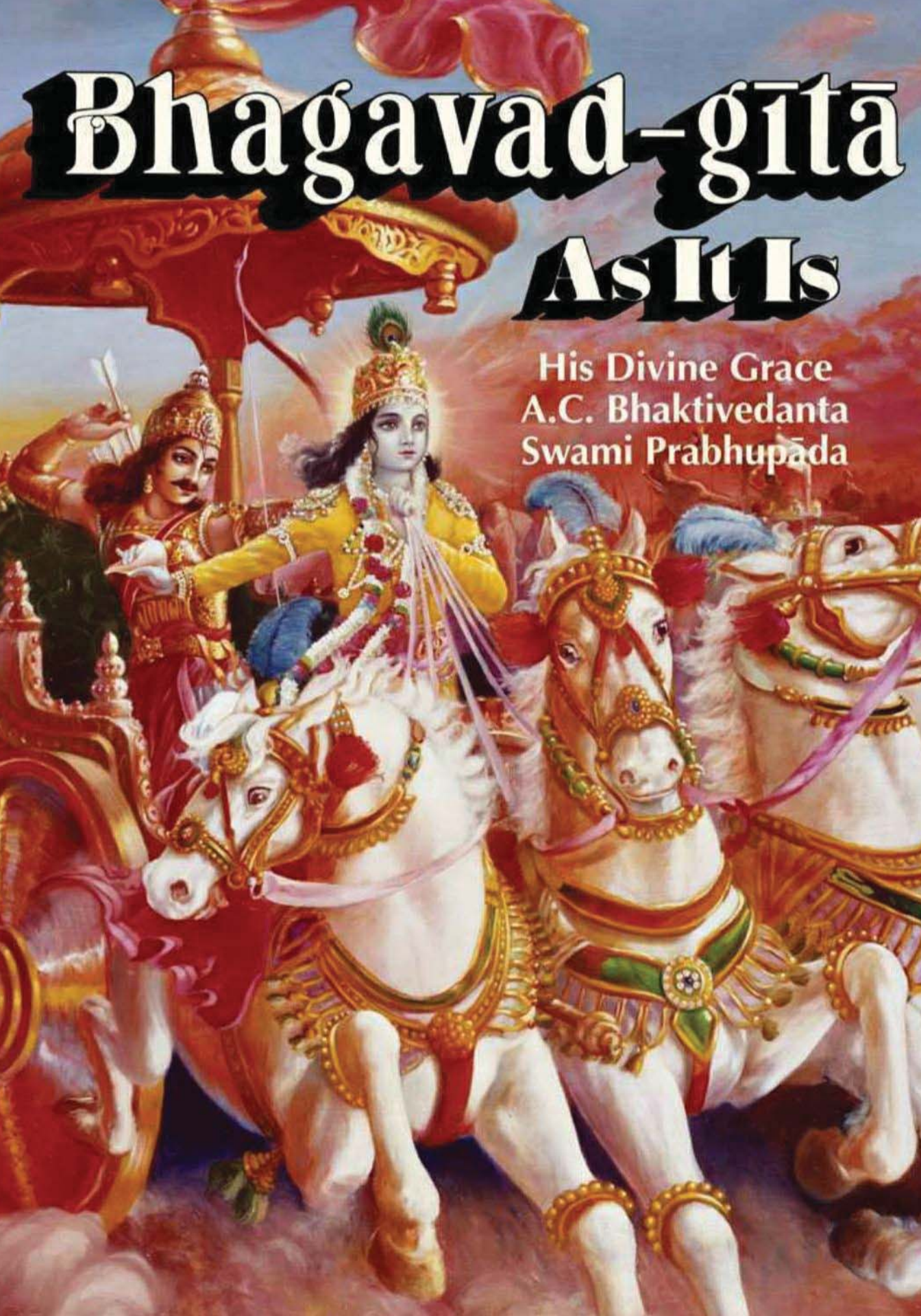


Bhagavad-gītā

As It Is

His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupāda



BERSERKER

BOOKS



COMPLETE EDITION
with original Sanskrit text,
Roman transliteration, English equivalents,
translation and elaborate purports

His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

To
ŚRĪLA BALADEVA VIDYĀBHŪṢAṆA
who presented so nicely
the "*Govinda-bhāṣya*" commentary
on
Vedānta philosophy

Preface

Originally I wrote *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* in the form in which it is presented now. When this book was first published, the original manuscript was, unfortunately, cut short to less than 400 pages, without illustrations and without explanations for most of the original verses of the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*. In all of my other books—*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, etc.—the system is that I give the original verse, its English transliteration, word-for-word Sanskrit-English equivalents, translations and purports. This makes the book very authentic and scholarly and makes the meaning self-evident. I was not very happy, therefore, when I had to minimize my original manuscript. But later on, when the demand for *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* considerably increased, I was requested by many scholars and devotees to present the book in its original form, and Messrs. Macmillan and Co. agreed to publish the complete edition. Thus the present attempt is to offer the original manuscript of this great book of knowledge with full *paramparā* explanation in order to establish the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement more soundly and progressively.

Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is genuine, historically authorized, natural and transcendental due to its being based on *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. It is gradually becoming the most popular movement in the entire world, especially amongst the younger generation. It is becoming more and more interesting to the older generation also. Older gentlemen are becoming interested, so much so that the fathers and grandfathers of my disciples are encouraging us by becoming life members of our great society, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. In Los Angeles many fathers and mothers used to come to see me to express their feelings of gratitude for my leading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement throughout the entire world. Some of them said that it is greatly fortunate for the Americans that I have started the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in America. But actually the original father of this movement is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, since it was started a very long time ago but is coming down to

human society by disciplic succession. If I have any credit in this connection, it does not belong to me personally, but it is due to my eternal spiritual master, His Divine Grace Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrajakācārya 108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja Prabhupāda.

If personally I have any credit in this matter, it is only that I have tried to present *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is, without adulteration. Before my presentation of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, almost all the English editions of *Bhagavad-gītā* were introduced to fulfill someone's personal ambition. But our attempt, in presenting *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, is to present the mission of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Our business is to present the will of Kṛṣṇa, not that of any mundane speculator like the politician, philosopher or scientist, for they have very little knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, despite all their other knowledge. When Kṛṣṇa says, *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru*, etc., we, unlike the so-called scholars, do not say that Kṛṣṇa and His inner spirit are different. Kṛṣṇa is absolute, and there is no difference between Kṛṣṇa's name, Kṛṣṇa's form, Kṛṣṇa's quality, Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, etc. This absolute position of Kṛṣṇa is difficult to understand for any person who is not a devotee of Kṛṣṇa in the *paramparā* (disciplic succession) system. Generally the so-called scholars, politicians, philosophers, and *svāmīs*, without perfect knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, try to banish or kill Kṛṣṇa when writing commentary on *Bhagavad-gītā*. Such unauthorized commentary upon *Bhagavad-gītā* is known as *Māyāvādī-Bhāṣya*, and Lord Caitanya has warned us about these unauthorized men. Lord Caitanya clearly says that anyone who tries to understand *Bhagavad-gītā* from the *Māyāvādī* point of view will commit a great blunder. The result of such a blunder will be that the misguided student of *Bhagavad-gītā* will certainly be bewildered on the path of spiritual guidance and will not be able to go back home, back to Godhead.

Our only purpose is to present this *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* in order to guide the conditioned student to the same purpose for which Kṛṣṇa descends to this planet once in a day of Brahmā, or every 8,600,000,000 years. This purpose is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, and we have to accept it as it is; otherwise there is no point in trying to understand the *Bhagavad-gītā* and its speaker, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa first spoke *Bhagavad-gītā* to the sun-

god some hundreds of millions of years ago. We have to accept this fact and thus understand the historical significance of *Bhagavad-gītā*, without misinterpretation, on the authority of Kṛṣṇa. To interpret *Bhagavad-gītā* without any reference to the will of Kṛṣṇa is the greatest offense. In order to save oneself from this offense, one has to understand the Lord as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as He was directly understood by Arjuna, Lord Kṛṣṇa's first disciple. Such understanding of *Bhagavad-gītā* is really profitable and authorized for the welfare of human society in fulfilling the mission of life.

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is essential in human society, for it offers the highest perfection of life. How this is so is explained fully in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Unfortunately, mundane wranglers have taken advantage of *Bhagavad-gītā* to push forward their demonic propensities and mislead people regarding right understanding of the simple principles of life. Everyone should know how God or Kṛṣṇa is great, and everyone should know the factual position of the living entities. Everyone should know that a living entity is eternally a servant and that unless one serves Kṛṣṇa one has to serve illusion in different varieties of the three modes of material nature, and thus perpetually one has to wander within the cycle of birth and death; even the so-called liberated Māyāvādī speculator has to undergo this process. This knowledge constitutes a great science, and each and every living being has to hear it for his own interest.

People in general, especially in this age of Kali, are enamored by the external energy of Kṛṣṇa, and they wrongly think that by advancement of material comforts every man will be happy. They have no knowledge that the material or external nature is very strong, for everyone is strongly bound by the stringent laws of material nature. A living entity is happily the part and parcel of the Lord, and thus his natural function is to render immediate service to the Lord. By the spell of illusion one tries to be happy by serving his personal sense gratification in different forms which will never make him happy. Instead of satisfying his own personal material senses, he has to satisfy the senses of the Lord. That is the highest perfection of life. The Lord wants this, and He demands it. One has to understand this central point of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is teaching the whole world this central point, and because we are not polluting the theme

of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, anyone seriously interested in deriving benefit by studying the *Bhagavad-gītā* must take help from the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement for practical understanding of *Bhagavad-gītā* under the direct guidance of the Lord. We hope, therefore, that people will derive the greatest benefit by studying *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* as we have presented it here, and if even one man becomes a pure devotee of the Lord we shall consider our attempt a success.

[signed] A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
12 May 1971
Sydney, Australia

INTRODUCTION

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya
jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena
tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

*śrī-caitanya-mano-'bhīṣṭaṁ
sthāpitaṁ yena bhū-tale
svayaṁ rūpaḥ kadā mahyaṁ
dadāti sva-padāntikam*

I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him.

When will Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, who has established within this material world the mission to fulfill the desire of Lord Caitanya, give me shelter under his lotus feet?

*vande 'haṁ śrī-guroḥ śrī-yuta-pada-kamalaṁ śrī-gurun vaiṣṇavāṁś ca
śrī-rūpaṁ sāgrajātaṁ saha-gaṇa-raghunāthānviṭaṁ taṁ sa-jīvaṁ
sādvaitaṁ sāvadhūtaṁ parijana-sahitaṁ kṛṣṇa-caitanya-devaṁ
śrī-rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pādān saha-gaṇa-lalitā-śrī-viśākhānviṭāṁś ca*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master and unto the feet of all Vaiṣṇavas. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī along with his elder brother Sanātana Gosvāmī, as well as Raghunātha Dāsa and Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. I offer my respectful obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda along with Advaita Ācārya, Gadādhara, Śrīvāsa, and other associates. I offer my respectful obeisances to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Śrī Kṛṣṇa along with Their associates, Śrī Lalitā and Viśākhā.

*he kṛṣṇa karuṇā-sindho dīna-bandho jagat-pate
gopeśa gopikā-kānta rādhā-kānta namo 'stu te*

O my dear Kṛṣṇa, You are the friend of the distressed and the source of creation. You are the master of the *gopīs* and the lover of Rādhārāṇī. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

*tapta-kāñcana-gaurāṅgi rādhe vṛndāvaneśvari
vṛṣabhānu-sute devi praṇamāmi hari-priye*

I offer my respects to Rādhārāṇī whose bodily complexion is like molten gold and who is the Queen of Vṛndāvana. You are the daughter of King Vṛṣabhānu, and You are very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

*vāñchā-kalpatarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto all the Vaiṣṇava devotees of the Lord who can fulfill the desires of everyone, just like desire trees, and who are full of compassion for the fallen souls.

*śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya prabhu nityānanda
śrī advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda*

I offer my obeisances to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Prabhu Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita, Gadādhara, Śrīvāsa and all others in the line of devotion.

*hare kṛṣṇa, hare kṛṣṇa, kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa, hare hare
hare rāma, hare rāma, rāma rāma, hare hare.*

Bhagavad-gītā is also known as *Gītapaniṣad*. It is the essence of Vedic knowledge and one of the most important *Upaniṣads* in Vedic literature. Of course there are many commentaries in English on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and one may question the necessity for another one. This present edition can be explained in the following way. Recently an American lady asked me to recommend an English translation of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Of course in America there are so many editions of *Bhagavad-gītā* available in English, but as far as I have seen, not only in America but also in India, none of them can be strictly said to be authoritative because in almost every one of them the

commentator has expressed his own opinions without touching the spirit of *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is.

The spirit of *Bhagavad-gītā* is mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā* itself. It is just like this: if we want to take a particular medicine, then we have to follow the directions written on the label. We cannot take the medicine according to our own whim or the direction of a friend. It must be taken according to the directions on the label or the directions given by a physician. Similarly, *Bhagavad-gītā* should be taken or accepted as it is directed by the speaker himself. The speaker of *Bhagavad-gītā* is Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is mentioned on every page of *Bhagavad-gītā* as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavān. Of course the word "*bhagavān*" sometimes refers to any powerful person or any powerful demigod, and certainly here Bhagavān designates Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a great personality, but at the same time we should know that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as is confirmed by all great *ācāryas* (spiritual masters) like Śaṅkarācārya, Rāmāṇujācārya, Madhvācārya, Nimbārka Svāmī, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and many other authorities of Vedic knowledge in India. The Lord Himself also establishes Himself as the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and He is accepted as such in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* and all the *Purāṇas*, especially the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, known as the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (*Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*). Therefore we should take *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is directed by the Personality of Godhead Himself.

In the Fourth Chapter of the *Gītā* the Lord says:

(1) *imaṁ vivasvate yogaṁ proktavān ahaṁ avyayam
vivasvān manave prāha manur ikṣvākave 'bravīt*

(2) *evam paramparā-prāptam imaṁ rājarṣayo viduḥ
sa kāleneha mahatā yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa*

(3) *sa evāyaṁ mayā te 'dya yogaḥ proktaḥ purātanaḥ
bhakto 'si me sakhā ceti rahasyaṁ hy etad uttamam*

Here the Lord informs Arjuna that this system of *yoga*, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, was first spoken to the sun-god, and the sun-god explained it to Manu, and Manu explained it to Ikṣvāku, and in that way, by disciplic succession, one speaker after another, this *yoga* system has been coming down. But in

the course of time it has become lost. Consequently the Lord has to speak it again, this time to Arjuna on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra.

He tells Arjuna that He is relating this supreme secret to him because he is His devotee and His friend. The purport of this is that *Bhagavad-gītā* is a treatise which is especially meant for the devotee of the Lord. There are three classes of transcendentalists, namely the *jñānī*, the *yogī* and the *bhakta*, or the impersonalist, the meditator and the devotee. Here the Lord clearly tells Arjuna that He is making him the first receiver of a new *paramparā* (disciplic succession) because the old succession was broken. It was the Lord's wish, therefore, to establish another *paramparā* in the same line of thought that was coming down from the sun-god to others, and it was His wish that His teaching be distributed anew by Arjuna. He wanted Arjuna to become the authority in understanding the *Bhagavad-gītā*. So we see that *Bhagavad-gītā* is instructed to Arjuna especially because Arjuna was a devotee of the Lord, a direct student of Kṛṣṇa, and His intimate friend. Therefore *Bhagavad-gītā* is best understood by a person who has qualities similar to Arjuna's. That is to say he must be a devotee in a direct relationship with the Lord. As soon as one becomes a devotee of the Lord, he also has a direct relationship with the Lord. That is a very elaborate subject matter, but briefly it can be stated that a devotee is in a relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead in one of five different ways:

1. One may be a devotee in a passive state;
2. One may be a devotee in an active state;
3. One may be a devotee as a friend;
4. One may be a devotee as a parent;
5. One may be a devotee as a conjugal lover.

Arjuna was in a relationship with the Lord as friend. Of course there is a gulf of difference between this friendship and the friendship found in the material world. This is transcendental friendship which cannot be had by everyone. Of course everyone has a particular relationship with the Lord, and that relationship is evoked by the perfection of devotional service. But in the present status of our life, we have not only forgotten the Supreme Lord, but we have forgotten our eternal relationship with the Lord. Every living being, out of many, many billions and trillions of living beings, has a particular relationship with the Lord eternally. That is called *svarūpa*. By the process of devotional service, one can revive that *svarūpa*, and that

stage is called *svarūpa-siddhi*-perfection of one's constitutional position. So Arjuna was a devotee, and he was in touch with the Supreme Lord in friendship.

How Arjuna accepted this *Bhagavad-gītā* should be noted. His manner of acceptance is given in the Tenth Chapter.

(12) *arjuna uvāca*

*param brahma param dhāma pavitram paramam bhavān
puruṣam śāśvataṁ divyam ādi-devam ajam vibhum*

(13) *āhus tvām ṛṣayaḥ sarve devarṣir nāradaś tathā*

asito devalo vyāsaḥ svayaṁ caiva bravīṣi me

(14) *sarvam etad ṛtaṁ manye yan mām vadasi keśava*

na hi te bhagavan vyaktiṁ vidur devā na dānavāḥ

"Arjuna said: You are the Supreme Brahman, the ultimate, the supreme abode and purifier, the Absolute Truth and the eternal Divine Person. You are the primal God, transcendental and original, and You are the unborn and all-pervading beauty. All the great sages like Nārada, Asita, Devala, and Vyāsa proclaim this of You, and now You Yourself are declaring it to me. O Kṛṣṇa, I totally accept as truth all that You have told me. Neither the gods nor demons, O Lord, know Thy personality." (Bg. 10. 12-14).

After hearing *Bhagavad-gītā* from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Arjuna accepted Kṛṣṇa as *Param Brahma*, the Supreme Brahman. Every living being is Brahman, but the supreme living being, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the Supreme Brahman. *Param dhāma* means that He is the supreme rest or abode of everything, *pavitram* means that He is pure, untainted by material contamination, *puruṣam* means that He is the supreme enjoyer, *divyam*, transcendental, *ādi-devam*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, *ajam*, the unborn, and *vibhum*, the greatest, the all-pervading.

Now one may think that because Kṛṣṇa was the friend of Arjuna, Arjuna was telling Him all this by way of flattery, but Arjuna, just to drive out this kind of doubt from the minds of the readers of *Bhagavad-gītā*, substantiates these praises in the next verse when he says that Kṛṣṇa is accepted as the Supreme Personality of Godhead not only by himself but by authorities like

the sage Nārada, Asita, Devala, Vyāsadeva and so on. These are great personalities who distribute the Vedic knowledge as it is accepted by all *ācāryas*. Therefore Arjuna tells Kṛṣṇa that he accepts whatever He says to be completely perfect. *Sarvam etad ṛtaṁ manye*: "I accept everything You say to be true." Arjuna also says that the personality of the Lord is very difficult to understand and that He cannot be known even by the great demigods. This means that the Lord cannot even be known by personalities greater than human beings. So how can a human being understand Śrī Kṛṣṇa without becoming His devotee?

Therefore *Bhagavad-gītā* should be taken up in a spirit of devotion. One should not think that he is equal to Kṛṣṇa, nor should he think that Kṛṣṇa is an ordinary personality or even a very great personality. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, at least theoretically, according to the statements of *Bhagavad-gītā* or the statements of Arjuna, the person who is trying to understand the *Bhagavad-gītā*. We should therefore at least theoretically accept Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and with that submissive spirit we can understand the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Unless one reads the *Bhagavad-gītā* in a submissive spirit, it is very difficult to understand *Bhagavad-gītā* because it is a great mystery.

Just what is the *Bhagavad-gītā*? The purpose of *Bhagavad-gītā* is to deliver mankind from the nescience of material existence. Every man is in difficulty in so many ways, as Arjuna also was in difficulty in having to fight the Battle of Kurukṣetra. Arjuna surrendered unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and consequently this *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken. Not only Arjuna, but every one of us is full of anxieties because of this material existence. Our very existence is in the atmosphere of nonexistence. Actually we are not meant to be threatened by nonexistence. Our existence is eternal. But somehow or other we are put into *asat*. *Asat* refers to that which does not exist.

Out of so many human beings who are suffering, there are a few who are actually inquiring about their position, as to what they are, why they are put into this awkward position and so on. Unless one is awakened to this position of questioning his suffering, unless he realizes that he doesn't want suffering but rather wants to make a solution to all sufferings, then one is not to be considered a perfect human being. Humanity begins when this sort of inquiry is awakened in one's mind. In the *Brahma-sūtra* this inquiry is

called "*brahma-jijñāsā*." Every activity of the human being is to be considered a failure unless he inquires about the nature of the Absolute. Therefore those who begin to question why they are suffering or where they came from and where they shall go after death are proper students for understanding *Bhagavad-gītā*. The sincere student should also have a firm respect for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such a student was Arjuna.

Lord Kṛṣṇa descends specifically to reestablish the real purpose of life when man forgets that purpose. Even then, out of many, many human beings who awaken, there may be one who actually enters the spirit of understanding his position, and for him this *Bhagavad-gītā* is spoken. Actually we are all followed by the tiger of nescience, but the Lord is very merciful upon living entities, especially human beings. To this end He spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*, making His friend Arjuna His student.

Being an associate of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna was above all ignorance, but Arjuna was put into ignorance on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra just to question Lord Kṛṣṇa about the problems of life so that the Lord could explain them for the benefit of future generations of human beings and chalk out the plan of life. Then man could act accordingly and perfect the mission of human life.

The subject of the *Bhagavad-gītā* entails the comprehension of five basic truths. First of all, the science of God is explained and then the constitutional position of the living entities, *jīvas*. There is *īśvara*, which means controller, and there are *jīvas*, the living entities which are controlled. If a living entity says that he is not controlled but that he is free, then he is insane. The living being is controlled in every respect, at least in his conditioned life. So in the *Bhagavad-gītā* the subject matter deals with the *īśvara*, the supreme controller, and the *jīvas*, the controlled living entities. *Prakṛti* (material nature) and time (the duration of existence of the whole universe or the manifestation of material nature) and *karma* (activity) are also discussed. The cosmic manifestation is full of different activities. All living entities are engaged in different activities. From *Bhagavad-gītā* we must learn what God is, what the living entities are, what *prakṛti* is, what the cosmic manifestation is and how it is controlled by time, and what the activities of the living entities are.

Out of these five basic subject matters in *Bhagavad-gītā* it is established that the Supreme Godhead, or Kṛṣṇa, or Brahman, or supreme controller, or Paramātmā-you may use whatever name you like-is the greatest of all. The living beings are in quality like the supreme controller. For instance, the Lord has control over the universal affairs, over material nature, etc., as will be explained in the later chapters of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Material nature is not independent. She is acting under the directions of the Supreme Lord. As Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "*Prakṛti* is working under My direction." When we see wonderful things happening in the cosmic nature, we should know that behind this cosmic manifestation there is a controller. Nothing could be manifested without being controlled. It is childish not to consider the controller. For instance, a child may think that an automobile is quite wonderful to be able to run without a horse or other animal pulling it, but a sane man knows the nature of the automobile's engineering arrangement. He always knows that behind the machinery there is a man, a driver. Similarly, the Supreme Lord is a driver under whose direction everything is working. Now the *jīvas*, or the living entities, have been accepted by the Lord, as we will note in the later chapters, as His parts and parcels. A particle of gold is also gold, a drop of water from the ocean is also salty, and similarly, we the living entities, being part and parcel of the supreme controller, *īśvara*, or Bhagavān, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, have all the qualities of the Supreme Lord in minute quantity because we are minute *īśvaras*, subordinate *īśvaras*. We are trying to control nature, as presently we are trying to control space or planets, and this tendency to control is there because it is in Kṛṣṇa. But although we have a tendency to lord it over material nature, we should know that we are not the supreme controller. This is explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

What is material nature? This is also explained in *Gītā* as inferior *prakṛti*, inferior nature. The living entity is explained as the superior *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* is always under control, whether inferior or superior. *Prakṛti* is female, and she is controlled by the Lord just as the activities of a wife are controlled by the husband. *Prakṛti* is always subordinate, predominated by the Lord, who is the predominator. The living entities and material nature are both predominated, controlled by the Supreme Lord. According to the *Gītā*, the living entities, although parts and parcels of the

Supreme Lord, are to be considered *prakṛti*. This is clearly mentioned in the Seventh Chapter, fifth verse of *Bhagavad-gītā*: "*Apareyam itas tv anyām.*" "This *prakṛti* is My lower nature." "*Prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parām jīva-bhūtām mahā-bāho yayedam dhāryate jagat.*" And beyond this there is another *prakṛti*: *jīva-bhūtām*, the living entity.

Prakṛti itself is constituted by three qualities: the mode of goodness, the mode of passion and the mode of ignorance. Above these modes there is eternal time, and by a combination of these modes of nature and under the control and purview of eternal time there are activities which are called *karma*. These activities are being carried out from time immemorial, and we are suffering or enjoying the fruits of our activities. For instance, suppose I am a businessman and have worked very hard with intelligence and have amassed a great bank balance. Then I am an enjoyer. But then say I have lost all my money in business; then I am a sufferer. Similarly, in every field of life we enjoy the results of our work, or we suffer the results. This is called *karma*.

Īśvara (the Supreme Lord), *jīva* (the living entity), *prakṛti* (nature), eternal time and *karma* (activity) are all explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Out of these five, the Lord, the living entities, material nature and time are eternal. The manifestation of *prakṛti* may be temporary, but it is not false. Some philosophers say that the manifestation of material nature is false, but according to the philosophy of *Bhagavad-gītā* or according to the philosophy of the Vaiṣṇavas, this is not so. The manifestation of the world is not accepted as false; it is accepted as real, but temporary. It is likened unto a cloud which moves across the sky, or the coming of the rainy season which nourishes grains. As soon as the rainy season is over and as soon as the cloud goes away, all the crops which were nourished by the rain dry up. Similarly, this material manifestation takes place at a certain interval, stays for a while and then disappears. Such are the workings of *prakṛti*. But this cycle is working eternally. Therefore *prakṛti* is eternal; it is not false. The Lord refers to this as "My *prakṛti*." This material nature is the separated energy of the Supreme Lord, and similarly the living entities are also the energy of the Supreme Lord, but they are not separated. They are eternally related. So the Lord, the living entity, material nature and time are all interrelated and are all eternal. However, the other item, *karma*, is not

eternal. The effects of *karma* may be very old indeed. We are suffering or enjoying the results of our activities from time immemorial, but we can change the results of our *karma*, or our activity, and this change depends on the perfection of our knowledge. We are engaged in various activities. Undoubtedly we do not know what sort of activities we should adopt to gain relief from the actions and reactions of all these activities, but this is also explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

The position of *īśvara* is that of supreme consciousness. The *jīvas*, or the living entities, being parts and parcels of the Supreme Lord, are also conscious. Both the living entity and material nature are explained as *prakṛti*, the energy of the Supreme Lord, but one of the two, the *jīva*, is conscious. The other *prakṛti* is not conscious. That is the difference. Therefore the *jīva-prakṛti* is called superior because the *jīva* has consciousness which is similar to the Lord's. The Lord's is supreme consciousness, however, and one should not claim that the *jīva*, the living entity, is also supremely conscious. The living being cannot be supremely conscious at any stage of his perfection, and the theory that he can be so is a misleading theory. Conscious he may be, but he is not perfectly or supremely conscious.

The distinction between the *jīva* and the *īśvara* will be explained in the Thirteenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*. The Lord is *kṣetra-jñāḥ*, conscious, as is the living being, but the living being is conscious of his particular body, whereas the Lord is conscious of all bodies. Because He lives in the heart of every living being, He is conscious of the psychic movements of the particular *jīvas*. We should not forget this. It is also explained that the *Paramātmā*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is living in everyone's heart as *īśvara*, as the controller, and that He is giving directions for the living entity to act as he desires. The living entity forgets what to do. First of all he makes a determination to act in a certain way, and then he is entangled in the acts and reactions of his own *karma*. After giving up one type of body, he enters another type of body, as we put on and take off old clothes. As the soul thus migrates, he suffers the actions and reactions of his past activities. These activities can be changed when the living being is in the mode of goodness, in sanity, and understands what sort of activities he should adopt. If he does so, then all the actions and reactions of his past

activities can be changed. Consequently, *karma* is not eternal. Therefore we stated that of the five items (*īśvara*, *jīva*, *prakṛti* time and *karma*) four are eternal, whereas *karma* is not eternal.

The supreme conscious *īśvara* is similar to the living entity in this way: both the consciousness of the Lord and that of the living entity are transcendental. It is not that consciousness is generated by the association of matter. That is a mistaken idea. The theory that consciousness develops under certain circumstances of material combination is not accepted in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Consciousness may be pervertedly reflected by the covering of material circumstances, just as light reflected through colored glass may appear to be a certain color, but the consciousness of the Lord is not materially affected. Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "*mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ*." When He descends into the material universe, His consciousness is not materially affected. If He were so affected, He would be unfit to speak on transcendental matters as He does in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. One cannot say anything about the transcendental world without being free from materially contaminated consciousness. So the Lord is not materially contaminated. Our consciousness, at the present moment, however, is materially contaminated. The *Bhagavad-gītā* teaches that we have to purify this materially contaminated consciousness. In pure consciousness, our actions will be dovetailed to the will of *īśvara*, and that will make us happy. It is not that we have to cease all activities. Rather, our activities are to be purified, and purified activities are called *bhakti*. Activities in *bhakti* appear to be like ordinary activities, but they are not contaminated. An ignorant person may see that a devotee is acting or working like an ordinary man, but such a person with a poor fund of knowledge does not know that the activities of the devotee or of the Lord are not contaminated by impure consciousness or matter. They are transcendental to the three modes of nature. We should know, however, that at this point our consciousness is contaminated.

When we are materially contaminated, we are called conditioned. False consciousness is exhibited under the impression that I am a product of material nature. This is called false ego. One who is absorbed in the thought of bodily conceptions cannot understand his situation. *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken to liberate one from the bodily conception of life, and Arjuna put himself in this position in order to receive this information from the Lord.

One must become free from the bodily conception of life; that is the preliminary activity for the transcendentalist. One who wants to become free, who wants to become liberated, must first of all learn that he is not this material body. *Mukti* or liberation means freedom from material consciousness. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also the definition of liberation is given: *Mukti* means liberation from the contaminated consciousness of this material world and situation in pure consciousness. All the instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā* are intended to awaken this pure consciousness, and therefore we find at the last stage of the *Gītā*'s instructions that Kṛṣṇa is asking Arjuna whether he is now in purified consciousness. Purified consciousness means acting in accordance with the instructions of the Lord. This is the whole sum and substance of purified consciousness. Consciousness is already there because we are part and parcel of the Lord, but for us there is the affinity of being affected by the inferior modes. But the Lord, being the Supreme, is never affected. That is the difference between the Supreme Lord and the conditioned souls.

What is this consciousness? This consciousness is "I am." Then what am I? In contaminated consciousness "I am" means "I am the lord of all I survey. I am the enjoyer." The world revolves because every living being thinks that he is the lord and creator of the material world. Material consciousness has two psychic divisions. One is that I am the creator, and the other is that I am the enjoyer. But actually the Supreme Lord is both the creator and the enjoyer, and the living entity, being part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, is neither the creator nor the enjoyer, but a cooperator. He is the created and the enjoyed. For instance, a part of a machine cooperates with the whole machine; a part of the body cooperates with the whole body. The hands, feet, eyes, legs and so on are all parts of the body, but they are not actually the enjoyers. The stomach is the enjoyer. The legs move, the hands supply food, the teeth chew and all parts of the body are engaged in satisfying the stomach because the stomach is the principal factor that nourishes the body's organization. Therefore everything is given to the stomach. One nourishes the tree by watering its root, and one nourishes the body by feeding the stomach, for if the body is to be kept in a healthy state, then the parts of the body must cooperate to feed the stomach. Similarly, the Supreme Lord is the enjoyer and the creator, and we, as subordinate living

beings, are meant to cooperate to satisfy Him. This cooperation will actually help us, just as food taken by the stomach will help all other parts of the body. If the fingers of the hand think that they should take the food themselves instead of giving it to the stomach, then they will be frustrated. The central figure of creation and of enjoyment is the Supreme Lord, and the living entities are cooperators. By cooperation they enjoy. The relation is also like that of the master and the servant. If the master is fully satisfied, then the servant is satisfied. Similarly, the Supreme Lord should be satisfied, although the tendency to become the creator and the tendency to enjoy the material world are there also in the living entities because these tendencies are there in the Supreme Lord who has created the manifested cosmic world.

We shall find, therefore, in this *Bhagavad-gītā* that the complete whole is comprised of the supreme controller, the controlled living entities, the cosmic manifestation, eternal time, and *karma*, or activities, and all of these are explained in this text. All of these taken completely form the complete whole, and the complete whole is called the Supreme Absolute Truth. The complete whole and the complete Absolute Truth are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All manifestations are due to His different energies. He *is* the complete whole.

It is also explained in the *Gītā* that impersonal Brahman is also subordinate to the complete. Brahman is more explicitly explained in the *Brahma-sūtra* to be like the rays of the sunshine. The impersonal Brahman is the shining rays of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Impersonal Brahman is incomplete realization of the absolute whole, and so also is the conception of Paramātmā in the Twelfth Chapter. There it shall be seen that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Puruṣottama, is above both impersonal Brahman and the partial realization of Paramātmā. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is called *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*. The *Brahma-saṁhitā* begins in this way: *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ/anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*. "Kṛṣṇa is the cause of all causes. He is the primal cause, and He is the very form of eternal being, knowledge and bliss." Impersonal Brahman realization is the realization of His *sat* (being) feature. Paramātmā realization is the realization of the *cit* (eternal knowledge) feature. But realization of the

Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is realization of all the transcendental features: *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* (being, knowledge, bliss) in complete *vigraha* (form).

People with less intelligence consider the Supreme Truth to be impersonal, but He is a transcendental person, and this is confirmed in all Vedic literatures. *Nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām*. As we are all individual living beings and have our individuality, the Supreme Absolute Truth is also, in the ultimate issue, a person, and realization of the Personality of Godhead is realization of all of the transcendental features. The complete whole is not formless. If He is formless, or if He is less than any other thing, then He cannot be the complete whole. The complete whole must have everything within our experience and beyond our experience, otherwise it cannot be complete. The complete whole, Personality of Godhead, has immense potencies.

How Kṛṣṇa is acting in different potencies is also explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*. This phenomenal world or material world in which we are placed is also complete in itself because the twenty-four elements of which this material universe is a temporary manifestation, according to Sāṅkhya philosophy, are completely adjusted to produce complete resources which are necessary for the maintenance and subsistence of this universe. There is nothing extraneous; nor is there anything needed. This manifestation has its own time fixed by the energy of the supreme whole, and when its time is complete, these temporary manifestations will be annihilated by the complete arrangement of the complete. There is complete facility for the small complete units, namely the living entities, to realize the complete, and all sorts of incompleteness are experienced due to incomplete knowledge of the complete. So *Bhagavad-gītā* contains the complete knowledge of Vedic wisdom.

All Vedic knowledge is infallible, and Hindus accept Vedic knowledge to be complete and infallible. For example, cow dung is the stool of an animal, and according to *smṛti* or Vedic injunction, if one touches the stool of an animal he has to take a bath to purify himself. But in the Vedic scriptures cow dung is considered to be a purifying agent. One might consider this to be contradictory, but it is accepted because it is Vedic injunction, and indeed by accepting this, one will not commit a mistake; subsequently it has been

proved by modern science that cow dung contains all antiseptic properties. So Vedic knowledge is complete because it is above all doubts and mistakes, and *Bhagavad-gītā* is the essence of all Vedic knowledge.

Vedic knowledge is not a question of research. Our research work is imperfect because we are researching things with imperfect senses. We have to accept perfect knowledge which comes down, as is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, by the *paramparā* disciplic succession. We have to receive knowledge from the proper source in disciplic succession beginning with the supreme spiritual master, the Lord Himself, and handed down to a succession of spiritual masters. Arjuna, the student who took lessons from Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, accepts everything that He says without contradicting Him. One is not allowed to accept one portion of *Bhagavad-gītā* and not another. No. We must accept *Bhagavad-gītā* without interpretation, without deletion and without our own whimsical participation in the matter. The *Gītā* should be taken as the most perfect presentation of Vedic knowledge. Vedic knowledge is received from transcendental sources, and the first words were spoken by the Lord Himself. The words spoken by the Lord are different from words spoken by a person of the mundane world who is infected with four defects. A mundaner 1) is sure to commit mistakes, 2) is invariably illusioned, 3) has the tendency to cheat others and 4) is limited by imperfect senses. With these four imperfections, one cannot deliver perfect information of all-pervading knowledge.

Vedic knowledge is not imparted by such defective living entities. It was imparted unto the heart of Brahmā, the first created living being, and Brahmā in his turn disseminated this knowledge to his sons and disciples, as he originally received it from the Lord. The Lord is *pūrṇam*, all-perfect, and there is no possibility of His becoming subjected to the laws of material nature. One should therefore be intelligent enough to know that the Lord is the only proprietor of everything in the universe and that He is the original creator, the creator of Brahmā. In the Eleventh Chapter the Lord is addressed as *prapitāmaha* because Brahmā is addressed as *pitāmaha*, the grandfather, and He is the creator of the grandfather. So no one should claim to be the proprietor of anything; one should accept only things which are set aside for him by the Lord as his quota for his maintenance.

There are many examples given of how we are to utilize those things which are set aside for us by the Lord. This is also explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*. In the beginning, Arjuna decided that he should not fight in the Battle of Kurukṣetra. This was his own decision. Arjuna told the Lord that it was not possible for him to enjoy the kingdom after killing his own kinsmen. This decision was based on the body because he was thinking that the body was himself and that his bodily relations or expansions were his brothers, nephews, brothers-in-law, grandfathers and so on. He was thinking in this way to satisfy his bodily demands. *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken by the Lord just to change this view, and at the end Arjuna decides to fight under the directions of the Lord when he says, "*kariṣye vacanaṁ tava*." "I shall act according to Thy word."

In this world man is not meant to toil like hogs. He must be intelligent to realize the importance of human life and refuse to act like an ordinary animal. A human being should realize the aim of his life, and this direction is given in all Vedic literatures, and the essence is given in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Vedic literature is meant for human beings, not for animals. Animals can kill other living animals, and there is no question of sin on their part, but if a man kills an animal for the satisfaction of his uncontrolled taste, he must be responsible for breaking the laws of nature. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is clearly explained that there are three kinds of activities according to the different modes of nature: the activities of goodness, of passion and of ignorance. Similarly, there are three kinds of eatables also: eatables in goodness, passion and ignorance. All of this is clearly described, and if we properly utilize the instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā*, then our whole life will become purified, and ultimately we will be able to reach the destination which is beyond this material sky.

That destination is called the *sanātana* sky, the eternal spiritual sky. In this material world we find that everything is temporary. It comes into being, stays for some time, produces some by-products, dwindles and then vanishes. That is the law of the material world, whether we use as an example this body, or a piece of fruit or anything. But beyond this temporary world there is another world of which we have information. This world consists of another nature which is *sanātana*, eternal. *Jīva* is also described as *sanātana*, eternal, and the Lord is also described as *sanātana* in

the Eleventh Chapter. We have an intimate relationship with the Lord, and because we are all qualitatively one-the *sanātana-dhāma*, or sky, the *sanātana* Supreme Personality and the *sanātana* living entities-the whole purpose of *Bhagavad-gītā* is to revive our *sanātana* occupation, or *sanātana-dharma*, which is the eternal occupation of the living entity. We are temporarily engaged in different activities, but all of these activities can be purified when we give up all these temporary activities and take up the activities which are prescribed by the Supreme Lord. That is called our pure life.

The Supreme Lord and His transcendental abode are both *sanātana*, as are the living entities, and the combined association of the Supreme Lord and the living entities in the *sanātana* abode is the perfection of human life. The Lord is very kind to the living entities because they are His sons. Lord Kṛṣṇa declares in *Bhagavad-gītā*, "*sarva-yoniṣu...ahaṁ bīja-pradaḥ pitā*." "I am the father of all." Of course there are all types of living entities according to their various *karmas*, but here the Lord claims that He is the father of all of them. Therefore the Lord descends to reclaim all of these fallen, conditioned souls to call them back to the *sanātana* eternal sky so that the *sanātana* living entities may regain their eternal *sanātana* positions in eternal association with the Lord. The Lord comes Himself in different incarnations, or He sends His confidential servants as sons or His associates or *ācāryas* to reclaim the conditioned souls.

Therefore, *sanātana-dharma* does not refer to any sectarian process of religion. It is the eternal function of the eternal living entities in relationship with the eternal Supreme Lord. *Sanātana-dharma* refers, as stated previously, to the eternal occupation of the living entity. Rāmānujācārya has explained the word *sanātana* as "that which has neither beginning nor end," so when we speak of *sanātana-dharma*, we must take it for granted on the authority of Śrī Rāmānujācārya that it has neither beginning nor end.

The English word "religion" is a little different from *sanātana-dharma*. Religion conveys the idea of faith, and faith may change. One may have faith in a particular process, and he may change this faith and adopt another, but *sanātana-dharma* refers to that activity which cannot be changed. For instance, liquidity cannot be taken from water, nor can heat be taken from fire. Similarly, the eternal function of the eternal living entity cannot be

taken from the living entity. *Sanātana-dharma* is eternally integral with the living entity. When we speak of *sanātana-dharma*, therefore, we must take it for granted on the authority of Śrī Rāmānujācārya that it has neither beginning nor end. That which has neither end nor beginning must not be sectarian, for it cannot be limited by any boundaries. Yet those belonging to some sectarian faith will wrongly consider that *sanātana-dharma* is also sectarian, but if we go deeply into the matter and consider it in the light of modern science, it is possible for us to see that *sanātana-dharma* is the business of all the people of the world-nay, of all the living entities of the universe.

Non-*sanātana* religious faith may have some beginning in the annals of human history, but there is no beginning to the history of *sanātana-dharma* because it remains eternally with the living entities. Insofar as the living entities are concerned, the authoritative *śāstras* state that the living entity has neither birth nor death. In the *Gītā* it is stated that the living entity is never born, and he never dies. He is eternal and indestructible, and he continues to live after the destruction of his temporary material body. In reference to the concept of *sanātana-dharma*, we must try to understand the concept of religion from the Sanskrit root meaning of the word. *Dharma* refers to that which is constantly existing with the particular object. We conclude that there is heat and light along with the fire; without heat and light, there is no meaning to the word fire. Similarly, we must discover the essential part of the living being, that part which is his constant companion. That constant companion is his eternal quality, and that eternal quality is his eternal religion.

When Sanātana Gosvāmī asked Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu about the *svarūpa* of every living being, the Lord replied that the *svarūpa* or constitutional position of the living being is the rendering of service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If we analyze this statement of Lord Caitanya, we can easily see that every living being is constantly engaged in rendering service to another living being. A living being serves other living beings in two capacities. By doing so, the living entity enjoys life. The lower animals serve human beings as servants serve their master. A serves B master, B serves C master and C serves D master and so on. Under these circumstances, we can see that one friend serves another friend, the mother

serves the son, the wife serves the husband, the husband serves the wife and so on. If we go on searching in this spirit, it will be seen that there is no exception in the society of living beings to the activity of service. The politician presents his manifesto for the public to convince them of his capacity for service. The voters therefore give the politician their valuable votes, thinking that he will render valuable service to society. The shopkeeper serves the customer, and the artisan serves the capitalist. The capitalist serves the family, and the family serves the state in the terms of the eternal capacity of the eternal living being. In this way we can see that no living being is exempt from rendering service to other living beings, and therefore we can safely conclude that service is the constant companion of the living being and that the rendering of service is the eternal religion of the living being.

Yet man professes to belong to a particular type of faith with reference to particular time and circumstance and thus claims to be a Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist or any other sect. Such designations are non-*sanātana-dharma*. A Hindu may change his faith to become a Muslim, or a Muslim may change his faith to become a Hindu, or a Christian may change his faith and so on. But in all circumstances the change of religious faith does not effect the eternal occupation of rendering service to others. The Hindu, Muslim or Christian in all circumstances is servant of someone. Thus, to profess a particular type of sect is not to profess one's *sanātana-dharma*. The rendering of service is *sanātana-dharma*.

Factually we are related to the Supreme Lord in service. The Supreme Lord is the supreme enjoyer, and we living entities are His servitors. We are created for His enjoyment, and if we participate in that eternal enjoyment with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we become happy. We cannot become happy otherwise. It is not possible to be happy independantly, just as no one part of the body can be happy without cooperating with the stomach. It is not possible for the living entity to be happy without rendering transcendental loving service unto the Supreme Lord.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, worship of different demigods or rendering service to them is not approved. It is stated in the Seventh Chapter, twentieth verse:

*kāmais tais tair hr̥ta-jñānāḥ prapadyante 'nya-devatāḥ
taṁ taṁ niyamam āsthāya prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā*

"Those whose minds are distorted by material desires surrender unto demigods and follow the particular rules and regulations of worship according to their own natures." (Bg. 7.20) Here it is plainly said that those who are directed by lust worship the demigods and not the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. When we mention the name Kṛṣṇa, we do not refer to any sectarian name. Kṛṣṇa means the highest pleasure, and it is confirmed that the Supreme Lord is the reservoir or storehouse of all pleasure. We are all hankering after pleasure. *Ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt*. (Vs. 1.1.12) The living entities, like the Lord, are full of consciousness, and they are after happiness. The Lord is perpetually happy, and if the living entities associate with the Lord, cooperate with Him and take part in His association, then they also become happy.

The Lord descends to this mortal world to show His pastimes in Vṛndāvana, which are full of happiness. When Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was in Vṛndāvana, His activities with His cowherd boy friends, with His damsel friends, with the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana and with the cows were all full of happiness. The total population of Vṛndāvana knew nothing but Kṛṣṇa. But Lord Kṛṣṇa even discouraged His father Nanda Mahārāja from worshiping the demigod Indra because He wanted to establish the fact that people need not worship any demigod. They need only worship the Supreme Lord because their ultimate goal is to return to His abode.

The abode of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Fifteenth Chapter, sixth verse:

*na tad bhāsayate sūryo na śaśāṅko na pāvakaḥ
yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama*

"That abode of Mine is not illumined by the sun or moon, nor by electricity. And anyone who reaches it never comes back to this material world." (Bg. 15.6)

This verse gives a description of that eternal sky. Of course we have a material conception of the sky, and we think of it in relationship to the sun, moon, stars and so on, but in this verse the Lord states that in the eternal sky

there is no need for the sun nor for the moon nor fire of any kind because the spiritual sky is already illuminated by the *brahmajyoti*, the rays emanating from the Supreme Lord. We are trying with difficulty to reach other planets, but it is not difficult to understand the abode of the Supreme Lord. This abode is referred to as Goloka. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is beautifully described: *Goloka eva nivasaty akhilātma-bhūtaḥ*. The Lord resides eternally in His abode Goloka, yet He can be approached from this world, and to this end the Lord comes to manifest His real form, *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*. When He manifests this form, there is no need for our imagining what He looks like. To discourage such imaginative speculation, He descends and exhibits Himself as He is, as Śyāmasundara. Unfortunately, the less intelligent deride Him because He comes as one of us and plays with us as a human being. But because of this we should not consider that the Lord is one of us. It is by His potency that He presents Himself in His real form before us and displays His pastimes, which are prototypes of those pastimes found in His abode.

In the effulgent rays of the spiritual sky there are innumerable planets floating. The *brahmajyoti* emanates from the supreme abode, Kṛṣṇaloka, and the *ānandamaya-cinmaya* planets, which are not material, float in those rays. The Lord says, *na tad bhāsayate sūryo na śaśāṅko na pāvakaḥ yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama*. One who can approach that spiritual sky is not required to descend again to the material sky. In the material sky, even if we approach the highest planet (Brahmaloka), what to speak of the moon, we will find the same conditions of life, namely birth, death, disease and old age. No planet in the material universe is free from these four principles of material existence. Therefore the Lord says in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *ābrahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ punar āvartino 'rjuna*. The living entities are traveling from one planet to another, not by mechanical arrangement but by a spiritual process. This is also mentioned: *yānti deva-vratā devān pitṛn yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ*. No mechanical arrangement is necessary if we want interplanetary travel. The *Gītā* instructs: *yānti deva-vratā devān*. The moon, the sun and higher planets are called *svargaloka*. There are three different statuses of planets: higher, middle and lower planetary systems. The earth belongs to the middle planetary system. *Bhagavad-gītā* informs us how to travel to the higher planetary systems

(*devaloka*) with a very simple formula: *yānti deva-vratā devān*. One need only worship the particular demigod of that particular planet and in that way go to the moon, the sun or any of the higher planetary systems.

Yet *Bhagavad-gītā* does not advise us to go to any of the planets in this material world because even if we go to Brahmaloka, the highest planet, through some sort of mechanical contrivance by maybe traveling for forty thousand years (and who would live that long?), we will still find the material inconveniences of birth, death, disease and old age. But one who wants to approach the supreme planet, Kṛṣṇaloka, or any of the other planets within the spiritual sky, will not meet with these material inconveniences. Amongst all of the planets in the spiritual sky there is one supreme planet called Goloka Vṛndāvana, which is the original planet in the abode of the original Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All of this information is given in *Bhagavad-gītā*, and we are given through its instruction information how to leave the material world and begin a truly blissful life in the spiritual sky.

In the Fifteenth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the real picture of the material world is given. It is said there:

*ūrdhva-mūlam adhaḥ-śākham aśvattham prāhur avyayam
chandāmsi yasya parṇāni yas taṁ veda sa veda-vit*

"The Supreme Lord said: There is a banyan tree which has its roots upward and its branches down, and the Vedic hymns are its leaves. One who knows this tree is the knower of the *Vedas*." (Bg. 15.1) Here the material world is described as a tree whose roots are upwards and branches are below. We have experience of a tree whose roots are upward: if one stands on the bank of a river or any reservoir of water, he can see that the trees reflected in the water are upside down. The branches go downward and the roots upward. Similarly, this material world is a reflection of the spiritual world. The material world is but a shadow of reality. In the shadow there is no reality or substantiality, but from the shadow we can understand that there is substance and reality. In the desert there is no water, but the mirage suggests that there is such a thing as water. In the material world there is no water, there is no happiness, but the real water of actual happiness is there in the spiritual world.

The Lord suggests that we attain the spiritual world in the following manner:

*nirmāna-mohā jīta-saṅga-doṣā
adhyātma-nityā vinivṛtta-kāmāḥ
dvandvair vimuktāḥ sukha-duḥkha-saṁjñair
gacchanty amūḍhāḥ padam avyayam tat.*

That *padam avyayam* or eternal kingdom can be reached by one who is *nirmāna-moha*. What does this mean? We are after designations. Someone wants to become a son, someone wants to become Lord, someone wants to become the president or a rich man or a king or something else. As long as we are attached to these designations, we are attached to the body because designations belong to the body. But we are not these bodies, and realizing this is the first stage in spiritual realization. We are associated with the three modes of material nature, but we must become detached through devotional service to the Lord. If we are not attached to devotional service to the Lord, then we cannot become detached from the modes of material nature. Designations and attachments are due to our lust and desire, our wanting to lord it over the material nature. As long as we do not give up this propensity of lording it over material nature, there is no possibility of returning to the kingdom of the Supreme, the *sanātana-dhāma*. That eternal kingdom, which is never destroyed, can be approached by one who is not bewildered by the attractions of false material enjoyments, who is situated in the service of the Supreme Lord. One so situated can easily approach that supreme abode.

Elsewhere in the *Gītā* it is stated:

*avyakto 'kṣara ity uktas tam āhuḥ paramām gatim
yam prāpya na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama.*

Avyakta means unmanifested. Not even all of the material world is manifested before us. Our senses are so imperfect that we cannot even see all of the stars within this material universe. In Vedic literature we can receive much information about all the planets, and we can believe it or not believe it. All of the important planets are described in Vedic literatures, especially *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and the spiritual world, which is beyond

this material sky, is described as *avyakta*, unmanifested. One should desire and hanker after that supreme kingdom, for when one attains that kingdom, he does not have to return to this material world.

Next, one may raise the question of how one goes about approaching that abode of the Supreme Lord. Information of this is given in the Eighth Chapter. It is said there:

*anta-kāle ca mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvam yāti nāsty atra saṁśayaḥ*

"Anyone who quits his body, at the end of life, remembering Me, attains immediately to My nature; and there is no doubt of this." (Bg. 8.5) One who thinks of Kṛṣṇa at the time of his death goes to Kṛṣṇa. One must remember the form of Kṛṣṇa; if he quits his body thinking of this form, he approaches the spiritual kingdom. *Mad-bhāvam* refers to the supreme nature of the Supreme Being. The Supreme Being is *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*-eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. Our present body is not *sac-cid-ānanda*. It is *asat*, not *sat*. It is not eternal; it is perishable. It is not *cit*, full of knowledge, but it is full of ignorance. We have no knowledge of the spiritual kingdom, nor do we even have perfect knowledge of this material world where there are so many things unknown to us. The body is also *nirānanda*; instead of being full of bliss it is full of misery. All of the miseries we experience in the material world arise from the body, but one who leaves this body thinking of the Supreme Personality of Godhead at once attains a *sac-cid-ānanda* body, as is promised in this fifth verse of the Eighth Chapter where Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "He attains My nature."

The process of quitting this body and getting another body in the material world is also organized. A man dies after it has been decided what form of body he will have in the next life. Higher authorities, not the living entity himself, make this decision. According to our activities in this life, we either rise or sink. This life is a preparation for the next life. If we can prepare, therefore, in this life to get promotion to the kingdom of God, then surely, after quitting this material body, we will attain a spiritual body just like the Lord.

As explained before, there are different kinds of transcendentalists, the *brahmavādi paramātmavādi* and the devotee, and, as mentioned, in the

brahmajyoti (spiritual sky) there are innumerable spiritual planets. The number of these planets is far, far greater than all of the planets of this material world. This material world has been approximated as only one quarter of the creation. In this material segment there are millions and billions of universes with trillions of planets and suns, stars and moons. But this whole material creation is only a fragment of the total creation. Most of the creation is in the spiritual sky. One who desires to merge into the existence of the Supreme Brahman is at once transferred to the *brahmajyoti* of the Supreme Lord and thus attains the spiritual sky. The devotee, who wants to enjoy the association of the Lord, enters into the Vaikuṇṭha planets, which are innumerable, and the Supreme Lord by His plenary expansions as Nārāyaṇa with four hands and with different names like Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Govinda, etc., associates with him there. Therefore at the end of life the transcendentalists either think of the *brahmajyoti*, the Paramātmā or the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In all cases they enter into the spiritual sky, but only the devotee, or he who is in personal touch with the Supreme Lord, enters into the Vaikuṇṭha planets. The Lord further adds that of this "there is no doubt." This must be believed firmly. We should not reject that which does not tally with our imagination; our attitude should be that of Arjuna: "I believe everything that You have said." Therefore when the Lord says that at the time of death whoever thinks of Him as Brahman or Paramātmā or as the Personality of Godhead certainly enters into the spiritual sky, there is no doubt about it. There is no question of disbelieving it.

The information on how to think of the Supreme Being at the time of death is also given in the *Gītā*:

*yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ tyajaty ante kalevaram
taṁ tam evaiti kaunteya sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*

"In whatever condition one quits his present body, in his next life he will attain to that state of being without fail." (Bg. 8.6) Material nature is a display of one of the energies of the Supreme Lord. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* the total energies of the Supreme Lord as *Viṣṇu-śaktiḥ parā proktā*, etc., are delineated. The Supreme Lord has diverse and innumerable energies which are beyond our conception; however, great learned sages or liberated souls

have studied these energies and have analyzed them into three parts. All of the energies are of *Viṣṇu-śakti*, that is to say they are different potencies of Lord Viṣṇu. That energy is *parā*, transcendental. Living entities also belong to the superior energy, as has already been explained. The other energies, or material energies, are in the mode of ignorance. At the time of death we can either remain in the inferior energy of this material world, or we can transfer to the energy of the spiritual world.

In life we are accustomed to thinking either of the material or the spiritual energy. There are so many literatures which fill our thoughts with the material energy-newspapers, novels, etc. Our thinking, which is now absorbed in these literatures, must be transferred to the Vedic literatures. The great sages, therefore, have written so many Vedic literatures such as the *Purāṇas*, etc. The *Purāṇas* are not imaginative; they are historical records. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* there is the following verse:

māyā mugdha jīver nāhi svataḥ kṛṣṇa-jñāna
jīvera kṛpāya kailā kṛṣṇa veda-purāṇa
(Cc. Madhya 20.122)

The forgetful living entities or conditioned souls have forgotten their relationship with the Supreme Lord, and they are engrossed in thinking of material activities. Just to transfer their thinking power to the spiritual sky, Kṛṣṇa has given a great number of Vedic literatures. First He divided the *Vedas* into four, then He explained them in the *Purāṇas*, and for less capable people He wrote the *Mahābhārata*. In the *Mahābhārata* there is given the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Then all Vedic literature is summarized in the *Vedānta-sūtra*, and for future guidance He gave a natural commentation on the *Vedānta-sutra*, called *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. We must always engage our minds in reading these Vedic literatures. Just as materialists engage their minds in reading newspapers, magazines and so many materialistic literatures, we must transfer our reading to these literatures which are given to us by Vyāsadeva; in that way it will be possible for us to remember the Supreme Lord at the time of death. That is the only way suggested by the Lord, and He guarantees the result: "There is no doubt." (Bg. 8.7)

tasmāt sarveṣu kālēṣu mām anusmara yudhya ca
mayy arpita-mano-buddhir mām evaiṣyasy asaṁśayaḥ

"Therefore, Arjuna, you should always think of Me, and at the same time you should continue your prescribed duty and fight. With your mind and activities always fixed on Me, and everything engaged in Me, you will attain to Me without any doubt."

He does not advise Arjuna to simply remember Him and give up his occupation. No, the Lord never suggests anything impractical. In this material world, in order to maintain the body one has to work. Human society is divided, according to work, into four divisions of social order—*brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, *śūdra*. The *brāhmaṇa* class or intelligent class is working in one way, the *kṣatriya* or administrative class is working in another way, and the mercantile class and the laborers are all tending to their specific duties. In the human society, whether one is a laborer, merchant, warrior, administrator, or farmer, or even if one belongs to the highest class and is a literary man, a scientist or a theologian, he has to work in order to maintain his existence. The Lord therefore tells Arjuna that he need not give up his occupation, but while he is engaged in his occupation he should remember Kṛṣṇa. If he doesn't practice remembering Kṛṣṇa while he is struggling for existence, then it will not be possible for him to remember Kṛṣṇa at the time of death. Lord Caitanya also advises this. He says that one should practice remembering the Lord by chanting the names of the Lord always. The names of the Lord and the Lord are nondifferent. So Lord Kṛṣṇa's instruction to Arjuna to "remember Me" and Lord Caitanya's injunction to always "chant the names of Lord Kṛṣṇa" are the same instruction. There is no difference, because Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's name are nondifferent. In the absolute status there is no difference between reference and referent. Therefore we have to practice remembering the Lord always, twenty-four hours a day, by chanting His names and molding our life's activities in such a way that we can remember Him always.

How is this possible? The *ācāryas* give the following example. If a married woman is attached to another man, or if a man has an attachment for a woman other than his wife, then the attachment is to be considered very strong. One with such an attachment is always thinking of the loved one. The wife who is thinking of her lover is always thinking of meeting him, even while she is carrying out her household chores. In fact, she carries out her household work even more carefully so her husband will not

suspect her attachment. Similarly, we should always remember the supreme lover, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and at the same time perform our material duties very nicely. A strong sense of love is required here. If we have a strong sense of love for the Supreme Lord, then we can discharge our duty and at the same time remember Him. But we have to develop that sense of love. Arjuna, for instance, was always thinking of Kṛṣṇa; he was the constant companion of Kṛṣṇa, and at the same time he was a warrior. Kṛṣṇa did not advise him to give up fighting and go to the forest to meditate. When Lord Kṛṣṇa delineates the *yoga* system to Arjuna, Arjuna says that the practice of this system is not possible for him.

arjuna uvāca

*yo 'yaṁ yogas tvayā proktaḥ sāmyena madhusūdana
etasyāhaṁ na paśyāmi cañcalatvāt sthitim sthirām*

"Arjuna said, O Madhusūdana, the system of *yoga* which you have summarized appears impractical and unendurable to me, for the mind is restless and unsteady." (Bg. 6.33)

But the Lord says:

*yoginām api sarveṣāṁ mad-gatenāntarātmanā
śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām sa me yuktatamo mataḥ*

"Of all *yogīs*, he who always abides in Me with great faith, worshiping Me in transcendental loving service, is most intimately united with Me in *yoga*, and is the highest of all." (Bg. 6.47) So one who thinks of the Supreme Lord always is the greatest *yogī*, the supermost *jñānī*, and the greatest devotee at the same time. The Lord further tells Arjuna that as a *kṣatriya* he cannot give up his fighting, but if Arjuna fights remembering Kṛṣṇa, then he will be able to remember Him at the time of death. But one must be completely surrendered in the transcendental loving service of the Lord.

We work not with our body, actually, but with our mind and intelligence. So if the intelligence and the mind are always engaged in the thought of the Supreme Lord, then naturally the senses are also engaged in His service. Superficially, at least, the activities of the senses remain the same, but the consciousness is changed. The *Bhagavad-gītā* teaches one how to absorb the mind and intelligence in the thought of the Lord. Such absorption will

enable one to transfer himself to the kingdom of the Lord. If the mind is engaged in Kṛṣṇa's service, then the senses are automatically engaged in His service. This is the art, and this is also the secret of *Bhagavad-gītā*: total absorption in the thought of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Modern man has struggled very hard to reach the moon, but he has not tried very hard to elevate himself spiritually. If one has fifty years of life ahead of him, he should engage that brief time in cultivating this practice of remembering the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This practice is the devotional process of:

*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam pāda-sevanam
arcanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyam sakhyam ātma-nivedanam*

These nine processes, of which the easiest is *śravaṇam*, hearing *Bhagavad-gītā* from the realized person, will turn one to the thought of the Supreme Being. This will lead to *niścala*, remembering the Supreme Lord, and will enable one, upon leaving the body, to attain a spiritual body which is just fit for association with the Supreme Lord.

The Lord further says:

*abhyāsa-yoga-yuktena cetasā nānya-gāminā
paramaṁ puruṣaṁ divyaṁ yāti pārthānucintayan*

"By practicing this remembering, without being deviated, thinking ever of the Supreme Godhead, one is sure to achieve the planet of the Divine, the Supreme Personality, O son of Kuntī." (Bg. 8.8)

This is not a very difficult process. However, one must learn it from an experienced person, from one who is already in the practice. The mind is always flying to this and that, but one must always practice concentrating the mind on the form of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa or on the sound of His name. The mind is naturally restless, going hither and thither, but it can rest in the sound vibration of Kṛṣṇa. One must thus meditate on *paramaṁ puruṣaṁ*, the Supreme Person; and thus attain Him. The ways and the means for ultimate realization, ultimate attainment, are stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and the doors of this knowledge are open for everyone. No one is barred out. All classes of men can approach the Lord by thinking of Him, for hearing and thinking of Him is possible for everyone.

The Lord further says:

*mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya ye 'pi syuḥ pāpa-yonayaḥ
striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās te 'pi yānti parām gatim
kim punar brāhmaṇāḥ puṇyā bhaktā rājarṣayas tathā
anityam asukhaṁ lokam imaṁ prāpya bhajasva mām*

"O son of Pṛthā, anyone who will take shelter in Me, whether a woman, or a merchant, or one born in a low family, can yet approach the supreme destination. How much greater then are the *brāhmaṇas*, the righteous, the devotees, and saintly kings! In this miserable world, these are fixed in devotional service to the Lord." (Bg. 9.32-33)

Human beings even in the lower statuses of life (a merchant, a woman or a laborer) can attain the Supreme. One does not need highly developed intelligence. The point is that anyone who accepts the principle of *bhakti-yoga* and accepts the Supreme Lord as the *summum bonum* of life, as the highest target, the ultimate goal, can approach the Lord in the spiritual sky. If one adopts the principles enunciated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, he can make his life perfect and make a perfect solution to all the problems of life which arise out of the transient nature of material existence. This is the sum and substance of the entire *Bhagavad-gītā*.

In conclusion, *Bhagavad-gītā* is a transcendental literature which one should read very carefully. It is capable of saving one from all fear.

*nehābhikrama-nāśo 'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate
svalpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt*

"In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous type of fear." (Bg. 2.40) If one reads *Bhagavad-gītā* sincerely and seriously, then all of the reactions of his past misdeeds will not react upon him. In the last portion of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa proclaims:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

"Give up all varieties of religiousness, and just surrender unto Me; and in return I shall protect you from all sinful reactions. Therefore, you have

nothing to fear." (Bg. 18.66) Thus the Lord takes all responsibility for one who surrenders unto Him, and He indemnifies all the reactions of sin.

One cleanses himself daily by taking a bath in water, but one who takes his bath only once in the sacred Ganges water of the *Bhagavad-gītā* cleanses away all the dirt of material life. Because *Bhagavad-gītā* is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one need not read any other Vedic literature. One need only attentively and regularly hear and read *Bhagavad-gītā*. In the present age, mankind is so absorbed with mundane activities that it is not possible to read all of the Vedic literatures. But this is not necessary. This one book, *Bhagavad-gītā*, will suffice because it is the essence of all Vedic literatures and because it is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is said that one who drinks the water of the Ganges certainly gets salvation, but what to speak of one who drinks the waters of *Bhagavad-gītā*? *Gītā* is the very nectar of the *Mahābhārata* spoken by Viṣṇu Himself, for Lord Kṛṣṇa is the original Viṣṇu. It is nectar emanating from the mouth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the Ganges is said to be emanating from the lotus feet of the Lord. Of course there is no difference between the mouth and the feet of the Supreme Lord, but in our position we can appreciate that the *Bhagavad-gītā* is even more important than the Ganges.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* is just like a cow, and Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is a cowherd boy, is milking this cow. The milk is the essence of the *Vedas*, and Arjuna is just like a calf. The wise men, the great sages and pure devotees, are to drink the nectarean milk of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

In this present day, man is very eager to have one scripture, one God, one religion, and one occupation. So let there be one common scripture for the whole world-*Bhagavad-gītā*. And let there be one God only for the whole world-Śrī Kṛṣṇa. And one *mantra* only-Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. And let there be one work only-the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

THE DISCIPLE SUCCESSION

Evam paramparā-prāptam imaṁ rājarṣayo viduḥ. (Bhagavad-gītā, 4.2)
This *Bhagavad-gītā* As It Is is received through this disciplic succession:

1) **Kṛṣṇa**, 2) Brahmā, 3) Nārada; 4) Vyāsa, 5) Madhva, 6) Padmanābha, 7) Nṛhari, 8) Mādhava, 9) Akṣobhya, 10) Jayatīrtha, 11) Jñānasindhu, 12) Dayānidhi, 13) Vidyānidhi, 14) Rājendra, 15) Jayadharmā, 16) Puruṣottama, 17) Brahmanyaīrtha, 18) Vyāsaīrtha, 19) Lakṣmīpati, 20) Mādhavendra Purī, 21) Īśvara Purī, (Nityānanda, Advaita), **22) Lord Caitanya**, 23) Rūpa (Svarūpa, Sanātana), 24) Raghunātha, Jīva, 25) Kṛṣṇadāsa, 26) Narottama, 27) Viśvanātha, 28) (Baladeva) Jagannātha, 29) Bhaktivinoda, 30) Gaurakiśora, 31) Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, 32) His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.

1. Observing the Armies on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra

TEXT 1

*dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca
dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre
samavetā yuyutsavaḥ
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāś caiva
kim akurvata sañjaya*

SYNONYMS

dhṛtarāṣṭraḥ-King Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *uvāca*-said; *dharma-kṣetre*-in the place of pilgrimage; *kuru-kṣetre*-in the place named Kurukṣetra; *samavetāḥ*-assembled; *yuyutsavaḥ*-desiring to fight; *māmakāḥ*-my party (sons); *pāṇḍavāḥ*-the sons of Pāṇḍu; *ca*-and; *eva*-certainly; *kim*-what; *akurvata*-did they do; *sañjaya*-O Sañjaya.

TRANSLATION

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said: O Sañjaya, after assembling in the place of pilgrimage at Kurukṣetra, what did my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu do, being desirous to fight?

PURPORT

Bhagavad-gītā is the widely read theistic science summarized in the *Gītā-māhātmya* (*Glorification of the Gītā*). There it says that one should read *Bhagavad-gītā* very scrutinizingly with the help of a person who is a devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and try to understand it without personally motivated interpretations. The example of clear understanding is there in the *Bhagavad-gītā* itself, in the way the teaching is understood by Arjuna, who

heard the *Gītā* directly from the Lord. If someone is fortunate enough to understand *Bhagavad-gītā* in that line of disciplic succession, without motivated interpretation, then he surpasses all studies of Vedic wisdom, and all scriptures of the world. One will find in the *Bhagavad-gītā* all that is contained in other scriptures, but the reader will also find things which are not to be found elsewhere. That is the specific standard of the *Gītā*. It is the perfect theistic science because it is directly spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

The topics discussed by Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Sañjaya, as described in the *Mahābhārata*, form the basic principle for this great philosophy. It is understood that this philosophy evolved on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, which is a sacred place of pilgrimage from the immemorial time of the Vedic age. It was spoken by the Lord when He was present personally on this planet for the guidance of mankind.

The word *dharma-kṣetra* (a place where religious rituals are performed) is significant because, on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead was present on the side of Arjuna. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the father of the Kurus, was highly doubtful about the possibility of his sons' ultimate victory. In his doubt, he inquired from his secretary Sañjaya, "What did my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu do?" He was confident that both his sons and the sons of his younger brother Pāṇḍu were assembled in that Field of Kurukṣetra for a determined engagement of the war. Still, his inquiry is significant. He did not want a compromise between the cousins and brothers, and he wanted to be sure of the fate of his sons on the battlefield. Because the battle was arranged to be fought at Kurukṣetra, which is mentioned elsewhere in the *Vedas* as a place of worship-even for the denizens of heaven-Dhṛtarāṣṭra became very fearful about the influence of the holy place on the outcome of the battle. He knew very well that this would influence Arjuna and the sons of Pāṇḍu favorably, because by nature they were all virtuous. Sañjaya was a student of Vyāsa, and therefore, by the mercy of Vyāsa, Sañjaya was able to envision the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra even while he was in the room of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. And so, Dhṛtarāṣṭra asked him about the situation on the battlefield.

Both the Pāṇḍavas and the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra belong to the same family, but Dhṛtarāṣṭra's mind is disclosed herein. He deliberately claimed only his

sons as Kurus, and he separated the sons of Pāṇḍu from the family heritage. One can thus understand the specific position of Dhṛtarāṣṭra in his relationship with his nephews, the sons of Pāṇḍu. As in the paddy field the unnecessary plants are taken out, so it is expected from the very beginning of these topics that in the religious field of Kurukṣetra where the father of religion, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was present, the unwanted plants like Dhṛtarāṣṭra's son Duryodhana and others would be wiped out and the thoroughly religious persons, headed by Yudhiṣṭhira, would be established by the Lord. This is the significance of the words *dharma-kṣetre* and *kuru-kṣetre*, apart from their historical and Vedic importance.

TEXT 2

sañjaya uvāca
dr̥ṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkam
vyūḍham duryodhanas tadā
ācāryam upasaṅgamyā
rājā vacanam abravīt

SYNONYMS

sañjayaḥ-Sañjaya; *uvāca*-said; *dr̥ṣṭvā*-after seeing; *tu*-but; *pāṇḍava-anīkam*-the soldiers of the Pāṇḍavas; *vyūḍham*-arranged in military phalanx; *duryodhanaḥ*-King Duryodhana; *tadā*-at that time; *ācāryam*-the teacher; *upasaṅgamyā*-approaching nearby; *rājā*-the king; *vacanam*-words; *abravīt*-spoke.

TRANSLATION

Sañjaya said: O King, after looking over the army gathered by the sons of Pāṇḍu, King Duryodhana went to his teacher and began to speak the following words:

PURPORT

Dhṛtarāṣṭra was blind from birth. Unfortunately, he was also bereft of spiritual vision. He knew very well that his sons were equally blind in the

matter of religion, and he was sure that they could never reach an understanding with the Pāṇḍavas, who were all pious since birth. Still he was doubtful about the influence of the place of pilgrimage, and Sañjaya could understand his motive in asking about the situation on the battlefield. He wanted, therefore, to encourage the despondent King, and thus he warned him that his sons were not going to make any sort of compromise under the influence of the holy place. Sañjaya therefore informed the King that his son, Duryodhana, after seeing the military force of the Pāṇḍavas, at once went to the commander-in-chief, Droṇācārya, to inform him of the real position. Although Duryodhana is mentioned as the king, he still had to go to the commander on account of the seriousness of the situation. He was therefore quite fit to be a politician. But Duryodhana's diplomatic veneer could not disguise the fear he felt when he saw the military arrangement of the Pāṇḍavas.

TEXT 3

*paśyaitām pāṇḍu-putrāṇām
ācārya mahatīm camūm
vyūḍhām drupada-putreṇa
tava śiṣyeṇa dhīmatā*

SYNONYMS

paśya-behold; *etām*-this; *pāṇḍu-putrāṇām*-of the sons of Pāṇḍu; *ācārya*-O teacher; *mahatīm*-great; *camūm*-military force; *vyūḍham*-arranged; *drupada-putreṇa*-by the son of Drupada; *tava*-your; *śiṣyeṇa*-disciple; *dhīmatā*-very intelligent.

TRANSLATION

O my teacher, behold the great army of the sons of Pāṇḍu, so expertly arranged by your intelligent disciple, the son of Drupada.

PURPORT

Duryodhana, a great diplomat, wanted to point out the defects of Droṇācārya, the great *brāhmaṇa* commander-in-chief. Droṇācārya had some political quarrel with King Drupada, the father of Draupadī, who was Arjuna's wife. As a result of this quarrel, Drupada performed a great sacrifice, by which he received the benediction of having a son who would be able to kill Droṇācārya. Droṇācārya knew this perfectly well, and yet, as a liberal *brāhmaṇa*, he did not hesitate to impart all his military secrets when the son of Drupada, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, was entrusted to him for military education. Now, on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, Dhṛṣṭadyumna took the side of the Pāṇḍavas, and it was he who arranged for their military phalanx, after having learned the art from Droṇācārya. Duryodhana pointed out this mistake of Droṇācārya's so that he might be alert and uncompromising in the fighting. By this he wanted to point out also that he should not be similarly lenient in battle against the Pāṇḍavas, who were also Droṇācārya's affectionate students. Arjuna, especially, was his most affectionate and brilliant student. Duryodhana also warned that such leniency in the fight would lead to defeat.

TEXT 4

*atra śūrā maheṣv-āsā
bhīmārjuna-samā yudhi
yuyudhāno virāṭaś ca
drupadaś ca mahā-rathaḥ*

SYNONYMS

atra-here; *śūrāḥ*-heroes; *maheṣvāsāḥ*-mighty bowmen; *bhīma-arjuna*-Bhīma and Arjuna; *samāḥ*-equal; *yudhi*-in the fight; *yuyudhānaḥ*-Yuyudhāna; *virāṭaḥ*-Virāṭa; *ca*-also; *drupadaḥ*-Drupada; *ca*-also; *mahārathaḥ*-great fighter.

TRANSLATION

Here in this army there are many heroic bowmen equal in fighting to Bhīma and Arjuna; there are also great fighters like Yuyudhāna, Virāṭa and Drupada.

PURPORT

Even though Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna was not a very important obstacle in the face of Droṇācārya's very great power in the military art, there were many others who were the cause of fear. They are mentioned by Duryodhana as great stumbling blocks on the path of victory because each and every one of them was as formidable as Bhīma and Arjuna. He knew the strength of Bhīma and Arjuna, and thus he compared the others with them.

TEXT 5

*dhr̥ṣṭaketuś cekitānaḥ
kāśirājaś ca vīryavān
puruḥjit kuntibhojaś ca
śaibyaś ca nara-puṅgavaḥ*

SYNONYMS

dhr̥ṣṭaketuḥ-Dhr̥ṣṭaketu; *cekitānaḥ*-Cekitāna; *kāśirājaḥ*-Kāśirāja; *ca*-also; *vīryavān*-very powerful; *puruḥjit*-Puruḥjit; *kuntibhojaḥ*-Kuntibhoja; *ca*-and; *śaibyaḥ*-Śaibya; *ca*-and; *nara-puṅgavaḥ*-heroes in human society.

TRANSLATION

There are also great, heroic, powerful fighters like Dhr̥ṣṭaketu, Cekitāna, Kāśirāja, Puruḥjit, Kuntibhoja and Śaibya.

TEXT 6

*yudhāmanyuś ca vikrānta
uttamaujāś ca vīryavān
saubhadro draupadeyāś ca
sarva eva mahā-rathāḥ*

SYNONYMS

yudhāmanyuḥ-Yudhāmanyu; *ca*-and; *vikrāntaḥ*-mighty; *uttamaujāḥ*-Uttamaujā; *ca*-and; *vīryavān*-very powerful; *saubhadraḥ*-the son of

Subhadrā; *draupadeyāḥ*-the sons of Draupadī; *ca*-and; *sarve*-all; *eva*-certainly; *mahā-rathāḥ*-great chariot fighters.

TRANSLATION

There are the mighty Yudhāmanyu, the very powerful Uttamaujā, the son of Subhadrā and the sons of Draupadī. All these warriors are great chariot fighters.

TEXT 7

*asmākaṁ tu viśiṣṭā ye
tān nibodha dvijottama
nāyakā mama sainyasya
saṁjñārthaṁ tān bravāmi te*

SYNONYMS

asmākaṁ-our; *tu*-but; *viśiṣṭāḥ*-especially powerful; *ye*-those; *tān*-them; *nibodha*-just take note, be informed; *dvijottama*-the best of the *brāhmaṇas*; *nāyakāḥ*-captains; *mama*-my; *sainyasya*-of the soldiers; *saṁjñā-arthaṁ*-for information; *tān*-them; *bravāmi*-I am speaking; *te*-your.

TRANSLATION

O best of the brāhmaṇas, for your information, let me tell you about the captains who are especially qualified to lead my military force.

TEXT 8

*bhavān bhīṣmaś ca karṇaś ca
kṛpaś ca samitiṁ-jayaḥ
aśvatthāmā vikaṇaś ca
saumadattis tathaiva ca*

SYNONYMS

bhavān-yourself; *bhīṣmaḥ*-Grandfather Bhīṣma; *ca*-also; *karṇaḥ*-Karṇa; *ca*-and; *kṛpaḥ*-Kṛpa; *ca*-and; *saṁitiñjayaḥ*-always victorious in battle; *aśvatthāmā*-Aśvatthāmā; *vikarṇaḥ*-Vikarṇa; *ca*-as well as; *saumadattiḥ*-the son of Somadatta; *tathā*-and as; *eva*-certainly; *ca*-and.

TRANSLATION

There are personalities like yourself, Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Kṛpa, Aśvatthāmā, Vikarṇa and the son of Somadatta called Bhūriśravā, who are always victorious in battle.

PURPORT

Duryodhana mentioned the exceptional heroes in the battle, all of whom are ever-victorious. Vikarṇa is the brother of Duryodhana, Aśvatthāmā is the son of Droṇācārya, and Saumadatti, or Bhūriśravā, is the son of the King of the Bāhlikas. Karṇa is the half brother of Arjuna, as he was born of Kuntī before her marriage with King Pāṇḍu. Kṛpācārya married the twin sister of Droṇācārya.

TEXT 9

*anye ca bahavaḥ śūrā
mad-arthe tyakta-jīvitāḥ
nānā-śastra-praharaṇāḥ
sarve yuddha-viśāradaḥ*

SYNONYMS

anye-many others; *ca*-also; *bahavaḥ*-in great numbers; *śūrāḥ*-heroes; *mad-arthe*-for my sake; *tyakta-jīvitāḥ*-prepared to risk life; *nānā*-many; *śastra*-weapons; *praharaṇāḥ*-equipped with; *sarve*-all of them; *yuddha*-battle; *viśāradaḥ*-experienced in military science.

TRANSLATION

There are many other heroes who are prepared to lay down their lives for my sake. All of them are well equipped with different kinds of

weapons, and all are experienced in military science.

PURPORT

As far as the others are concerned-like Jayadratha, Kṛtavarmā, Śalya, etc.-all are determined to lay down their lives for Duryodhana's sake. In other words, it is already concluded that all of them would die in the Battle of Kurukṣetra for joining the party of the sinful Duryodhana. Duryodhana was, of course, confident of his victory on account of the above-mentioned combined strength of his friends.

TEXT 10

*aparyāptam tad asmākam
balam bhīṣmābhirakṣitam
paryāptam tv idam eteṣām
balam bhīmābhirakṣitam*

SYNONYMS

aparyāptam-immeasurable; *tat*-that; *asmākam*-of ours; *balam*-strength; *bhīṣma*-by Grandfather Bhīṣma; *abhirakṣitam*-perfectly protected; *paryāptam*-limited; *tu*-but; *idam*-all these; *eteṣām*-of the Pāṇḍavas; *balam*-strength; *bhīma*-by Bhīma; *abhirakṣitam*-carefully protected.

TRANSLATION

Our strength is immeasurable, and we are perfectly protected by Grandfather Bhīṣma, whereas the strength of the Pāṇḍavas, carefully protected by Bhīma, is limited.

PURPORT

Herein an estimation of comparative strength is made by Duryodhana. He thinks that the strength of his armed forces is immeasurable, being specifically protected by the most experienced general, Grandfather Bhīṣma. On the other hand, the forces of the Pāṇḍavas are limited, being protected by a less experienced general, Bhīma, who is like a fig in the

presence of Bhīṣma. Duryodhana was always envious of Bhīma because he knew perfectly well that if he should die at all, he would only be killed by Bhīma. But at the same time, he was confident of his victory on account of the presence of Bhīṣma, who was a far superior general. His conclusion that he would come out of the battle victorious was well ascertained.

TEXT 11

*ayaneṣu ca sarveṣu
yathā-bhāgam avasthitāḥ
bhīṣmam evābhirakṣantu
bhavantaḥ sarva eva hi*

SYNONYMS

ayaneṣu-in the strategic points; *ca*-also; *sarveṣu*-everywhere; *yathābhāgam*-as they are differently arranged; *avasthitāḥ*-situated; *bhīṣmam*-unto Grandfather Bhīṣma; *eva*-certainly; *abhirakṣantu*-support may be given; *bhavantaḥ*-all of you; *sarve*-respectively; *eva*-certainly; *hi*-and exactly.

TRANSLATION

Now all of you must give full support to Grandfather Bhīṣma, standing at your respective strategic points in the phalanx of the army.

PURPORT

Duryodhana, after praising the prowess of Bhīṣma, further considered that others might think that they had been considered less important, so in his usual diplomatic way, he tried to adjust the situation in the above words. He emphasized that Bhīṣmadeva was undoubtedly the greatest hero, but he was an old man, so everyone must especially think of his protection from all sides. He might become engaged in the fight, and the enemy might take advantage of his full engagement on one side. Therefore, it was important that other heroes would not leave their strategic positions and allow the enemy to break the phalanx. Duryodhana clearly felt that the victory of the Kurus depended on the presence of Bhīṣmadeva. He was confident of the

full support of Bhīṣmadeva and Droṇācārya in the battle because he well knew that they did not even speak a word when Arjuna's wife Draupadī, in her helpless condition, had appealed to them for justice while she was being forced to strip naked in the presence of all the great generals in the assembly. Although he knew that the two generals had some sort of affection for the Pāṇḍavas, he hoped that all such affection would now be completely given up by them, as was customary during the gambling performances.

TEXT 12

*tasya sañjanayan harṣam
kuru-vṛddhaḥ pitāmahaḥ
simha-nādam vinadyoccaiḥ
śaṅkham dadhmau pratāpavān*

SYNONYMS

tasya-his; *sañjanayan*-increasing; *harṣam*-cheerfulness; *kuru-vṛddhaḥ*-the grandsire of the Kuru dynasty (Bhīṣma); *pitāmahaḥ*-the grandfather; *simha-nādam*-roaring sound, like a lion; *vinadya*-vibrating; *uccaiḥ*-very loudly; *śaṅkham*-conchshell; *dadhmau*-blew; *pratāpavān*-the valiant.

TRANSLATION

Then Bhīṣma, the great valiant grandsire of the Kuru dynasty, the grandfather of the fighters, blew his conchshell very loudly like the sound of a lion, giving Duryodhana joy.

PURPORT

The grandsire of the Kuru dynasty could understand the inner meaning of the heart of his grandson Duryodhana, and out of his natural compassion for him he tried to cheer him by blowing his conchshell very loudly, befitting his position as a lion. Indirectly, by the symbolism of the conchshell, he informed his depressed grandson Duryodhana that he had no chance of victory in the battle, because the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa was on the

other side. But still, it was his duty to conduct the fight, and no pains would be spared in that connection.

TEXT 13

*tataḥ śaṅkhāś ca bheryaś ca
paṇavānaka-gomukhāḥ
sahasāivābhyahanyanta
sa śabdāsa tumulo 'bhavat*

SYNONYMS

tataḥ-thereafter; *śaṅkhāḥ*-conchshells; *ca*-also; *bheryaḥ*-bugles; *ca*-and; *paṇava-ānaka*-trumpets and drums; *go-mukhāḥ*-horns; *sahasā*-all of a sudden; *eva*-certainly; *abhyahanyanta*-being simultaneously sounded; *saḥ*-that; *śabdāsa*-combined sound; *tumulaḥ*-tumultuous; *abhavat*-became.

TRANSLATION

After that, the conchshells, bugles, trumpets, drums and horns were all suddenly sounded, and the combined sound was tumultuous.

TEXT 14

*tataḥ śvetair hayair yukte
mahati syandane sthitau
mādhavaḥ pāṇḍavaś caiva
divyau śaṅkhau pradadhmatuḥ*

SYNONYMS

tataḥ-thereafter; *śvetaiḥ*-by white; *hayaiḥ*-horses; *yukte*-being yoked with; *mahati*-in the great; *syandane*-chariot; *sthitau*-so situated; *mādhavaḥ*-Kṛṣṇa (the husband of the goddess of fortune); *pāṇḍavaḥ*-Arjuna (the son of Pāṇḍu); *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *divyau*-transcendental; *śaṅkhau*-conchshells; *pradadhmatuḥ*-sounded.

TRANSLATION

On the other side, both Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, stationed on a great chariot drawn by white horses, sounded their transcendental conchshells.

PURPORT

In contrast with the conchshell blown by Bhīṣmadeva, the conchshells in the hands of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna are described as transcendental. The sounding of the transcendental conchshells indicated that there was no hope of victory for the other side because Kṛṣṇa was on the side of the Pāṇḍavas. *Jayas tu pāṇḍu-putrāṇāṁ yeṣāṁ pakṣe janārdanaḥ*. Victory is always with persons like the sons of Pāṇḍu because Lord Kṛṣṇa is associated with them. And whenever and wherever the Lord is present, the goddess of fortune is also there because the goddess of fortune never lives alone without her husband. Therefore, victory and fortune were awaiting Arjuna, as indicated by the transcendental sound produced by the conchshell of Viṣṇu, or Lord Kṛṣṇa. Besides that, the chariot on which both the friends were seated was donated by Agni (the fire-god) to Arjuna, and this indicated that this chariot was capable of conquering all sides, wherever it was drawn over the three worlds.

TEXT 15

*pāñcajanyaṁ hṛṣīkeśo
devadattaṁ dhanañjayaḥ
pauṇḍraṁ dadhmau mahā-śaṅkhaṁ
bhīma-karmā vṛkodaraḥ*

SYNONYMS

pāñcajanya-the conchshell named Pāñcajanya; *hṛṣīkeśaḥ*-Hṛṣīkeśa (Kṛṣṇa, the Lord who directs the senses of the devotees); *devadatta*-the conchshell named Devadatta; *dhanañjayaḥ*-Dhanañjaya (Arjuna, the winner of wealth); *pauṇḍra*-the conch named Pauṇḍra; *dadhmau*-blew; *mahā*-

śaṅkham-the terrific conchshell; *bhīma-karmā*-one who performs Herculean tasks; *vṛkodaraḥ*-the voracious eater (Bhīma).

TRANSLATION

Then, Lord Kṛṣṇa blew His conchshell, called Pāñcajanya; Arjuna blew his, the Devadatta; and Bhīma, the voracious eater and performer of Herculean tasks, blew his terrific conchshell called Pauṇḍram.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa is referred to as Hṛṣīkeśa in this verse because He is the owner of all senses. The living entities are part and parcel of Him, and, therefore, the senses of the living entities are also part and parcel of His senses. The impersonalists cannot account for the senses of the living entities, and therefore they are always anxious to describe all living entities as sense-less, or impersonal. The Lord, situated in the hearts of all living entities, directs their senses. But, He directs in terms of the surrender of the living entity, and in the case of a pure devotee He directly controls the senses. Here on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra the Lord directly controls the transcendental senses of Arjuna, and thus His particular name of Hṛṣīkeśa. The Lord has different names according to His different activities. For example, His name is Madhusūdana because He killed the demon of the name Madhu; His name is Govinda because He gives pleasure to the cows and to the senses; His name is Vāsudeva because He appeared as the son of Vasudeva; His name is Devakī-nandana because He accepted Devakī as His mother; His name is Yaśodā-nandana because He awarded His childhood pastimes to Yaśodā at Vṛndāvana; His name is Pārtha-sārathi because He worked as charioteer of His friend Arjuna. Similarly, His name is Hṛṣīkeśa because He gave direction to Arjuna on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra.

Arjuna is referred to as Dhanañjaya in this verse because he helped his elder brother in fetching wealth when it was required by the King to make expenditures for different sacrifices. Similarly, Bhīma is known as Vṛkodara because he could eat as voraciously as he could perform Herculean tasks, such as killing the demon Hidimba. So, the particular types of conchshell blown by the different personalities on the side of the Pāṇḍavas, beginning

with the Lord's, were all very encouraging to the fighting soldiers. On the other side there were no such credits, nor the presence of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme director, nor that of the goddess of fortune. So, they were predestined to lose the battle-and that was the message announced by the sounds of the conchshells.

TEXTS 16-18

*anantavijayaṁ rājā
kuntī-putro yudhiṣṭhiraḥ
nakulaḥ sahadevaś ca
sughoṣa-maṇipuṣpakau*

*kāśyaś ca parameṣv-āsaḥ
śikhaṇḍī ca mahā-rathaḥ
dhr̥ṣṭadyumno virāṭaś ca
sātyakiś cāparājitaḥ*

*drupado draupadeyāś ca
sarvaśaḥ pṛthivī-pate
saubhadraś ca mahā-bāhuḥ
śaṅkhān dadhmuḥ pṛthak pṛthak*

SYNONYMS

ananta-vijayaṁ-the conch named Ananta-vijaya; *rājā*-the king; *kuntī-putraḥ*-the son of Kuntī; *yudhiṣṭhiraḥ*-Yudhiṣṭhira; *nakulaḥ*-Nakula; *sahadevaḥ*-Sahadeva; *ca*-and; *sughoṣa-maṇipuṣpakau*-the conches named Sughoṣa and Maṇipuṣpaka; *kāśyaḥ*-the King of Kāśī (Vārāṇasī); *ca*-and; *parama-iṣu-āsaḥ*-the great archer; *śikhaṇḍī*-Śikhaṇḍī; *ca*-also; *mahā-rathaḥ*-one who can fight alone against thousands; *dhr̥ṣṭadyumnaḥ*-Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna (the son of King Drupada); *virāṭaḥ*-Virāṭa (the prince who gave shelter to the Pāṇḍavas while they were in disguise); *ca*-also; *sātyakiḥ*-Sātyaki (the same as Yuyudhāna, the charioteer of Lord Kṛṣṇa); *ca*-and; *aparājitaḥ*-who had never been vanquished; *drupadaḥ*-Drupada, the King of Pāñcāla; *draupadeyāḥ*-the sons of Draupadī; *ca*-also; *sarvaśaḥ*-all; *pṛthivī-pate*-O King; *saubhadraḥ*-Abhimanyu, the son of Subhadra; *ca*-also;

mahā-bāhuḥ-mighty-armed; *śaṅkhān*-conchshells; *dadhmuḥ*-blew; *prthak prthak*-each separately.

TRANSLATION

King Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Kuntī, blew his conchshell, the Anantavijaya, and Nakula and Sahadeva blew the Sughoṣa and Maṇipuṣpaka. That great archer the King of Kāśī, the great fighter Śikhaṇḍī, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Virāṭa and the unconquerable Sātyaki, Drupada, the sons of Draupadī, and the others, O King, such as the son of Subhadrā, greatly armed, all blew their respective conchshells.

PURPORT

Saṅjaya informed King Dhṛtarāṣṭra very tactfully that his unwise policy of deceiving the sons of Pāṇḍu and endeavoring to enthrone his own sons on the seat of the kingdom was not very laudable. The signs already clearly indicated that the whole Kuru dynasty would be killed in that great battle. Beginning with the grandsire, Bhīṣma, down to the grandsons like Abhimanyu and others-including kings from many states of the world-all were present there, and all were doomed. The whole catastrophe was due to King Dhṛtarāṣṭra, because he encouraged the policy followed by his sons.

TEXT 19

*sa ghoṣo dhārtarāṣṭrāṇām
hṛdayāni vyadārayat
nabhaś ca prthivīm caiva
tumulo 'bhyanunādayan*

SYNONYMS

saḥ-that; *ghoṣaḥ*-vibration; *dhārtarāṣṭrāṇām*-of the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *hṛdayāni*-hearts; *vyadārayat*-shattered; *nabhaḥ*-the sky; *ca*-also; *prthivīm*-the surface of the earth; *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *tumulaḥ*-uproarious; *abhyanunādayan*-by resounding.

TRANSLATION

The blowing of these different conchshells became uproarious, and thus, vibrating both in the sky and on the earth, it shattered the hearts of the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

PURPORT

When Bhīṣma and the others on the side of Duryodhana blew their respective conchshells, there was no heart-breaking on the part of the Pāṇḍavas. Such occurrences are not mentioned, but in this particular verse it is mentioned that the hearts of the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra were shattered by the sounds vibrated by the Pāṇḍavas' party. This is due to the Pāṇḍavas and their confidence in Lord Kṛṣṇa. One who takes shelter of the Supreme Lord has nothing to fear, even in the midst of the greatest calamity.

TEXT 20

*atha vyavasthitān dr̥ṣṭvā
dhārtarāṣṭrān kapi-dhvajāḥ
pravṛtte śastra-sampāte
dhanur udyamya pāṇḍavaḥ
hr̥ṣīkeśam tadā vākyam
idam āha mahī-pate*

SYNONYMS

atha-thereupon; *vyavasthitān*-situated; *dr̥ṣṭvā*-looking on; *dhārtarāṣṭrān*-the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *kapi-dhvajāḥ*-one whose flag is marked with Hanumān; *pravṛtte*-while about to be engaged; *śastra-sampāte*-the arrows released; *dhanuḥ*-bow; *udyamya*-after taking up; *pāṇḍavaḥ*-the son of Pāṇḍu (Arjuna); *hr̥ṣīkeśam*-unto Lord Kṛṣṇa; *tadā*-at that time; *vākyam*-words; *idam*-these; *āha*-said; *mahī-pate*-O King.

TRANSLATION

O King, at that time Arjuna, the son of Pāṇḍu, who was seated in his chariot, his flag marked with Hanumān, took up his bow and prepared

to shoot his arrows, looking at the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. O King, Arjuna then spoke to Hṛṣīkeśa [Kṛṣṇa] these words:

PURPORT

The battle was just about to begin. It is understood from the above statement that the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra were more or less disheartened by the unexpected arrangement of military force by the Pāṇḍavas, who were guided by the direct instructions of Lord Kṛṣṇa on the battlefield. The emblem of Hanumān on the flag of Arjuna is another sign of victory because Hanumān cooperated with Lord Rāma in the battle between Rāma and Rāvaṇa, and Lord Rāma emerged victorious. Now both Rāma and Hanumān were present on the chariot of Arjuna to help him. Lord Kṛṣṇa is Rāma Himself, and wherever Lord Rāma is, His eternal servitor Hanumān and His eternal consort Sītā, the goddess of fortune, are present. Therefore, Arjuna had no cause to fear any enemies whatsoever. And above all, the Lord of the senses, Lord Kṛṣṇa, was personally present to give him direction. Thus, all good counsel was available to Arjuna in the matter of executing the battle. In such auspicious conditions, arranged by the Lord for His eternal devotee, lay the signs of assured victory.

TEXTS 21-22

arjuna uvāca
senayor ubhayor madhye
ratham sthāpaya me 'cyuta
yāvad etān nirīkṣe 'ham
yoddhu-kāmān avasthitān
kair mayā saha yoddhavyam
asmin raṇa-samudyame

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ-Arjuna; *uvāca*-said; *senayoḥ*-of the armies; *ubhayoḥ*-of both the parties; *madhye*-in between them; *ratham*-the chariot; *sthāpaya*-please keep; *me*-my; *acyuta*-O infallible one; *yāvat*-as long as; *etān*-all these; *nirīkṣe*-may look; *aham*-I; *yoddhu-kāmān*-desiring to fight; *avasthitān*-

arrayed on the battlefield; *kaiḥ*-with whom; *mayā*-by me; *saha*-with; *yoddhavyam*-to fight with; *asmin*-in this; *raṇa*-strife; *samudyame*-in the attempt.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O infallible one, please draw my chariot between the two armies so that I may see who is present here, who is desirous of fighting, and with whom I must contend in this great battle attempt.

PURPORT

Although Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, out of His causeless mercy He was engaged in the service of His friend. He never fails in His affection for His devotees, and thus He is addressed herein as infallible. As charioteer, He had to carry out the orders of Arjuna, and since He did not hesitate to do so, He is addressed as infallible. Although He had accepted the position of a charioteer for His devotee, His supreme position was not challenged. In all circumstances, He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hṛṣīkeśa, the Lord of the total senses. The relationship between the Lord and His servitor is very sweet and transcendental. The servitor is always ready to render a service to the Lord, and, similarly, the Lord is always seeking an opportunity to render some service to the devotee. He takes greater pleasure in His pure devotee's assuming the advantageous position of ordering Him than He does in being the giver of orders. As master, everyone is under His orders, and no one is above Him to order Him. But when he finds that a pure devotee is ordering Him, He obtains transcendental pleasure, although He is the infallible master of all circumstances.

As a pure devotee of the Lord, Arjuna had no desire to fight with his cousins and brothers, but he was forced to come onto the battlefield by the obstinacy of Duryodhana, who was never agreeable to any peaceful negotiation. Therefore, he was very anxious to see who the leading persons present on the battlefield were. Although there was no question of a peacemaking endeavor on the battlefield, he wanted to see them again, and to see how much they were bent upon demanding an unwanted war.

TEXT 23

*yotsyamānān avekṣe 'haṁ
ya ete 'tra samāgatāḥ
dhārtarāṣṭrasya durbuddheḥ
yuddhe priya-cikīrṣavaḥ*

SYNONYMS

yotsyamānān-those who will be fighting; *avekṣe*-let me see; *aham*-I; *ye*-who; *ete*-those; *atra*-here; *samāgatāḥ*-assembled; *dhārtarāṣṭrasya*-the son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *durbuddheḥ*-evil-minded; *yuddhe*-in the fight; *priya*-well; *cikīrṣavaḥ*-wishing.

TRANSLATION

Let me see those who have come here to fight, wishing to please the evil-minded son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

PURPORT

It was an open secret that Duryodhana wanted to usurp the kingdom of the Pāṇḍavas by evil plans, in collaboration with his father, Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Therefore, all persons who had joined the side of Duryodhana must have been birds of the same feather. Arjuna wanted to see them in the battlefield before the fight was begun, just to learn who they were, but he had no intention of proposing peace negotiations with them. It was also a fact that he wanted to see them to make an estimate of the strength which he had to face, although he was quite confident of victory because Kṛṣṇa was sitting by his side.

TEXT 24

*sañjaya uvāca
evam ukto hṛṣīkeśo
guḍākeśena bhārata
senayor ubhayor madhye*

sthāpayitvā rathottamam

SYNONYMS

sañjayaḥ-Sañjaya; *uvāca*-said; *evam*-thus; *uktaḥ*-addressed; *hr̥ṣīkeśaḥ*-Lord Kṛṣṇa; *guḍākeśena*-by Arjuna; *bhārata*-O descendant of Bharata; *senayoḥ*-of armies; *ubhayoḥ*-of both; *madhye*-in the midst of; *sthāpayitvā*-by placing; *rathottamam*-the finest chariot.

TRANSLATION

Sañjaya said: O descendant of Bharata, being thus addressed by Arjuna, Lord Kṛṣṇa drew up the fine chariot in the midst of the armies of both parties.

PURPORT

In this verse Arjuna is referred to as Guḍākeśa. *Guḍāka* means sleep, and one who conquers sleep is called *guḍākeśa*. Sleep also means ignorance. So Arjuna conquered both sleep and ignorance because of his friendship with Kṛṣṇa. As a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa, he could not forget Kṛṣṇa even for a moment, because that is the nature of a devotee. Either in waking or in sleep, a devotee of the Lord can never be free from thinking of Kṛṣṇa's name, form, quality and pastimes. Thus a devotee of Kṛṣṇa can conquer both sleep and ignorance simply by thinking of Kṛṣṇa constantly. This is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or *samādhi*. As Hṛṣīkeśa, or the director of the senses and mind of every living entity, Kṛṣṇa could understand Arjuna's purpose in placing the chariot in the midst of the armies. Thus He did so, and spoke as follows.

TEXT 25

*bhīṣma-droṇa-pramukhataḥ
sarveṣāṃ ca mahī-kṣitām
uvāca pārtha paśyaitān
samavetān kurūn iti*

SYNONYMS

bhīṣma-Grandfather Bhīṣma; *droṇa*-the teacher Droṇa; *pramukhataḥ*-in the front of; *sarveṣām*-all; *ca*-also; *mahīkṣitām*-chiefs of the world; *uvāca*-said; *pārtha*-O Pārtha (son of Pṛthā); *paśya*-just behold; *etān*-all of them; *samavetān*-assembled; *kurūn*-all the members of the *Kuru* dynasty; *iti*-thus.

TRANSLATION

In the presence of Bhīṣma, Droṇa and all other chieftains of the world, Hṛṣīkeśa, the Lord, said, Just behold, Pārtha, all the Kurus who are assembled here.

PURPORT

As the Supersoul of all living entities, Lord Kṛṣṇa could understand what was going on in the mind of Arjuna. The use of the word Hṛṣīkeśa in this connection indicates that He knew everything. And the word Pārtha, or the son of Kuntī or Pṛthā, is also similarly significant in reference to Arjuna. As a friend, He wanted to inform Arjuna that because Arjuna was the son of Pṛthā, the sister of His own father Vasudeva, He had agreed to be the charioteer of Arjuna. Now what did Kṛṣṇa mean when He told Arjuna to "behold the Kurus"? Did Arjuna want to stop there and not fight? Kṛṣṇa never expected such things from the son of His aunt Pṛthā. The mind of Arjuna was thus predicated by the Lord in friendly joking.

TEXT 26

*tatrāpaśyat sthitān pārthah
pitṛn atha pitāmahān
ācāryān mātulān bhrātṛn
putrān pautrān sakhīms tathā
śvaśurān suhṛdaś caiva
senayor ubhayor api*

SYNONYMS

tatra-there; *apaśyat*-he could see; *sthitān*-standing; *pārthaḥ*-Arjuna; *pitṛn*-fathers; *atha*-also; *pitāmahān*-grandfathers; *ācāryān*-teachers; *mātulān*-maternal uncles; *bhrātṛn*-brothers; *putrān*-sons ; *pautrān*-grandsons; *sakhīn*-friends; *tathā*-too, *śvaśurān*-fathers-in-law; *suhṛdaḥ*-wellwishers; *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *senayoḥ*-of the armies; *ubhayoḥ*-of both parties; *api*-including.

TRANSLATION

There Arjuna could see, within the midst of the armies of both parties, his fathers, grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons, friends, and also his father-in-law and well-wishers-all present there.

PURPORT

On the battlefield Arjuna could see all kinds of relatives. He could see persons like Bhūriśravā, who were his father's contemporaries, grandfathers Bhīṣma and Somadatta, teachers like Droṇācārya and Kṛpācārya, maternal uncles like Śalya and Śakuni, brothers like Duryodhana, sons like Lakṣmaṇa, friends like Aśvatthāmā, well-wishers like Kṛtavarmā, etc. He could see also the armies which contained many of his friends.

TEXT 27

*tān samīkṣya sa kaunteyaḥ
sarvān bandhūn avasthitān
kṛpayā parayāviṣṭo
viṣṭīdann idam abravīt*

SYNONYMS

tān-all of them; *samīkṣya*-after seeing; *saḥ*-he; *kaunteyaḥ*-the son of Kuntī; *sarvān*-all kinds of; *bandhūn*-relatives; *avasthitān*-situated; *kṛpayā*-by compassion; *parayā*-of a high grade; *āviṣṭaḥ*-overwhelmed by; *viṣṭīdan-*while lamenting; *idam*-thus; *abravīt*-spoke.

TRANSLATION

When the son of Kuntī, Arjuna, saw all these different grades of friends and relatives, he became overwhelmed with compassion and spoke thus:

TEXT 28

*arjuna uvāca
dṛṣṭvemaṁ sva-janaṁ kṛṣṇa
yuyutsum samupasthitam
sīdanti mama gātrāṇi
mukhaṁ ca pariśuṣyati*

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ-Arjuna; *uvāca*-said; *dṛṣṭvā*-after seeing; *imam*-all these; *svajanam*-kinsmen; *kṛṣṇa*-O Kṛṣṇa; *yuyutsum*-all in fighting spirit; *samupasthitam*-all present; *sīdanti*-quivering; *mama*-my; *gātrāṇi*-limbs of the body; *mukham*-mouth; *ca*-also; *pariśuṣyati*-drying up.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: My dear Kṛṣṇa, seeing my friends and relatives present before me in such a fighting spirit, I feel the limbs of my body quivering and my mouth drying up.

PURPORT

Any man who has genuine devotion to the Lord has all the good qualities which are found in godly persons or in the demigods, whereas the nondevotee, however advanced he may be in material qualifications by education and culture, lacks in godly qualities. As such, Arjuna, just after seeing his kinsmen, friends and relatives on the battlefield, was at once overwhelmed by compassion for them who had so decided to fight amongst themselves. As far as his soldiers were concerned, he was sympathetic from the beginning, but he felt compassion even for the soldiers of the opposite party, foreseeing their imminent death. And so thinking, the limbs of his

body began to quiver, and his mouth became dry. He was more or less astonished to see their fighting spirit. Practically the whole community, all blood relatives of Arjuna, had come to fight with him. This overwhelmed a kind devotee like Arjuna. Although it is not mentioned here, still one can easily imagine that not only were Arjuna's bodily limbs quivering and his mouth drying up, but that he was also crying out of compassion. Such symptoms in Arjuna were not due to weakness but to his softheartedness, a characteristic of a pure devotee of the Lord. It is said therefore:

*yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā
sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ
harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā
mano-rathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ*

"One who has unflinching devotion for the Personality of Godhead has all the good qualities of the demigods. But one who is not a devotee of the Lord has only material qualifications that are of little value. This is because he is hovering on the mental plane and is certain to be attracted by the glaring material energy." (*Bhāg.* 5.18.12)

TEXT 29

*vepathuś ca śarīre me
roma-harṣaś ca jāyate
gāṇḍīvaṁ sraṁsate hastāt
tvak caiva paridahyate*

SYNONYMS

vepathuḥ-trembling of the body; *ca*-also; *śarīre*-on the body; *me*-my; *roma-harṣaḥ*-standing of hair on end; *ca*-also; *jāyate*-is taking place; *gāṇḍīvaṁ*-the bow of Arjuna; *sraṁsate*-is slipping; *hastāt*-from the hands; *tvak*-skin; *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *paridahyate*-burning.

TRANSLATION

My whole body is trembling, and my hair is standing on end. My bow Gāṇḍīva is slipping from my hand, and my skin is burning.

PURPORT

There are two kinds of trembling of the body, and two kinds of standings of the hair on end. Such phenomena occur either in great spiritual ecstasy or out of great fear under material conditions. There is no fear in transcendental realization. Arjuna's symptoms in this situation are out of material fear-namely, loss of life. This is evident from other symptoms also; he became so impatient that his famous bow Gāṇḍīva was slipping from his hands, and, because his heart was burning within him, he was feeling a burning sensation of the skin. All these are due to a material conception of life.

TEXT 30

*na ca śaknomy avasthātum
bhramatīva ca me manaḥ
nimittāni ca paśyāmi
viparītāni keśava*

SYNONYMS

na-nor; *ca*-also; *śaknomy*-am I able; *avasthātum*-to stay; *bhramati*-forgetting; *iva*-as; *ca*-and; *me*-my; *manaḥ*-mind; *nimittāni*-causes; *ca*-also; *paśyāmi*-I foresee; *viparītāni*-just the opposite; *keśava*-O killer of the demon Keśī (Kṛṣṇa).

TRANSLATION

I am now unable to stand here any longer. I am forgetting myself, and my mind is reeling. I foresee only evil, O killer of the Keśī demon.

PURPORT

Due to his impatience, Arjuna was unable to stay on the battlefield, and he was forgetting himself on account of the weakness of his mind. Excessive attachment for material things puts a man in a bewildering condition of existence. *Bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ*: such fearfulness and loss of mental equilibrium take place in persons who are too affected by

material conditions. Arjuna envisioned only unhappiness in the battlefield- he would not be happy even by gaining victory over the foe. The word *nimitta* is significant. When a man sees only frustration in his expectations, he thinks, "Why am I here?" Everyone is interested in himself and his own welfare. No one is interested in the Supreme Self. Arjuna is supposed to show disregard for self-interest by submission to the will of Kṛṣṇa, who is everyone's real self-interest. The conditioned soul forgets this, and therefore suffers material pains. Arjuna thought that his victory in the battle would only be a cause of lamentation for him.

TEXT 31

*na ca śreya 'nupaśyāmi
hatvā sva-janam āhave
na kāṅkṣe vijayaṁ kṛṣṇa
na ca rājyaṁ sukhāni ca*

SYNONYMS

na-nor; *ca*-also; *śreyaḥ*-good; *anupaśyāmi*-do I foresee; *hatvā*-by killing; *svajanam*-own kinsmen; *āhave*-in the fight; *na*-nor; *kāṅkṣe*-do I desire; *vijayaṁ*-victory; *kṛṣṇa*-O Kṛṣṇa; *na*-nor; *ca*-also; *rājyaṁ*-kingdom; *sukhāni*-happiness thereof; *ca*-also.

TRANSLATION

I do not see how any good can come from killing my own kinsmen in this battle, nor can I, my dear Kṛṣṇa, desire any subsequent victory, kingdom, or happiness.

PURPORT

Without knowing that one's self-interest is in Viṣṇu (or Kṛṣṇa), conditioned souls are attracted by bodily relationships, hoping to be happy in such situations. Under delusion, they forget that Kṛṣṇa is also the cause of material happiness. Arjuna appears to have even forgotten the moral codes for a *kṣatriya*. It is said that two kinds of men, namely the *kṣatriya*

who dies directly in front of the battlefield under Kṛṣṇa's personal orders and the person in the renounced order of life who is absolutely devoted to spiritual culture, are eligible to enter into the sun-globe, which is so powerful and dazzling. Arjuna is reluctant even to kill his enemies, let alone his relatives. He thought that by killing his kinsmen there would be no happiness in his life, and therefore he was not willing to fight, just as a person who does not feel hunger is not inclined to cook. He has now decided to go into the forest and live a secluded life in frustration. But as a *kṣatriya*, he requires a kingdom for his subsistence, because the *kṣatriyas* cannot engage themselves in any other occupation. But Arjuna has had no kingdom. Arjuna's sole opportunity for gaining a kingdom lay in fighting with his cousins and brothers and reclaiming the kingdom inherited from his father, which he does not like to do. Therefore he considers himself fit to go to the forest to live a secluded life of frustration.

TEXTS 32-35

*kiṁ no rājyena govinda
kiṁ bhogair jīvitena vā
yeṣāṁ arthe kāṅkṣitaṁ no
rājyaṁ bhogāḥ sukhāni ca*

*ta ime 'vasthitā yuddhe
prāṇāṁs tyaktvā dhanāni ca
ācāryāḥ pitaraḥ putrās
tathaiva ca pitāmahāḥ*

*mātulāḥ śvaśurāḥ pautrāḥ
śyālāḥ sambandhinas tathā
etān na hantum icchāmi
ghnato 'pi madhusūdana*

*api trailokya-rājyasya
hetoḥ kiṁ nu mahī-kṛte
nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrān naḥ
kā prītiḥ syāj janārdana*

SYNONYMS

kim-what use; *naḥ*-to us; *rājyena*-is the kingdom; *govinda*-O Kṛṣṇa; *kim*-what; *bhogaiḥ*-enjoyment; *jīvitena*-by living; *vā*-either; *yeṣām*-for whom; *arthe*-for the matter of; *kāṅkṣitam*-desired; *naḥ*-our; *rājyam*-kingdom; *bhogāḥ*-material enjoyment; *sukhāni*-all happiness; *ca*-also; *te*-all of them; *ime*-these; *avasthitāḥ*-situated; *yuddhe*-in this battlefield; *prāṇān*-lives; *tyaktvā*-giving up; *dhanāni*-riches; *ca*-also; *ācāryāḥ*-teachers; *pitaraḥ*-fathers; *putrāḥ*-sons; *tathā*-as well as; *eva*-certainly; *ca*-also; *pitāmahāḥ*-grandfathers; *mātulāḥ*-maternal uncles; *śvaśurāḥ*-fathers-in-law; *pautrāḥ*-grandsons; *śyālāḥ*-brothers-in-law; *sambandhinaḥ*-relatives; *tathā*-as well as; *etān*-all these; *na*-never; *hantum*-for killing; *icchāmi*-do I wish; *ghnataḥ*-being killed; *api*-even; *madhusūdana*-O killer of the demon Madhu (Kṛṣṇa); *api*-even if; *trailokya*-of the three worlds; *rājyasya*-of the kingdoms; *hetoḥ*-in exchange; *kim*-what to speak of; *nu*-only; *mahī-kṛte*-for the sake of earth; *nihatya*-by killing; *dhārtarāṣṭrān*-the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *naḥ*-our; *kā*-what; *prītiḥ*-pleasure; *syāt*-will there be; *janārdana*-O maintainer of all living entities.

TRANSLATION

O Govinda, of what avail to us are kingdoms, happiness or even life itself when all those for whom we may desire them are now arrayed in this battlefield? O Madhusūdana, when teachers, fathers, sons, grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law and all relatives are ready to give up their lives and properties and are standing before me, then why should I wish to kill them, though I may survive? O maintainer of all creatures, I am not prepared to fight with them even in exchange for the three worlds, let alone this earth.

PURPORT

Arjuna has addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa as Govinda because Kṛṣṇa is the object of all pleasures for cows and the senses. By using this significant word, Arjuna indicates what will satisfy his senses. Although Govinda is not meant for satisfying our senses, if we try to satisfy the senses of Govinda then automatically our own senses are satisfied. Materially, everyone wants

to satisfy his senses, and he wants God to be the order supplier for such satisfaction. The Lord will satisfy the senses of the living entities as much as they deserve, but not to the extent that they may covet. But when one takes the opposite way-namely, when one tries to satisfy the senses of Govinda without desiring to satisfy one's own senses-then by the grace of Govinda all desires of the living entity are satisfied. Arjuna's deep affection for community and family members is exhibited here partly due to his natural compassion for them. He is therefore not prepared to fight. Everyone wants to show his opulence to friends and relatives, but Arjuna fears that all his relatives and friends will be killed in the battlefield, and he will be unable to share his opulence after victory. This is a typical calculation of material life. The transcendental life is, however, different. Since a devotee wants to satisfy the desires of the Lord, he can, Lord willing, accept all kinds of opulence for the service of the Lord, and if the Lord is not willing, he should not accept a farthing. Arjuna did not want to kill his relatives, and if there were any need to kill them, he desired that Kṛṣṇa kill them personally. At this point he did not know that Kṛṣṇa had already killed them before their coming into the battlefield and that he was only to become an instrument for Kṛṣṇa. This fact is disclosed in following chapters. As a natural devotee of the Lord, Arjuna did not like to retaliate against his miscreant cousins and brothers, but it was the Lord's plan that they should all be killed. The devotee of the Lord does not retaliate against the wrongdoer, but the Lord does not tolerate any mischief done to the devotee by the miscreants. The Lord can excuse a person on His own account, but He excuses no one who has done harm to His devotees. Therefore the Lord was determined to kill the miscreants, although Arjuna wanted to excuse them.

TEXT 36

*pāpam evāśrayed asmān
hatvaitān ātatāyinaḥ
tasmān nārhā vayaṁ hantum
dhārtarāṣṭrān sa-bāndhavān
sva-janaṁ hi kathaṁ hatvā
sukhinaḥ syāma mādharma*

SYNONYMS

pāpam-vices; *eva*-certainly; *āśrayet*-must take upon; *asmān*-us; *hatvā*-by killing; *etān*-all these; *ātātāyinaḥ*-aggressors; *tasmāt*-therefore; *na*-never; *arhāḥ*-deserving; *vayam*-us; *hantum*-to kill; *dhārtarāṣṭrān*-the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *svabāndhavān*-along with friends; *svajanam*-kinsmen; *hi*-certainly; *katham*-how; *hatvā*-by killing; *sukhinaḥ*-happy; *syāma*-become; *mādhava*-O Kṛṣṇa, husband of the goddess of fortune.

TRANSLATION

Sin will overcome us if we slay such aggressors. Therefore it is not proper for us to kill the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and our friends. What should we gain, O Kṛṣṇa, husband of the goddess of fortune, and how could we be happy by killing our own kinsmen?

PURPORT

According to Vedic injunctions there are six kinds of aggressors: 1) a poison giver, 2) one who sets fire to the house, 3) one who attacks with deadly weapons, 4) one who plunders riches, 5) one who occupies another's land, and 6) one who kidnaps a wife. Such aggressors are at once to be killed, and no sin is incurred by killing such aggressors. Such killing of aggressors is quite befitting for any ordinary man, but Arjuna was not an ordinary person. He was saintly by character, and therefore he wanted to deal with them in saintliness. This kind of saintliness, however, is not for a *kṣatriya*. Although a responsible man in the administration of a state is required to be saintly, he should not be cowardly. For example, Lord Rāma was so saintly that people were anxious to live in His kingdom, (*Rāma-rājya*), but Lord Rāma never showed any cowardice. Rāvaṇa was an aggressor against Rāma because he kidnapped Rāma's wife, Sītā, but Lord Rāma gave him sufficient lessons, unparalleled in the history of the world. In Arjuna's case, however, one should consider the special type of aggressors, namely his own grandfather, own teacher, friends, sons, grandsons, etc. Because of them, Arjuna thought that he should not take the severe steps necessary against ordinary aggressors. Besides that, saintly persons are advised to forgive. Such injunctions for saintly persons are

more important than any political emergency. Arjuna considered that rather than kill his own kinsmen for political reasons, it would be better to forgive them on grounds of religion and saintly behavior. He did not, therefore, consider such killing profitable simply for the matter of temporary bodily happiness. After all, kingdoms and pleasures derived therefrom are not permanent, so why should he risk his life and eternal salvation by killing his own kinsmen? Arjuna's addressing of Kṛṣṇa as "Mādhava," or the husband of the goddess of fortune, is also significant in this connection. He wanted to point out to Kṛṣṇa that, as husband of the goddess of fortune, He should not have to induce Arjuna to take up a matter which would ultimately bring about misfortune. Kṛṣṇa, however, never brings misfortune to anyone, to say nothing of His devotees.

TEXTS 37-38

*yady apy ete na paśyanti
lobhopahata-cetasah
kula-kṣaya-kṛtaṁ doṣaṁ
mitra-drohe ca pātakam*

*kathaṁ na jñeyam asmābhiḥ
pāpād asmān nivartitum
kula-kṣaya-kṛtaṁ doṣaṁ
prapaśyadbhir janārdana*

SYNONYMS

yadi-if; *api*-certainly; *ete*-they; *na*-do not; *paśyanti*-see; *lobha*-greed; *upahata*-overpowered; *cetasah*-the hearts; *kula-kṣaya*-in killing the family; *kṛtaṁ*-done; *doṣaṁ*-fault; *mitra-drohe*-quarreling with friends; *ca*-also; *pātakam*-sinful reactions; *kathaṁ*-why; *na*-shall not; *jñeyam*-know this; *asmābhiḥ*-by us; *pāpāt*-from sins; *asmāt*-ourselves; *nivartitum*-to cease; *kula-kṣaya*-the destruction of a dynasty; *kṛtaṁ*-by so doing; *doṣaṁ*-crime; *prapaśyadbhiḥ*-by those who can see; *janārdana*-O Kṛṣṇa.

TRANSLATION

O Janārdana, although these men, overtaken by greed, see no fault in killing one's family or quarreling with friends, why should we, with knowledge of the sin, engage in these acts?

PURPORT

A *kṣatriya* is not supposed to refuse to battle or gamble when he is so invited by some rival party. Under such obligation, Arjuna could not refuse to fight because he was challenged by the party of Duryodhana. In this connection, Arjuna considered that the other party might be blind to the effects of such a challenge. Arjuna, however, could see the evil consequences and could not accept the challenge. Obligation is actually binding when the effect is good, but when the effect is otherwise, then no one can be bound. Considering all these pros and cons, Arjuna decided not to fight.

TEXT 39

*kula-kṣaye prajāśyanti
kula-dharmāḥ sanātanaḥ
dharme naṣṭe kulam kṛtsnam
adharmo 'bhibhavaty uta*

SYNONYMS

kula-kṣaye-in destroying the family; *prajāśyanti*-becomes vanquished;
kula-dharmāḥ-the family traditions; *sanātanaḥ*-eternal; *dharme*-in religion;
naṣṭe-being destroyed; *kulam*-family; *kṛtsnam*-wholesale; *adharmaḥ*-
irreligious; *abhibhavaty*-transforms; *uta*-it is said.

TRANSLATION

With the destruction of dynasty, the eternal family tradition is vanquished, and thus the rest of the family becomes involved in irreligious practice.

PURPORT

In the system of the *varṇāśrama* institution there are many principles of religious traditions to help members of the family grow properly and attain spiritual values. The elder members are responsible for such purifying processes in the family, beginning from birth to death. But on the death of the elder members, such family traditions of purification may stop, and the remaining younger family members may develop irreligious habits and thereby lose their chance for spiritual salvation. Therefore, for no purpose should the elder members of the family be slain.

TEXT 40

*adharmābhibhavāt kṛṣṇa
praduṣyanti kula-striyaḥ
strīṣu duṣṭāsu vārṣṇeya
jāyate varṇa-saṅkaraḥ*

SYNONYMS

adharma-irreligion; *abhibhavāt*-having been predominant; *kṛṣṇa*-O Kṛṣṇa; *praduṣyanti*-become polluted; *kula-striyaḥ*-family ladies; *strīṣu* -of the womanhood; *duṣṭāsu*-being so polluted; *vārṣṇeya*-O descendant of Vṛṣṇi; *jāyate*-it so becomes; *varṇa-saṅkaraḥ*-unwanted progeny.

TRANSLATION

When irreligion is prominent in the family, O Kṛṣṇa, the women of the family become corrupt, and from the degradation of womanhood, O descendant of Vṛṣṇi, comes unwanted progeny.

PURPORT

Good population in human society is the basic principle for peace, prosperity and spiritual progress in life. The *varṇāśrama* religion's principles were so designed that the good population would prevail in society for the general spiritual progress of state and community. Such population depends on the chastity and faithfulness of its womanhood. As children are very prone to be misled, women are similarly very prone to

degradation. Therefore, both children and women require protection by the elder members of the family. By being engaged in various religious practices, women will not be misled into adultery. According to Cāṇakya Paṇḍit, women are generally not very intelligent and therefore not trustworthy. So, the different family traditions of religious activities should always engage them, and thus their chastity and devotion will give birth to a good population eligible for participating in the *varṇāśrama* system. On the failure of such *varṇāśrama-dharma*, naturally the women become free to act and mix with men, and thus adultery is indulged in at the risk of unwanted population. Irresponsible men also provoke adultery in society, and thus unwanted children flood the human race at the risk of war and pestilence.

TEXT 41

*saṅkaro narakāyaiva
kula-ghnānām kulasya ca
patanti pitaro hy eṣām
lupta-piṇḍodaka-kriyāḥ*

SYNONYMS

saṅkaraḥ-such unwanted children; *narakāya*-for hellish life; *eva*-certainly; *kula-ghnānām*-of those who are killers of the family; *kulasya*-of the family; *ca*-also; *patanti*-fall down; *pitaraḥ*-forefathers; *hi*-certainly; *eṣām*-of them; *lupta*-stopped; *piṇḍa*-offerings; *udaka*-water; *kriyāḥ*-performance.

TRANSLATION

When there is increase of unwanted population, a hellish situation is created both for the family and for those who destroy the family tradition. In such corrupt families, there is no offering of oblations of food and water to the ancestors.

PURPORT

According to the rules and regulations of fruitive activities, there is a need to offer periodical food and water to the forefathers of the family. This offering is performed by worship of Viṣṇu, because eating the remnants of food offered to Viṣṇu can deliver one from all kinds of sinful actions. Sometimes the forefathers may be suffering from various types of sinful reactions, and sometimes some of them cannot even acquire a gross material body and are forced to remain in subtle bodies as ghosts. Thus, when remnants of *prasādam* food are offered to forefathers by descendants, the forefathers are released from ghostly or other kinds of miserable life. Such help rendered to forefathers is a family tradition, and those who are not in devotional life are required to perform such rituals. One who is engaged in the devotional life is not required to perform such actions. Simply by performing devotional service, one can deliver hundreds and thousands of forefathers from all kinds of misery. It is stated in the *Bhāgavatam*:

*devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛnām pitṛṇām
na kiṅkaro nāyamṛṇī ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇam śaraṇyam
gato mukundaṁ parihṛtya kartam*

"Anyone who has taken shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, the giver of liberation, giving up all kinds of obligation, and has taken to the path in all seriousness, owes neither duties nor obligations to the demigods, sages, general living entities, family members, humankind or forefathers." (*Bhāg.* 11.5.41) Such obligations are automatically fulfilled by performance of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 42

*doṣair etaiḥ kula-ghnānām
varṇa-saṅkara-kārakaiḥ
utsādyante jāti-dharmāḥ
kula-dharmāś ca śāśvatāḥ*

SYNONYMS

doṣaiḥ-by such faults; *etaiḥ*-all these; *kula-ghnānām*-of the destroyer of a family; *varṇa-saṅkara*-unwanted children; *kāraakaiḥ*-by the doers; *utsādyante*-causes devastation; *jāti-dharmāḥ*-community project; *kula-dharmāḥ*-family tradition; *ca*-also; *śāśvatāḥ*-eternal.

TRANSLATION

Due to the evil deeds of the destroyers of family tradition, all kinds of community projects and family welfare activities are devastated.

PURPORT

The four orders of human society, combined with family welfare activities as they are set forth by the institution of the *sanātana-dharma* or *varṇāśrama-dharma*, are designed to enable the human being to attain his ultimate salvation. Therefore, the breaking of the *sanātana-dharma* tradition by irresponsible leaders of society brings about chaos in that society, and consequently people forget the aim of life-Viṣṇu. Such leaders are called blind, and persons who follow such leaders are sure to be led into chaos.

TEXT 43

utsanna-kula-dharmāṇām
manuṣyāṇām janārdana
narake niyataṁ vāso
bhavatīty anuśuśrūma

SYNONYMS

utsanna-spoiled; *kula-dharmāṇām*-of those who have the family traditions; *manuṣyāṇām*-of such men; *janārdana*-O Kṛṣṇa; *narake*-in hell; *niyataṁ*-always; *vāsaḥ*-residence; *bhavati*-it so becomes; *iti*-thus; *anuśuśrūma*-I have heard by disciplic succession.

TRANSLATION

O Kṛṣṇa, maintainer of the people, I have heard by disciplic succession that those who destroy family traditions dwell always in hell.

PURPORT

Arjuna bases his argument not on his own personal experience, but on what he has heard from the authorities. That is the way of receiving real knowledge. One cannot reach the real point of factual knowledge without being helped by the right person who is already established in that knowledge. There is a system in the *varṇāśrama* institution by which one has to undergo the process of ablution before death for his sinful activities. One who is always engaged in sinful activities must utilize the process of ablution called the *prāyaścitta*. Without doing so, one surely will be transferred to hellish planets to undergo miserable lives as the result of sinful activities.

TEXT 44

*aho bata mahat pāpam
kartum vyavasitā vayam
yad rājya-sukha-lobhena
hantum sva-janam udyatāḥ*

SYNONYMS

ahaḥ-alas; *bata*-how strange it is; *mahat*-great; *pāpam*-sins; *kartum*-to perform; *vyavasitāḥ*-decided; *vayam*-we; *yad*-so that; *rājya*-kingdom; *sukha-lobhena*-driven by greed for royal happiness; *hantum*-to kill; *svajanam*-kinsmen; *udyatāḥ*-trying for.

TRANSLATION

Alas, how strange it is that we are preparing to commit greatly sinful acts, driven by the desire to enjoy royal happiness.

PURPORT

Driven by selfish motives, one may be inclined to such sinful acts as the killing of one's own brother, father, or mother. There are many such instances in the history of the world. But Arjuna, being a saintly devotee of the Lord, is always conscious of moral principles and therefore takes care to avoid such activities.

TEXT 45

*yadi mām apratīkāram
aśastram śastra-pāṇayah
dhārtarāṣṭrā raṇe hanyus
tat me kṣemataram bhavet*

SYNONYMS

yadi-even if; *mām*-unto me; *apratīkāram*-without being resistant; *aśastram*-without being fully equipped; *śastra-pāṇayah*-those with weapons in hand; *dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ*-the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *raṇe*-in the battlefield; *hanyuḥ*-may kill; *tat*-that; *me*-mine; *kṣemataram*-better; *bhavet*-become.

TRANSLATION

I would consider it better for the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra to kill me unarmed and unresisting, rather than fight with them.

PURPORT

It is the custom-according to *kṣatriya* fighting principles-that an unarmed and unwilling foe should not be attacked. Arjuna, however, in such an enigmatic position, decided he would not fight if he were attacked by the enemy. He did not consider how much the other party was bent upon fighting. All these symptoms are due to softheartedness resulting from his being a great devotee of the Lord.

TEXT 46

sañjaya uvāca

*evam uktvārjunaḥ saṅkhye
rathopastha upāviśat
visṛjya sa-śaram cāpam
śoka-saṁvigna-mānasaḥ*

SYNONYMS

sañjayaḥ-Sañjaya; *uvāca*-said; *evam*-thus; *uktvā*-saying; *arjunaḥ*-Arjuna; *saṅkhye*-in the battlefield; *ratha*-chariot; *upasthaḥ*-situated on; *upāviśat*-sat down again; *visṛjya*-keeping aside; *sa-śaram*-along with arrows; *cāpam*-the bow; *śoka*-lamentation; *saṁvigna*-distressed; *mānasaḥ*-within the mind.

TRANSLATION

Sañjaya said: Arjuna, having thus spoken on the battlefield, cast aside his bow and arrows and sat down on the chariot, his mind overwhelmed with grief.

PURPORT

While observing the situation of his enemy, Arjuna stood up on the chariot, but he was so afflicted with lamentation that he sat down again, setting aside his bow and arrows. Such a kind and softhearted person, in the devotional service of the Lord, is fit to receive self-knowledge.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the First Chapter of the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of Observing the Armies on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra.

2. Contents of the Gītā Summarized

TEXT 1

*sañjaya uvāca
tam tathā kṛpayāviṣṭam
aśru-pūrṇākulekṣaṇam
viṣīdantam idam vākyam
uvāca madhusūdanaḥ*

SYNONYMS

sañjayaḥ uvāca-Sañjaya said; *tam*-unto Arjuna; *tathā*-thus; *kṛpayā*-by compassion; *āviṣṭam*-overwhelmed; *aśru-pūrṇa*-full of tears; *ākula*-depressed; *īkṣaṇam*-eyes; *viṣīdantam*-lamenting; *idam*-this; *vākyam*-words; *uvāca*-said; *madhusūdanaḥ*-the killer of Madhu.

TRANSLATION

Sañjaya said: Seeing Arjuna full of compassion and very sorrowful, his eyes brimming with tears, Madhusūdana, Kṛṣṇa, spoke the following words.

PURPORT

Material compassion, lamentation and tears are all signs of ignorance of the real self. Compassion for the eternal soul is self-realization. The word "Madhusūdana" is significant in this verse. Lord Kṛṣṇa killed the demon Madhu, and now Arjuna wanted Kṛṣṇa to kill the demon of misunderstanding that had overtaken him in the discharge of his duty. No one knows where compassion should be applied. Compassion for the dress of a drowning man is senseless. A man fallen in the ocean of nescience cannot be saved simply by rescuing his outward dress-the gross material

body. One who does not know this and laments for the outward dress is called a *śūdra*, or one who laments unnecessarily. Arjuna was a *kṣatriya*, and this conduct was not expected from him. Lord Kṛṣṇa, however, can dissipate the lamentation of the ignorant man, and for this purpose the *Bhagavad-gītā* was sung by Him. This chapter instructs us in self-realization by an analytical study of the material body and the spirit soul, as explained by the supreme authority, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This realization is made possible by working with the fruitive being situated in the fixed conception of the real self.

TEXT 2

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
kutas tvā kaśmalam idam
viṣame samupasthitam
anārya-juṣṭam asvargyam
akīrti-karam arjuna

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *kutaḥ*-wherefrom; *tvā*-unto you; *kaśmalam*-dirtiness; *idam*-this lamentation; *viṣame*-this hour of crisis; *samupasthitam*-arrived; *anārya*-persons who do not know the value of life; *juṣṭam*-practiced by; *asvargyam*-that which does not lead to higher planets; *akīrti*-infamy; *karam*-the cause of; *arjuna*-O Arjuna.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Person [Bhagavān] said: My dear Arjuna, how have these impurities come upon you? They are not at all befitting a man who knows the progressive values of life. They do not lead to higher planets, but to infamy.

PURPORT

Kṛṣṇa and the Supreme Personality of Godhead are identical. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa is referred to as "Bhagavān" throughout the *Gītā*. Bhagavān is the ultimate in the Absolute Truth. Absolute Truth is realized in three phases of understanding, namely Brahman or the impersonal all-pervasive spirit; Paramātmā, or the localized aspect of the Supreme within the heart of all living entities; and Bhagavān, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* this conception of the Absolute Truth is explained thus:

*avadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmēti bhagavān iti śabdyate.*

"The Absolute Truth is realized in three phases of understanding by the knower of the Absolute Truth, and all of them are identical. Such phases of the Absolute Truth are expressed as Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān." (*Bhāg.* 1.2.11) These three divine aspects can be explained by the example of the sun, which also has three different aspects, namely the sunshine, the sun's surface and the sun planet itself. One who studies the sunshine only is the preliminary student. One who understands the sun's surface is further advanced. And one who can enter into the sun planet is the highest. Ordinary students who are satisfied by simply understanding the sunshine—its universal pervasiveness and the glaring effulgence of its impersonal nature—may be compared to those who can realize only the Brahman feature of the Absolute Truth. The student who has advanced still further can know the sun disc, which is compared to knowledge of the Paramātmā feature of the Absolute Truth. And the student who can enter into the heart of the sun planet is compared to those who realize the personal features of the Supreme Absolute Truth. Therefore, the *bhaktas*, or the transcendentalists who have realized the Bhagavān feature of the Absolute Truth, are the topmost transcendentalists, although all students who are engaged in the study of the Absolute Truth are engaged in the same subject matter. The sunshine, the sun disc and the inner affairs of the sun planet cannot be separated from one another, and yet the students of the three different phases are not in the same category.

The Sanskrit word *Bhagavān* is explained by the great authority, Parāśara Muni, the father of Vyāsadeva. The Supreme Personality who

possesses all riches, all strength, all fame, all beauty, all knowledge and all renunciation is called Bhagavān. There are many persons who are very rich, very powerful, very beautiful, very famous, very learned, and very much detached, but no one can claim that he possesses all riches, all strength, etc., entirely. Only Kṛṣṇa can claim this because He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. No living entity, including Brahmā, Lord Śiva, or Nārāyaṇa, can possess opulences as fully as Kṛṣṇa. Therefore it is concluded in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* by Lord Brahmā himself that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. No one is equal to or above Him. He is the primeval Lord, or Bhagavān, known as Govinda, and He is the supreme cause of all causes.

*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*

"There are many personalities possessing the qualities of Bhagavān, but Kṛṣṇa is the supreme because none can excel Him. He is the Supreme Person, and His body is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. He is the primeval Lord Govinda and the cause of all causes." (*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.1)

In the *Bhāgavatam* also there is a list of many incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but Kṛṣṇa is described as the original Personality of Godhead, from whom many, many incarnations and Personalities of Godhead expand:

*ete cāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam
indrāri-vyākulaṁ lokaṁ mṛdayanti yuge yuge*

"All the lists of the incarnations of Godhead submitted herewith are either plenary expansions or parts of the plenary expansions of the Supreme Godhead, but Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself." (Bhag. 1.3.28)

Therefore, Kṛṣṇa is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, the source of both the Supersoul and the impersonal Brahman.

In the presence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Arjuna's lamentation for his kinsmen is certainly unbecoming, and therefore Kṛṣṇa expressed His surprise with the word *kutas*, "wherefrom." Such unmanly

sentiments were never expected from a person belonging to the civilized class of men known as *Āryans*. The word *āryan* is applicable to persons who know the value of life and have a civilization based on spiritual realization. Persons who are led by the material conception of life do not know that the aim of life is realization of the Absolute Truth, Viṣṇu, or Bhagavān, and they are captivated by the external features of the material world, and therefore they do not know what liberation is. Persons who have no knowledge of liberation from material bondage are called non-Āryans. Although Arjuna was a *kṣatriya*, he was deviating from his prescribed duties by declining to fight. This act of cowardice is described as befitting the non-Āryans. Such deviation from duty does not help one in the progress of spiritual life, nor does it even give one the opportunity to become famous in this world. Lord Kṛṣṇa did not approve of the so-called compassion of Arjuna for his kinsmen.

TEXT 3

*klaibyaṁ mā sma gamaḥ pārtha
naitat tvayy upapadyate
kṣudraṁ hṛdaya-daurbalyaṁ
tyaktvottiṣṭha parantapa*

SYNONYMS

klaibyam-impotence; *mā*-do not; *sma*-take it; *gamaḥ*-go in; *pārtha*-O son of Prṥhā; *na*-never; *etat*-like this; *tvayi*-unto you; *upapadyate*-is befitting; *kṣudram*-very little; *hṛdaya*-heart; *daurbalyam*-weakness; *tyaktvā*-giving up; *uttiṣṭha*-get up; *parantapa*-O chastiser of the enemies.

TRANSLATION

O son of Prṥhā, do not yield to this degrading impotence. It does not become you. Give up such petty weakness of heart and arise, O chastiser of the enemy.

PURPORT

Arjuna was addressed as the "son of Pṛthā," who happened to be the sister of Kṛṣṇa's father Vasudeva. Therefore Arjuna had a blood relationship with Kṛṣṇa. If the son of a *ksatriya* declines to fight, he is a *kṣatriya* in name only, and if the son of a *brāhmaṇa* acts impiously, he is a *brāhmaṇa* in name only. Such *kṣatriyas* and *brāhmaṇas* are unworthy sons of their fathers; therefore, Kṛṣṇa did not want Arjuna to become an unworthy son of a *kṣatriya*. Arjuna was the most intimate friend of Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa was directly guiding him on the chariot; but in spite of all these credits, if Arjuna abandoned the battle, he would be committing an infamous act; therefore Kṛṣṇa said that such an attitude in Arjuna did not fit his personality. Arjuna might argue that he would give up the battle on the grounds of his magnanimous attitude for the most respectable Bhīṣma and his relatives, but Kṛṣṇa considered that sort of magnanimity not approved by authority. Therefore, such magnanimity or so-called nonviolence should be given up by persons like Arjuna under the direct guidance of Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 4

arjuna uvāca
katham bhīṣmam aham saṅkhye
droṇam ca madhusūdana
iṣubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi
pūjārḥāv ari-sūdana

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca-Arjuna said; *katham*-how; *bhīṣmam*-unto Bhīṣma; *aham*-I; *saṅkhye*-in the fight; *droṇam*-unto Droṇa; *ca*-also, *madhusūdana*-O killer of Madhu; *iṣubhiḥ*-with arrows; *pratiyotsyāmi*-shall counterattack; *pūjā-arḥau*-those who are worshipable; *arisūdana*-O killer of the enemies.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O killer of Madhu [Kṛṣṇa], how can I counterattack with arrows in battle men like Bhīṣma and Droṇa, who are worthy of my worship?

PURPORT

Respectable superiors like Bhīṣma the grandfather and Droṇācārya the teacher are always worshipable. Even if they attack, they should not be counterattacked. It is general etiquette that superiors are not to be offered even a verbal fight. Even if they are sometimes harsh in behavior, they should not be harshly treated. Then, how is it possible for Arjuna to counterattack them? Would Kṛṣṇa ever attack His own grandfather, Ugrasena, or His teacher, Sāṇḍīpani Muni? These were some of the arguments by Arjuna to Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 5

*gurūn ahatvā hi mahānubhāvān
śreyo bhoktum bhaikṣyam apīha loke
hatvārtha-kāmāms tu gurūn ihaiva
bhuñjīya bhogān rudhira-pradigdhān*

SYNONYMS

gurūn-the superiors; *ahatvā*-by killing; *hi*-certainly; *mahā-anubhāvān*-great souls; *śreyah*-it is better; *bhoktum*-to enjoy life; *bhaikṣyam*-begging; *api*-even; *iha*-in this life; *loke*-in this world; *hatvā*-killing; *artha*-gain; *kāmān*-so desiring; *tu*-but; *gurūn*-superiors; *iha*-in this world; *eva*-certainly; *bhuñjīya*-has to enjoy; *bhogān*-enjoyable things; *rudhira*-blood; *pradigdhān*-tainted with.

TRANSLATION

It is better to live in this world by begging than to live at the cost of the lives of great souls who are my teachers. Even though they are avaricious, they are nonetheless superiors. If they are killed, our spoils will be tainted with blood.

PURPORT

According to scriptural codes, a teacher who engages in an abominable action and has lost his sense of discrimination is fit to be abandoned.

Bhīṣma and Droṇa were obliged to take the side of Duryodhana because of his financial assistance, although they should not have accepted such a position simply on financial considerations. Under the circumstances, they have lost the respectability of teachers. But Arjuna thinks that nevertheless they remain his superiors, and therefore to enjoy material profits after killing them would mean to enjoy spoils tainted with blood.

TEXT 6

*na caitad vidmaḥ kataran no garīyo
yad vā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ
yān eva hatvā na jijīviṣāmas
te 'vasthitāḥ pramukhe dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ*

SYNONYMS

na-nor; *ca*-also; *etat*-this; *vidmaḥ*-do know; *katarat*-which; *naḥ*-us; *garīyaḥ*-better; *yat*-what; *vā*-either; *jayema*-conquer us; *yadi*-if; *vā*-or; *naḥ*-us; *jayeyuḥ*-conquer; *yān*-those; *eva*-certainly; *hatvā*-by killing; *na*-never; *jijīviṣāmaḥ*-want to live; *te*-all of them; *avasthitāḥ*-are situated; *pramukhe*-in the front; *dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ*-the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

TRANSLATION

Nor do we know which is better-conquering them or being conquered by them. The sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, whom if we killed we should not care to live, are now standing before us on this battlefield.

PURPORT

Arjuna did not know whether he should fight and risk unnecessary violence, although fighting is the duty of the *kṣatriyas*, or whether he should refrain and live by begging. If he did not conquer the enemy, begging would be his only means of subsistence. Nor was there certainty of victory, because either side might emerge victorious. Even if victory awaited them (and their cause was justified), still, if the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra died in battle, it would be very difficult to live in their absence. Under the circumstances,

that would be another kind of defeat for them. All these considerations by Arjuna definitely prove that he was not only a great devotee of the Lord but that he was also highly enlightened and had complete control over his mind and senses. His desire to live by begging, although he was born in the royal household, is another sign of detachment. He was truly virtuous, as these qualities, combined with his faith in the words of instruction of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (his spiritual master), indicate. It is concluded that Arjuna was quite fit for liberation. Unless the senses are controlled, there is no chance of elevation to the platform of knowledge, and without knowledge and devotion there is no chance of liberation. Arjuna was competent in all these attributes, over and above his enormous attributes in his material relationships.

TEXT 7

*kārpaṇya-doṣopahata-svabhāvaḥ
prcchāmi tvām dharma-sammūḍha-cetāḥ
yac chreyaḥ syān niścitaṁ brūhi tan me
śiṣyas te 'haṁ śādhi mām tvām prapannam*

SYNONYMS

kārpaṇya-miserly; *doṣa*-weakness; *upahata*-being inflicted by; *svabhāvaḥ*-characteristics; *prcchāmi*-I am asking; *tvām*-unto You; *dharma*-religion; *sammūḍha*-bewildered; *cetāḥ*-in heart; *yac*-what; *śreyaḥ*-all-good; *syāt*-may be; *niścitaṁ*-confidently; *brūhi*-tell; *tat*-that; *me*-unto me; *śiṣyaḥ*-disciple; *te*-Your; *ahaṁ*-I am; *śādhi*-just instruct; *mām*-me; *tvām*-unto You; *prapannam*-surrendered.

TRANSLATION

Now I am confused about my duty and have lost all composure because of weakness. In this condition I am asking You to tell me clearly what is best for me. Now I am Your disciple, and a soul surrendered unto You. Please instruct me.

PURPORT

By nature's own way the complete system of material activities is a source of perplexity for everyone. In every step there is perplexity, and therefore it behooves one to approach a bona fide spiritual master who can give one proper guidance for executing the purpose of life. All Vedic literatures advise us to approach a bona fide spiritual master to get free from the perplexities of life which happen without our desire. They are like a forest fire that somehow blazes without being set by anyone. Similarly, the world situation is such that perplexities of life automatically appear, without our wanting such confusion. No one wants fire, and yet it takes place, and we become perplexed. The Vedic wisdom therefore advises that in order to solve the perplexities of life and to understand the science of the solution, one must approach a spiritual master who is in the disciplic succession. A person with a bona fide spiritual master is supposed to know everything. One should not, therefore, remain in material perplexities but should approach a spiritual master. This is the purport of this verse.

Who is the man in material perplexities? It is he who does not understand the problems of life. In the *Garga Upaniṣad* the perplexed man is described as follows:

yo vā etad akṣaram gārgy aviditvāsmāl lokāt praiti sa kṛpaṇaḥ

"He is a miserly man who does not solve the problems of life as a human and who thus quits this world like the cats and dogs, without understanding the science of self-realization." This human form of life is a most valuable asset for the living entity who can utilize it for solving the problems of life; therefore, one who does not utilize this opportunity properly is a miser. On the other hand, there is the *brāhmaṇa*, or he who is intelligent enough to utilize this body to solve all the problems of life.

The *kṛpaṇas*, or miserly persons, waste their time in being overly affectionate for family, society, country, etc., in the material conception of life. One is often attached to family life, namely to wife, children and other members, on the basis of "skin disease." The *kṛpaṇa* thinks that he is able to protect his family members from death; or the *kṛpaṇa* thinks that his family or society can save him from the verge of death. Such family attachment can be found even in the lower animals who take care of children also. Being intelligent, Arjuna could understand that his affection for family

members and his wish to protect them from death were the causes of his perplexities. Although he could understand that his duty to fight was awaiting him, still, on account of miserly weakness, he could not discharge the duties. He is therefore asking Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme spiritual master, to make a definite solution. He offers himself to Kṛṣṇa as a disciple. He wants to stop friendly talks. Talks between the master and the disciple are serious, and now Arjuna wants to talk very seriously before the recognized spiritual master. Kṛṣṇa is therefore the original spiritual master of the science of *Bhagavad-gītā*, and Arjuna is the first disciple for understanding the *Gītā*. How Arjuna understands the *Bhagavad-gītā* is stated in the *Gītā* itself. And yet foolish mundane scholars explain that one need not submit to Kṛṣṇa as a person, but to "the unborn within Kṛṣṇa." There is no difference between Kṛṣṇa's within and without. And one who has no sense of this understanding is the greatest fool in trying to understand *Bhagavad-gītā*.

TEXT 8

*na hi prapaśyāmi mamāpanudyād
yac chokam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇām
avāpya bhūmāv asapatnam ṛddham
rājyaṁ surāṇām api cādhipatyam*

SYNONYMS

na-do not; *hi*-certainly; *prapaśyāmi*-I see; *mama*-my; *apanudyāt*-they can drive away; *yac*-that; *śokam*-lamentation; *ucchoṣaṇam*-drying up; *indriyāṇām*-of the senses; *avāpya*-achieving; *bhūmau*-on the earth; *asapatnam*-without rival; *ṛddham*-prosperous; *rājyaṁ*-kingdom; *surāṇām*-of the demigods; *api*-even; *ca*-also; *ādhipatyam*-supremacy.

TRANSLATION

I can find no means to drive away this grief which is drying up my senses. I will not be able to destroy it even if I win an unrivalled kingdom on the earth with sovereignty like that of the demigods in heaven.

PURPORT

Although Arjuna was putting forward so many arguments based on knowledge of the principles of religion and moral codes, it appears that he was unable to solve his real problem without the help of the spiritual master, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He could understand that his so-called knowledge was useless in driving away his problems, which were drying up his whole existence; and it was impossible for him to solve such perplexities without the help of a spiritual master like Lord Kṛṣṇa. Academic knowledge, scholarship, high position, etc., are all useless in solving the problems of life; help can only be given by a spiritual master like Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, the conclusion is that a spiritual master who is one hundred percent Kṛṣṇa conscious is the bona fide spiritual master, for he can solve the problems of life. Lord Caitanya said that one who is master in the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, regardless of his social position, is the real spiritual master.

*kibāvipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei 'guru' haya.*

(Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 8.127)

"It does not matter whether a person is a *vipra* [learned scholar in Vedic wisdom] or is born in a lower family, or is in the renounced order of life-if he is master in the science of Kṛṣṇa, he is the perfect and bona fide spiritual master." So without being a master in the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, no one is a bona fide spiritual master. It is also said in Vedic literatures:

*ṣaṭ-karma-nipuṇo vipro mantra-tantra-viśāradaḥ
avaiṣṇavo gurur na syād vaiṣṇavaḥ śvapaco guruḥ*

"A scholarly *brāhmaṇa*, expert in all subjects of Vedic knowledge, is unfit to become a spiritual master without being a Vaiṣṇava, or expert in the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But a person born in a family of a lower caste can become a spiritual master if he is a Vaiṣṇava, or Kṛṣṇa conscious."

The problems of material existence-birth, old age, disease and death-cannot be counteracted by accumulation of wealth and economic development. In many parts of the world there are states which are replete with all facilities of life, which are full of wealth, and economically

developed, yet the problems of material existence are still present. They are seeking peace in different ways, but they can achieve real happiness only if they consult Kṛṣṇa, or the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*-which constitute the science of Kṛṣṇa-or the bona fide representative of Kṛṣṇa, the man in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

If economic development and material comforts could drive away one's lamentations for family, social, national or international inebrieties, then Arjuna would not have said that even an unrivalled kingdom on earth or supremacy like that of the demigods in the heavenly planets would not be able to drive away his lamentations. He sought, therefore, refuge in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that is the right path for peace and harmony. Economic development or supremacy over the world can be finished at any moment by the cataclysms of material nature. Even elevation into a higher planetary situation, as men are now seeking a place on the moon planet, can also be finished at one stroke. The *Bhagavad-gītā* confirms this: *kṣīṇe punye martyalokam viśanti* "When the results of pious activities are finished, one falls down again from the peak of happiness to the lowest status of life." Many politicians of the world have fallen down in that way. Such downfalls only constitute more causes for lamentation.

Therefore, if we want to curb lamentation for good, then we have to take shelter of Kṛṣṇa, as Arjuna is seeking to do. So Arjuna asked Kṛṣṇa to solve his problem definitely, and that is the way of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 9

sañjaya uvāca
evam uktvā hr̥ṣīkeśam
guḍākeśaḥ parantapaḥ
na yotsya iti govindam
uktvā tūṣṇīm babhūva ha

SYNONYMS

sañjayaḥ uvāca-Sañjaya said; *evam*-thus; *uktvā*-speaking; *hr̥ṣīkeśam*-unto Kṛṣṇa, the master of the senses; *guḍākeśaḥ*-Arjuna, the master at curbing ignorance; *parantapaḥ*-the chastiser of the enemies; *na yotsya*-I shall not

fight; *iti*-thus; *govindam*-unto Kṛṣṇa, the giver of pleasure; *uktvā*-saying; *tūṣṇīm*-silent; *babhūva*-became; *ha*-certainly.

TRANSLATION

Saṅjaya said: Having spoken thus, Arjuna, chastiser of enemies, told Kṛṣṇa, "Govinda, I shall not fight," and fell silent.

PURPORT

Dhṛtarāṣṭra must have been very glad to understand that Arjuna was not going to fight and was instead leaving the battlefield for the begging profession. But Saṅjaya disappointed him again in relating that Arjuna was competent to kill his enemies (*parantapaḥ*). Although Arjuna was for the time being overwhelmed with false grief due to family affection, he surrendered unto Kṛṣṇa, the supreme spiritual master, as a disciple. This indicated that he would soon be free from the false lamentation resulting from family affection and would be enlightened with perfect knowledge of self-realization, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and would then surely fight. Thus Dhṛtarāṣṭra's joy would be frustrated, since Arjuna would be enlightened. by Kṛṣṇa and would fight to the end.

TEXT 10

*tam uvāca hr̥ṣīkeśaḥ
prahasann iva bhārata
senayor ubhayor madhye
viṣḍantam idam vacaḥ*

SYNONYMS

tam-unto him; *uvāca*-said; *hr̥ṣīkeśaḥ*-the master of the senses, Kṛṣṇa; *prahasann*-smiling; *iva*-like that; *bhārata*-O Dhṛtarāṣṭra, descendant of Bharata; *senayor*-of the armies; *ubhayor*-of both parties; *madhye*-between; *viṣḍantam*-unto the lamenting one; *idam*-the following; *vacaḥ*-words.

TRANSLATION

O descendant of Bharata, at that time Kṛṣṇa, smiling, in the midst of both the armies, spoke the following words to the grief-stricken Arjuna.

PURPORT

The talk was going on between intimate friends, namely the Hṛṣīkeśa and the Guḍākeśa. As friends, both of them were on the same level, but one of them voluntarily became a student of the other. Kṛṣṇa was smiling because a friend had chosen to become a disciple. As Lord of all, He is always in the superior position as the master of everyone, and yet the Lord accepts one who wishes to be a friend, a son, a lover or a devotee, or who wants Him in such a role. But when He was accepted as the master, He at once assumed the role and talked with the disciple like the master-with gravity, as it is required. It appears that the talk between the master and the disciple was openly exchanged in the presence of both armies so that all were benefitted. So the talks of *Bhagavad-gītā* are not for any particular person, society, or community, but they are for all, and friends or enemies are equally entitled to hear them.

TEXT 11

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
aśocyān anvaśocas tvam
prajñā-vādāmś ca bhāṣase
gatāsūn agatāsūmś ca
nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ*

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *aśocyān*-that which is not worthy of lamentation; *anvaśocaḥ*-you are lamenting; *tvam*-you; *prajñā-vādāḥ*-learned talks; *ca*-also; *bhāṣase*-speaking; *gata*-lost; *asūn*-life; *agata*-not past; *asūn*-life; *ca*-also; *na*-never; *anuśocanti*-lament; *paṇḍitāḥ*-the learned.

TRANSLATION

The Blessed Lord said: While speaking learned words, you are mourning for what is not worthy of grief. Those who are wise lament neither for the living nor the dead.

PURPORT

The Lord at once took the position of the teacher and chastised the student, calling him, indirectly, a fool. The Lord said, you are talking like a learned man, but you do not know that one who is learned-one who knows what is body and what is soul-does not lament for any stage of the body, neither in the living nor in the dead condition. As it will be explained in later chapters, it will be clear that knowledge means to know matter and spirit and the controller of both. Arjuna argued that religious principles should be given more importance than politics or sociology, but he did not know that knowledge of matter, soul and the Supreme is even more important than religious formularies. And, because he was lacking in that knowledge, he should not have posed himself as a very learned man. As he did not happen to be a very learned man, he was consequently lamenting for something which was unworthy of lamentation. The body is born and is destined to be vanquished today or tomorrow; therefore the body is not as important as the soul. One who knows this is actually learned, and for him there is no cause for lamentation, regardless of the condition of the material body.

TEXT 12

*na tv evāhaṁ jātu nāsaṁ
na tvam neme janādhīpāḥ
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ
sarve vayam ataḥ param*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *tu*-but; *eva*-certainly; *ahaṁ*-I; *jātu*-become; *na*-never; *āsaṁ*-existed; *na*-it is not so; *tvam*-yourself; *na*-not; *ime*-all these; *janādhīpāḥ*-kings; *na*-never; *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *na*-not like that; *bhaviṣyāmaḥ*-shall exist; *sarve*-all of us; *vayam*-we; *ataḥ param*-hereafter.

TRANSLATION

Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be.

PURPORT

In the *Vedas*, in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* as well as in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, it is said that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the maintainer of innumerable living entities, in terms of their different situations according to individual work and reaction of work. That Supreme Personality of Godhead is also, by His plenary portions, alive in the heart of every living entity. Only saintly persons who can see, within and without, the same Supreme Lord, can actually attain to perfect and eternal peace.

*nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām
eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān
tam ātmaśthaṁ ye 'nupaśyanti dhīrās
teṣāṁ śāntiḥ śāśvatī netareṣāṁ.*

(Kaṭha 2.2.13)

The same Vedic truth given to Arjuna is given to all persons in the world who pose themselves as very learned but factually have but a poor fund of knowledge. The Lord says clearly that He Himself, Arjuna, and all the kings who are assembled on the battlefield, are eternally individual beings and that the Lord is eternally the maintainer of the individual living entities both in their conditioned as well as in their liberated situations. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the supreme individual person, and Arjuna, the Lord's eternal associate, and all the kings assembled there are individual, eternal persons. It is not that they did not exist as individuals in the past, and it is not that they will not remain eternal persons. Their individuality existed in the past, and their individuality will continue in the future without interruption. Therefore, there is no cause for lamentation for anyone.

The Māyāvādī theory that after liberation the individual soul, separated by the covering of māyā or illusion, will merge into the impersonal Brahman and lose its individual existence is not supported herein by Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme authority. Nor is the theory that we only think of

individuality in the conditioned state supported herein. Kṛṣṇa clearly says herein that in the future also the individuality of the Lord and others, as it is confirmed in the *Upaniṣads*, will continue eternally. This statement of Kṛṣṇa is authoritative because Kṛṣṇa cannot be subject to illusion. If individuality is not a fact, then Kṛṣṇa would not have stressed it so much—even for the future. The Māyāvādī may argue that the individuality spoken of by Kṛṣṇa is not spiritual, but material. Even accepting the argument that the individuality is material, then how can one distinguish Kṛṣṇa's individuality? Kṛṣṇa affirms His individuality in the past and confirms His individuality in the future also. He has confirmed His individuality in many ways, and impersonal Brahman has been declared to be subordinate to Him. Kṛṣṇa has maintained spiritual individuality all along; if He is accepted as an ordinary conditioned soul in individual consciousness, then His *Bhagavad-gītā* has no value as authoritative scripture. A common man with all the four defects of human frailty is unable to teach that which is worth hearing. The *Gītā* is above such literature. No mundane book compares with the *Bhagavad-gītā*. When one accepts Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary man, the *Gītā* loses all importance. The Māyāvādī argues that the plurality mentioned in this verse is conventional and that it refers to the body. But previous to this verse such a bodily conception is already condemned. After condemning the bodily conception of the living entities, how was it possible for Kṛṣṇa to place a conventional proposition on the body again? Therefore, individuality is maintained on spiritual grounds and is thus confirmed by great *ācāryas* like Śrī Rāmānuja and others. It is clearly mentioned in many places in the *Gītā* that this spiritual individuality is understood by those who are devotees of the Lord. Those who are envious of Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead have no bona fide access to the great literature. The nondevotee's approach to the teachings of the *Gītā* is something like bees licking on a bottle of honey. One cannot have a taste of honey unless one opens the bottle. Similarly, the mysticism of the *Bhagavad-gītā* can be understood only by devotees, and no one else can taste it, as it is stated in the Fourth Chapter of the book. Nor can the *Gītā* be touched by persons who envy the very existence of the Lord. Therefore, the Māyāvādī explanation of the *Gītā* is a most misleading presentation of the whole truth. Lord Caitanya has forbidden us to read commentations made by the Māyāvādīs and warns that one who takes to such an understanding of the

Māyāvādī philosophy loses all power to understand the real mystery of the *Gītā*. If individuality refers to the empirical universe, then there is no need of teaching by the Lord. The plurality of the individual soul and of the Lord is an eternal fact, and it is confirmed by the *Vedas* as above mentioned.

TEXT 13

*dehino 'smin yathā dehe
kaumāraṁ yauvanam jarā
tathā dehāntara-prāptir
dhīras tatra na muhyati*

SYNONYMS

dehinaḥ-of the embodied; *asmin*-in this; *yathā*-as; *dehe*-in the body; *kaumāram*-boyhood; *yauvanam*-youth; *jarā*-old age; *tathā*-similarly; *dehāntara*-transference of the body; *prāptiḥ*-achievement; *dhīraḥ*-the sober; *tatra*-thereupon; *na*-never; *muhyati*-deluded.

TRANSLATION

As the embodied soul continually passes, in this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death. The self-realized soul is not bewildered by such a change.

PURPORT

Since every living entity is an individual soul, each is changing his body every moment, manifesting sometimes as a child, sometimes as a youth, and sometimes as an old man. Yet the same spirit soul is there and does not undergo any change. This individual soul finally changes the body at death and transmigrates to another body; and since it is sure to have another body in the next birth-either material or spiritual-there was no cause for lamentation by Arjuna on account of death, neither for Bhīṣma nor for Droṇa, for whom he was so much concerned. Rather, he should rejoice for their changing bodies from old to new ones, thereby rejuvenating their energy. Such changes of body account for varieties of enjoyment or

suffering, according to one's work in life. So Bhīṣma and Droṇa, being noble souls, were surely going to have either spiritual bodies in the next life, or at least life in heavenly bodies for superior enjoyment of material existence. So, in either case, there was no cause of lamentation.

Any man who has perfect knowledge of the constitution of the individual soul, the Supersoul, and nature-both material and spiritual-is called a *dhīra* or a most sober man. Such a man is never deluded by the change of bodies. The Māyāvādī theory of oneness of the spirit soul cannot be entertained on the ground that spirit soul cannot be cut into pieces as a fragmental portion. Such cutting into different individual souls would make the Supreme cleavable or changeable, against the principle of the Supreme Soul being unchangeable.

As confirmed in the *Gītā*, the fragmental portions of the Supreme exist eternally (*sanātana*) and are called *kṣara*; that is, they have a tendency to fall down into material nature. These fragmental portions are eternally so, and even after liberation, the individual soul remains the same-fragmental. But once liberated, he lives an eternal life in bliss and knowledge with the Personality of Godhead. The theory of reflection can be applied to the Supersoul who is present in each and every individual body and is known as the Paramātmā, who is different from the individual living entity. When the sky is reflected in water, the reflections represent both the sun and the moon and the stars also. The stars can be compared to the living entities and the sun or the moon to the Supreme Lord. The individual fragmental spirit soul is represented by Arjuna, and the Supreme Soul is the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They are not on the same level, as it will be apparent in the beginning of the Fourth Chapter. If Arjuna is on the same level with Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is not superior to Arjuna, then their relationship of instructor and instructed becomes meaningless. If both of them are deluded by the illusory energy (*māyā*), then there is no need of one being the instructor and the other the instructed. Such instruction would be useless because, in the clutches of *māyā*, no one can be an authoritative instructor. Under the circumstances, it is admitted that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord, superior in position to the living entity, Arjuna, who is a forgotten soul deluded by *māyā*.

TEXT 14

*mātrā-sparśās tu kaunteya
śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ
āgamāpāyino 'nityās
tāms titikṣasva bhārata*

SYNONYMS

mātrā-sensuous; *sparśāḥ*-perception; *tu*-only; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *śīta*-winter; *uṣṇa*-summer; *sukha*-happiness; *duḥkha-dāḥ*-giving pain; *āgama*-appearing; *apāyinaḥ*-disappearing; *anityāḥ*-nonpermanent; *tān*-all of them; *titikṣasva*-just try to tolerate; *bhārata*-O descendant of the Bhārata dynasty.

TRANSLATION

O son of Kuntī, the nonpermanent appearance of happiness and distress, and their disappearance in due course, are like the appearance and disappearance of winter and summer seasons. They arise from sense perception, O scion of Bharata, and one must learn to tolerate them without being disturbed.

PURPORT

In the proper discharge of duty, one has to learn to tolerate nonpermanent appearances and disappearances of happiness and distress. According to Vedic injunction, one has to take his bath early in the morning even during the month of *Māgha* (January-February). It is very cold at that time, but in spite of that a man who abides by the religious principles does not hesitate to take his bath. Similarly, a woman does not hesitate to cook in the kitchen in the months of May and June, the hottest part of the summer season. One has to execute his duty in spite of climatic inconveniences. Similarly, to fight is the religious principle of the *kṣatriyas*, and although one has to fight with some friend or relative, one should not deviate from his prescribed duty. One has to follow the prescribed rules and regulations of religious principles in order to rise up to the platform of knowledge because by

knowledge and devotion only can one liberate himself from the clutches of *māyā* (illusion).

The two different names of address given to Arjuna are also significant. To address him as Kaunteya signifies his great blood relations from his mother's side; and to address him as Bhārata signifies his greatness from his father's side. From both sides he is supposed to have a great heritage. A great heritage brings responsibility in the matter of proper discharge of duties; therefore, he cannot avoid fighting.

TEXT 15

*yam hi na vyathayanty ete
puruṣaṁ puruṣarṣabha
sama-duḥkha-sukhaṁ dhīraṁ
so 'mṛtatvāya kalpate*

SYNONYMS

yam-one who; *hi*-certainly; *na*-never; *vyathayanti*-are distressing; *ete*-all these; *puruṣaṁ*-to a person; *puruṣarṣabha*-is best among men; *sama*-unaltered; *duḥkha*-distress; *sukhaṁ*-happiness; *dhīraṁ*-patient; *saḥ*-he; *amṛtatvāya*-for liberation; *kalpate*-is considered eligible.

TRANSLATION

O best among men [Arjuna], the person who is not disturbed by happiness and distress and is steady in both is certainly eligible for liberation.

PURPORT

Anyone who is steady in his determination for the advanced stage of spiritual realization and can equally tolerate the onslaughts of distress and happiness is certainly a person eligible for liberation. In the *varṇāśrama* institution, the fourth stage of life, namely the renounced order (*sannyāsa*) is a painstaking situation. But one who is serious about making his life perfect surely adopts the *sannyāsa* order of life in spite of all difficulties.

The difficulties usually arise from having to sever family relationships, to give up the connection of wife and children. But if anyone is able to tolerate such difficulties, surely his path to spiritual realization is complete. Similarly, in Arjuna's discharge of duties as a *kṣatriya*, he is advised to persevere, even if it is difficult to fight with his family members or similarly beloved persons. Lord Caitanya took *sannyāsa* at the age of twenty-four, and His dependants, young wife as well as old mother, had no one else to look after them. Yet for a higher cause He took *sannyāsa* and was steady in the discharge of higher duties. That is the way of achieving liberation from material bondage.

TEXT 16

*nāsato vidyate bhāvo
nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ
ubhayor api dr̥ṣṭo 'ntas
tv anayos tattva-darśibhiḥ*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *asataḥ*-of the nonexistent; *vidyate*-there is; *bhāvaḥ*-endurance; *na*-never; *abhāvaḥ*-changing quality; *vidyate*-there is; *sataḥ*-of the eternal; *ubhayor*-of the two; *api*-verily; *dr̥ṣṭaḥ*-observed; *antaḥ*-conclusion; *tu*-but; *anayoḥ*-of them; *tattva*-truth; *darśibhiḥ*-by the seers.

TRANSLATION

Those who are seers of the truth have concluded that of the nonexistent there is no endurance, and of the existent there is no cessation. This seers have concluded by studying the nature of both.

PURPORT

There is no endurance of the changing body. That the body is changing every moment by the actions and reactions of the different cells is admitted by modern medical science; and thus growth and old age are taking place in the body. But the spirit soul exists permanently, remaining the same despite

all changes of the body and the mind. That is the difference between matter and spirit. By nature, the body is ever changing, and the soul is eternal. This conclusion is established by all classes of seers of the truth, both impersonalist and personalist. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* it is stated that Viṣṇu and His abodes all have self-illuminated spiritual existence. "*Jyotīṃṣi viṣṇur bhavanāni viṣṇuḥ*." The words existent and nonexistent refer only to spirit and matter. That is the version of all seers of truth.

This is the beginning of the instruction by the Lord to the living entities who are bewildered by the influence of ignorance. Removal of ignorance involves the reestablishment of the eternal relationship between the worshiper and the worshipable and the consequent understanding of the difference between the part and parcel living entities and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One can understand the nature of the Supreme by thorough study of oneself, the difference between oneself and the Supreme being understood as the relationship between the part and the whole. In the *Vedānta-sūtras*, as well as in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the Supreme has been accepted as the origin of all emanations. Such emanations are experienced by superior and inferior natural sequences. The living entities belong to the superior nature, as it will be revealed in the Seventh Chapter. Although there is no difference between the energy and the energetic, the energetic is accepted as the Supreme, and energy or nature is accepted as the subordinate. The living entities, therefore, are always subordinate to the Supreme Lord, as in the case of the master and the servant, or the teacher and the taught. Such clear knowledge is impossible to understand under the spell of ignorance, and to drive away such ignorance the Lord teaches the *Bhagavad-gītā* for the enlightenment of all living entities for all time.

TEXT 17

*avināśi tu tad viddhi
yena sarvam idaṁ tatam
vināśam avyayasyāsyā
na kaścit kartum arhati*

SYNONYMS

avināśi-imperishable; *tu*-but; *tat*-that; *viddhi*-know it; *yena*-by whom; *sarvam*-all of the body; *idam*-this; *tatam*-widespread; *vināśam*-destruction; *avyayasya*-of the imperishable; *asya*-of it; *na kaścit*-no one; *kartum*-to do; *arhati*-able.

TRANSLATION

Know that which pervades the entire body is indestructible. No one is able to destroy the imperishable soul.

PURPORT

This verse more clearly explains the real nature of the soul, which is spread all over the body. Anyone can understand what is spread all over the body: it is consciousness. Everyone is conscious of the pains and pleasures of the body in part or as a whole. This spreading of consciousness is limited within one's own body. The pains and pleasures of one body are unknown to another. Therefore, each and every body is the embodiment of an individual soul, and the symptom of the soul's presence is perceived as individual consciousness. This soul is described as one ten-thousandth part of the upper portion of the hair point in size. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* confirms this:

*bālāgra-śata-bhāgasya śatadhā kalpitasya ca
bhāgo jīvaḥ sa vijñeyaḥ sa cānantyāya kalpate.*

"When the upper point of a hair is divided into one hundred parts and again each of such parts is further divided into one hundred parts, each such part is the measurement of the dimension of the spirit soul." (*Svet.* 5.9) Similarly, in the *Bhāgavatam* the same version is stated:

*keśāgra-śata-bhāgasya śatāṁśaḥ sādṛśātmakaḥ
jīvaḥ sūkṣma-svarupo 'yaṁ saṅkhyātīto hi cit-kaṇaḥ*

"There are innumerable particles of spiritual atoms, which are measured as one ten-thousandth of the upper portion of the hair."

Therefore, the individual particle of spirit soul is a spiritual atom smaller than the material atoms, and such atoms are innumerable. This very small

spiritual spark is the basic principle of the material body, and the influence of such a spiritual spark is spread all over the body as the influence of the active principle of some medicine spreads throughout the body. This current of the spirit soul is felt all over the body as consciousness, and that is the proof of the presence of the soul. Any layman can understand that the material body minus consciousness is a dead body, and this consciousness cannot be revived in the body by any means of material administration. Therefore, consciousness is not due to any amount of material combination, but to the spirit soul. In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* the measurement of the atomic spirit soul is further explained:

*eṣo 'nurātmā cetasā veditavyo
yasmin prāṇaḥ pañcadhā saṁviveśa
prāṇaiś cittam sarvam otam prajānām
yasmin viśuddhe vibhavaty eṣa ātmā.*

"The soul is atomic in size and can be perceived by perfect intelligence. This atomic soul is floating in the five kinds of air [*prāṇa*, *apāna*, *vyāna*, *samāna* and *udāna*], is situated within the heart, and spreads its influence all over the body of the embodied living entities. When the soul is purified from the contamination of the five kinds of material air, its spiritual influence is exhibited." (Muṇḍ. 3.1.9)

The *haṭha-yoga* system is meant for controlling the five kinds of air encircling the pure soul by different kinds of sitting postures-not for any material profit, but for liberation of the minute soul from the entanglement of the material atmosphere.

So the constitution of the atomic soul is admitted in all Vedic literatures, and it is also actually felt in the practical experience of any sane man. Only the insane man can think of this atomic soul as all-pervading *Viṣṇu-tattva*.

The influence of the atomic soul can be spread all over a particular body. According to the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, this atomic soul is situated in the heart of every living entity, and because the measurement of the atomic soul is beyond the power of appreciation of the material scientists, some of them assert foolishly that there is no soul. The individual atomic soul is definitely there in the heart along with the Supersoul, and thus all the energies of bodily movement are emanating from this part of the body. The corpuscles

which carry the oxygen from the lungs gather energy from the soul. When the soul passes away from this position, activity of the blood, generating fusion, ceases. Medical science accepts the importance of the red corpuscles, but it cannot ascertain that the source of the energy is the soul. Medical science, however, does admit that the heart is the seat of all energies of the body.

Such atomic particles of the spirit whole are compared to the sunshine molecules. In the sunshine there are innumerable radiant molecules. Similarly, the fragmental parts of the Supreme Lord are atomic sparks of the rays of the Supreme Lord, called by the name *prabhā* or superior energy. Neither Vedic knowledge nor modern science denies the existence of the spirit soul in the body, and the science of the soul is explicitly described in the *Bhagavad-gītā* by the Personality of Godhead Himself.

TEXT 18

*antavanta ime dehā
nityasyuktāḥ śarīriṇaḥ
anāśino 'prameyasya
tasmād yudhyasva bhārata*

SYNONYMS

antavantaḥ-perishable; *ime*-all these; *dehāḥ*-material bodies; *nityasya*-eternal in existence; *uktāḥ*-it is so said; *śarīriṇaḥ*-the embodied souls; *anāśinaḥ*-never to be destroyed; *aprameyasya*-immeasurable; *tasmāt*-therefore; *yudhyasva*-fight; *bhārata*-O descendant of Bharata.

TRANSLATION

Only the material body of the indestructible, immeasurable and eternal living entity is subject to destruction; therefore, fight, O descendant of Bharata.

PURPORT

The material body is perishable by nature. It may perish immediately, or it may do so after a hundred years. It is a question of time only. There is no chance of maintaining it indefinitely. But the spirit soul is so minute that it cannot even be seen by an enemy, to say nothing of being killed. As mentioned in the previous verse, it is so small that no one can have any idea how to measure its dimension. So from both viewpoints there is no cause of lamentation because the living entity can neither be killed as he is, nor can the material body, which cannot be saved for any length of time, be permanently protected. The minute particle of the whole spirit acquires this material body according to his work, and therefore observance of religious principles should be utilized. In the *Vedānta-sūtras* the living entity is qualified as light because he is part and parcel of the supreme light. As sunlight maintains the entire universe, so the light of the soul maintains this material body. As soon as the spirit soul is out of this material body, the body begins to decompose; therefore it is the spirit soul which maintains this body. The body itself is unimportant. Arjuna was advised to fight and sacrifice the material body for the cause of religion.

TEXT 19

*ya enam veti hantāram
yaś cainam manyate hatam
ubhau tau na vijānīto
nāyam hanti na hanyate*

SYNONYMS

yaḥ-anyone; *enam*-this; *veti*-knows; *hantāram*-the killer; *yaḥ*-anyone; *ca*-also; *enam*-this; *manyate*-thinks; *hatam*-killed; *ubhau*-both of them; *tau*-they; *na*-never; *vijānītaḥ*-in knowledge; *na*-never; *ayam*-this; *hanti*-kills; *na*-nor; *hanyate*-be killed.

TRANSLATION

He who thinks that the living entity is the slayer or that he is slain, does not understand. One who is in knowledge knows that the self slays not nor is slain.

PURPORT

When an embodied living entity is hurt by fatal weapons, it is to be known that the living entity within the body is not killed. The spirit soul is so small that it is impossible to kill him by any material weapon, as is evident from the previous verses. Nor is the living entity killable because of his spiritual constitution. What is killed, or is supposed to be killed, is the body only. This, however, does not at all encourage killing of the body. The Vedic injunction is, "*māhimśyāt sarva-bhūtāni*" never commit violence to anyone. Nor does understanding that the living entity is not killed encourage animal slaughter. Killing the body of anyone without authority is abominable and is punishable by the law of the state as well as by the law of the Lord. Arjuna, however, is being engaged in killing for the principle of religion, and not whimsically.

TEXT 20

*na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin
nāyaṁ bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ
ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yaṁ purāṇo
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *jāyate*-takes birth; *mriyate*-never dies; *vā*-either; *kadācit*-at any time (past, present or future); *na*-never; *ayaṁ*-this; *bhūtvā*-came into being; *bhavitā*-will come to be; *vā*-or; *na*-not; *bhūyaḥ*-or has come to be; *ajaḥ*-unborn; *nityaḥ*-eternal; *śāśvataḥ*-permanent; *ayaṁ*-this; *purāṇaḥ*-the oldest; *na*-never; *hanyate*-is killed; *hanyamāne*-being killed; *śarīre*-by the body.

TRANSLATION

For the soul there is never birth nor death. Nor, having once been, does he ever cease to be. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, undying and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.

PURPORT

Qualitatively, the small atomic fragmental part of the Supreme Spirit is one with the Supreme. He undergoes no changes like the body. Sometimes the soul is called the steady, or *kūṭastha*. The body is subject to six kinds of transformations. It takes its birth in the womb of the mother's body, remains for some time, grows, produces some effects, gradually dwindles, and at last vanishes into oblivion. The soul, however, does not go through such changes. The soul is not born, but, because he takes on a material body, the body takes its birth. The soul does not take birth there, and the soul does not die. Anything which has birth also has death. And because the soul has no birth, he therefore has no past, present or future. He is eternal, ever-existing, and primeval-that is, there is no trace in history of his coming into being. Under the impression of the body, we seek the history of birth, etc., of the soul. The soul does not at any time become old, as the body does. The so-called old man, therefore, feels himself to be in the same spirit as in his childhood or youth. The changes of the body do not affect the soul. The soul does not deteriorate like a tree, nor anything material. The soul has no by-product either. The by-products of the body, namely children, are also different individual souls; and, owing to the body, they appear as children of a particular man. The body develops because of the soul's presence, but the soul has neither offshoots nor change. Therefore, the soul is free from the six changes of the body.

In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* also we find a similar passage which reads:

*na jāyate mriyate vā vipaścin
nāyaṁ kutaścin na vibhūva kaścit
ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yaṁ purāṇo
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre.*

(Kaṭha 1.2.18)

The meaning and purport of this verse is the same as in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, but here in this verse there is one special word, *vipaścit*, which means learned or with knowledge.

The soul is full of knowledge, or full always with consciousness. Therefore, consciousness is the symptom of the soul. Even if one does not find the soul within the heart, where he is situated, one can still understand the presence of the soul simply by the presence of consciousness.

Sometimes we do not find the sun in the sky owing to clouds, or for some other reason, but the light of the sun is always there, and we are convinced that it is therefore daytime. As soon as there is a little light in the sky early in the morning, we can understand that the sun is in the sky. Similarly, since there is some consciousness in all bodies-whether man or animal-we can understand the presence of the soul. This consciousness of the soul is, however, different from the consciousness of the Supreme because the supreme consciousness is all-knowledge-past, present and future. The consciousness of the individual soul is prone to be forgetful. When he is forgetful of his real nature, he obtains education and enlightenment from the superior lessons of Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa is not like the forgetful soul. If so, Kṛṣṇa's teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā* would be useless.

There are two kinds of souls-namely the minute particle soul (*aṇu-ātmā*) and the Supersoul (the *vibhu-ātmā*). This is also confirmed in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* in this way:

*aṇor aṇīyān mahato mahīyān
ātmāsya jantor nihito guhāyām
tam akratuḥ paśyati vīta-śoko
dhātuḥ prasādān mahimānam ātmanaḥ*

(Kaṭha 1.2.20)

"Both the Supersoul [*Paramātmā*] and the atomic soul [*jīvātmā*] are situated on the same tree of the body within the same heart of the living being, and only one who has become free from all material desires as well as lamentations can, by the grace of the Supreme, understand the glories of the soul." Kṛṣṇa is the fountainhead of the Supersoul also, as it will be disclosed in the following chapters, and Arjuna is the atomic soul, forgetful of his real nature; therefore he requires to be enlightened by Kṛṣṇa, or by His bona fide representative (the spiritual master).

TEXT 21

*vedāvināśīnam nityam
ya enam ajam avyayam
katham sa puruṣaḥ pārtha*

kam ghātayati hanti kam

SYNONYMS

veda-in knowledge; *avināśinam*-indestructible; *nityam*-always; *yaḥ*-one who; *enam*-this (soul); *ajam*-unborn; *avyayam*-immutable; *katham*-how; *saḥ*-he; *puruṣaḥ*-person; *pārtha*-O Pārtha (Arjuna); *kam*-whom; *ghātayati*-hurts; *hanti*-kills; *kam*-whom.

TRANSLATION

O Pārtha, how can a person who knows that the soul is indestructible, unborn, eternal and immutable, kill anyone or cause anyone to kill?

PURPORT

Everything has its proper utility, and a man who is situated in complete knowledge knows how and where to apply a thing for its proper utility. Similarly, violence also has its utility, and how to apply violence rests with the person in knowledge. Although the justice of the peace awards capital punishment to a person condemned for murder, the justice of the peace cannot be blamed because he orders violence to another person according to the codes of justice. In *Manu-saṁhitā*, the lawbook for mankind, it is supported that a murderer should be condemned to death so that in his next life he will not have to suffer for the great sin he has committed. Therefore, the king's punishment of hanging a murderer is actually beneficial. Similarly, when Kṛṣṇa orders fighting, it must be concluded that violence is for supreme justice, and, as such, Arjuna should follow the instruction, knowing well that such violence, committed in the act of fighting for Kṛṣṇa, is not violence at all because, at any rate, the man, or rather the soul, cannot be killed; so for the administration of justice, so-called violence is permitted. A surgical operation is not meant to kill the patient, but to cure him. Therefore the fighting to be executed by Arjuna at the instruction of Kṛṣṇa is with full knowledge, so there is no possibility of sinful reaction.

TEXT 22

*vāsāmsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya
navāni grhṇāti naro 'parāṇi
tathā śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇāny
anyāni saṁyāti navāni dehī*

SYNONYMS

vāsāmsi-garments; *jīrṇāni*-old and worn out; *yathā*-as it is; *vihāya*-giving up; *navāni*-new garments; *grhṇāti*-does accept; *naraḥ*-a man; *aparāṇi*-other; *tathā*-in the same way; *śarīrāṇi*-bodies; *vihāya*-giving up; *jīrṇāni*-old and useless; *anyāni*-different; *saṁyāti*-verily accepts; *navāni*-new sets; *dehī*-the embodied.

TRANSLATION

As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, similarly, the soul accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones.

PURPORT

Change of body by the atomic individual soul is an accepted fact. Even some of the modern scientists who do not believe in the existence of the soul, but at the same time cannot explain the source of energy from the heart, have to accept continuous changes of body which appear from childhood to boyhood and from boyhood to youth and again from youth to old age. From old age, the change is transferred to another body. This has already been explained in the previous verse.

Transference of the atomic individual soul to another body is made possible by the grace of the Supersoul. The Supersoul fulfills the desire of the atomic soul as one friend fulfills the desire of another. The *Vedas*, like the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, as well as the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, compare the soul and the Supersoul to two friendly birds sitting on the same tree. One of the birds (the individual atomic soul) is eating the fruit of the tree, and the other bird (Kṛṣṇa) is simply watching His friend. Of these two birds-although they are the same in quality-one is captivated by the fruits of the material tree, while the other is simply witnessing the activities of His

friend. Kṛṣṇa is the witnessing bird, and Arjuna is the eating bird. Although they are friends, one is still the master and the other is the servant. Forgetfulness of this relationship by the atomic soul is the cause of one's changing his position from one tree to another or from one body to another. The *jīva* soul is struggling very hard on the tree of the material body, but as soon as he agrees to accept the other bird as the supreme spiritual master-as Arjuna agreed to do by voluntary surrender unto Kṛṣṇa for instruction-the subordinate bird immediately becomes free from all lamentations. Both the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* confirm this:

*samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno
'nīśayā śocati muhyamānaḥ
juṣṭam yadā paśyaty anyam īśam asya
mahimānam iti vīta-śokaḥ*

"Although the two birds are in the same tree, the eating bird is fully engrossed with anxiety and moroseness as the enjoyer of the fruits of the tree. But if in some way or other he turns his face to his friend who is the Lord and knows His glories-at once the suffering bird becomes free from all anxieties." Arjuna has now turned his face towards his eternal friend, Kṛṣṇa, and is understanding the *Bhagavad-gītā* from Him. And thus, hearing from Kṛṣṇa, he can understand the supreme glories of the Lord and be free from lamentation.

Arjuna is advised herewith by the Lord not to lament for the bodily change of his old grandfather and his teacher. He should rather be happy to kill their bodies in the righteous fight so that they may be cleansed at once of all reactions from various bodily activities. One who lays down his life on the sacrificial altar, or in the proper battlefield, is at once cleansed of bodily reactions and promoted to a higher status of life. So there was no cause for Arjuna's lamentation.

TEXT 23

*nainam chindanti śāstrāṇi
nainam dahati pāvakaḥ
na cainam kledayanty āpo*

na śoṣayati mārutaḥ

SYNONYMS

na-never; *enam*-unto this soul; *chindanti*-can cut into pieces; *śaṣṭrāṇi* -all weapons; *na*-never; *enam*-unto this soul; *dahati*-burns; *pāvakaḥ*-fire; *na*-never; *ca*-also; *enam*-unto this soul; *kledayanti*-moistens; *āpaḥ* -water; *na*-never; *śoṣayati*-dries; *mārutaḥ*-wind.

TRANSLATION

The soul can never be cut into pieces by any weapon, nor can he be burned by fire, nor moistened by water, nor withered by the wind.

PURPORT

All kinds of weapons, swords, flames, rains, tornadoes, etc., are unable to kill the spirit soul. It appears that there were many kinds of weapons made of earth, water, air, ether, etc., in addition to the modern weapons of fire. Even the nuclear weapons of the modern age are classified as fire weapons, but formerly there were other weapons made of all different types of material elements. Firearms were counteracted by water weapons, which are now unknown to modern science. Nor do modern scientists have knowledge of tornado weapons. Nonetheless, the soul can never be cut into pieces, nor annihilated by any number of weapons, regardless of scientific devices.

Nor was it ever possible to cut the individual souls from the original Soul. The Māyāvādī, however, cannot describe how the individual soul evolved from ignorance and consequently became covered by illusory energy. Because they are atomic individual souls (*sanātana*) eternally, they are prone to be covered by the illusory energy, and thus they become separated from the association of the Supreme Lord, just as the sparks of the fire, although one in quality with the fire, are prone to be extinguished when out of the fire. In the *Varāha Purāṇa*, the living entities are described as separated parts and parcels of the Supreme. They are eternally so, according to the *Bhagavad-gītā* also. So, even after being liberated from illusion, the living entity remains a separate identity, as is evident from the teachings of

the Lord to Arjuna. Arjuna became liberated by the knowledge received from Kṛṣṇa, but he never became one with Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 24

*acchedyo 'yam adāhyo 'yam
akledyo 'śoṣya eva ca
nityaḥ sarva-gataḥ sthāṇur
acalo 'yam sanātanaḥ*

SYNONYMS

acchedyaḥ-unbreakable; *ayam*-this soul; *adāhyaḥ*-cannot be burned; *ayam*-this soul; *akledyaḥ*-insoluble; *aśoṣyaḥ*-cannot be dried; *eva*-certainly; *ca*-and; *nityaḥ*-everlasting; *sarva-gataḥ*-all-pervading; *sthāṇuḥ*-unchangeable; *acalaḥ*-immovable; *ayam*-this soul; *sanātanaḥ*-eternally the same.

TRANSLATION

This individual soul is unbreakable and insoluble, and can be neither burned nor dried. He is everlasting, all-pervading, unchangeable, immovable and eternally the same.

PURPORT

All these qualifications of the atomic soul definitely prove that the individual soul is eternally the atomic particle of the spirit whole, and he remains the same atom eternally, without change. The theory of monism is very difficult to apply in this case, because the individual soul is never expected to become one homogeneously. After liberation from material contamination, the atomic soul may prefer to remain as a spiritual spark in the effulgent rays of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but the intelligent souls enter into the spiritual planets to associate with the Personality of Godhead.

The word *sarva-gataḥ* (all-pervading) is significant because there is no doubt that living entities are all over God's creation. They live on the land, in the water, in the air, within the earth and even within fire. The belief that

they are sterilized in fire is not acceptable, because it is clearly stated here that the soul cannot be burned by fire. Therefore, there is no doubt that there are living entities also in the sun planet with suitable bodies to live there. If the sun globe is uninhabited, then the word *sarva-gataḥ*-living everywhere-becomes meaningless.

TEXT 25

*avyakto 'yam acintyo 'yam
avikāryo 'yam ucyate
tasmād evaṁ viditvainam
nānuśocitum arhasi*

SYNONYMS

avyaktaḥ-invisible; *ayam*-this soul; *acintyaḥ*-inconceivable; *ayam*-this soul; *avikāryaḥ*-unchangeable; *ayam*-this soul; *ucyate*-is said; *tasmāt*-therefore; *evam*-like this; *viditvā*-knowing it well; *enam*-this soul; *na*-do not; *anuśocitum*-may lament over; *arhasi*-you deserve.

TRANSLATION

It is said that the soul is invisible, inconceivable, immutable, and unchangeable. Knowing this, you should not grieve for the body.

PURPORT

As described previously, the magnitude of the soul is so small for our material calculation that he cannot be seen even by the most powerful microscope; therefore, he is invisible. As far as the soul's existence is concerned, no one can establish his existence experimentally beyond the proof of *śruti* or Vedic wisdom. We have to accept this truth, because there is no other source of understanding the existence of the soul, although it is a fact by perception. There are many things we have to accept solely on grounds of superior authority. No one can deny the existence of his father, based upon the authority of his mother. There is no other source of understanding the identity of the father except by the authority of the

mother. Similarly, there is no other source of understanding the soul except by studying the *Vedas*. In other words, the soul is inconceivable by human experimental knowledge. The soul is consciousness and conscious-that also is the statement of the *Vedas*, and we have to accept that. Unlike the bodily changes, there is no change in the soul. As eternally unchangeable, the soul remains atomic in comparison to the infinite Supreme Soul. The Supreme Soul is infinite, and the atomic soul is infinitesimal. Therefore, the infinitesimal soul, being unchangeable, can never become equal to the infinite soul, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This concept is repeated in the *Vedas* in different ways just to confirm the stability of the conception of the soul. Repetition of something is necessary in order that we understand the matter thoroughly without error.

TEXT 26

*atha cainam nitya-jātam
nityam vā manyase mṛtam
tathāpi tvam mahā-bāho
nainam śocitum arhasi*

SYNONYMS

atha-if, however; *ca*-also; *enam*-this soul; *nitya-jātam*-always born; *nityam*-forever; *vā*-either; *manyase*-so think; *mṛtam*-dead; *tathāpi*-still; *tvam*-you; *mahā-bāho*-O mighty-armed one; *na*-never; *enam*-about the soul; *śocitum*-to lament; *arhasi*-deserve.

TRANSLATION

If, however, you think that the soul is perpetually born and always dies, still you have no reason to lament, O mighty-armed.

PURPORT

There is always a class of philosophers, almost akin to the Buddhists, who do not believe in the separate existence of the soul beyond the body. When Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*, it appears that such

philosophers existed, and they were known as the *Lokāyatikas* and *Vaibhāṣikas*. These philosophers maintained that life symptoms, or soul, takes place at a certain mature condition of material combination. The modern material scientist and materialist philosophers also think similarly. According to them, the body is a combination of physical elements, and at a certain stage the life symptoms develop by interaction of the physical and chemical elements. The science of anthropology is based on this philosophy. Currently, many pseudo-religions-now becoming fashionable in America-are also adhering to this philosophy, as well as to the nihilistic nondevotional Buddhist sects.

Even if Arjuna did not believe in the existence of the soul-as in the *Vaibhāṣika* philosophy-there would still have been no cause for lamentation. No one laments the loss of a certain bulk of chemicals and stops discharging his prescribed duty. On the other hand, in modern science and scientific warfare, so many tons of chemicals are wasted for achieving victory over the enemy. According to the *Vaibhāṣika* philosophy, the so-called soul or *ātmā* vanishes along with the deterioration of the body. So, in any case, whether Arjuna accepted the Vedic conclusion that there is an atomic soul, or whether he did not believe in the existence of the soul, he had no reason to lament. According to this theory, since there are so many living entities generating out of matter every moment, and so many of them are being vanquished every moment, there is no need to grieve for such an incidence. However, since he was not risking rebirth of the soul, Arjuna had no reason to be afraid of being affected with sinful reactions due to his killing his grandfather and teacher. But at the same time, Kṛṣṇa sarcastically addressed Arjuna as *mahā-bāhu*, mighty-armed, because He, at least, did not accept the theory of the *Vaibhāṣikas*, which leaves aside the Vedic wisdom. As a *kṣatriya*, Arjuna belonged to the Vedic culture, and it behooved him to continue to follow its principles.

TEXT 27

*jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyur
dhruvaṁ janma mṛtasya ca
tasmād aparihārye 'rthe*

na tvam śocitum arhasi

SYNONYMS

jātasya-one who has taken his birth; *hi*-certainly; *dhruvaḥ*-a fact; *mṛtyuḥ*-death; *dhruvam*-it is also a fact; *janma*-birth; *mṛtasya*-of the dead; *ca*-also; *tasmāt*-therefore; *aparihārye*-for that which is unavoidable; *arthe*-in the matter of; *na*-do not; *tvam*-you; *śocitum*-to lament; *arhasi*-deserve.

TRANSLATION

For one who has taken his birth, death is certain; and for one who is dead, birth is certain. Therefore, in the unavoidable discharge of your duty, you should not lament.

PURPORT

One has to take birth according to one's activities of life. And, after finishing one term of activities, one has to die to take birth for the next. In this way the cycle of birth and death is revolving, one after the other without liberation. This cycle of birth and death does not, however, support unnecessary murder, slaughter and war. But at the same time, violence and war are inevitable factors in human society for keeping law and order.

The Battle of Kurukṣetra, being the will of the Supreme, was an inevitable event, and to fight for the right cause is the duty of a *kṣatriya*. Why should he be afraid of or aggrieved at the death of his relatives since he was discharging his proper duty? He did not deserve to break the law, thereby becoming subjected to the reactions of sinful acts, of which he was so afraid. By avoiding the discharge of his proper duty, he would not be able to stop the death of his relatives, and he would be degraded due to his selection of the wrong path of action.

TEXT 28

*avyaktādīni bhūtāni
vyakta-madhyāni bhārata
avyakta-nidhanāny eva*

tatra kā paridevanā

SYNONYMS

avyaktādīni-in the beginning unmanifested; *bhūtāni*-all that are created; *vyakta*-manifested; *madhyāni*-in the middle; *bhārata*-O descendant of Bharata; *avyakta*-nonmanifested; *nidhanāni*-all that are vanquished; *eva*-it is all like that; *tatra*-therefore; *kā*-what; *paridevanā*-lamentation.

TRANSLATION

All created beings are unmanifest in their beginning, manifest in their interim state, and unmanifest again when they are annihilated. So what need is there for lamentation?

PURPORT

Accepting that there are two classes of philosophers, one believing in the existence of soul and the other not believing in the existence of the soul, there is no cause for lamentation in either case. Nonbelievers in the existence of the soul are called atheists by followers of Vedic wisdom. Yet even if, for argument's sake, we accept the atheistic theory, there is still no cause for lamentation. Apart from the separate existence of the soul, the material elements remain unmanifested before creation. From this subtle state of unmanifestation comes manifestation, just as from ether, air is generated; from air, fire is generated; from fire, water is generated; and from water, earth becomes manifested. From the earth, many varieties of manifestations take place. Take, for example, a big skyscraper manifested from the earth. When it is dismantled, the manifestation becomes again unmanifested and remains as atoms in the ultimate stage. The law of conservation of energy remains, but in course of time things are manifested and unmanifested-that is the difference. Then what cause is there for lamentation either in the stage of manifestation or unmanifestation? Somehow or other, even in the unmanifested stage, things are not lost. Both at the beginning and at the end, all elements remain unmanifested, and only in the middle are they manifested, and this does not make any real material difference.

And if we accept the Vedic conclusion as stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (*antavanta ime dehāḥ*) that these material bodies are perishable in due course of time (*nityasyoktāḥ śarīriṇaḥ*) but that soul is eternal, then we must remember always that the body is like a dress; therefore why lament the changing of a dress? The material body has no factual existence in relation to the eternal soul. It is something like a dream. In a dream we may think of flying in the sky, or sitting on a chariot as a king, but when we wake up we can see that we are neither in the sky nor seated on the chariot. The Vedic wisdom encourages self-realization on the basis of the nonexistence of the material body. Therefore, in either case, whether one believes in the existence of the soul, or one does not believe in the existence of the soul, there is no cause for lamentation for loss of the body.

TEXT 29

*āścarya-vat paśyati kaścīd enam
āścarya-vad vadati tathaiva cānyaḥ
āścarya-vac cainam anyaḥ śṛṇoti
śrutvāpy enam veda na caiva kaścīd*

SYNONYMS

āścaryavat-amazing; *paśyati*-see; *kaścīd*-some; *enam*-this soul; *āścaryavat*-amazing; *vadati*-speak; *tathā*-there; *eva*-certainly; *ca*-also; *anyaḥ*-others; *āścaryavat*-similarly amazing; *ca*-also; *enam*-this soul; *anyaḥ*-others; *śṛṇoti*-hear; *śrutvā*-having heard; *api*-even; *enam*-this soul; *veda*-do know; *na*-never; *ca*-and; *eva*-certainly; *kaścīd*-anyone.

TRANSLATION

Some look on the soul as amazing, some describe him as amazing, and some hear of him as amazing, while others, even after hearing about him, cannot understand him at all.

PURPORT

Since *Gītopaniṣad* is largely based on the principles of the *Upaniṣads*, it is not surprising to also find this passage in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*.

*śravaṇāyāpi bahubhir yo na labhyaḥ
śṛṇvanto 'pi bahavo yaḥ na vidyuh
āścaryo vaktā kuśalo 'sya labdhā
āścaryo jñātā kuśalānuśiṣṭaḥ.*

The fact that the atomic soul is within the body of a gigantic animal, in the body of a gigantic banyan tree, and also in the microbic germs, millions and billions of which occupy only an inch of space, is certainly very amazing. Men with a poor fund of knowledge and men who are not austere cannot understand the wonders of the individual atomic spark of spirit, even though it is explained by the greatest authority of knowledge, who imparted lessons even to Brahmā, the first living being in the universe. Owing to a gross material conception of things, most men in this age cannot imagine how such a small particle can become both so great and so small. So men look at the soul proper as wonderful either by constitution or by description. Illusioned by the material energy, people are so engrossed in subject matter for sense gratification that they have very little time to understand the question of self-understanding, even though it is a fact that without this self-understanding all activities result in ultimate defeat in the struggle for existence. Perhaps one has no idea that one must think of the soul, and also make a solution of the material miseries.

Some people who are inclined to hear about the soul may be attending lectures, in good association, but sometimes, owing to ignorance, they are misguided by acceptance of the Supersoul and the atomic soul as one without distinction of magnitude. It is very difficult to find a man who perfectly understands the position of the soul, the Supersoul, the atomic soul, their respective functions, relationships and all other major and minor details. And it is still more difficult to find a man who has actually derived full benefit from knowledge of the soul, and who is able to describe the position of the soul in different aspects. But if, somehow or other, one is able to understand the subject matter of the soul, then one's life is successful. The easiest process for understanding the subject matter of self, however, is to accept the statements of the *Bhagavad-gītā* spoken by the

greatest authority, Lord Kṛṣṇa, without being deviated by other theories. But it also requires a great deal of penance and sacrifice, either in this life or in the previous ones, before one is able to accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Kṛṣṇa can, however, be known as such by the causeless mercy of the pure devotee and by no other way.

TEXT 30

*dehī nityam avadhyo 'yaṁ
dehe sarvasya bhārata
tasmāt sarvāṇi bhūtāni
na tvam śocitum arhasi*

SYNONYMS

dehī-the owner of the material body; *nityam*-eternally; *avadhyaḥ*-cannot be killed; *ayaṁ*-this soul; *dehe*-in the body; *sarvasya*-of everyone; *bhārata*-O descendant of Bharata; *tasmāt*-therefore; *sarvāṇi*-all; *bhūtāni*-living entities (that are born); *na*-never; *tvam*-yourself; *śocitum* -to lament; *arhasi*-deserve.

TRANSLATION

O descendant of Bharata, he who dwells in the body is eternal and can never be slain. Therefore you need not grieve for any creature.

PURPORT

The Lord now concludes the chapter of instruction on the immutable spirit soul. In describing the immortal soul in various ways, Lord Kṛṣṇa establishes that the soul is immortal and the body is temporary. Therefore Arjuna as a *kṣatriya* should not abandon his duty out of fear that his grandfather and teacher-Bhīṣma and Droṇa-will die in the battle. On the authority of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one has to believe that there is a soul different from the material body, not that there is no such thing as soul, or that living symptoms develop at a certain stage of material maturity resulting from the interaction of chemicals. Though the soul is immortal, violence is not

encouraged, but at the time of war it is not discouraged when there is actual need for it. That need must be justified in terms of the sanction of the Lord, and not capriciously.

TEXT 31

*sva-dharmam api cāvekṣya
na vikampitum arhasi
dharmyād dhi yuddhāc chreya 'nyat
kṣatriyasya na vidyate*

SYNONYMS

svadharmam-one's own religious principles; *api*-also; *ca*-indeed; *avekṣya*-considering; *na*-never; *vikampitum*-to hesitate; *arhasi*-you deserve; *dharmyāt*-from religious principles; *hi*-indeed; *yuddhāt*-of fighting; *śreyaḥ*-better engagements; *anyat*-anything else; *kṣatriyasya*-of the *kṣatriya*; *na*-does not; *vidyate*-exist.

TRANSLATION

Considering your specific duty as a kṣatriya, you should know that there is no better engagement for you than fighting on religious principles; and so there is no need for hesitation.

PURPORT

Out of the four orders of social administration, the second order, for the matter of good administration, is called *kṣatriya*. *Kṣat* means hurt. One who gives protection from harm is called *kṣatriya* (*trayate*-to give protection). The *kṣatriyas* are trained for killing in the forest. A *kṣatriya* would go into the forest and challenge a tiger face to face and fight with the tiger with his sword. When the tiger was killed, it would be offered the royal order of cremation. This system is being followed even up to the present day by the *kṣatriya* kings of Jaipur state. The *kṣatriyas* are specially trained for challenging and killing because religious violence is sometimes a necessary factor. Therefore, *kṣatriyas* are never meant for accepting directly the order

of *sannyāsa* or renunciation. Nonviolence in politics may be a diplomacy, but it is never a factor or principle. In the religious law books it is stated:

*āhaveṣu mitho 'nyonyam jighāmsanto mahīkṣitaḥ
yuddhamānāḥ param śaktyā svargam yānty aparānmukhāḥ
yajñeṣu paśavo brahman hanyante satataṁ dvijaiḥ
saṁskṛtāḥ kila mantraiś ca te 'pi svargam avāpnuvan.*

"In the battlefield, a king or *kṣatriya*, while fighting another king envious of him, is eligible for achieving heavenly planets after death, as the *brāhmaṇas* also attain the heavenly planets by sacrificing animals in the sacrificial fire." Therefore, killing on the battle on the religious principle and the killing of animals in the sacrificial fire are not at all considered to be acts of violence, because everyone is benefitted by the religious principles involved. The animal sacrificed gets a human life immediately without undergoing the gradual evolutionary process from one form to another, and the *kṣatriyas* killed in the battlefield also attain the heavenly planets as do the *brāhmaṇas* who attain them by offering sacrifice.

There are two kinds of *svadharma*s, specific duties. As long as one is not liberated, one has to perform the duties of that particular body in accordance with religious principles in order to achieve liberation. When one is liberated, one's *svadharma*-specific duty-becomes spiritual and is not in the material bodily concept. In the bodily conception of life there are specific duties for the *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas* respectively, and such duties are unavoidable. *Svadharma* is ordained by the Lord, and this will be clarified in the Fourth Chapter. On the bodily plane *svadharma* is called *varṇāśrama-dharma*, or man's steppingstone for spiritual understanding. Human civilization begins from the stage of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, or specific duties in terms of the specific modes of nature of the body obtained. Discharging one's specific duty in any field of action in accordance with *varṇāśrama-dharma* serves to elevate one to a higher status of life.

TEXT 32

yadṛcchayā copapannam

*svarga-dvāram apāvṛtam
sukhinaḥ kṣatriyāḥ pārtha
labhante yuddham īdṛśam*

SYNONYMS

yadṛcchayā-by its own accord; *ca*-also; *upapannam*-arrived at; *svarga*-heavenly planet; *dvāram*-door; *apāvṛtam*-wide open; *sukhinaḥ*-very happy; *kṣatriyāḥ*-the members of the royal order; *pārtha*-O son of Pṛthā; *labhante*-do achieve; *yuddham*-war; *īdṛśam*-like this.

TRANSLATION

O Pārtha, happy are the kṣatriyas to whom such fighting opportunities come unsought, opening for them the doors of the heavenly planets.

PURPORT

As supreme teacher of the world, Lord Kṛṣṇa condemns the attitude of Arjuna who said, "I do not find any good in this fighting. It will cause perpetual habitation in hell." Such statements by Arjuna were due to ignorance only. He wanted to become nonviolent in the discharge of his specific duty. For a *kṣatriya* to be in the battlefield and to become nonviolent is the philosophy of fools. In the *Parāśara-smṛti* or religious codes made by Parāśara, the great sage and father of Vyāsadeva, it is stated:

*kṣatriyo hi prajā rakṣan śastra-pāṇiḥ pradaṇḍayan
nirjitya parasainyādi kṣitiṁ dharmeṇa pālayet.*

"The *kṣatriya*'s duty is to protect the citizens from all kinds of difficulties, and for that reason he has to apply violence in suitable cases for law and order. Therefore he has to conquer the soldiers of inimical kings, and thus, with *religious principles*, he should rule over the world."

Considering all aspects, Arjuna had no reason to refrain from fighting. If he should conquer his enemies, he would enjoy the kingdom; and if he should die in the battle, he would be elevated to the heavenly planets whose

doors were wide open to him. Fighting would be for his benefit in either case.

TEXT 33

*atha cet tvam imam dharmyam
saṅgrāmaṁ na kariṣyasi
tataḥ sva-dharmaṁ kīrtiṁ ca
hitvā pāpam avāpsyasi*

SYNONYMS

atha-therefore; *cet*-if; *tvam*-you; *imam*-this; *dharmyam*-religious duty; *saṅgrāmaṁ*-fighting; *na*-do not; *kariṣyasi*-perform; *tataḥ*-then; *svadharmam*-your religious duty; *kīrtiṁ*--reputation; *ca*-also; *hitvā*-losing; *pāpam*-sinful reaction; *avāpsyasi*-do gain.

TRANSLATION

If, however, you do not fight this religious war, then you will certainly incur sins for neglecting your duties and thus lose your reputation as a fighter.

PURPORT

Arjuna was a famous fighter, and he attained fame by fighting many great demigods, including even Lord Śiva. After fighting and defeating Lord Śiva in the dress of a hunter, Arjuna pleased the Lord and received as a reward a weapon called *pāśupata-astra*. Everyone knew that he was a great warrior. Even Droṇācārya gave him benediction and awarded him the special weapon by which he could kill even his teacher. So he was credited with so many military certificates from many authorities, including his adopted father Indra, the heavenly king. But if he abandoned the battle, he would not only neglect his specific duty as a *kṣatriya*, but he would lose all his fame and good name and thus prepare his royal road to hell. In other words, he would go to hell, not by fighting, but by withdrawing from battle.

TEXT 34

*akīrtim cāpi bhūtāni
kathayiṣyanti te 'vyayām
sambhāvitasya cākīrtir
maraṇād atiricyate*

SYNONYMS

akīrtim-infamy; *ca*-also; *api*-over and above; *bhūtāni*-all people;
kathayiṣyanti-will speak; *te*-of you; *avyayām*-forever; *sambhāvitasya*-for a
respectable man; *ca*-also; *akīrtiḥ*-ill fame; *maraṇāt*-than death; *atiricyate*-
becomes more than.

TRANSLATION

**People will always speak of your infamy, and for one who has been
honored, dishonor is worse than death.**

PURPORT

Both as friend and philosopher to Arjuna, Lord Kṛṣṇa now gives His final judgement regarding Arjuna's refusal to fight. The Lord says, "Arjuna, if you leave the battlefield, people will call you a coward even before your actual flight. And if you think that people may call you bad names but that you will save your life by fleeing the battlefield, then My advice is that you'd do better to die in the battle. For a respectable man like you, ill fame is worse than death. So, you should not flee for fear of your life; better to die in the battle. That will save you from the ill fame of misusing My friendship and from losing your prestige in society."

So, the final judgement of the Lord was for Arjuna to die in the battle and not withdraw.

TEXT 35

*bhayād raṇād uparatam
maṁsyante tvām mahā-rathāḥ*

*yeṣām ca tvaṁ bahu-mato
bhūtvā yāsyasi lāghavam*

SYNONYMS

bhayāt-out of fear; *raṇāt*-from the battlefield; *uparatam*-ceased;
maṁsyante-will consider; *tvām*-unto you; *mahā-rathāḥ*-the great generals;
yeṣām-of those who; *ca*-also; *tvam*-you; *bahu-mataḥ*-in great estimation;
bhūtvā-will become; *yāsyasi*-will go; *lāghavam*-decreased in value.

TRANSLATION

The great generals who have highly esteemed your name and fame will think that you have left the battlefield out of fear only, and thus they will consider you a coward.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa continued to give His verdict to Arjuna: "Do not think that the great generals like Duryodhana, Karna, and other contemporaries will think that you have left the battlefield out of compassion for your brothers and grandfather. They will think that you have left out of fear for your life. And thus their high estimation of your personality will go to hell."

TEXT 36

*avācya-vādāṁś ca bahūn
vadiṣyanti tavāhitāḥ
nindantas tava sāmārthyam
tato duḥkhataram nu kim*

SYNONYMS

avācya-unkind; *vādān*-fabricated words; *ca*-also; *bahūn*-many; *vadiṣyanti*-will say; *tava*-your; *ahitāḥ*-enemies; *nindantaḥ*-while vilifying; *tava*-your; *sāmārthyam*-ability; *tataḥ*-thereafter; *duḥkhataram*-more painful; *nu*-of course; *kim*-what is there.

TRANSLATION

Your enemies will describe you in many unkind words and scorn your ability. What could be more painful for you?

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa was astonished in the beginning at Arjuna's uncalled-for plea for compassion, and He described his compassion as befitting the non-Aryans. Now in so many words, He has proved His statements against Arjuna's so-called compassion.

TEXT 37

*hato vā prāpsyasi svargam
jītvā vā bhokṣyase mahīm
tasmād uttiṣṭha kaunteya
yuddhāya kṛta-niścayaḥ*

SYNONYMS

hataḥ-being killed; *vā*-either; *prāpsyasi*-you gain; *svargam*-the heavenly kingdom; *jītvā*-by conquering; *vā*-or; *bhokṣyase*-you enjoy; *mahīm*-the world; *tasmāt*-therefore; *uttiṣṭha*-get up; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *yuddhāya*-to fight; *kṛta*-determination; *niścayaḥ*-uncertainty.

TRANSLATION

O son of Kuntī, either you will be killed on the battlefield and attain the heavenly planets, or you will conquer and enjoy the earthly kingdom. Therefore get up and fight with determination.

PURPORT

Even though there was no certainty of victory for Arjuna's side, he still had to fight; for, even being killed there, he could be elevated into the heavenly planets.

TEXT 38

*sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā
lābhālābhau jayājayau
tato yuddhāya yujyasva
naivam pāpam avāpsyasi*

SYNONYMS

sukha-happiness; *duḥkhe*-in distress; *same*-in equanimity; *kṛtvā*-doing so; *lābhālābhau*-both in loss and profit; *jayājayau*-both in defeat and victory; *tataḥ*-thereafter; *yuddhāya*-for the sake of fighting; *yujyasva*-do fight; *na*-never; *evam*-in this way; *pāpam*-sinful reaction; *avāpsyasi*-you will gain.

TRANSLATION

Do thou fight for the sake of fighting, without considering happiness or distress, loss or gain, victory or defeat-and, by so doing, you shall never incur sin.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa now directly says that Arjuna should fight for the sake of fighting because He desires the battle. There is no consideration of happiness or distress, profit or gain, victory or defeat in the activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That everything should be performed for the sake of Kṛṣṇa is transcendental consciousness; so there is no reaction to material activities. He who acts for his own sense gratification, either in goodness or in passion, is subject to the reaction, good or bad. But he who has completely surrendered himself in the activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is no longer obliged to anyone, nor is he a debtor to anyone, as one is in the ordinary course of activities. It is said:

*devarṣi-bhutāpta-nṛṇām pitṛṇām
na kiṅkaro nāyamṛṇī ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇam śaraṇyam
gato mukundaṁ parihṛtya kartam*

(Bhag. 11.5.41)

"Anyone who has completely surrendered unto Kṛṣṇa, Mukunda, giving up all other duties, is no longer a debtor, nor is he obliged to anyone-not the demigods, nor the sages, nor the people in general, nor kinsmen, nor humanity, nor forefathers." That is the indirect hint given by Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna in this verse, and the matter will be more clearly explained in the following verses.

TEXT 39

*eṣā te 'bhihitā sāṅkhye
buddhir yoge tv imām śṛṇu
buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha
karma-bandhaṁ prahāsyasi*

SYNONYMS

eṣā-all these; *te*-unto you; *abhihitā*-described; *sāṅkhye*-by analytical study; *buddhiḥ*-intelligence; *yoge*-work without fruitive result; *tu*-but; *imām*-this; *śṛṇu*-just hear; *buddhyā*-by intelligence; *yuktaḥ*-dovetailed; *yayā*-by which; *pārtha*-O son of Prthā; *karma-bandham*-bondage of reaction; *prahāsyasi*-you can be released from.

TRANSLATION

Thus far I have declared to you the analytical knowledge of sāṅkhya philosophy. Now listen to the knowledge of yoga whereby one works without fruitive result. O son of Prthā, when you act by such intelligence, you can free yourself from the bondage of works.

PURPORT

According to the *Nirukti*, or the Vedic dictionary, *sāṅkhya* means that which describes phenomena in detail, and *sāṅkhya* refers to that philosophy which describes the real nature of the soul. And *yoga* involves controlling the senses. Arjuna's proposal not to fight was based on sense gratification. Forgetting his prime duty, he wanted to cease fighting because he thought

that by not killing his relatives and kinsmen he would be happier than by enjoying the kingdom by conquering his cousins and brothers, the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. In both ways, the basic principles were for sense gratification. Happiness derived from conquering them and happiness derived by seeing kinsmen alive are both on the basis of personal sense gratification, for there is a sacrifice of wisdom and duty. Kṛṣṇa, therefore, wanted to explain to Arjuna that by killing the body of his grandfather he would not be killing the soul proper, and He explained that all individual persons, including the Lord Himself, are eternal individuals; they were individuals in the past, they are individuals in the present, and they will continue to remain individuals in the future, because all of us are individual souls eternally, and we simply change our bodily dress in different manners. But, actually, we keep our individuality even after liberation from the bondage of material dress. An analytical study of the soul and the body has been very graphically explained by Lord Kṛṣṇa. And this descriptive knowledge of the soul and the body from different angles of vision has been described here as *sāṅkhya*, in terms of the *Nirukti* dictionary. This *sāṅkhya* has nothing to do with the *sāṅkhya* philosophy of the atheist Kapila. Long before the imposter Kapila's *sāṅkhya*, the *sāṅkhya* philosophy was expounded in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by the true Lord Kapila, the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who explained it to His mother, Devahūti. It is clearly explained by Him that the *Puruṣa*, or the Supreme Lord, is active and that He creates by looking over the *prakṛti*. This is accepted in the *Vedas* and in the *Gītā*. The description in the *Vedas* indicates that the Lord glanced over the *prakṛti*, or nature, and impregnated it with atomic individual souls. All these individuals are working in the material world for sense gratification, and under the spell of material energy they are thinking of being enjoyers. This mentality is dragged to the last point of liberation when the living entity wants to become one with the Lord. This is the last snare of *māyā* or sense gratificatory illusion, and it is only after many, many births of such sense gratificatory activities that a great soul surrenders unto Vāsudeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa, thereby fulfilling the search after the ultimate truth.

Arjuna has already accepted Kṛṣṇa as his spiritual master by surrendering himself unto Him: *śiṣyas te 'haṁ śādhī māṁ tvāṁ prapaṇnam*. Consequently, Kṛṣṇa will now tell him about the working process in

buddhi-yoga, or *karma-yoga*, or in other words, the practice of devotional service only for the sense gratification of the Lord. This *buddhi-yoga* is clearly explained in Chapter Ten, verse ten, as being direct communion with the Lord, who is sitting as Paramātmā in everyone's heart. But such communion does not take place without devotional service. One who is therefore situated in devotional or transcendental loving service to the Lord, or, in other words, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, attains to this stage of *buddhi-yoga* by the special grace of the Lord. The Lord says, therefore, that only to those who are always engaged in devotional service out of transcendental love does He award the pure knowledge of devotion in love. In that way the devotee can reach Him easily in the ever-blissful kingdom of God.

Thus the *buddhi-yoga* mentioned in this verse is the devotional service of the Lord, and the word *sāṅkhya* mentioned herein has nothing to do with the atheistic *sāṅkhya-yoga* enunciated by the impostor Kapila. One should not, therefore, misunderstand that the *sāṅkhya-yoga* mentioned herein has any connection with the atheistic *sāṅkhya*. Nor did that philosophy have any influence during that time; nor would Lord Kṛṣṇa care to mention such godless philosophical speculations. Real *sāṅkhya* philosophy is described by Lord Kapila in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, but even that *sāṅkhya* has nothing to do with the current topics. Here, *sāṅkhya* means analytical description of the body and the soul. Lord Kṛṣṇa made an analytical description of the soul just to bring Arjuna to the point of *buddhi-yoga*, or *bhakti-yoga*. Therefore, Lord Kṛṣṇa's *sāṅkhya* and Lord Kapila's *sāṅkhya*, as described in the *Bhāgavatam*; are one and the same. They are all *bhakti-yoga*. He said, therefore, that only the less intelligent class of men make a distinction between *sāṅkhya-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga*.

Of course, atheistic *sāṅkhya-yoga* has nothing to do with *bhakti-yoga*, yet the unintelligent claim that the atheistic *sāṅkhya-yoga* is referred to in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

One should therefore understand that *buddhi-yoga* means to work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in the full bliss and knowledge of devotional service. One who works for the satisfaction of the Lord only, however difficult such work may be, is working under the principles of *buddhi-yoga* and finds himself always in transcendental bliss. By such transcendental engagement, one achieves all transcendental qualities automatically, by the grace of the

Lord, and thus his liberation is complete in itself, without his making extraneous endeavors to acquire knowledge. There is much difference between work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and work for fruitive results, especially in the matter of sense gratification for achieving results in terms of family or material happiness. *Buddhi-yoga* is therefore the transcendental quality of the work that we perform.

TEXT 40

*nehābhikrama-nāśo 'sti
pratyavāyo na vidyate
sv-alpam apy asya dharmasya
trāyate mahato bhayāt*

SYNONYMS

na-there is not; *iha*-in this world; *abhikrama*-endeavoring; *nāśaḥ*-loss; *asti*-there is; *pratyavāyaḥ*-diminution; *na*-never; *vidyate*-there is; *svalpam*-little; *api*-although; *asya*-of this; *dharmasya*-of this occupation; *trāyate*-releases; *mahataḥ*-of very great; *bhayāt*-from danger.

TRANSLATION

In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous type of fear.

PURPORT

Activity in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or acting for the benefit of Kṛṣṇa without expectation of sense gratification, is the highest transcendental quality of work. Even a small beginning of such activity finds no impediment, nor can that small beginning be lost at any stage. Any work begun on the material plane has to be completed, otherwise the whole attempt becomes a failure. But any work begun in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has a permanent effect, even though not finished. The performer of such work is therefore not at a loss even if his work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is

incomplete. One percent done in Kṛṣṇa consciousness bears permanent results, so that the next beginning is from the point of two percent; whereas, in material activity, without a hundred percent success, there is no profit. Ajāmila performed his duty in some percentage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but the result he enjoyed at the end was a hundred percent, by the grace of the Lord. There is a nice verse in this connection in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*tyaktvā sva-dharmam caraṇāmbujam harer
bhajan na pakko 'tha patet tato yadi
yatra kva vābhadram abhūd amuṣya kim
ko vārtha āpto 'bhajatām sva-dharmataḥ*

"If someone gives up self-gratificatory pursuits and works in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and then falls down on account of not completing his work, what loss is there on his part? And, what can one gain if one performs his material activities perfectly?" (*Bhāg.* 1.5.17) Or, as the Christians say, "What profiteth a man if he gain the whole world yet suffers the loss of his eternal soul?"

Material activities and their results end with the body. But work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness carries the person again to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, even after the loss of the body. At least one is sure to have a chance in the next life of being born again as a human being, either in the family of a great cultured *brāhmaṇa* or in a rich aristocratic family that will give one a further chance for elevation. That is the unique quality of work done in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 41

*vyavasāyātmikā buddhir
ekeha kuru-nandana
bahu-śākhā hy anantāś ca
buddhayo 'vyavasāyīnām*

SYNONYMS

vyavasāyātmikā-resolute Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *buddhiḥ*-intelligence; *ekā*-only one; *iha*-in this world; *kuru-nandana*-O beloved child of the Kurus;

bahu-śākhāḥ-various branches; *hi*-indeed; *anantāḥ*-unlimited; *ca*-also; *buddhayaḥ*-intelligence; *avyavasāyinām*-of those who are not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TRANSLATION

Those who are on this path are resolute in purpose, and their aim is one. O beloved child of the Kurus, the intelligence of those who are irresolute is many-branched.

PURPORT

A strong faith in Kṛṣṇa consciousness that one should be elevated to the highest perfection of life is called *vyavasāyātmikā* intelligence. The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* states:

*'śraddhā'-śabde viśvāsa kahe sudṛḍha niścaya
kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya*

Faith means unflinching trust in something sublime. When one is engaged in the duties of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he need not act in relationship to the material world with obligations to family traditions, humanity, or nationality. Fruitive activities are the engagements of one's reactions from past good or bad deeds. When one is awake in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he need no longer endeavor for good results in his activities. When one is situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all activities are on the absolute plane, for they are no longer subject to dualities like good and bad. The highest perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is renunciation of the material conception of life. This state is automatically achieved by progressive Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The resolute purpose of a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is based on knowledge ("*Vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ*") by which one comes to know perfectly that Vāsudeva, or Kṛṣṇa, is the root of all manifested causes. As water on the root of a tree is automatically distributed to the leaves and branches, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can render the highest service to everyone-namely self, family, society, country, humanity, etc. If Kṛṣṇa is satisfied by one's actions, then everyone will be satisfied.

Service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is, however, best practiced under the able guidance of a spiritual master who is a bona fide representative of Kṛṣṇa, who knows the nature of the student and who can guide him to act in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As such, to be well-versed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness one has to act firmly and obey the representative of Kṛṣṇa, and one should accept the instruction of the bona fide spiritual master as one's mission in life. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura instructs us, in his famous prayers for the spiritual master, as follows:

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādānna gatiḥ kuto 'pi
dhyāyaṁ stuvāṁs tasya yaśas tri-sandhyaṁ
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam.*

"By satisfaction of the spiritual master, the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes satisfied. And by not satisfying the spiritual master, there is no chance of being promoted to the plane of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I should, therefore, meditate and pray for his mercy three times a day, and offer my respectful obeisances unto him, my spiritual master."

The whole process, however, depends on perfect knowledge of the soul beyond the conception of the body-not theoretically but practically, when there is no longer chance for sense gratification manifested in fruitive activities. One who is not firmly fixed in mind is diverted by various types of fruitive acts.

TEXTS 42-43

*yām imām puṣpitām vācam
pravadanty avipaścitaḥ
veda-vāda-ratāḥ pārtha
nānyad astīti vādinaḥ*

*kāmātmānaḥ svarga-parā
janma-karma-phala-pradām
kriyā-viśeṣa-bahulām
bhogaiśvarya-gatiṁ prati*

SYNONYMS

yām imām-all these; *puṣpitām*-flowery; *vācam*-words; *pravadanti*-say; *avipaścitaḥ*-men with a poor fund of knowledge; *veda-vāda-ratāḥ*-supposed followers of the *Vedas*; *pārtha*-O son of Pṛthā; *na*-never; *anyat*-anything else; *asti*-there is; *iti*-this; *vādinaḥ*-advocates; *kāma-ātmānaḥ*-desirous of sense gratification; *svarga-parāḥ*-aiming to achieve heavenly planets; *janma-karma-phala-pradām*-resulting in fruitive action, good birth, etc.; *kriyā-viśeṣa*-pompous ceremonies; *bahulām*-various; *bhoga*-sense enjoyment; *aiśvarya*-opulence; *gatim*-progress; *prati*-towards.

TRANSLATION

Men of small knowledge are very much attached to the flowery words of the Vedas, which recommend various fruitive activities for elevation to heavenly planets, resultant good birth, power, and so forth. Being desirous of sense gratification and opulent life, they say that there is nothing more than this.

PURPORT

People in general are not very intelligent, and due to their ignorance they are most attached to the fruitive activities recommended in the *karma-kāṇḍa* portions of the *Vedas*. They do not want anything more than sense gratificatory proposals for enjoying life in heaven, where wine and women are available and material opulence is very common. In the *Vedas* many sacrifices are recommended for elevation to the heavenly planets, especially the *gyotiṣṭoma* sacrifices. In fact, it is stated that anyone desiring elevation to heavenly planets must perform these sacrifices, and men with a poor fund of knowledge think that this is the whole purpose of Vedic wisdom. It is very difficult for such inexperienced persons to be situated in the determined action of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As fools are attached to the flowers of poisonous trees without knowing the results of such attractions, similarly unenlightened men are attracted by such heavenly opulence and the sense enjoyment thereof.

In the *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas* it is said that those who perform the four monthly penances become eligible to drink the *somarasa* beverages

to become immortal and happy forever. Even on this earth some are very eager to have *somarasa* to become strong and fit to enjoy sense gratifications. Such persons have no faith in liberation from material bondage, and they are very much attached to the pompous ceremonies of Vedic sacrifices. They are generally sensual, and they do not want anything other than the heavenly pleasures of life. It is understood that there are gardens called *nandana-kānana* in which there is good opportunity for association with angelic, beautiful women and having a profuse supply of *somarasa* wine. Such bodily happiness is certainly sensual; therefore there are those who are purely attached to material, temporary happiness, as lords of the material world.

TEXT 44

*bhogaiśvarya-prasaktānām
tayāpahṛta-cetasām
vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ
samādhau na vidhīyate*

SYNONYMS

bhoga-material enjoyment; *aiśvarya*-opulence; *prasaktānām*-those who are so attached; *tayā*-by such things; *apahṛta-cetasām*-bewildered in mind; *vyavasāyātmikā*-fixed determination; *buddhiḥ*-devotional service of the Lord; *samādhau*-in the controlled mind; *na*-never; *vidhīyate*-does take place.

TRANSLATION

In the minds of those who are too attached to sense enjoyment and material opulence, and who are bewildered by such things, the resolute determination of devotional service to the Supreme Lord does not take place.

PURPORT

Samādhī means "fixed mind." The Vedic dictionary, the *Nirukti*, says, *samyag ādhīyate 'sminn ātmatattva-yāthātmīyam*: "When the mind is fixed for understanding the self, it is called *samādhī*. "*Samādhī* is never possible for persons interested in material sense enjoyment, nor for those who are bewildered by such temporary things. They are more or less condemned by the process of material energy.

TEXT 45

*traī-guṇya-viṣayā vedā
nistraī-guṇyo bhavārjuna
nirdvandvo nitya-sattva-stho
niryoga-kṣema ātmavān*

SYNONYMS

traiguṇya-pertaining to the three modes of material nature; *viṣayāḥ*-on the subject matter; *vedāḥ*-Vedic literatures; *nistraiguṇyaḥ*-in a pure state of spiritual existence; *bhava*-be; *arjuna*-O Arjuna; *nirdvandvaḥ*-free from the pains of opposites; *nitya-sattva-sthaḥ*-ever remaining in *sattva* (goodness); *niryoga-kṣemaḥ*-free from (the thought of) acquisition and preservation; *ātmavān*-established in the Self.

TRANSLATION

The Vedas mainly deal with the subject of the three modes of material nature. Rise above these modes, O Arjuna. Be transcendental to all of them. Be free from all dualities and from all anxieties for gain and safety, and be established in the Self.

PURPORT

All material activities involve actions and reactions in the three modes of material nature. They are meant for fruitive results, which cause bondage in the material world. The *Vedas* deal mostly with fruitive activities to gradually elevate the general public from the field of sense gratification to a position on the transcendental plane. Arjuna, as a student and friend of Lord

Kṛṣṇa, is advised to raise himself to the transcendental position of *Vedānta* philosophy where, in the beginning, there is *brahma-jijñāsā*, or questions on the Supreme Transcendence. All the living entities who are in the material world are struggling very hard for existence. For them the Lord, after creation of the material world, gave the Vedic wisdom advising how to live and get rid of the material entanglement. When the activities for sense gratification, namely the *karma-kāṇḍa* chapter, are finished, then the chance for spiritual realization is offered in the form of the *Upaniṣads*, which are part of different *Vedas*, as the *Bhagavad-gītā* is a part of the fifth *Veda*, namely the *Mahābhārata*. The *Upaniṣads* mark the beginning of transcendental life.

As long as the material body exists, there are actions and reactions in the material modes. One has to learn tolerance in the face of dualities such as happiness and distress, or cold and warmth, and by tolerating such dualities become free from anxieties regarding gain and loss. This transcendental position is achieved in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness when one is fully dependant on the good will of Kṛṣṇa

TEXT 46

*yāvān artha udapāne
sarvataḥ samplutodake
tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu
brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ*

SYNONYMS

yāvān-all that; *arthaḥ*-is meant; *udapāne*-in a well of water; *sarvataḥ*-in all respects; *sampluta-udake*-in a great reservoir of water; *tāvān*-similarly; *sarveṣu*-in all; *vedeṣu*-Vedic literatures; *brāhmaṇasya*-of the man who knows the Supreme Brahman; *vijānataḥ*-of one who is in complete knowledge.

TRANSLATION

All purposes that are served by the small pond can at once be served by the great reservoirs of water. Similarly, all the purposes of the Vedas can be served to one who knows the purpose behind them.

PURPORT

The rituals and sacrifices mentioned in the *karma-kāṇḍa* division of the Vedic literature are to encourage gradual development of self-realization. And the purpose of self-realization is clearly stated in the Fifteenth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15): the purpose of studying the *Vedas* is to know Lord Kṛṣṇa, the primeval cause of everything. So, self-realization means understanding Kṛṣṇa and one's eternal relationship with Him. The relationship of the living entities with Kṛṣṇa is also mentioned in the Fifteenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*. The living entities are parts and parcels of Kṛṣṇa; therefore, revival of Kṛṣṇa consciousness by the individual living entity is the highest perfectional stage of Vedic knowledge. This is confirmed in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.33.7) as follows:

*aho bata śvapaco'to garīyān
yaj-jihvāgre vartate nāma tubhyam
tepus tapas te juhuvuḥ sasnur āryā
brahmānūcur nāma grṇanti ye te.*

"O my Lord, a person who is chanting Your holy name, although born of a low family like that of a *cāṇḍāla* [dog eater], is situated on the highest platform of self-realization. Such a person must have performed all kinds of penances and sacrifices according to Vedic rituals and studied the Vedic literatures many, many times after taking his bath in all the holy places of pilgrimage. Such a person is considered to be the best of the Āryan family." So one must be intelligent enough to understand the purpose of the *Vedas*, without being attached to the rituals only, and must not desire to be elevated to the heavenly kingdoms for a better quality of sense gratification. It is not possible for the common man in this age to follow all the rules and regulations of the Vedic rituals and the injunctions of the *Vedāntas* and the *Upaniṣads*. It requires much time, energy, knowledge and resources to execute the purposes of the *Vedas*. This is hardly possible in this age. The best purpose of Vedic culture is served, however, by chanting the holy name

of the Lord, as recommended by Lord Caitanya, the deliverer of all fallen souls. When Lord Caitanya was asked by a great Vedic scholar, Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī, why He, the Lord, was chanting the holy name of the Lord like a sentimentalist instead of studying *Vedānta* philosophy, the Lord replied that His spiritual master found Him to be a great fool, and thus he asked Him to chant the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He did so, and became ecstatic like a madman. In this age of Kali, most of the population is foolish and not adequately educated to understand *Vedānta* philosophy; the best purpose of *Vedānta* philosophy is served by inoffensively chanting the holy name of the Lord. *Vedānta* is the last word in Vedic wisdom, and the author and knower of the *Vedānta* philosophy is Lord Kṛṣṇa; and the highest Vedantist is the great soul who takes pleasure in chanting the holy name of the Lord. That is the ultimate purpose of all Vedic mysticism.

TEXT 47

*karmaṇy evādhikāras te
mā phaleṣu kadācana
mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr
mā te saṅgo 'stv akarmaṇi*

SYNONYMS

karmaṇi-prescribed duties; *eva*-certainly; *adhikāraḥ*-right; *te*-of you; *mā*-never; *phaleṣu*-in the fruits; *kadācana*-at any time; *mā*-never; *karma-phala*-in the result of the work; *hetuḥ*-cause; *bhūḥ*-become; *mā*-never; *te*-of you; *saṅgaḥ*-attachment; *astu*-be there; *akarmaṇi*-in not doing.

TRANSLATION

You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself to be the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duty.

PURPORT

There are three considerations here: prescribed duties, capricious work, and inaction. Prescribed duties refer to activities performed while one is in the modes of material nature. Capricious work means actions without the sanction of authority, and inaction means not performing one's prescribed duties. The Lord advised that Arjuna not be inactive, but that he perform his prescribed duty without being attached to the result. One who is attached to the result of his work is also the cause of the action. Thus he is the enjoyer or sufferer of the result of such actions.

As far as prescribed duties are concerned, they can be fitted into three subdivisions, namely routine work, emergency work and desired activities. Routine work, in terms of the scriptural injunctions, is done without desire for results. As one has to do it, obligatory work is action in the mode of goodness. Work with results becomes the cause of bondage; therefore such work is not auspicious. Everyone has his proprietary right in regard to prescribed duties, but should act without attachment to the result; such disinterested obligatory duties doubtlessly lead one to the path of liberation.

Arjuna was therefore advised by the Lord to fight as a matter of duty without attachment to the result. His nonparticipation in the battle is another side of attachment. Such attachment never leads one to the path of salvation. Any attachment, positive or negative, is cause for bondage. Inaction is sinful. Therefore, fighting as a matter of duty was the only auspicious path of salvation for Arjuna.

TEXT 48

*yoga-sthaḥ kuru karmāṇi
saṅgam tyaktvā dhanañjaya
siddhy-asiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā
samatvaṁ yoga ucyate*

SYNONYMS

yoga-sthaḥ-steadfast in yoga; *kuru*-perform; *karmāṇi*-your duty; *saṅgam*-attachment; *tyaktvā*-having abandoned; *dhanañjaya*-O Dhanañjaya; *siddhi-asiddhyoḥ*-in success and failure; *samaḥ*-the same; *bhūtvā*-having become; *samatvam*-evenness of mind; *yogaḥ*-yoga; *ucyate*-is called.

TRANSLATION

Be steadfast in yoga, O Arjuna. Perform your duty and abandon all attachment to success or failure. Such evenness of mind is called yoga.

PURPORT

Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that he should act in *yoga*. And what is that *yoga*? *Yoga* means to concentrate the mind upon the Supreme by controlling the ever-disturbing senses. And who is the Supreme? The Supreme is the Lord. And because He Himself is telling Arjuna to fight, Arjuna has nothing to do with the results of the fight. Gain or victory are Kṛṣṇa's concern; Arjuna is simply advised to act according to the dictation of Kṛṣṇa. The following of Kṛṣṇa's dictation is real *yoga*, and this is practiced in the process called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. By Kṛṣṇa consciousness only can one give up the sense of proprietorship. One has to become the servant of Kṛṣṇa, or the servant of the servant of Kṛṣṇa. That is the right way to discharge duty in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which alone can help one to act in *yoga*.

Arjuna is a *kṣatriya*, and as such he is participating in the *varṇāśrama-dharma* institution. It is said in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* that in the *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the whole aim is to satisfy Viṣṇu. No one should satisfy himself, as is the rule in the material world, but one should satisfy Kṛṣṇa. So, unless one satisfies Kṛṣṇa, one cannot correctly observe the principles of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. Indirectly, Arjuna was advised to act as Kṛṣṇa told him.

TEXT 49

*dūreṇa hy avaram karma
buddhi-yogād dhanañjaya
buddhau śaraṇam anviccha
kṛpaṇāḥ phala-hetavaḥ*

SYNONYMS

dūreṇa-by discarding it at a long distance; *hi*-certainly; *avaram*-abominable; *karma*-activities; *buddhi-yogāt*-on the strength of Kṛṣṇa

consciousness; *dhanañjaya*-O conqueror of wealth; *buddhau*-in such consciousness; *śaraṇam*-full surrender; *anviccha*-desire; *kṛpaṇāḥ*-the misers; *phala-hetavaḥ*-those desiring fruitive action.

TRANSLATION

O Dhanañjaya, rid yourself of all fruitive activities by devotional service, and surrender fully to that consciousness. Those who want to enjoy the fruits of their work are misers.

PURPORT

One who has actually come to understand one's constitutional position as the eternal servitor of the Lord gives up all engagements save working in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As already explained, *buddhi-yoga* means transcendental loving service to the Lord. Such devotional service is the right course of action for the living entity. Only misers desire to enjoy the fruit of their own work just to be further entangled in material bondage. Except for work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all activities are abominable because they continually bind the worker to the cycle of birth and death. One should therefore never desire to be the cause of work. Everything should be done in Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. Misers do not know how to utilize the assets of riches which they acquire by good fortune or by hard labor. One should spend all energies working in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that will make one's life successful. Like the misers, unfortunate persons do not employ their human energy in the service of the Lord.

TEXT 50

*buddhi-yukto jahātīha
ubhe sukr̥ta-duṣkr̥te
tasmād yogāya yujyasva
yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*

SYNONYMS

buddhi-yuktaḥ-one who is engaged in devotional service; *jahāti*-can get rid of; *iha*-in this life; *ubhe*-in both; *sukṛta-duṣkṛte*-in good and bad results; *tasmāt*-therefore; *yogāya*-for the sake of devotional service; *yujyasva*-be so engaged; *yogaḥ*-Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *karmasu*-in all activities; *kauśalam*-art.

TRANSLATION

A man engaged in devotional service rids himself of both good and bad actions even in this life. Therefore strive for yoga, O Arjuna, which is the art of all work.

PURPORT

Since time immemorial each living entity has accumulated the various reactions of his good and bad work, As such, he is continuously ignorant of his real constitutional position. One's ignorance can be removed by the instruction of the *Bhagavad-gītā* which teaches one to surrender unto Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in all respects and become liberated from the chained victimization of action and reaction, birth after birth. Arjuna is therefore advised to act in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the purifying process of resultant action.

TEXT 51

*karma-jam buddhi-yuktā hi
phalaṁ tyaktvā manīṣiṇaḥ
janma-bandha-vinirmuktāḥ
padam gacchanty anāmayam*

SYNONYMS

karma-jam-because of fruitive activities; *buddhi-yuktāḥ*-being done in devotional service; *hi*-certainly; *phalam*-results; *tyaktvā*-giving up; *manīṣiṇaḥ*-devotees who are great sages; *janma-bandha*-the bondage of birth and death; *vinirmuktāḥ*-liberated souls; *padam*-position; *gacchanti*-reach; *anāmayam*-without miseries.

TRANSLATION

The wise, engaged in devotional service, take refuge in the Lord, and free themselves from the cycle of birth and death by renouncing the fruits of action in the material world. In this way they can attain that state beyond all miseries.

PURPORT

The liberated living entities seek that place where there are no material miseries. The *Bhāgavatam* says:

*samāśritā ye padapallava-plavaṁ
mahat-padaṁ puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ
bhāvambudhir vatsa-padaṁ paraṁ padaṁ
paraṁ padaṁ yad vipadāṁ na teṣāṁ*

(Bhāg. 10.14.58)

"For one who has accepted the boat of the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of the cosmic manifestation and is famous as Mukunda or the giver of *mukti*, the ocean of the material world is like the water contained in a calf's hoofprint. *Param padaṁ*, or the place where there are no material miseries, or Vaikuṇṭha, is his goal, not the place where there is danger in every step of life."

Owing to ignorance, one does not know that this material world is a miserable place where there are dangers at every step. Out of ignorance only, less intelligent persons try to adjust to the situation by fruitive activities, thinking that resultant actions will make them happy. They do not know that no kind of material body anywhere within the universe can give life without miseries. The miseries of life, namely birth, death, old age and diseases, are present everywhere within the material world. But one who understands his real constitutional position as the eternal servitor of the Lord, and thus knows the position of the Personality of Godhead, engages himself in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. Consequently he becomes qualified to enter into the Vaikuṇṭha planets, where there is neither material, miserable life, nor the influence of time and death. To know one's constitutional position means to know also the sublime position of the Lord.

One who wrongly thinks that the living entity's position and the Lord's position are on the same level is to be understood to be in darkness and therefore unable to engage himself in the devotional service of the Lord. He becomes a lord himself and thus paves the way for the repetition of birth and death. But one who, understanding that his position is to serve, transfers himself to the service of the Lord, at once becomes eligible for *Vaikuṇṭhaloka*. Service for the cause of the Lord is called *karma-yoga* or *buddhi-yoga*, or in plain words, devotional service to the Lord.

TEXT 52

*yadā te moha-kalilam
buddhir vyatitariṣyati
tadā gantāsi nirvedam
śrotavyasya śrutasya ca*

SYNONYMS

yadā-when; *te*-your; *moha*-illusory; *kalilam*-dense forest; *buddhiḥ*-transcendental service with intelligence; *vyatitariṣyati*-surpasses; *tadā*-at that time; *gantāsi*-you shall go; *nirvedam*-callousness; *śrotavyasya*-all that is to be heard; *śrutasya*-all that is already heard; *ca*-also.

TRANSLATION

When your intelligence has passed out of the dense forest of delusion, you shall become indifferent to all that has been heard and all that is to be heard.

PURPORT

There are many good examples in the lives of the great devotees of the Lord of those who became indifferent to the rituals of the *Vedas* simply by devotional service to the Lord. When a person factually understands Kṛṣṇa and his relationship with Kṛṣṇa, he naturally becomes completely indifferent to the rituals of fruitive activities, even though an experienced

brāhmaṇa. Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, a great devotee and *ācārya* in the line of the devotees, says:

*sandhyā-vandana bhadram astu bhavato bhoḥ snāna tubhyaṁ namo
bho devāḥ pitaras ca tarpaṇa-vidhau nāhaṁ kṣamaḥ kṣamyatām
yatra kvāpi niṣadya yādava-kulottamasya kaṁsa-dviṣaḥ
smāraṁ smāram aghaṁ harāmi tad alaṁ manye kim anyena me.*

"O Lord, in my prayers three times a day, all glory to You. Bathing, I offer my obeisances unto You. O demigods! O forefathers! Please excuse me for my inability to offer you my respects. Now wherever I sit, I can remember the great descendant of the Yadu dynasty [Kṛṣṇa], the enemy of Kaṁsa, and thereby I can free myself from all sinful bondage. I think this is sufficient for me."

The Vedic rites and rituals are imperative for neophytes: comprehending all kinds of prayer three times a day, taking a bath early in the morning, offering respects to the forefathers, etc. But, when one is fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and is engaged in His transcendental loving service, one becomes indifferent to all these regulative principles because he has already attained perfection. If one can reach the platform of understanding by service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, he has no longer to execute different types of penances and sacrifices as recommended in revealed scriptures. And, similarly, if one has not understood that the purpose of the *Vedas* is to reach Kṛṣṇa and simply engages in the rituals, etc., then he is uselessly wasting time in such engagements. Persons in Kṛṣṇa consciousness transcend the limit of *śabda-brahma*, or the range of the *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads*.

TEXT 53

*śruti-vipratipannā te
yadā sthāsyati niścalā
samādhāv acalā buddhis
tadā yogam avāpsyasi*

SYNONYMS

śruti-Vedic revelation; *vipratipannā*-without being influenced by the fruitive results of the *Vedas*; *te*-your; *yadā*-when; *sthāsyati*-remains; *nīscalā*-unmoved; *samādhau*-in transcendental consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *acalā*-unflinching; *buddhiḥ*-intelligence; *tadā*-at that time; *yogam*-self-realization; *avāpsyasi*-you will achieve.

TRANSLATION

When your mind is no longer disturbed by the flowery language of the Vedas, and when it remains fixed in the trance of self-realization, then you will have attained the Divine consciousness.

PURPORT

To say that one is in *samādhi* is to say that one has fully realized Kṛṣṇa consciousness; that is, one in full *samādhi* has realized Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān. The highest perfection of self-realization is to understand that one is eternally the servitor of Kṛṣṇa and that one's only business is to discharge one's duties in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person, or unflinching devotee of the Lord, should not be disturbed by the flowery language of the *Vedas* nor be engaged in fruitive activities for promotion to the heavenly kingdom. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one comes directly into communion with Kṛṣṇa, and thus all directions from Kṛṣṇa may be understood in that transcendental state. One is sure to achieve results by such activities and attain conclusive knowledge. One has only to carry out the orders of Kṛṣṇa or His representative, the spiritual master.

TEXT 54

arjuna uvāca
sthita-prajñasya kā bhāṣā
samādhi-sthasya keśava
sthita-dhīḥ kiṁ prabhāṣeta
kim āsīta vrajeta kim

SYNONYMS

arjuna uvāca-Arjuna said; *sthita-prajñasya*-of one who is situated in fixed Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *kā*-what; *bhāṣā*-language; *samādhi-sthasya*-of one situated in trance; *keśava*-O Kṛṣṇa; *sthita-dhīḥ*-one fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *kim*-what; *prabhāṣeta*-speak; *kim*-how; *āsīta*-does remain; *vrajeta*-walk; *kim*-how.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: What are the symptoms of one whose consciousness is thus merged in Transcendence? How does he speak, and what is his language? How does he sit, and how does he walk?

PURPORT

As there are symptoms for each and every man, in terms of his particular situation, similarly one who is Kṛṣṇa conscious has his particular nature—talking, walking, thinking, feeling, etc. As a rich man has his symptoms by which he is known as a rich man, as a diseased man has his symptoms, by which he is known as diseased, or as a learned man has his symptoms, so a man in transcendental consciousness of Kṛṣṇa has specific symptoms in various dealings. One can know his specific symptoms from the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Most important is how the man in Kṛṣṇa consciousness speaks, for speech is the most important quality of any man. It is said that a fool is undiscovered as long as he does not speak, and certainly a well-dressed fool cannot be identified unless he speaks, but as soon as he speaks, he reveals himself at once. The immediate symptom of a Kṛṣṇa conscious man is that he speaks only of Kṛṣṇa and of matters relating to Him. Other symptoms then automatically follow, as stated below.

TEXT 55

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
prajahāti yadā kāmān
sarvān pārtha mano-gatān
ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ
sthita-prajñas tadocyate

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *prajahāti*-gives up; *yadā*-when; *kāmān*-desires for sense gratification; *sarvān*-of all varieties; *pārtha*-O son of Pṛthā; *manaḥ-gatān*-of mental concoction; *ātmani*-in the pure state of the soul; *eva*-certainly; *ātmanā*-by the purified mind; *tuṣṭaḥ*-satisfied; *sthita-prajñāḥ*-transcendentally situated; *tadā*-at that time; *ucyate*-is said.

TRANSLATION

The Blessed Lord said: O Pārtha, when a man gives up all varieties of sense desire which arise from mental concoction, and when his mind finds satisfaction in the self alone, then he is said to be in pure transcendental consciousness.

PURPORT

The *Bhāgavatam* affirms that any person who is fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or devotional service of the Lord, has all the good qualities of the great sages, whereas a person who is not so transcendently situated has no good qualifications, because he is sure to be taking refuge in his own mental concoctions. Consequently, it is rightly said herein that one has to give up all kinds of sense desire manufactured by mental concoction. Artificially, such sense desires cannot be stopped. But if one is engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then, automatically, sense desires subside without extraneous efforts. Therefore, one has to engage himself in Kṛṣṇa consciousness without hesitation, for this devotional service will instantly help one on to the platform of transcendental consciousness. The highly developed soul always remains satisfied in himself by realizing himself as the eternal servitor of the Supreme Lord. Such a transcendently situated person has no sense desires resulting from petty materialism; rather, he remains always happy in his natural position of eternally serving the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 56

duḥkheṣv anudvigna-manāḥ
sukheṣu vigata-sprhaḥ
vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ
sthita-dhīr munir ucyate

SYNONYMS

duḥkheṣu-in the threefold miseries; *anudvigna-manāḥ*-without being agitated in mind; *sukheṣu*-in happiness; *vigata-sprhaḥ*-without being too interested; *vīta*-free from; *rāga*-attachment; *bhaya*-fear; *krodhaḥ*-anger; *sthita-dhīr*-one who is steady; *munir*-sage; *ucyate*-is called.

TRANSLATION

One who is not disturbed in spite of the threefold miseries, who is not elated when there is happiness, and who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage of steady mind.

PURPORT

The word *muni* means one who can agitate his mind in various ways for mental speculation without coming to a factual conclusion. It is said that every *muni* has a different angle of vision, and unless a *muni* differs from other *munis*, he cannot be called a *muni* in the strict sense of the term. *Nāsau munir yasya mataṁ na binnam*. But a *sthita-dhī-muni* as mentioned herein by the Lord, is different from an ordinary *muni*. The *sthita-dhī-muni* is always in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, for he has exhausted all his business of creative speculation. He has surpassed the stage of mental speculations and has come to the conclusion that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or Vāsudeva, is everything. He is called a *muni* fixed in mind. Such a fully Kṛṣṇa conscious person is not at all disturbed by the onslaughts of the threefold miseries, for he accepts all miseries as the mercy of the Lord, thinking himself only worthy of more trouble due to his past misdeeds; and he sees that his miseries, by the grace of the Lord, are minimized to the lowest. Similarly, when he is happy he gives credit to the Lord, thinking himself unworthy of the happiness; he realizes that it is due only to the Lord's grace that he is in such a comfortable condition and able to render better service to the Lord.

And, for the service of the Lord, he is always daring and active and is not influenced by attachment or aversion. Attachment means accepting things for one's own sense gratification, and detachment is the absence of such sensual attachment. But one fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has neither attachment nor detachment because his life is dedicated in the service of the Lord. Consequently he is not at all angry even when his attempts are unsuccessful. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person is always steady in his determination.

TEXT 57

*yaḥ sarvatrānabhisnehas
tat tat prāpya śubhāśubham
nābhinandati na dveṣṭi
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

SYNONYMS

yaḥ-one who; *sarvatra*-everywhere; *anabhisnehaḥ*-without affection; *tat*-that; *tat*-that; *prāpya*-achieving; *śubha*-good; *āśubham*-evil; *na*-never; *abhinandati*-prays; *na*-never; *dveṣṭi*-envies; *tasya*-his; *prajñā*-perfect knowledge; *pratiṣṭhita*-fixed.

TRANSLATION

He who is without attachment, who does not rejoice when he obtains good, nor lament when he obtains evil, is firmly fixed in perfect knowledge.

PURPORT

There is always some upheaval in the material world which may be good or evil. One who is not agitated by such material upheavals, who is unaffected by good and evil, is to be understood to be fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As long as one is in the material world there is always the possibility of good and evil because this world is full of duality. But one who is fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not affected by good and evil

because he is simply concerned with Kṛṣṇa, who is all good absolute. Such consciousness in Kṛṣṇa situates one in a perfect transcendental position called, technically, *samādhī*.

TEXT 58

*yadā samharate cāyaṁ
kūrmō 'ṅgānīva sarvaśaḥ
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

SYNONYMS

yadā-when; *samharate*-winds up; *ca*-also; *ayam*-all these; *kūrmah*-tortoise; *aṅgāni*-limbs; *iva*-like; *sarvaśaḥ*-altogether; *indriyāni*-senses; *indriya-arthebhyah*-from the sense objects; *tasya*-his; *prajñā*-consciousness; *pratiṣṭhitā*-fixed up.

TRANSLATION

One who is able to withdraw his senses from sense objects, as the tortoise draws his limbs within the shell, is to be understood as truly situated in knowledge.

PURPORT

The test of a *yogī*, devotee, or self-realized soul is that he is able to control the senses according to his plan. Most people, however, are servants of the senses and are thus directed by the dictation of the senses. That is the answer to the question as to how the *yogī* is situated. The senses are compared to venomous serpents. They want to act very loosely and without restriction. The *yogī*, or the devotee, must be very strong to control the serpents-like a snake charmer. He never allows them to act independantly. There are many injunctions in the revealed scriptures; some of them are do-not's, and some of them are do's. Unless one is able to follow the do's and the do-not's, restricting oneself from sense enjoyment, it is not possible to be firmly fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The best example, set herein, is the

tortoise. The tortoise can at any moment wind up his senses and exhibit them again at any time for particular purposes. Similarly, the senses of the Kṛṣṇa conscious persons are used only for some particular purpose in the service of the Lord and are withdrawn otherwise. Keeping the senses always in the service of the Lord is the example set by the analogy of the tortoise, who keeps the senses within.

TEXT 59

*viṣayā vinivartante
nirāhārasya dehinaḥ
rasa-varjam raso 'py asya
param dṛṣṭvā nivartate*

SYNONYMS

viṣayāḥ-objects for sense enjoyment; *vinivartante*-are practiced to be refrained from; *nirāhārasya*-by negative restrictions; *dehinaḥ*-for the embodied; *rasa-varjam*-giving up the taste; *rasaḥ*-sense of enjoyment; *api*-although there is; *asya*-his; *param*-far superior things; *dṛṣṭvā*-by experiencing; *nivartate*-ceases from.

TRANSLATION

The embodied soul may be restricted from sense enjoyment, though the taste for sense objects remains. But, ceasing such engagements by experiencing a higher taste, he is fixed in consciousness.

PURPORT

Unless one is transcendently situated, it is not possible to cease from sense enjoyment. The process of restriction from sense enjoyment by rules and regulations is something like restricting a diseased person from certain types of eatables. The patient, however, neither likes such restrictions, nor loses his taste for eatables. Similarly, sense restriction by some spiritual process like *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, in the matter of *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dharaṇā*, *dhyāna*, etc., is recommended for less

intelligent persons who have no better knowledge. But one who has tasted the beauty of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, in the course of his advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, no longer has a taste for dead material things. Therefore, restrictions are there for the less intelligent neophytes in the spiritual advancement of life, but such restrictions are only good if one actually has a taste for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. When one is actually Kṛṣṇa conscious, he automatically loses his taste for pale things.

TEXT 60

*yatato hy api kaunteya
puruṣasya vipaścitāḥ
indriyāṇi pramāthīni
haranti prasabham manaḥ*

SYNONYMS

yatataḥ-while endeavoring; *hi*-certainly; *api*-in spite of; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *puruṣasya*-of the man; *vipaścitāḥ*-full of discriminating knowledge; *indriyāṇi*-the senses; *pramāthīni*-stimulated; *haranti*-throws forcefully; *prasabham*-by force; *manaḥ*-the mind.

TRANSLATION

The senses are so strong and impetuous, O Arjuna, that they forcibly carry away the mind even of a man of discrimination who is endeavoring to control them.

PURPORT

There are many learned sages, philosophers and transcendentalists who try to conquer the senses, but in spite of their endeavors, even the greatest of them sometimes fall victim to material sense enjoyment due to the agitated mind. Even Viśvāmitra, a great sage and perfect *yogī*, was misled by Menakā into sex enjoyment, although the *yogī* was endeavoring for sense control with severe types of penance and *yoga* practice. And, of course, there are so many similar instances in the history of the world.

Therefore, it is very difficult to control the mind and the senses without being fully Kṛṣṇa conscious. Without engaging the mind in Kṛṣṇa, one cannot cease such material engagements. A practical example is given by Śrī Yāmunācārya, a great saint and devotee, who says: "Since my mind has been engaged in the service of the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and I have been enjoying an ever new transcendental humor, whenever I think of sex life with a woman, my face at once turns from it, and I spit at the thought."

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is such a transcendently nice thing that automatically material enjoyment becomes distasteful. It is as if a hungry man had satisfied his hunger by a sufficient quantity of nutritious eatables. Mahārāja Ambarīṣa also conquered a great *yogī*, Durvāsā Muni, simply because his mind was engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 61

*tāni sarvāṇi saṁyamya
yukta āsīta mat-paraḥ
vaśe hi yasyendriyāṇi
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

SYNONYMS

tāni-those senses; *sarvāṇi*-all; *saṁyamya*-keeping under control; *yuktaḥ*-being engaged; *āsīta*-being so situated; *mat-paraḥ*-in relationship with Me; *vaśe*-in full subjugation; *hi*-certainly; *yasya*-one whose; *indriyāṇi*-senses; *tasya*-his; *prajñā*-consciousness; *pratiṣṭhitā*-fixed.

TRANSLATION

One who restrains his senses and fixes his consciousness upon Me is known as a man of steady intelligence.

PURPORT

That the highest conception of *yoga* perfection is Kṛṣṇa consciousness is clearly explained in this verse. And, unless one is Kṛṣṇa conscious, it is not at all possible to control the senses. As cited above, the great sage Durvāsā

Muni picked a quarrel with Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, and Durvāsā Muni unnecessarily became angry out of pride and therefore could not check his senses. On the other hand, the King, although not as powerful a *yogī* as the sage, but a devotee of the Lord, silently tolerated all the sage's injustices and thereby emerged victorious. The King was able to control his senses because of the following qualifications, as mentioned in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayor
vacāmsi vaikunṭha-guṇānavarṇane
karau harer mandira-mārjanādiṣu
śrutim cakārācyuta-sat-kathodaye*

*mukunda-liṅgālaya-darśane dṛṣau
tad-bhr̥tya-gātra-sparśe'ṅga-saṅgamam
ghrāṇam ca tat-pāda-saroja-saurabhe
śrīmat-tulasyā rasanām tad-arpite*

*pādau hareḥ kṣetra-padānusarpaṇe
śiro hr̥ṣīkeśa-padābhivandane
kāmaṁ ca dāsyē na tu kāma-kāmyayā
yathottamaśloka-janāśrayā ratih*

"King Ambarīṣa fixed his mind on the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, engaged his words in describing the abode of the Lord, his hands in cleansing the temple of the Lord, his ears in hearing the pastimes of the Lord, his eyes in seeing the form of the Lord, his body in touching the body of the devotee, his nostrils in smelling the flavor of the flowers offered to the lotus feet of the Lord, his tongue in tasting the *tulasī* leaves offered to Him, his legs in traveling to the holy place where His temple is situated, his head in offering obeisances unto the Lord, and his desires in fulfilling the desires of the Lord ... and all these qualifications made him fit to become a *mat-parah* devotee of the Lord." (*Bhāg.* 9.4.18-20)

The word *mat-parah* is most significant in this connection. How one can become a *mat-parah* is described in the life of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa. Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, a great scholar and *ācārya* in the line of the *mat-parah*, remarks: "*mad-bhakti-prabhāvena sarvendriya-vijaya-pūrvikā*

svātma dr̥ṣṭiḥ sulabheti bhāvaḥ." "The senses can be completely controlled only by the strength of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa." Also the example of fire is sometimes given: "As the small flames within burn everything within the room, similarly Lord Viṣṇu, situated in the heart of the *yogī*, burns up all kinds of impurities." The *Yoga-sūtra* also prescribes meditation on Viṣṇu, and not meditation on the void. The so-called *yogīs* who meditate on something which is not the Viṣṇu form simply waste their time in a vain search after some phantasmagoria. We have to be Kṛṣṇa conscious-devoted to the Personality of Godhead. This is the aim of the real *yoga*.

TEXT 62

*dhyāyato viṣayān puṁsaḥ
saṅgas teṣūpajāyate
saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmāḥ
kāmāt krodho 'bhijāyate*

SYNONYMS

dhyayataḥ-while contemplating; *viṣayān*-sense objects; *puṁsaḥ*-of the person; *saṅgaḥ*-attachment; *teṣu*-in the sense objects; *upajāyate*-develops; *saṅgāt*-attachment; *sañjāyate*-develops; *kāmāḥ*-desire; *kāmāt*-from desire; *krodhaḥ*-anger; *abhijāyate*-becomes manifest.

TRANSLATION

While contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops attachment for them, and from such attachment lust develops, and from lust anger arises.

PURPORT

One who is not Kṛṣṇa conscious is subjected to material desires while contemplating the objects of senses. The senses require real engagements, and if they are not engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, they will certainly seek engagement in the service of materialism. In the material world everyone, including Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā-to say

nothing of other demigods in the heavenly planets-is subjected to the influence of sense objects, and the only method to get out of this puzzle of material existence is to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. Lord Śiva was deep in meditation, but when Pārvatī agitated him for sense pleasure, he agreed to the proposal, and as a result Kārtikeya was born. When Haridāsa Ṭhākura was a young devotee of the Lord, he was similarly allured by the incarnation of Māyā Devī, but Haridāsa easily passed the test because of his unalloyed devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa. As illustrated in the above-mentioned verse of Śrī Yāmunācārya, a sincere devotee of the Lord shuns all material sense enjoyment due to his higher taste for spiritual enjoyment in the association of the Lord. That is the secret of success. One who is not, therefore, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however powerful he may be in controlling the senses by artificial repression, is sure ultimately to fail, for the slightest thought of sense pleasure will agitate him to gratify his desires.

TEXT 63

*krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ
sammohāt smṛti-vibhramaḥ
smṛti-bhramśād buddhi-nāśo
buddhi-nāśāt praṇaśyati*

SYNONYMS

krodhāt-from anger; *bhavati*-takes place; *sammohaḥ*-perfect illusion; *sammohāt*-from illusion; *smṛti*-of memory; *vibhramaḥ*-bewilderment; *smṛti-bhramśāt*-after bewilderment of memory; *buddhi-nāśaḥ*-loss of intelligence; *buddhi-nāśāt*-and from loss of intelligence; *praṇaśyati*-falls down.

TRANSLATION

From anger, delusion arises, and from delusion bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost, one falls down again into the material pool.

PURPORT

By development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness one can know that everything has its use in the service of the Lord. Those who are without knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness artificially try to avoid material objects, and as a result, although they desire liberation from material bondage, they do not attain to the perfect stage of renunciation. On the other hand, a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness knows how to use everything in the service of the Lord; therefore he does not become a victim of material consciousness. For example, for an impersonalist, the Lord, or the Absolute, being impersonal, cannot eat. Whereas an impersonalist tries to avoid good eatables, a devotee knows that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme enjoyer and that He eats all that is offered to Him in devotion. So, after offering good eatables to the Lord, the devotee takes the remnants, called *prasādam*. Thus everything becomes spiritualized and there is no danger of a downfall. The devotee takes *prasādam* in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whereas the nondevotee rejects it as material. The impersonalist, therefore, cannot enjoy life due to his artificial renunciation; and for this reason, a slight agitation of the mind pulls him down again into the pool of material existence. It is said that such a soul, even though rising up to the point of liberation, falls down again due to his not having support in devotional service.

TEXT 64

*rāga-dveṣa-vimuktais tu
viṣayān indriyaiś caran
ātma-vaśyair vidheyātmā
prasādam adhigacchati*

SYNONYMS

rāga-attachment; *dveṣa*-detachment; *vimuktaiḥ*-by one who has been free from such things; *tu*-but; *viṣayān*-sense objects; *indriyaiḥ*-by the senses; *caran*-acting; *ātma-vaśyaiḥ*-one who has control over; *vidheyātmā*-one who follows regulated freedom; *prasādam*-the mercy of the Lord; *adhigacchati*-attains.

TRANSLATION

One who can control his senses by practicing the regulated principles of freedom can obtain the complete mercy of the Lord and thus become free from all attachment and aversion.

PURPORT

It is already explained that one may externally control the senses by some artificial process, but unless the senses are engaged in the transcendental service of the Lord, there is every chance of a fall. Although the person in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness may apparently be on the sensual plane, because of his being Kṛṣṇa conscious, he has no attachment to sensual activities. The Kṛṣṇa conscious person is concerned only with the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa, and nothing else. Therefore he is transcendental to all attachment. If Kṛṣṇa wants, the devotee can do anything which is ordinarily undesirable; and if Kṛṣṇa does not want, he shall not do that which he would have ordinarily done for his own satisfaction. Therefore to act or not to act is within his control because he acts only under the direction of Kṛṣṇa. This consciousness is the causeless mercy of the Lord, which the devotee can achieve in spite of his being attached to the sensual platform.

TEXT 65

*prasāde sarva-duḥkhānām
hānir asyopajāyate
prasanna-cetaso hy āśu
buddhiḥ paryavatiṣṭhate*

SYNONYMS

prasāde-on achievement of the causeless mercy of the Lord; *sarva*-all; *duḥkhānām*-material miseries; *hāniḥ*-destruction; *asya*-his; *upajāyate*-takes place; *prasanna-cetaso*-of the happy-minded; *hi*-certainly; *āśu*-very soon; *buddhiḥ*-intelligence; *pari*-sufficiently; *avatiṣṭhate*-established.

TRANSLATION

For one who is so situated in the Divine consciousness, the threefold miseries of material existence exist no longer; in such a happy state, one's intelligence soon becomes steady.

TEXT 66

*nāsti buddhir ayuktasya
na cāyuktasya bhāvanā
na cābhāvayataḥ śāntir
aśāntasya kutaḥ sukham*

SYNONYMS

na asti-there cannot be; *buddhiḥ*-transcendental intelligence; *ayuktasya*-of one who is not connected (with Kṛṣṇa consciousness); *na*-neither; *ca*-and; *ayuktasya*-of one devoid of Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *bhāvanā*-mind fixed in happiness; *na*-neither; *ca*-and; *abhāvayataḥ*-one who is not fixed; *śāntiḥ*-peace; *aśāntasya*-of the unpeaceful; *kutaḥ*-where is; *sukham*-happiness.

TRANSLATION

One who is not in transcendental consciousness can have neither a controlled mind nor steady intelligence, without which there is no possibility of peace. And how can there be any happiness without peace?

PURPORT

Unless one is in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is no possibility of peace. So it is confirmed in the Fifth Chapter (5.29) that when one understands that Kṛṣṇa is the only enjoyer of all the good results of sacrifice and penance, and that He is the proprietor of all universal manifestations, that He is the real friend of all living entities, then only can one have real peace. Therefore, if one is not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there cannot be a final goal for the mind. Disturbance is due to want of an ultimate goal, and when one is certain that Kṛṣṇa is the enjoyer, proprietor and friend of everyone and everything, then one can, with a steady mind, bring about peace. Therefore,

one who is engaged without a relationship with Kṛṣṇa is certainly always in distress and is without peace, however much one may make a show of peace and spiritual advancement in life. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a self-manifested peaceful condition which can be achieved only in relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 67

*indriyāṇām hi caratām
yan mano 'nuvidhīyate
tad asya harati prajñām
vāyur nāvam ivāmbhasi*

SYNONYMS

indriyāṇām-of the senses; *hi*-certainly; *caratām*-while herding over; *yat*-that; *manaḥ*-mind; *anuvidhīyate*-becomes constantly engaged; *tat*-that; *asya*-his; *harati*-takes away; *prajñām*-intelligence; *vāyuh*-wind; *nāvam*-a boat; *iva*-like; *ambhasi*-on the water.

TRANSLATION

As a boat on the water is swept away by a strong wind, even one of the senses on which the mind focuses can carry away a man's intelligence.

PURPORT

Unless all of the senses are engaged in the service of the Lord, even one of them engaged in sense gratification can deviate the devotee from the path of transcendental advancement. As mentioned in the life of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, all of the senses must be engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, for that is the correct technique for controlling the mind.

TEXT 68

tasmād yasya mahā-bāho

*nigṛhītāni sarvaśaḥ
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

SYNONYMS

tasmāt-therefore; *yasya*-of one's; *mahā-bāho*-O mighty-armed one; *nigṛhītāni*-so curbed down; *sarvaśaḥ*-all around; *indriyāṇi*-the senses; *indriya-arthebhyaḥ*-for the sake of sense objects; *tasya*-his; *prajñā*-intelligence; *pratiṣṭhitā*-fixed.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O mighty-armed, one whose senses are restrained from their objects is certainly of steady intelligence.

PURPORT

As enemies are curbed by superior force, similarly, the senses can be curbed not by any human endeavor, but only by keeping them engaged in the service of the Lord. One who has understood this-that only by Kṛṣṇa consciousness is one really established in intelligence and that one should practice this art under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master-is called *sādhaka*, or a suitable candidate for liberation.

TEXT 69

*yā niśā sarva-bhūtānām
tasyām jāgarti saṁyamī
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni
sā niśā paśyato muneḥ*

SYNONYMS

yā-what; *niśā*-is night; *sarva*-all; *bhūtānām*-of living entities; *tasyām*-in that; *jāgarti*-wakeful; *saṁyamī*-the self-controlled; *yasyām*-in which; *jāgrati*-awake; *bhūtāni*-all beings; *sā*-that is; *niśā*-night; *paśyataḥ*-for the introspective; *muneḥ*-sage.

TRANSLATION

What is night for all beings is the time of awakening for the self-controlled; and the time of awakening for all beings is night for the introspective sage.

PURPORT

There are two classes of intelligent men. The one is intelligent in material activities for sense gratification, and the other is introspective and awake to the cultivation of self-realization. Activities of the introspective sage, or thoughtful man, are night for persons materially absorbed. Materialistic persons remain asleep in such a night due to their ignorance of self-realization. The introspective sage remains alert in the "night" of the materialistic men. The sage feels transcendental pleasure in the gradual advancement of spiritual culture, whereas the man in materialistic activities, being asleep to self-realization, dreams of varieties of sense pleasure, feeling sometimes happy and sometimes distressed in his sleeping condition. The introspective man is always indifferent to materialistic happiness and distress. He goes on with his self-realization activities undisturbed by material reaction.

TEXT 70

*āpūryamāṇam acala-pratiṣṭham
samudram āpaḥ praviśanti yadvat
tadvat kāmā yaṁ praviśanti sarve
sa śāntim āpnoti na kāma-kāmī*

SYNONYMS

āpūryamāṇam-always filled; *acala-pratiṣṭham*-steadily situated; *samudram*-the ocean; *āpaḥ*-water; *praviśanti*-enter; *yadvat*-as; *tadvat*-so; *kāmāḥ*-desires; *yaṁ*-unto one; *praviśanti*-enter; *sarve*-all; *saḥ*-that person; *śāntim*-peace; *āpnoti*-achieves; *na*-not; *kāma-kāmī*-one who desires to fulfill desires.

TRANSLATION

A person who is not disturbed by the incessant flow of desires-that enter like rivers into the ocean which is ever being filled but is always still-can alone achieve peace, and not the man who strives to satisfy such desires.

PURPORT

Although the vast ocean is always filled with water, it is always, especially during the rainy season, being filled with much more water. But the ocean remains the same-steady; it is not agitated, nor does it cross beyond the limit of its brink. That is also true of a person fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As long as one has the material body, the demands of the body for sense gratification will continue. The devotee, however, is not disturbed by such desires because of his fullness. A Kṛṣṇa conscious man is not in need of anything because the Lord fulfills all his material necessities. Therefore he is like the ocean-always full in himself. Desires may come to him like the waters of the rivers that flow into the ocean, but he is steady in his activities, and he is not even slightly disturbed by desires for sense gratification. That is the proof of a Kṛṣṇa conscious man-one who has lost all inclinations for material sense gratification, although the desires are present. Because he remains satisfied in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, he can remain steady, like the ocean, and therefore enjoy full peace. Others, however, who fulfill desires even up to the limit of liberation, what to speak of material success, never attain peace. The fruitive workers, the salvationists, and also the *yogīs* who are after mystic powers, are all unhappy because of unfulfilled desires. But the person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is happy in the service of the Lord, and he has no desires to be fulfilled. In fact, he does not even desire liberation from the so-called material bondage. The devotees of Kṛṣṇa have no material desires, and therefore they are in perfect peace.

TEXT 71

*vihāya kāmān yaḥ sarvān
pumāṁś carati niḥsprhaḥ*

*nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ
sa śāntim adhigacchati*

SYNONYMS

vihāya-after giving up; *kāmān*-all material desires for sense gratification; *yaḥ*-the person; *sarvān*-all; *pumān*-a person; *carati*-lives; *niḥspṛhaḥ* - desireless; *nirmamaḥ*-without a sense of proprietorship; *nirahaṅkāraḥ*-without false ego; *saḥ*-all; *śāntim*-perfect peace; *adhigacchati*-attains.

TRANSLATION

A person who has given up all desires for sense gratification, who lives free from desires, who has given up all sense of proprietorship and is devoid of false ego-he alone can attain real peace.

PURPORT

To become desireless means not to desire anything for sense gratification. In other words, desire for becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious is actually desirelessness. To understand one's actual position as the eternal servitor of Kṛṣṇa, without falsely claiming this material body to be oneself and without falsely claiming proprietorship over anything in the world, is the perfect stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One who is situated in this perfect stage knows that because Kṛṣṇa is the proprietor of everything, therefore everything must be used for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna did not want to fight for his own sense satisfaction, but when he became fully Kṛṣṇa conscious he fought because Kṛṣṇa wanted him to fight. For himself there was no desire to fight, but for Kṛṣṇa the same Arjuna fought to his best ability. Desire for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa is really desirelessness; it is not an artificial attempt to abolish desires. The living entity cannot be desireless or senseless, but he does have to change the quality of the desires. A materially desireless person certainly knows that everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa (*īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ*), and therefore he does not falsely claim proprietorship over anything. This transcendental knowledge is based on self-realization-namely, knowing perfectly well that every living entity is the eternal part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa in spiritual identity. and therefore the

eternal position of the living entity is never on the level of Kṛṣṇa or greater than Him. This understanding of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the basic principle of real peace.

TEXT 72

*eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ pārtha
nainām prāpya vimuhyati
sthitvāsyām anta-kāle 'pi
brahma-nirvāṇam ṛcchati*

SYNONYMS

eṣā-this; *brāhmī*-spiritual; *sthitiḥ*-situation; *pārtha*-O son of Prthā; *na*-never; *enām*-this; *prāpya*-achieving; *vimuhyati*-bewilders; *sthitvā*-being so situated; *asyām*-being so; *anta-kāle*-at the end of life; *api*-also; *brahma-nirvāṇam*-spiritual (kingdom of God); *ṛcchati*-attains.

TRANSLATION

That is the way of the spiritual and godly life, after attaining which a man is not bewildered. Being so situated, even at the hour of death, one can enter into the kingdom of God.

PURPORT

One can attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness or divine life at once, within a second-or one may not attain such a state of life even after millions of births. It is only a matter of understanding and accepting the fact. Khaṭvāṅga Mahārāja attained this state of life just a few minutes before his death, by surrendering unto Kṛṣṇa. *Nirvāṇa* means ending the process of materialistic life. According to Buddhist philosophy, there is only void after the completion of this material life, but *Bhagavad-gītā* teaches differently. Actual life begins after the completion of this material life. For the gross materialist it is sufficient to know that one has to end this materialistic way of life, but for persons who are spiritually advanced, there is another life after this materialistic life. Before ending this life, if one fortunately

becomes Kṛṣṇa conscious, he at once attains the stage of *Brahma-nirvāṇa*. There is no difference between the kingdom of God and the devotional service of the Lord. Since both of them are on the absolute plane, to be engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord is to have attained the spiritual kingdom. In the material world there are activities of sense gratification, whereas in the spiritual world there are activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Attainment of Kṛṣṇa consciousness even during this life is immediate attainment of Brahman, and one who is situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has certainly already entered into the kingdom of God.

Brahman is just the opposite of matter. Therefore *brāhmī sthitiḥ* means "not on the platform of material activities." Devotional service of the Lord is accepted in the *Bhagavad-gītā* as the liberated stage. Therefore, *brāhmī-sthitiḥ* is liberation from material bondage.

Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura has summarized this Second Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* as being the contents for the whole text. In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the subject matters are *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga*, and *bhakti-yoga*. In the Second Chapter *karma-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga* have been clearly discussed, and a glimpse of *bhakti-yoga* has also been given, as the contents for the complete text.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the Second Chapter of the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of its Contents.

3. Karma-yoga

TEXT 1

*arjuna uvāca
jyāyasī cet karmaṇas te
matā buddhir janārdana
tat kiṁ karmaṇi ghore mām
niyojayasi keśava*

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ-Arjuna; *uvāca*-said; *jyāyasī*-speaking very highly; *cet*-although; *karmaṇaḥ*-than fruitive action; *te*-your; *matā*-opinion; *buddhiḥ*-intelligence; *janārdana*-O Kṛṣṇa; *tat*-therefore; *kiṁ*-why; *karmaṇi*-in action; *ghore*-ghastly; *mām*-me; *niyojayasi*-engaging me; *keśava*-O Kṛṣṇa.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O Janārdana, O Keśava, why do You urge me to engage in this ghastly warfare, if You think that intelligence is better than fruitive work?

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa has very elaborately described the constitution of the soul in the previous chapter, with a view to deliver His intimate friend Arjuna from the ocean of material grief. And the path of realization has been recommended: *buddhi-yoga*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa consciousness is misunderstood to be inertia, and one with such a misunderstanding often withdraws to a secluded place to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious by chanting the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. But without being trained in the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness,

it is not advisable to chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa in a secluded place where one may acquire only cheap adoration from the innocent public. Arjuna also thought of Kṛṣṇa consciousness or *buddhi-yoga*, or intelligence in spiritual advancement of knowledge, as something like retirement from active life and the practice of penance and austerity at a secluded place. In other words, he wanted to skillfully avoid the fighting by using Kṛṣṇa consciousness as an excuse. But as a sincere student, he placed the matter before his master and questioned Kṛṣṇa as to his best course of action. In answer, Lord Kṛṣṇa elaborately explained *karma-yoga*, or work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in this Third Chapter.

TEXT 2

*vyāmiśreṇeva vākyena
buddhiṁ mohayasīva me
tad ekaṁ vada niścitya
yena śreya 'ham āpnuyām*

SYNONYMS

vyāmiśreṇa-by equivocal; *iva*-as; *vākyena*-words; *buddhiṁ*-intelligence; *mohayasi*-bewildering; *iva*-as; *me*-my; *tat*-therefore; *ekaṁ*-only one; *vada*-please tell; *niścitya*-ascertaining; *yena*-by which; *śreyaḥ*-real benefit; *aham*-I; *āpnuyām*-may have it.

TRANSLATION

**My intelligence is bewildered by Your equivocal instructions.
Therefore, please tell me decisively what is most beneficial for me.**

PURPORT

In the previous chapter, as a prelude to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, many different paths were explained, such as *sāṅkhya-yoga*, *buddhi-yoga*, control of the senses by intelligence, work without fruitive desire, and the position of the neophyte. This was all presented unsystematically. A more organized outline of the path would be necessary for action and understanding.

Arjuna, therefore, wanted to clear up these apparently confusing matters so that any common man could accept them without misinterpretation. Although Kṛṣṇa had no intention of confusing Arjuna by any jugglery of words, Arjuna could not follow the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness-either by inertia or active service. In other words, by his questions he is clearing the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for all students who seriously want to understand the mystery of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

TEXT 3

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
loke 'smin dvi-vidhā niṣṭhā
purā proktā mayānagha
jñāna-yogena sāṅkhyānām
karma-yogena yoginām

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *loke*-in the world; *asmin*-this; *dvi-vidhā*-two kinds of; *niṣṭhā*-faith; *purā*-formerly; *proktā*-was said; *mayā*-by Me; *anagha*-O sinless one; *jñāna-yogena*-by the linking process of knowledge; *sāṅkhyānām*-of the empiric philosophers; *karma-yogena*-by the linking process of devotion; *yoginām*-of the devotees.

TRANSLATION

The Blessed Lord said: O sinless Arjuna, I have already explained that there are two classes of men who realize the Self. Some are inclined to understand Him by empirical, philosophical speculation, and others are inclined to know Him by devotional work.

PURPORT

In the Second Chapter, verse 39, the Lord explained two kinds of procedures-namely *sāṅkhya-yoga* and *karma-yoga*, or *buddhi-yoga*. In this verse, the Lord explains the same more clearly. *Sāṅkhya-yoga*, or the analytical study of the nature of spirit and matter, is the subject matter for

persons who are inclined to speculate and understand things by experimental knowledge and philosophy. The other class of men work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as it is explained in the 61st verse of the Second Chapter. The Lord has explained, also in the 39th verse, that by working by the principles of *buddhi-yoga*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can be relieved from the bonds of action; and, furthermore, there is no flaw in the process. The same principle is more clearly explained in the 61st verse—that this *buddhi-yoga* is to depend entirely on the Supreme (or more specifically, on Kṛṣṇa), and in this way all the senses can be brought under control very easily. Therefore, both the *yogas* are interdependant, as religion and philosophy. Religion without philosophy is sentiment, or sometimes fanaticism, while philosophy without religion is mental speculation. The ultimate goal is Kṛṣṇa, because the philosophers who are also sincerely searching after the Absolute Truth come in the end to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is also stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The whole process is to understand the real position of the self in relation to the Superself. The indirect process is philosophical speculation, by which, gradually, one may come to the point of Kṛṣṇa consciousness; and the other process is directly connecting with everything in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Of these two, the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is better because it does not depend on purifying the senses by a philosophical process. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is itself the purifying process, and by the direct method of devotional service it is simultaneously easy and sublime.

TEXT 4

*na karmaṇām anārambhān
naiṣkarmyam puruṣo 'śnute
na ca sannyasanād eva
siddhiṁ samadhigacchati*

SYNONYMS

na-without; *karmaṇām*-of the prescribed duties; *anārambhāt*-non-performance; *naiṣkarmyam*-freedom from reaction; *puruṣaḥ*-man; *aśnute*-

achieve; *na*-nor; *ca*-also; *sannyasanāt*-by renunciation; *eva*-simply; *siddhim*-success; *samadhigacchati*-attain.

TRANSLATION

Not by merely abstaining from work can one achieve freedom from reaction, nor by renunciation alone can one attain perfection.

PURPORT

The renounced order of life can be accepted upon being purified by the discharge of the prescribed form of duties which are laid down just to purify the heart of materialistic men. Without purification, one cannot attain success by abruptly adopting the fourth order of life (*sannyāsa*). According to the empirical philosophers, simply by adopting *sannyāsa*, or retiring from fruitive activities, one at once becomes as good as Nārāyaṇa. But Lord Kṛṣṇa does not approve this principle. Without purification of heart, *sannyāsa* is simply a disturbance to the social order. On the other hand, if someone takes to the transcendental service of the Lord, even without discharging his prescribed duties, whatever he may be able to advance in the cause is accepted by the Lord (*buddhi-yoga*). *Svalpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt*. Even a slight performance of such a principle enables one to overcome great difficulties.

TEXT 5

*na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api
jātu tiṣṭhaty akarma-kṛt
kāryate hy avaśaḥ karma
sarvaḥ prakṛti-jair guṇaiḥ*

SYNONYMS

na-nor; *hi*-certainly; *kaścit*-anyone; *kṣaṇam*-even a moment; *api*-also; *jātu*-even; *tiṣṭhati*-stands; *akarma-kṛt*-without doing something; *kāryate*-is forced to do; *hi*-certainly; *avaśaḥ*-helplessly; *karma*-work; *sarvaḥ*-

everything; *prakṛti-jaiḥ*-out of the modes of material nature; *guṇaiḥ*-by the qualities.

TRANSLATION

All men are forced to act helplessly according to the impulses born of the modes of material nature; therefore no one can refrain from doing something, not even for a moment.

PURPORT

It is not a question of embodied life, but it is the nature of the soul to be always active. Without the presence of the spirit soul, the material body cannot move. The body is only a dead vehicle to be worked by the spirit soul, which is always active and cannot stop even for a moment. As such, the spirit soul has to be engaged in the good work of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, otherwise it will be engaged in occupations dictated by illusory energy. In contact with material energy, the spirit soul acquires material modes, and to purify the soul from such affinities it is necessary to engage in the prescribed duties enjoined in the *śāstras*. But if the soul is engaged in his natural function of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whatever he is able to do is good for him. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* affirms this:

*tyaktvā sva-dharmam caraṇāmbujam harer
bhajann apakvo 'tha patet tato yadi
yatra kva vābhadram abhūd amuṣya kim
ko vārtha āpto 'bhajatām sva-dharmataḥ.*

"If someone takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, even though he may not follow the prescribed duties in the *śāstras* nor execute the devotional service properly, and even though he may fall down from the standard, there is no loss or evil for him. But if he carries out all the injunctions for purification in the *śāstras*, what does it avail him if he is not Kṛṣṇa conscious?" (*Bhāg.* 1.5.17) So the purificatory process is necessary for reaching this point of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore, *sannyāsa*, or any purificatory process, is to help reach the ultimate goal of becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious, without which everything is considered a failure.

TEXT 6

*karmendriyāṇi saṁyamya
ya āste manasā smaran
indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā
mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate*

SYNONYMS

karma-indriyāṇi-the five working sense organs; *saṁyamya*-controlling; *yaḥ*-anyone who; *āste*-remains; *manasā*-by mind; *smaran*-thinking; *indriya-arthān*-sense objects; *vimūḍha*-foolish; *ātmā*-soul; *mithyā-ācāraḥ*-pretender; *saḥ*-he; *ucyate*-is called.

TRANSLATION

One who restrains the senses and organs of action, but whose mind dwells on sense objects, certainly deludes himself and is called a pretender.

PURPORT

There are many pretenders who refuse to work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness but make a show of meditation, while actually dwelling within the mind upon sense enjoyment. Such pretenders may also speak on dry philosophy in order to bluff sophisticated followers, but according to this verse these are the greatest cheaters. For sense enjoyment one can act in any capacity of the social order, but if one follows the rules and regulations of his particular status, he can make gradual progress in purifying his existence. But he who makes a show of being a *yogī*, while actually searching for the objects of sense gratification, must be called the greatest cheater, even though he sometimes speaks of philosophy. His knowledge has no value because the effects of such a sinful man's knowledge are taken away by the illusory energy of the Lord. Such a pretender's mind is always impure, and therefore his show of yogic meditation has no value whatsoever.

TEXT 7

*yas tv indriyāṇi manasā
niyamyārabhate 'rjuna
karmendriyaiḥ karma-yogam
asaktaḥ sa viśiṣyate*

SYNONYMS

yaḥ-one who; *tu*-but; *indriyāṇi*-senses; *manasā*-by the mind; *niyamyā*-regulating; *ārabhate*-begins; *arjuna*-O Arjuna; *karma-indriyaiḥ*-by the active sense organs; *karma-yogam*-devotion; *asaktaḥ*-without attachment; *saḥ*-he; *viśiṣyate*-by far the better.

TRANSLATION

On the other hand, he who controls the senses by the mind and engages his active organs in works of devotion, without attachment, is by far superior.

PURPORT

Instead of becoming a pseudo-transcendentalist for the sake of wanton living and sense enjoyment, it is far better to remain in one's own business and execute the purpose of life, which is to get free from material bondage and enter into the kingdom of God. The prime *svārtha-gati*, or goal of self-interest, is to reach Viṣṇu. The whole institution of *varṇa* and *āśrama* is designed to help us reach this goal of life. A householder can also reach this destination by regulated service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For self-realization, one can live a controlled life, as prescribed in the *śāstras*, and continue carrying out his business without attachment, and in that way make progress. Such a sincere person who follows this method is far better situated than the false pretender who adopts show-bottle spiritualism to cheat the innocent public. A sincere sweeper in the street is far better than the charlatan meditator who meditates only for the sake of making a living.

TEXT 8

*niyataṁ kuru karma tvam
karma jyāyo hy akarmaṇaḥ
śarīra-yātrāpi ca te
na prasiddhyed akarmaṇaḥ*

SYNONYMS

niyatam-prescribed; *kuru*-do; *karma*-duties; *tvam*-you; *karma*-work; *jyāyaḥ*-better; *hi*-than; *akarmaṇaḥ*-without work; *śarīra*-bodily; *yātrā*-maintenance; *api*-even; *ca*-also; *te*-your; *na*-never; *prasiddhyed*-effected; *akarmaṇaḥ*-without work.

TRANSLATION

Perform your prescribed duty, for action is better than inaction. A man cannot even maintain his physical body without work.

PURPORT

There are many pseudo-meditators who misrepresent themselves as belonging to high parentage, and great professional men who falsely pose that they have sacrificed everything for the sake of advancement in spiritual life. Lord Kṛṣṇa did not want Arjuna to become a pretender, but that he perform his prescribed duties as set forth for *kṣatriyas*. Arjuna was a householder and a military general, and therefore it was better for him to remain as such and perform his religious duties as prescribed for the householder *kṣatriya*. Such activities gradually cleanse the heart of a mundane man and free him from material contamination. So-called renunciation for the purpose of maintenance is never approved by the Lord, nor by any religious scripture. After all, one has to maintain one's body and soul together by some work. Work should not be given up capriciously, without purification of materialistic propensities. Anyone who is in the material world is certainly possessed of the impure propensity for lording it over material nature, or, in other words, for sense gratification. Such polluted propensities have to be cleared. Without doing so, through

prescribed duties, one should never attempt to become a so-called transcendentalist, renouncing work and living at the cost of others.

TEXT 9

*yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra
loko 'yaṁ karma-bandhanaḥ
tat-arthaṁ karma kaunteya
mukta-saṅgaḥ samācara*

SYNONYMS

yajña-arthāt-only for the sake of Yajña, or Viṣṇu; *karmaṇaḥ*-work done; *anyatra*-otherwise; *lokaḥ*-this world; *ayaṁ*-this; *karma-bandhanaḥ*-bondage by work; *tat*-Him; *arthaṁ*-for the sake of; *karma*-work; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *mukta-saṅgaḥ*-liberated from association; *samācara*-do it perfectly.

TRANSLATION

Work done as a sacrifice for Viṣṇu has to be performed, otherwise work binds one to this material world. Therefore, O son of Kuntī, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way you will always remain unattached and free from bondage.

PURPORT

Since one has to work even for the simple maintenance of the body, the prescribed duties for a particular social position and quality are so made that that purpose can be fulfilled. *Yajña* means Lord Viṣṇu, or sacrificial performances. All sacrificial performances also are meant for the satisfaction of Lord Viṣṇu. The *Vedas* enjoin: *yajño vai viṣṇuḥ*. In other words, the same purpose is served whether one performs prescribed *yajñas* or directly serves Lord Viṣṇu. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is therefore performance of *yajña* as it is prescribed in this verse. The *varṇāśrama* institution also aims at this for satisfying Lord Viṣṇu. "*Varṇāśramācāra-vatā puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān/viṣṇur ārādhyate...*" (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 3.8.8) Therefore one has to work for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu. Any other work done in this material

world will be a cause of bondage, for both good and evil work have their reactions, and any reaction binds the performer. Therefore, one has to work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness to satisfy Kṛṣṇa (or Viṣṇu); and while performing such activities one is in a liberated stage. This is the great art of doing work, and in the beginning this process requires very expert guidance. One should therefore act very diligently, under the expert guidance of a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, or under the direct instruction of Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself (under whom Arjuna had the opportunity to work). Nothing should be performed for sense gratification, but everything should be done for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. This practice will not only save one from the reaction of work, but will also gradually elevate one to transcendental loving service of the Lord, which alone can raise one to the kingdom of God.

TEXT 10

*saha-yajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā
purovāca prajāpatiḥ
anena prasaviṣyadhvam
eṣa vo 'stv iṣṭa-kāma-dhuk*

SYNONYMS

saha-along with; *yajñāḥ*-sacrifices; *prajāḥ*-generations; *sṛṣṭvā*-by creating; *purā*-anciently; *uvāca*-said; *prajā-patiḥ*-the Lord of creatures; *anena*-by this; *prasaviṣyadhvam*-be more and more prosperous; *eṣaḥ*-certainly; *vaḥ*-your; *astu*-let it be; *iṣṭa*-all desirable; *kāma-dhuk*-bestower.

TRANSLATION

In the beginning of creation, the Lord of all creatures sent forth generations of men and demigods, along with sacrifices for Viṣṇu, and blessed them by saying, "Be thou happy by this yajña [sacrifice] because its performance will bestow upon you all desirable things."

PURPORT

The material creation by the Lord of creatures (Viṣṇu) is a chance offered to the conditioned souls to come back home-back to Godhead. All living entities within the material creation are conditioned by material nature because of their forgetfulness of their relationship to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Vedic principles are to help us understand this eternal relation as it is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*. The Lord says that the purpose of the *Vedas* is to understand Him. In the Vedic hymns it is said: *patim viśvasyātmeśvaram*. Therefore, the Lord of the living entities is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the Lord as *pati* in so many ways:

*śriyah-patir yajña-patiḥ prajā-patir
dhiyām patir loka-patir dharā-patiḥ
patir gatiś cāndhaka-vṛṣṇi-sātvatām
prasīdatām me bhagavān satām patiḥ*

(Bhāg. 2.4.20)

The *prajā-pati* is Lord Viṣṇu, and He is the Lord of all living creatures, all worlds, and all beauties, and the protector of everyone. The Lord created this material world for the conditioned souls to learn how to perform *yajñas* (sacrifice) for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu, so that while in the material world they can live very comfortably without anxiety. Then after finishing the present material body, they can enter into the kingdom of God. That is the whole program for the conditioned soul. By performance of *yajña*, the conditioned souls gradually become Kṛṣṇa conscious and become godly in all respects. In this age of Kali, the *saṅkīrtana-yajña* (the chanting of the names of God) is recommended by the Vedic scriptures, and this transcendental system was introduced by Lord Caitanya for the deliverance of all men in this age. *Saṅkīrtana-yajña* and Kṛṣṇa consciousness go well together. Lord Kṛṣṇa in His devotional form (as Lord Caitanya) is mentioned in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as follows, with special reference to the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*:

*kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇām sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ*

"In this age of Kali, people who are endowed with sufficient intelligence will worship the Lord, who is accompanied by His associates, by performance of *saṅkīrtana-yajña*." (*Bhāg.* 11.5.29) Other *yajñas* prescribed in the Vedic literatures are not easy to perform in this age of Kali, but the *saṅkīrtana-yajña* is easy and sublime for all purposes.

TEXT 11

*devān bhāvayatānena
te devā bhāvayantu vaḥ
parasparam bhāvayantaḥ
śreyaḥ param avāpsyatha*

SYNONYMS

devān-demigods; *bhāvayata*-having been pleased; *anena*-by this sacrifice; *te*-those; *devāḥ*-the demigods; *bhāvayantu*-will please; *vaḥ*-you; *parasparam*-mutual; *bhāvayantaḥ*-pleasing one another; *sreyaḥ*-benediction; *param*-the supreme; *avāpsyatha*-do you achieve.

TRANSLATION

The demigods, being pleased by sacrifices, will also please you; thus nourishing one another, there will reign general prosperity for all.

PURPORT

The demigods are empowered administrators of material affairs. The supply of air, light, water and all other benedictions for maintaining the body and soul of every living entity are entrusted to the demigods, who are innumerable assistants in different parts of the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Their pleasures and displeasures are dependant on the performance of *yajñas* by the human being. Some of the *yajñas* are meant to satisfy particular demigods; but even in so doing, Lord Viṣṇu is worshiped in all *yajñas* as the chief beneficiary. It is stated also in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that Kṛṣṇa Himself is the beneficiary of all kinds of *yajñas*: *bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasām*. Therefore, ultimate satisfaction of the *yajñapati*

is the chief purpose of all *yajñas*. When these *yajñas* are perfectly performed, naturally the demigods in charge of the different departments of supply are pleased, and there is no scarcity in the supply of natural products.

Performance of *yajñas* has many side benefits, ultimately leading to liberation from the material bondage. By performance of *yajñas*, all activities become purified, as it is stated in the *Vedas*:

*āhāra-śuddhau sattva-śuddhiḥ sattva-śuddhau
dhruvā smṛtiḥ smṛti-lambhe sarva-granthīnām vipra-mokṣaḥ*

As it will be explained in the following verse, by performance of *yajña*, one's eatables become sanctified, and by eating sanctified foodstuffs, one's very existence becomes purified; by the purification of existence, finer tissues in the memory become sanctified, and when memory is sanctified, one can think of the path of liberation, and all these combined together lead to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the great necessity of present-day society.

TEXT 12

*iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā
dāsyante yajña-bhāvitāḥ
tair dattān apradāyaibhyo
yo bhuñkte stena eva saḥ*

SYNONYMS

iṣṭān-desired; *bhogān*-necessities of life; *hi*-certainly; *vaḥ*-unto you; *devāḥ*-the demigods; *dāsyante*-award; *yajña-bhāvitāḥ*-being satisfied by the performance of sacrifices; *taiḥ*-by them; *dattān*-things given; *apradāya*-without offering; *ebhyaḥ*-to the demigods; *yaḥ*-he who; *bhuñkte*-enjoys; *stenaḥ*-thief; *eva*-certainly; *saḥ*-is he.

TRANSLATION

In charge of the various necessities of life, the demigods, being satisfied by the performance of yajña [sacrifice], supply all necessities

to man. But he who enjoys these gifts, without offering them to the demigods in return, is certainly a thief.

PURPORT

The demigods are authorized supplying agents on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. Therefore, they must be satisfied by the performance of prescribed *yajñas*. In the *Vedas*, there are different kinds of *yajñas* prescribed for different kinds of demigods, but all are ultimately offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. For one who cannot understand what the Personality of Godhead is, sacrifice to the demigods is recommended. According to the different material qualities of the persons concerned, different types of *yajñas* are recommended in the *Vedas*. Worship of different demigods is also on the same basis-namely, according to different qualities. For example, the meat-eaters are recommended to worship the goddess Kālī, the ghastly form of material nature, and before the goddess the sacrifice of animals is recommended. But for those who are in the mode of goodness, the transcendental worship of Viṣṇu is recommended. But ultimately, all *yajñas* are meant for gradual promotion to the transcendental position. For ordinary men, at least five *yajñas*, known as *pañca-mahāyajña*, are necessary.

One should know, however, that all the necessities of life that the human society requires are supplied by the demigod agents of the Lord. No one can manufacture anything. Take, for example, all the eatables of human society. These eatables include grains, fruits, vegetables, milk, sugar, etc., for the persons in the mode of goodness, and also eatables for the nonvegetarians, like meats, etc., none of which can be manufactured by men. Then again, take for example heat, light, water, air, etc., which are also necessities of life-none of them can be manufactured by the human society. Without the Supreme Lord, there can be no profuse sunlight, moonlight, rainfall, breeze, etc., without which no one can live. Obviously, our life is dependant on supplies from the Lord. Even for our manufacturing enterprises, we require so many raw materials like metal, sulphur, mercury, manganese, and so many essentials-all of which are supplied by the agents of the Lord, with the purpose that we should make proper use of them to keep ourselves fit and healthy for the purpose of self-realization, leading to the ultimate goal of

life, namely, liberation from the material struggle for existence. This aim of life is attained by performance of *yajñas*. If we forget the purpose of human life and simply take supplies from the agents of the Lord for sense gratification and become more and more entangled in material existence, which is not the purpose of creation, certainly we become thieves, and therefore we are punished by the laws of material nature. A society of thieves can never be happy because they have no aim in life. The gross materialist thieves have no ultimate goal of life. They are simply directed to sense gratification; nor do they have knowledge of how to perform *yajñas*. Lord Caitanya, however, inaugurated the easiest performance of *yajña*, namely the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, which can be performed by anyone in the world who accepts the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 13

*yajña-śiṣṭāśinaḥ santo
mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ
bhuñjate te tv agham pāpā
ye pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt*

SYNONYMS

yajña-śiṣṭa-food taken after performance of *yajña*; *āśinaḥ*-eaters; *santaḥ*-the devotees; *mucyante*-get relief from; *sarva*-all kinds of; *kilbiṣaiḥ*-sins; *bhuñjate*-enjoy; *te*-they; *tu*-but; *agham*-grievous sins; *pāpāḥ*-sinners; *ye*-those; *pacanti*-prepare food; *ātma-kāraṇāt*-for sense enjoyment.

TRANSLATION

The devotees of the Lord are released from all kinds of sins because they eat food which is offered first for sacrifice. Others, who prepare food for personal sense enjoyment, verily eat only sin.

PURPORT

The devotees of the Supreme Lord, or the persons who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, are called *santas*, and they are always in love with the Lord

as it is described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*: *premāñjana- cchurita-bhakti- vilocanena santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti*. The *santas*, being always in a compact of love with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda (the giver of all pleasures), or Mukunda (the giver of liberation), or Kṛṣṇa (the all-attractive person), cannot accept anything without first offering it to the Supreme Person. Therefore, such devotees always perform *yajñas* in different modes of devotional service, such as *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *smaraṇam*, *arcanam*, etc., and these performances of *yajñas* keep them always aloof from all kinds of contamination of sinful association in the material world. Others, who prepare food for self or sense gratification, are not only thieves, but are also the eaters of all kinds of sins. How can a person be happy if he is both a thief and sinful? It is not possible. Therefore, in order for people to become happy in all respects, they must be taught to perform the easy process of *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Otherwise, there can be no peace or happiness in the world.

TEXT 14

*annād bhavanti bhūtāni
parjanyaād anna-sambhavaḥ
yajñād bhavati parjanyo
yajñaḥ karma-samudbhavaḥ*

SYNONYMS

annāt-from grains; *bhavanti*-grow; *bhūtāni*-the material bodies; *parjanyaāt*-from rains; *anna*-food grains; *sambhavaḥ*-are made possible; *yajñāt*-from the performance of sacrifice; *bhavati*-becomes possible; *parjanyaḥ*-rains; *yajñaḥ*-performance of *yajña*; *karma*-prescribed duties; *samudbhavaḥ*-born of.

TRANSLATION

All living bodies subsist on food grains, which are produced from rain. Rains are produced by performance of yajña [sacrifice], and yajña is born of prescribed duties.

PURPORT

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, a great commentator on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, writes as follows: *ye indrādy-aṅga-tayāvasthitam yajñam sarveśvaram viṣṇum abhyarccya taccheṣam aśnanti tena taddeha-yāntrām sampādayanti te santaḥ sarveśvarasya bhaktāḥ sarva-kilviṣair anādi-kāla-vivṛddhair ātmānubhava- pratibandhakair nikhilaiḥ pāpāim vimucyante*. The Supreme Lord, who is known as the *yajña-puruṣaḥ*, or the personal beneficiary of all sacrifices, is the master of all demigods who serve Him as the different limbs of the body serve the whole. Demigods like Indra, Candra, Varuṇa, etc., are appointed officers who manage material affairs, and the *Vedas* direct sacrifices to satisfy these demigods so that they may be pleased to supply air, light and water sufficiently to produce food grains. When Lord Kṛṣṇa is worshiped, the demigods, who are different limbs of the Lord, are also automatically worshiped; therefore there is no separate need to worship the demigods. For this reason, the devotees of the Lord, who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, offer food to Kṛṣṇa and then eat—a process which nourishes the body spiritually. By such action not only are past sinful reactions in the body vanquished, but the body becomes immunized to all contamination of material nature. When there is an epidemic disease, an antiseptic vaccine protects a person from the attack of such an epidemic. Similarly, food offered to Lord Viṣṇu and then taken by us makes us sufficiently resistant to material affection, and one who is accustomed to this practice is called a devotee of the Lord. Therefore, a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, who eats only food offered to Kṛṣṇa, can counteract all reactions of past material infections, which are impediments to the progress of self-realization. On the other hand, one who does not do so continues to increase the volume of sinful action, and this prepares the next body to resemble hogs and dogs, to suffer the resultant reactions of all sins. The material world is full of contaminations, and one who is immunized by accepting *prasādam* of the Lord (food offered to Viṣṇu) is saved from the attack, whereas one who does not do so becomes subjected to contamination.

Food grains or vegetables are factually eatables. The human being eats different kinds of food grains, vegetables, fruits, etc., and the animals eat the refuse of the food grains and vegetables, grass, plants, etc. Human beings who are accustomed to eating meat and flesh must also depend on

the production of vegetation in order to eat the animals. Therefore, ultimately, we have to depend on the production of the field and not on the production of big factories. The field production is due to sufficient rain from the sky, and such rains are controlled by demigods like Indra, sun, moon, etc., and they are all servants of the Lord. The Lord can be satisfied by sacrifices; therefore, one who cannot perform them will find himself in scarcity—that is the law of nature. *Yajña*, specifically the *saṅkīrtana-yajña* prescribed for this age, must therefore be performed to save us at least from scarcity of food supply.

TEXT 15

*karma brahmodbhavam viddhi
brahmākṣara-samudbhavam
tasmāt sarva-gataṁ brahma
nityaṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam*

SYNONYMS

karma-work; *brahma*-Vedas; *udbhavam*-produced from; *viddhi*-one should know; *brahma*-the Vedas; *akṣara*-the Supreme Brahman (Personality of Godhead); *samudbhavam*; directly manifested; *tasmāt*-therefore; *sarva-gataṁ*-all-pervading; *brahma*-Transcendence; *nityaṁ*-eternally; *yajñe*-in sacrifice; *pratiṣṭhitam*-situated.

TRANSLATION

Regulated activities are prescribed in the Vedas, and the Vedas are directly manifested from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Consequently the all-pervading Transcendence is eternally situated in acts of sacrifice.

PURPORT

Yajñārtha karma, or the necessity of work for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa only, is more expressly stated in this verse. If we have to work for the satisfaction of the *yajña-puruṣa*, Viṣṇu, then we must find out the direction

of work in Brahman, or the transcendental *Vedas*. The *Vedas* are therefore codes of working directions. Anything performed without the direction of the *Vedas* is called *vikarma*, or unauthorized or sinful work. Therefore, one should always take direction from the *Vedas* to be saved from the reaction of work. As one has to work in ordinary life by the direction of the state, similarly, one has to work under direction of the supreme state of the Lord. Such directions in the *Vedas* are directly manifested from the breathing of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is said: *asya mahato bhūtasya naśvasitam etad yad ṛg-vedo yajur-vedaḥ sāma-vedo 'tharvān girasaḥ*. "The four *Vedas*-namely the *Ṛg-veda*, *Yajur-veda*, *Sāma-veda* and *Atharva-veda*-are all emanations from the breathing of the great Personality of Godhead." The Lord, being omnipotent, can speak by breathing air, as it is confirmed in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, for the Lord has the omnipotence to perform through each of His senses the actions of all other senses. In other words, the Lord can speak through His breathing, and He can impregnate by His eyes. In fact, it is said that He glanced over material nature and thus fathered all living entities. After creating or impregnating the conditioned souls into the womb of material nature, He gave His directions in the Vedic wisdom as to how such conditioned souls can return home, back to Godhead. We should always remember that the conditioned souls in material nature are all eager for material enjoyment. But the Vedic directions are so made that one can satisfy one's perverted desires, then return to Godhead, having finished his so-called enjoyment. It is a chance for the conditioned souls to attain liberation; therefore the conditioned souls must try to follow the process of *yajña* by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious. Even those who cannot follow the Vedic injunctions may adopt the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that will take the place of performance of Vedic *yajñas*, or *karmas*.

TEXT 16

*evam pravartitaṁ cakram
nānuvartayatīha yaḥ
aghāyur indriyārāmo
moghaṁ pārtha sa jīvati*

SYNONYMS

evam-thus prescribed; *pravartitam*-established by the *Vedas*; *cakram*-cycle; *na*-does not; *anuvartayati*-adopt; *iha*-in this life; *yaḥ*-one who; *aghāyuh*-life full of sins; *indriya-ārāmaḥ*-satisfied in sense gratification; *mogham*-useless; *pārtha*-O son of Pṛthā (Arjuna); *saḥ*-one who does so; *jīvati*-lives.

TRANSLATION

My dear Arjuna, a man who does not follow this prescribed Vedic system of sacrifice certainly leads a life of sin, for a person delighting only in the senses lives in vain.

PURPORT

The mammonist philosophy of work very hard and enjoy sense gratification is condemned herein by the Lord. Therefore, for those who want to enjoy this material world, the above-mentioned cycle of performing *yajñas* is absolutely necessary. One who does not follow such regulations is living a very risky life, being condemned more and more. By nature's law, this human form of life is specifically meant for self-realization, in either of the three ways-namely *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga*, or *bhakti-yoga*. There is no necessity of rigidly following the performances of the prescribed *yajñas* for the transcendentalists who are above vice and virtue; but those who are engaged in sense gratification require purification by the above-mentioned cycle of *yajña* performances. There are different kinds of activities. Those who are not Kṛṣṇa conscious are certainly engaged in sensory consciousness; therefore they need to execute pious work. The *yajña* system is planned in such a way that sensory conscious persons may satisfy their desires without becoming entangled in the reaction of sense-gratificatory work. The prosperity of the world depends not on our own efforts but on the background arrangement of the Supreme Lord, directly carried out by the demigods. Therefore, the *yajñas* are directly aimed at the particular demigod mentioned in the *Vedas*. Indirectly, it is the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, because when one masters the performance of *yajñas*, one is sure to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. But if by performing *yajñas* one does not become Kṛṣṇa conscious, such principles are counted as only moral codes.

One should not, therefore, limit his progress only to the point of moral codes, but should transcend them, to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 17

*yas tv ātma-ratir eva syād
ātma-tr̥ptaś ca mānavaḥ
ātmany eva ca santuṣṭaḥ
tasya kāryam na vidyate*

SYNONYMS

yah-one who; *tu*-but; *ātma-ratiḥ*-takes pleasure; *eva*-certainly; *syāt*-remains; *ātma-tr̥ptaḥ*-self-illuminated; *ca*-and; *mānavaḥ*-a man; *ātmani*-in himself; *eva*-only; *ca*-and; *santuṣṭaḥ*-perfectly satiated; *tasya*-his; *kāryam*-duty; *na*-does not; *vidyate*-exist.

TRANSLATION

One who is, however, taking pleasure in the self, who is illumined in the self, who rejoices in and is satisfied with the self only, fully satiated-for him there is no duty.

PURPORT

A person who is *fully* Kṛṣṇa conscious, and is fully satisfied by his acts in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, no longer has any duty to perform. Due to his being Kṛṣṇa conscious, all impiety within is instantly cleansed, an effect of many, many thousands of *yajña* performances. By such clearing of consciousness, one becomes fully confident of his eternal position in relationship with the Supreme. His duty thus becomes self-illuminated by the grace of the Lord, and therefore he no longer has any obligations to the Vedic injunctions. Such a Kṛṣṇa conscious person is no longer interested in material activities and no longer takes pleasure in material arrangements like wine, women and similar infatuations.

TEXT 18

*naiva tasya kṛtenārtho
nākṛteneha kaścana
na cāśya sarva-bhūteṣu
kaścīd artha-vyapāśrayaḥ*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *eva*-certainly; *tasya*-his; *kṛtena*-by discharge of duty; *arthaḥ*-purpose; *na*-nor; *akṛtena*-without discharge of duty; *iha*-in this world; *kaścana*-whatever; *na*-never; *ca*-and; *asya*-of him; *sarva-bhūteṣu* -in all living beings; *kaścīd*-any; *artha*-purpose; *vyapa-āśrayaḥ*-taking shelter of.

TRANSLATION

A self-realized man has no purpose to fulfill in the discharge of his prescribed duties, nor has he any reason not to perform such work. Nor has he any need to depend on any other living being.

PURPORT

A self-realized man is no longer obliged to perform any prescribed duty, save and except activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not inactivity either, as will be explained in the following verses. A Kṛṣṇa conscious man does not take shelter of any person-man or demigod. Whatever he does in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is sufficient in the discharge of his obligation.

TEXT 19

*tasmād asaktaḥ satatam
kāryam karma samācara
asakto hy ācāraṇ karma
param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ*

SYNONYMS

tasmāt-therefore; *asaktaḥ*-without attachment; *satatam*-constantly; *kāryam*-as duty; *karma*-work; *samācara*-perform; *asaktaḥ*-nonattachment; *hi*-certainly; *ācāra*-performing; *karma*-work; *param*-the Supreme; *āpnoti*-achieves; *pūruṣaḥ*-a man.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, without being attached to the fruits of activities, one should act as a matter of duty; for by working without attachment, one attains the Supreme.

PURPORT

The Supreme is the Personality of Godhead for the devotees, and liberation for the impersonalist. A person, therefore, acting for Kṛṣṇa, or in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, under proper guidance and without attachment to the result of the work, is certainly making progress toward the supreme goal of life. Arjuna is told that he should fight in the Battle of Kurukṣetra for the interest of Kṛṣṇa because Kṛṣṇa wanted him to fight. To be a good man or a nonviolent man is a personal attachment, but to act on behalf of the Supreme is to act without attachment for the result. That is perfect action of the highest degree, recommended by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Vedic rituals, like prescribed sacrifices, are performed for purification of impious activities that were performed in the field of sense gratification. But action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is transcendental to the reactions of good or evil work. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person has no attachment for the result but acts on behalf of Kṛṣṇa alone. He engages in all kinds of activities, but is completely nonattached.

TEXT 20

*karmaṇaiva hi saṁsiddhim
āsthītā janakādayaḥ
loka-saṅgraham evāpi
sampaśyan kartum arhasi*

SYNONYMS

karmaṇā-by work; *eva*-even; *hi*-certainly; *saṁsiddhim*-perfection; *āsthitāḥ*-situated; *janaka-ādayaḥ*-kings like Janaka and others; *loka-saṅgraham*-educating the people in general; *eva*-also; *api*-for the sake of; *sampaśyan*-by considering; *kartum*-to act; *arhasi*-deserve.

TRANSLATION

Even kings like Janaka and others attained the perfectional stage by performance of prescribed duties. Therefore, just for the sake of educating the people in general, you should perform your work.

PURPORT

Kings like Janaka and others were all self-realized souls; consequently they had no obligation to perform the prescribed duties in the *Vedas*. Nonetheless they performed all prescribed activities just to set examples for the people in general. Janaka was the father of Sītā, and father-in-law of Lord Śrī Rāma. Being a great devotee of the Lord, he was transcendently situated, but because he was the King of Mithila (a subdivision of Behar province in India), he had to teach his subjects how to fight righteously in battle. He and his subjects fought to teach people in general that violence is also necessary in a situation where good arguments fail. Before the Battle of Kurukṣetra, every effort was made to avoid the war, even by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but the other party was determined to fight. So for such a right cause, there is a necessity for fighting. Although one who is situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness may not have any interest in the world, he still works to teach the public how to live and how to act. Experienced persons in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can act in such a way that others will follow, and this is explained in the following verse.

TEXT 21

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas
tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇam kurute
lokaś tad anuvartate*

SYNONYMS

yat-whatever; *yat*-and whichever; *ācarati*-does he act; *śreṣṭhaḥ*-respectable leader; *tat*-that; *tat*-and that alone; *eva*-certainly; *itaraḥ*-common; *janaḥ*-person; *saḥ*-he; *yat*-whichever; *pramāṇam*-evidence; *kurute*-does perform; *lokaḥ*-all the world; *tat*-that; *anuvartate*-follow in the footsteps.

TRANSLATION

Whatever action is performed by a great man, common men follow in his footsteps. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.

PURPORT

People in general always require a leader who can teach the public by practical behavior. A leader cannot teach the public to stop smoking if he himself smokes. Lord Caitanya said that a teacher should behave properly even before he begins teaching. One who teaches in that way is called *ācārya*, or the ideal teacher. Therefore, a teacher must follow the principles of *śāstra* (scripture) to reach the common man. The teacher cannot manufacture rules against the principles of revealed scriptures. The revealed scriptures, like *Manu-saṁhitā* and similar others, are considered the standard books to be followed by human society. Thus the leader's teaching should be based on the principles of the standard rules as they are practiced by the great teachers. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also affirms that one should follow in the footsteps of great devotees, and that is the way of progress on the path of spiritual realization. The king or the executive head of a state, the father and the school teacher are all considered to be natural leaders of the innocent people in general. All such natural leaders have a great responsibility to their dependants; therefore they must be conversant with standard books of moral and spiritual codes.

TEXT 22

*na me pārthāsti kartavyam
triṣu lokeṣu kiñcana*

*nānavāptam avāptavyaṁ
varta eva ca karmaṇi*

SYNONYMS

na-none; *me*-Mine; *pārtha*-O son of Pṛthā; *asti*-there is; *kartavyam*-any prescribed duty; *triṣu*-in the three; *lokeṣu*-planetary systems; *kiñcana*-anything; *na*-no; *anavāptam*-in want; *avāptavyam*-to be gained; *varte*-engaged; *eva*-certainly; *ca*-also; *karmaṇi*-in one's prescribed duty.

TRANSLATION

O son of Pṛthā, there is no work prescribed for Me within all the three planetary systems. Nor am I in want of anything, nor have I need to obtain anything-and yet I am engaged in work.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is described in the Vedic literatures as follows:

*tam īśvarāṇām paramaṁ maheśvaram
tam devatānām paramaṁ ca daivatam
patim patinām paramaṁ parastād
vidāma devaṁ bhuvaneśam īḍyam

na tasya kāryaṁ karaṇaṁ ca vidyate
na tat-samaś cābhyadhikaś ca drśyate
parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate
svā-bhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca.*

"The Supreme Lord is the controller of all other controllers, and He is the greatest of all the diverse planetary leaders. Everyone is under His control. All entities are delegated with particular power only by the Supreme Lord; they are not supreme themselves. He is also worshipable by all demigods and is the supreme director of all directors. Therefore, He is transcendental to all kinds of material leaders and controllers and is worshipable by all. There is no one greater than Him, and He is the supreme cause of all causes.

"He does not possess bodily form like that of an ordinary living entity. There is no difference between His body and His soul. He is absolute. All His senses are transcendental. Any one of His senses can perform the action of any other sense. Therefore, no one is greater than Him or equal to Him. His potencies are multifarious, and thus His deeds are automatically performed as a natural sequence." (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.7-8)

Since everything is in full opulence in the Personality of Godhead and is existing in full truth, there is no duty for the Supreme Personality of Godhead to perform. One who must receive the results of work has some designated duty, but one who has nothing to achieve within the three planetary systems certainly has no duty. And yet Lord Kṛṣṇa is engaged on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra as the leader of the *kṣatriyas* because the *kṣatriyas* are duty-bound to give protection to the distressed. Although He is above all the regulations of the revealed scriptures, He does not do anything that violates the revealed scriptures.

TEXT 23

*yadi hy ahaṁ na varteyam
jātu karmaṇy atandritaḥ
mama vartmānuvartante
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

SYNONYMS

yadi-if; *hi*-certainly; *ahaṁ*-I; *na*-do not; *varteyam*-thus engage; *jātu*-ever; *karmaṇi*-in the performance of prescribed duties; *atandritaḥ*-with great care; *mama*-My; *vartma*-path; *anuvartante*-would follow; *manuṣyāḥ*-all men; *pārtha*-O son of Prthā; *sarvaśaḥ*-in all respects.

TRANSLATION

For, if I did not engage in work, O Pārtha, certainly all men would follow My path.

PURPORT

In order to keep the balance of social tranquility for progress in spiritual life, there are traditional family usages meant for every civilized man. Although such rules and regulations are for the conditioned souls and not Lord Kṛṣṇa, because He descended to establish the principles of religion, He followed the prescribed rules. Otherwise, common men would follow in His footsteps because He is the greatest authority. From the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is understood that Lord Kṛṣṇa was performing all the religious duties at home and out of home, as required of a householder.

TEXT 24

*utsīdeyur ime lokā
na kuryām karma ced aham
saṅkarasya ca kartā syām
upahanyām imāḥ prajāḥ*

SYNONYMS

utsīdeyuh-put into ruin; *ime*-all these; *lokāḥ*-worlds; *na*-do not; *kuryām*-perform; *karma*-prescribed duties; *ced*-if; *aham*-I; *saṅkarasya*-of unwanted population; *ca*-and; *kartā*-creator; *syām*-shall be; *upahanyām*-destroy; *imāḥ*-all these; *prajāḥ*-living entities.

TRANSLATION

If I should cease to work, then all these worlds would be put to ruination. I would also be the cause of creating unwanted population, and I would thereby destroy the peace of all sentient beings.

PURPORT

Varṇa-saṅkara is unwanted population which disturbs the peace of the general society. In order to check this social disturbance, there are prescribed rules and regulations by which the population can automatically become peaceful and organized for spiritual progress in life. When Lord Kṛṣṇa descends, naturally He deals with such rules and regulations in order to maintain the prestige and necessity of such important performances. The

Lord is the father of all living entities, and if the living entities are misguided, indirectly the responsibility goes to the Lord. Therefore, whenever there is general disregard of regulative principles, the Lord Himself descends and corrects the society. We should, however, note carefully that although we have to follow in the footsteps of the Lord, we still have to remember that we cannot imitate Him. Following and imitating are not on the same level. We cannot imitate the Lord by lifting Govardhana Hill, as the Lord did in His childhood. It is impossible for any human being. We have to follow His instructions, but we may not imitate Him at any time. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* affirms:

*naitat samācarej jātu manasāpi hy anīśvaraḥ
vinaśyaty ācaran mauḍhyād yathā 'rudro 'bdhijaṁ viṣam
īśvaraṇām vacaḥ satyaṁ tathaivācaritaṁ kvacit
teṣāṁ yat sva-vaco yuktaṁ buddhimāṁs tat samācaret*

"One should simply follow the instructions of the Lord and His empowered servants. Their instructions are all good for us, and any intelligent person will perform them as instructed. However, one should guard against trying to imitate their actions. One should not try to drink the ocean of poison in imitation of Lord Śiva." (*Bhāg.* 10.33.30)

We should always consider the position of the *īśvaras*, or those who can actually control the movements of the sun and moon, as superior. Without such power, one cannot imitate the *īśvaras*, who are superpowerful. Lord Śiva drank poison to the extent of swallowing an ocean, but if any common man tries to drink even a fragment of such poison, he will be killed. There are many pseudo-devotees of Lord Śiva who want to indulge in smoking *gāñjā* (marijuana) and similar intoxicating drugs, forgetting that by so imitating the acts of Lord Śiva they are calling death very near. Similarly, there are some pseudo-devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa who prefer to imitate the Lord in His *rāsa-līlā*, or dance of love, forgetting their inability to lift Govardhana Hill. It is best, therefore, that one not try to imitate the powerful, but simply follow their instructions; nor should one try to occupy their posts without qualification. There are so many "incarnations" of God without the power of the Supreme Godhead.

TEXT 25

*saktāḥ karmaṇy avidvāṁso
yathā kurvanti bhārata
kuryād vidvāṁs tathāsaktaś
cikīrṣur loka-saṅgraham*

SYNONYMS

saktāḥ-being attached; *karmaṇi*-prescribed duties; *avidvāṁsaḥ*-the ignorant; *yathā*-as much as; *kurvanti*-do it; *bhārata*-O descendant of Bharata; *kuryāt*-must do; *vidvān*-the learned; *tathā*-thus; *asaktaḥ*-without attachment; *cikīrṣuḥ*-desiring to; *loka-saṅgraham*-leading the people in general.

TRANSLATION

As the ignorant perform their duties with attachment to results, similarly the learned may also act, but without attachment, for the sake of leading people on the right path.

PURPORT

A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and a person not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are differentiated by different desires. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not do anything which is not conducive to development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He may even act exactly like the ignorant person, who is too much attached to material activities, but one is engaged in such activities for the satisfaction of his sense gratification, whereas the other is engaged for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, the Kṛṣṇa conscious person is required to show the people how to act and how to engage the results of action for the purpose of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 26

*na buddhi-bhedam janayed
ajñānām karma-saṅginām
joṣayet sarva-karmāṇi*

vidvān yuktaḥ samācāraṇ

SYNONYMS

na-do not; *buddhi-bhedam*-disrupt the intelligence; *janayet*-do; *ajñānām*-of the foolish; *karma-saṅginām*-attached to fruitive work; *joṣayet*-dovetailed; *sarva*-all; *karmāṇi*-work; *vidvān*-learned; *yuktaḥ*-all engaged; *samācāraṇ*-practicing.

TRANSLATION

Let not the wise disrupt the minds of the ignorant who are attached to fruitive action. They should not be encouraged to refrain from work, but to engage in work in the spirit of devotion.

PURPORT

Vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah: that is the end of all Vedic rituals. All rituals, all performances of sacrifices, and everything that is put into the *Vedas*, including all directions for material activities, are meant for understanding Kṛṣṇa, who is the ultimate goal of life. But because the conditioned souls do not know anything beyond sense gratification, they study the *Vedas* to that end. Through sense regulations, however, one is gradually elevated to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore a realized soul in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should not disturb others in their activities or understanding, but he should act by showing how the results of all work can be dedicated to the service of Kṛṣṇa. The learned Kṛṣṇa conscious person may act in such a way that the ignorant person working for sense gratification may learn how to act and how to behave. Although the ignorant man is not to be disturbed in his activities, still, a slightly developed Kṛṣṇa conscious person may directly be engaged in the service of the Lord without waiting for other Vedic formulas. For this fortunate man there is no need to follow the Vedic rituals, because in direct Kṛṣṇa consciousness one can have all the results simply by following the prescribed duties of a particular person.

TEXT 27

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni
guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā
kartāham iti manyate*

SYNONYMS

prakṛteḥ-of material nature; *kriyamāṇāni*-all being done; *guṇaiḥ*-by the modes; *karmāṇi*-activities; *sarvaśaḥ*-all kinds of; *ahaṅkāra-vimūḍha*-bewildered by false ego; *ātmā*-the spirit soul; *kartā*-doer; *aham*-I; *iti*-thus; *manyate*-thinks.

TRANSLATION

The bewildered spirit soul, under the influence of the three modes of material nature, thinks himself to be the doer of activities, which are in actuality carried out by nature.

PURPORT

Two persons, one in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the other in material consciousness, working on the same level, may appear to be working on the same platform, but there is a wide gulf of difference in their respective positions. The person in material consciousness is convinced by false ego that he is the doer of everything. He does not know that the mechanism of the body is produced by material nature, which works under the supervision of the Supreme Lord. The materialistic person has no knowledge that ultimately he is under the control of Kṛṣṇa. The person in false ego takes all credit for doing everything independantly, and that is the symptom of his nescience. He does not know that this gross and subtle body is the creation of material nature, under the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and as such his bodily and mental activities should be engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The ignorant man forgets that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is known as Hṛṣīkeśa, or the master of the senses of the material body, for due to his long misuse of the senses in sense

gratification, he is factually bewildered by the false ego, which makes him forget his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 28

*tattva-vit tu mahā-bāho
guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ
guṇā guṇeṣu vartanta
iti matvā na sajjate*

SYNONYMS

tattvavit-the knower of the Absolute Truth; *tu*-but; *mahā-bāho*-O mighty-armed one; *guṇa-karma*-works under material influence; *vibhāgayoḥ*-differences; *guṇāḥ*-senses; *guṇeṣu*-in sense gratification; *vartante*-being engaged; *iti*-thus; *matvā*-thinking; *na*-never; *sajjate*-becomes attached.

TRANSLATION

One who is in knowledge of the Absolute Truth, O mighty-armed, does not engage himself in the senses and sense gratification, knowing well the differences between work in devotion and work for fruitive results.

PURPORT

The knower of the Absolute Truth is convinced of his awkward position in material association. He knows that he is part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, and that his position should not be in the material creation. He knows his real identity as part and parcel of the Supreme, who is eternal bliss and knowledge, and he realizes that somehow or other he is entrapped in the material conception of life. In his pure state of existence he is meant to dovetail his activities in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. He therefore engages himself in the activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and becomes naturally unattached to the activities of the material senses, which are all circumstantial and temporary. He knows that his material condition of life is under the supreme

control of the Lord; consequently he is not disturbed by all kinds of material reactions, which he considers to be the mercy of the Lord. According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, one who knows the Absolute Truth in three different features-namely Brahman, Paramātmā, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead-is called *tattvavit*, for he knows also his own factual position in relationship with the Supreme.

TEXT 29

*prakṛter guṇa-sammūḍhāḥ
sajjante guṇa-karmasu
tān akṛtsna-vido mandān
kṛtsna-vin na vicālayet*

SYNONYMS

prakṛteḥ-impelled by the material modes; *guṇa-sammūḍhāḥ*-befooled by material identification; *sajjante*-become engaged; *guṇa-karmasu*-in material activities; *tān*-all those; *akṛtsna-vidaḥ*-persons with a poor fund of knowledge; *mandān*-lazy to understand self-realization; *kṛtsna-vit*-one who is in factual knowledge; *na*-may not; *vicālayet*-try to agitate.

TRANSLATION

Bewildered by the modes of material nature, the ignorant fully engage themselves in material activities and become attached. But the wise should not unsettle them, although these duties are inferior due to the performers' lack of knowledge.

PURPORT

Persons who are unknowledgeable falsely identify with gross material consciousness and are full of material designations. This body is a gift of the material nature, and one who is too much attached to the bodily consciousness is called *mandān*, or a lazy person without understanding of spirit soul. Ignorant men think of the body as the self; bodily connections with others are accepted as kinsmanship; the land in which the body is

obtained is the object of worship; and the formalities of religious rituals are considered ends in themselves. Social work, nationalism, and altruism are some of the activities for such materially designated persons. Under the spell of such designations, they are always busy in the material field; for them spiritual realization is a myth, and so they are not interested. Such bewildered persons may even be engaged in such primary moral principles of life as nonviolence and similar materially benevolent work. Those who are, however, enlightened in spiritual life, should not try to agitate such materially engrossed persons. Better to prosecute one's own spiritual activities silently.

Men who are ignorant cannot appreciate activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa advises us not to disturb them and simply waste valuable time. But the devotees of the Lord are more kind than the Lord because they understand the purpose of the Lord. Consequently they undertake all kinds of risks, even to the point of approaching ignorant men to try to engage them in the acts of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which are absolutely necessary for the human being.

TEXT 30

*mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi
sannyasyādhyātma-cetasā
nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā
yudhyasva vigata-jvaraḥ*

SYNONYMS

mayi-unto Me; *sarvāṇi*-all sorts of; *karmāṇi*-activities; *sannyasya*-giving up completely; *ādhyātma*-with full knowledge of the self; *cetasā*-consciousness; *nirāśīr*-without desire for profit; *nirmamaḥ*-without ownership; *bhūtvā*-so being; *yudhyasva*-fight; *vigata-jvaraḥ*-without being lethargic.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O Arjuna, surrendering all your works unto Me, with mind intent on Me, and without desire for gain and free from egoism and lethargy, fight.

PURPORT

This verse clearly indicates the purpose of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The Lord instructs that one has to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious to discharge duties, as if in military discipline. Such an injunction may make things a little difficult; nevertheless duties must be carried out, with dependence on Kṛṣṇa, because that is the constitutional position of the living entity. The living entity cannot be happy independent of the cooperation of the Supreme Lord because the eternal constitutional position of the living entity is to become subordinate to the desires of the Lord. Arjuna was, therefore, ordered by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to fight as if the Lord were his military commander. One has to sacrifice everything for the good will of the Supreme Lord, and at the same time discharge prescribed duties without claiming proprietorship. Arjuna did not have to consider the order of the Lord; he had only to execute His order. The Supreme Lord is the Soul of all souls; therefore, one who depends solely and wholly on the Supreme Soul without personal consideration, or in other words, one who is fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, is called *adhyātma-cetasā*. *Nirāśīḥ* means that one has to act on the order of the master. Nor should one ever expect fruitive results. The cashier may count millions of dollars for his employer, but he does not claim a cent for himself. Similarly, one has to realize that nothing in the world belongs to any individual person, but that everything belongs to the Supreme Lord. That is the real purport of *mayi*, or unto Me. And when one acts in such Kṛṣṇa consciousness, certainly he does not claim proprietorship over anything. This consciousness is called *nirmama*, or nothing is mine. And, if there is any reluctance to execute such a stern order which is without consideration of so-called kinsmen in the bodily relationship, that reluctance should be thrown off; in this way one may become *vigata-jvara*, or without feverish mentality or lethargy. Everyone, according to his quality and position, has a particular type of work to discharge, and all such duties may be discharged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as described above. That will lead one to the path of liberation.

TEXT 31

*ye me matam idam nityam
anutiṣṭhanti mānavāḥ
śraddhāvanto 'nasūyanto
mucyante te 'pi karmabhiḥ*

SYNONYMS

ye-those; *me*-My; *matam*-injunctions; *idam*-this; *nityam*-eternal function; *anutiṣṭhanti*-execute regularly; *mānavāḥ*-humankind; *śraddhāvantaḥ*-with faith and devotion; *anasūyantaḥ*-without envy; *mucyante*-become free; *te*-all of them; *api*-even; *karmabhiḥ*-from the bondage of the law of fruitive action.

TRANSLATION

One who executes his duties according to My injunctions and who follows this teaching faithfully, without envy, becomes free from the bondage of fruitive actions.

PURPORT

The injunction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the essence of all Vedic wisdom, and therefore is eternally true without exception. As the *Vedas* are eternal, so this truth of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is also eternal. One should have firm faith in this injunction, without envying the Lord. There are many philosophers who write comments on the *Bhagavad-gītā* but have no faith in Kṛṣṇa. They will never be liberated from the bondage of fruitive action. But an ordinary man with firm faith in the eternal injunctions of the Lord, even though unable to execute such orders, becomes liberated from the bondage of the law of *karma*. In the beginning of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one may not fully discharge the injunctions of the Lord, but because one is not resentful of this principle and works sincerely without consideration of defeat and hopelessness, he will surely be promoted to the stage of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 32

*ye tv etad abhyasūyanto
nānutiṣṭhanti me matam
sarva-jñāna-vimūḍhāṁs tān
viddhi naṣṭān acetasaḥ*

SYNONYMS

ye-those; *tu*-however; *etat*-this; *abhyasūyantaḥ*-out of envy; *na*-do not; *anutīṣṭhanti*-regularly perform; *me*-My; *matam*-injunction; *sarva-jñāna*-all sorts of knowledge; *vimūḍhān*-perfectly befooled; *tān*-they are; *viddhi*-know it well; *naṣṭān*-all ruined; *acetasaḥ*-without Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TRANSLATION

But those who, out of envy, disregard these teachings and do not practice them regularly, are to be considered bereft of all knowledge, befooled, and doomed to ignorance and bondage.

PURPORT

The flaw of not being Kṛṣṇa conscious is clearly stated herein. As there is punishment for disobedience to the order of the supreme executive head, so there is certainly punishment for the disobedience of the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A disobedient person, however great he may be, is ignorant of his own self, of the Supreme Brahman, and Paramātmā and the Personality of Godhead, due to a vacant heart. Therefore there is no hope of perfection of life for him.

TEXT 33

*sadrśaṁ ceṣṭate svasyāḥ
prakṛter jñānavān api
prakṛtiṁ yānti bhūtāni
nigrahaḥ kiṁ kariṣyati*

SYNONYMS

sadṛśam-accordingly; *ceṣṭate*-tries; *svasyāḥ*-in one's own nature; *prakṛteḥ*-modes; *jñānavān*-the learned; *api*-although; *prakṛtim*-nature; *yānti*-undergo; *bhūtāni*-all living entities; *nigrahaḥ*-suppression; *kim*-what; *kariṣyati*-can do.

TRANSLATION

Even a man of knowledge acts according to his own nature, for everyone follows his nature. What can repression accomplish?

PURPORT

Unless one is situated on the transcendental platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he cannot get free from the influence of the modes of material nature, as it is confirmed by the Lord in the Seventh Chapter (7.14). Therefore, even for the most highly educated person on the mundane plane, it is impossible to get out of the entanglement of *māyā* simply by theoretical knowledge, or by separating the soul from the body. There are many so-called spiritualists who outwardly pose to be advanced in the science, but inwardly or privately are completely under the particular modes of nature which they are unable to surpass. Academically, one may be very learned, but because of his long association with material nature, he is in bondage. Kṛṣṇa consciousness helps one to get out of the material entanglement, even though one may be engaged in his prescribed duties. Therefore, without being fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, no one should suddenly give up his prescribed duties and become a so-called *yogī* or transcendentalist artificially. It is better to be situated in one's position and to try to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness under superior training. Thus one may be freed from the clutches of *māyā*.

TEXT 34

*indriyasyendriyasyārthe
rāga-dveṣau vyavasthitau
tayo na vaśam āgacchet*

tau hy asya paripanthinau

SYNONYMS

indriyasya-of the senses; *indriyasya arthe*-in the sense objects; *rāga*-attachment; *dveṣau*-also in detachment; *vyavasthitau*-put under regulations; *tayoḥ*-of them; *na*-never; *vaśam*-control; *āgacchet*-one should come; *tau*-those; *hi*-certainly are; *asya*-his; *paripanthinau*-stumbling blocks.

TRANSLATION

Attraction and repulsion for sense objects are felt by embodied beings, but one should not fall under the control of senses and sense objects because they are stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization.

PURPORT

Those who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are naturally reluctant to engage in material sense gratifications. But those who are not in such consciousness should follow the rules and regulations of the revealed scriptures. Unrestricted sense enjoyment is the cause of material encagement, but one who follows the rules and regulations of the revealed scriptures does not become entangled by the sense objects. For example, sex enjoyment is a necessity for the conditioned soul, and sex enjoyment is allowed under the license of marriage ties. For example, according to scriptural injunctions, one is forbidden to engage in sex relationships with any women other than one's wife. All other women are to be considered as one's mother. But, in spite of such injunctions, a man is still inclined to have sex relationships with other women. These propensities are to be curbed; otherwise they will be stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization. As long as the material body is there, the necessities of the material body are allowed, but under rules and regulations. And yet, we should not rely upon the control of such allowances. One has to follow those rules and regulations, unattached to them, because practice of sense gratifications under regulations may also lead one to go astray-as much as there is always the chance of an accident, even on the royal roads. Although they may be very carefully maintained,

no one can guarantee that there will be no danger even on the safest road. The sense enjoyment spirit has been current a very long, long time, owing to material association. Therefore, in spite of regulated sense enjoyment, there is every chance of falling down; therefore any attachment for regulated sense enjoyment must also be avoided by all means. But action in the loving service of Kṛṣṇa detaches one from all kinds of sensory activities. Therefore, no one should try to be detached from Kṛṣṇa consciousness at any stage of life. The whole purpose of detachment from all kinds of sense attachment is ultimately to become situated on the platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 35

*śreyān sva-dharmo viguṇaḥ
para-dharmāt sv-anuṣṭhitāt
sva-dharme nidhanam śreyaḥ
para-dharmo bhayāvahaḥ*

SYNONYMS

śreyān-far better; *sva-dharmaḥ*-one's prescribed duties; *viguṇaḥ*-even faulty; *para-dharmāt*-from duties mentioned for others; *svanuṣṭhitāt*-than perfectly done; *sva-dharme*-in one's prescribed duties; *nidhanam*-destruction; *śreyaḥ*-better; *para-dharmaḥ*-duties prescribed for others; *bhaya-āvahaḥ*-dangerous.

TRANSLATION

It is far better to discharge one's prescribed duties, even though they may be faulty, than another's duties. Destruction in the course of performing one's own duty is better than engaging in another's duties, for to follow another's path is dangerous.

PURPORT

One should therefore discharge his prescribed duties in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness rather than those prescribed for others. Prescribed duties

complement one's psychophysical condition, under the spell of the modes of material nature. Spiritual duties are as ordered by the spiritual master, for the transcendental service of Kṛṣṇa. But both materially or spiritually, one should stick to his prescribed duties even up to death, rather than imitate another's prescribed duties. Duties on the spiritual platform and duties on the material platform may be different, but the principle of following the authorized direction is always good for the performer. When one is under the spell of the modes of material nature, one should follow the prescribed rules for particular situations and should not imitate others. For example, a *brāhmaṇa*, who is in the mode of goodness, is nonviolent, whereas a *kṣatriya*, who is in the mode of passion, is allowed to be violent. As such, for a *kṣatriya* it is better to be vanquished following the rules of violence than to imitate a *brāhmaṇa* who follows the principles of nonviolence. Everyone has to cleanse his heart by a gradual process, not abruptly. However, when one transcends the modes of material nature and is fully situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he can perform anything and everything under the direction of the bona fide spiritual master. In that complete stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the *kṣatriya* may act as a *brāhmaṇa*, or a *brāhmaṇa* may act as a *kṣatriya*. In the transcendental stage, the distinctions of the material world do not apply. For example, Viśvāmitra was originally a *kṣatriya*, but later on he acted as a *brāhmaṇa*, whereas Paraśurāma was a *brāhmaṇa*, but later on he acted as a *kṣatriya*. Being transcendently situated, they could do so; but as long as one is on the material platform, he must perform his duties according to the modes of material nature. At the same time, he must have a full sense of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 36

arjuna uvāca
atha kena prayukto 'yam
pāpaṁ carati pūruṣaḥ
anicchann api vārṣṇeya
balād iva niyojitaḥ

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca-Arjuna said; *atha*-hereafter; *kena*-by what; *prayuktaḥ*-impelled; *ayam*-one; *pāpam*-sins; *carati*-acts; *pūruṣaḥ*-a man; *anicchan-*without desiring; *api*-although; *vārṣṇeya*-O descendant of Vṛṣṇi; *balāt*-by force; *iva*-as if; *niyojitaḥ*-engaged.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O descendant of Vṛṣṇi, by what is one impelled to sinful acts, even unwillingly, as if engaged by force?

PURPORT

A living entity, as part and parcel of the Supreme, is originally spiritual, pure, and free from all material contaminations. Therefore, by nature he is not subjected to the sins of the material world. But when he is in contact with the material nature, he acts in many sinful ways without hesitation, and sometimes even against his will. As such, Arjuna's question to Kṛṣṇa is very sanguine, as to the perverted nature of the living entities. Although the living entity sometimes does not want to act in sin, he is still forced to act. Sinful actions are not, however, impelled by the Supersoul within, but are due to another cause, as the Lord explains in the next verse.

TEXT 37

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
kāma eṣa krodha eṣa
rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ
mahāśano mahā-pāpmā
viddhy enam iha vairiṇam

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Personality of Godhead said; *kāmaḥ*-lust; *eṣaḥ*-all these; *krodhaḥ*-wrath; *eṣaḥ*-all these; *rajo-guṇa*-the mode of passion; *samudbhavaḥ*-born of; *mahā-śanaḥ*-all-devouring; *mahā-pāpmā*-greatly sinful; *viddhi*-know; *enam*-this; *iha*-in the material world; *vairiṇam*-greatest enemy.

TRANSLATION

The Blessed Lord said: It is lust only, Arjuna, which is born of contact with the material modes of passion and later transformed into wrath, and which is the all-devouring, sinful enemy of this world.

PURPORT

When a living entity comes in contact with the material creation, his eternal love for Kṛṣṇa is transformed into lust, in association with the mode of passion. Or, in other words, the sense of love of God becomes transformed into lust, as milk in contact with sour tamarind is transformed into yogurt. Then again, when lust is unsatisfied, it turns into wrath; wrath is transformed into illusion, and illusion continues the material existence. Therefore, lust is the greatest enemy of the living entity, and it is lust only which induces the pure living entity to remain entangled in the material world. Wrath is the manifestation of the mode of ignorance; these modes exhibit themselves as wrath and other corollaries. If, therefore, the modes of passion, instead of being degraded into the modes of ignorance, are elevated to the modes of goodness by the prescribed method of living and acting, then one can be saved from the degradation of wrath by spiritual attachment.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead expanded Himself into many for His ever-increasing spiritual bliss, and the living entities are parts and parcels of this spiritual bliss. They also have partial independence, but by misuse of their independence, when the service attitude is transformed into the propensity for sense enjoyment, they come under the sway of lust. This material creation is created by the Lord to give a facility to the conditioned souls to fulfill these lustful propensities, and when they are completely baffled by prolonged lustful activities, the living entities begin to inquire about their real position.

This inquiry is the beginning of the *Vedānta-sūtras*, wherein it is said, *athāto brahma-jijñāsā*: one should inquire into the Supreme. And the Supreme is defined in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as *janmādyasya yato 'nvayād itarataś ca*, or, "The origin of everything is the Supreme Brahman." Therefore, the origin of lust is also in the Supreme. If, therefore, lust is

transformed into love for the Supreme, or transformed into Kṛṣṇa consciousness-or, in other words, desiring everything for Kṛṣṇa-then both lust and wrath can be spiritualized. Hanumān, the great servitor of Lord Rama, engaged his wrath upon his enemies for the satisfaction of the Lord. Therefore, lust and wrath, when they are employed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, become our friends instead of our enemies.

TEXT 38

*dhūmenāvriyate vahnir
yathādarśo malena ca
yatholbenāvṛto garbhas
tathā tenedam āvṛtam*

SYNONYMS

dhūmena-by smoke; *āvriyate*-covered; *vahnir*-fire; *yathā*-just as; *adarśaḥ*-mirror; *malena*-by dust; *ca*-also; *yathā*-just as; *ulbena*-by the womb; *āvṛtaḥ*-is covered; *garbhaḥ*-embryo; *tathā*-so; *tena*-by that lust; *idam*-this; *āvṛtam*-is covered.

TRANSLATION

As fire is covered by smoke, as a mirror is covered by dust, or as the embryo is covered by the womb, similarly, the living entity is covered by different degrees of this lust.

PURPORT

There are three degrees of covering of the living entity by which his pure consciousness is obscured. This covering is but lust under different manifestations like smoke in the fire, dust on the mirror, and the womb about the embryo. When lust is compared to smoke, it is understood that the fire of the living spark can be a little perceived. In other words, when the living entity exhibits his Kṛṣṇa consciousness slightly, he may be likened to the fire covered by smoke. Although fire is necessary where there is smoke, there is no overt manifestation of fire in the early stage. This stage is like

the beginning of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The dust on the mirror refers to a cleansing process of the mirror of the mind by so many spiritual methods. The best process is to chant the holy names of the Lord. The embryo covered by the womb is an analogy illustrating a helpless position, for the child in the womb is so helpless that he cannot even move. This stage of living condition can be compared to that of the trees. The trees are also living entities, but they have been put in such a condition of life by such a great exhibition of lust that they are almost void of all consciousness. The covered mirror is compared to the birds and beasts, and the smoke covered fire is compared to the human being. In the form of a human being, the living entity may revive a little Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and, if he makes further development, the fire of spiritual life can be kindled in the human form of life. By careful handling of the smoke in the fire, the fire can be made to blaze. Therefore the human form of life is a chance for the living entity to escape the entanglement of material existence. In the human form of life, one can conquer the enemy, lust, by cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness under able guidance.

TEXT 39

*āvṛtaṁ jñānam etena
jñānino nitya-vairiṇā
kāma-rūpeṇa kaunteya
duṣpūreṇānalena ca*

SYNONYMS

āvṛtam-covered; *jñānam*-pure consciousness; *etena*-by this; *jñāninaḥ*-of the knower; *nitya-vairiṇā*-eternal enemy; *kāma-rūpeṇa*-in the form of lust; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *duṣpūreṇa*-never to be satisfied; *analena*-by the fire; *ca*-also.

TRANSLATION

Thus, a man's pure consciousness is covered by his eternal enemy in the form of lust, which is never satisfied and which burns like fire.

PURPORT

It is said in the *Manu-smṛti* that lust cannot be satisfied by any amount of sense enjoyment, just as fire is never extinguished by a constant supply of fuel. In the material world, the center of all activities is sex, and thus this material world is called *maithuṇya-āgāra*, or the shackles of sex life. In the ordinary prison house, criminals are kept within bars; similarly, the criminals who are disobedient to the laws of the Lord are shackled by sex life. Advancement of material civilization on the basis of sense gratification means increasing the duration of the material existence of a living entity. Therefore, this lust is the symbol of ignorance by which the living entity is kept within the material world. While one enjoys sense gratification, it may be that there is some feeling of happiness, but actually that so-called feeling of happiness is the ultimate enemy of the sense enjoyer.

TEXT 40

*indriyāṇi mano buddhir
asyādhiṣṭhānam ucyate
etaiḥ vimohayaty eṣa
jñānam āvṛtya dehinam*

indriyāṇi-the senses; *manaḥ*-the mind; *buddhiḥ*-the intelligence; *asya*-of the lust; *adhiṣṭhānam*-sitting place; *ucyate*-called; *etaiḥ*-by all these; *vimohayati*-bewilders; *eṣaḥ*-of this; *jñānam*-knowledge; *āvṛtya*-covering; *dehinam*-the embodied.

TRANSLATION

The senses, the mind and the intelligence are the sitting places of this lust, which veils the real knowledge of the living entity and bewilders him.

PURPORT

The enemy has captured different strategic positions in the body of the conditioned soul, and therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa is giving hints of those places, so that one who wants to conquer the enemy may know where he can be

found. Mind is the center of all the activities of the senses, and thus the mind is the reservoir of all ideas of sense gratification; and, as a result, the mind and the senses become the repositories of lust. Next, the intelligence department becomes the capital of such lustful propensities. Intelligence is the immediate next-door neighbor of the spirit soul. Lusty intelligence influences the spirit soul to acquire the false ego and identify itself with matter, and thus with the mind and senses. The spirit soul becomes addicted to enjoying the material senses and mistakes this as true happiness. This false identification of the spirit soul is very nicely explained in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*yasyātmā-buddhiḥ kuṇāpe tri-dhātuke
sva-dhīḥ kalatrādiṣu bhauma idyadhīḥ
yat-tīrtha-buddhiḥ salite na karhicij
janeṣv abhijñeṣu sa eva gokharaḥ.*

"A human being who identifies this body made of three elements with his self, who considers the by-products of the body to be his kinsmen, who considers the land of birth as worshipable, and who goes to the place of pilgrimage simply to take a bath rather than meet men of transcendental knowledge there, is to be considered as an ass or a cow."

TEXT 41

*tasmāt tvam indriyāṇy ādau
niyamyā bharatarṣabha
pāpmānaṁ prajahi hy enaṁ
jñāna-vijñāna-nāśanam*

SYNONYMS

tasmāt-therefore; *tvam*-you; *indriyāṇi*-senses; *ādau*-in the beginning; *niyamyā*-by regulating; *bharatarṣabha*-O chief amongst the descendants of Bharata; *pāpmānaṁ*-the great symbol of sin; *prajahi*-curb; *hi*-certainly; *enaṁ*-this; *jñāna*-knowledge; *vijñāna*-scientific knowledge of the pure soul; *nāśanam*-destroyer.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O Arjuna, best of the Bhāratas, in the very beginning curb this great symbol of sin [lust] by regulating the senses, and slay this destroyer of knowledge and self-realization.

PURPORT

The Lord advised Arjuna to regulate the senses from the very beginning so that he could curb the greatest sinful enemy, lust, which destroys the urge for self-realization, and specifically, knowledge of the self. *Jñānam* refers to knowledge of self as distinguished from non-self, or, in other words, knowledge that the spirit soul is not the body. *Vijñānam* refers to specific knowledge of the spirit soul and knowledge of one's constitutional position and his relationship to the Supreme Soul. It is explained thus in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: *jñānam parama-guhyam me yad-vijñāna-samanvitam / sarahasyam tad-aṅgam ca grhāṇa gaditam mayā*: "The knowledge of the self and the Supreme Self is very confidential and mysterious, being veiled by *māyā*, but such knowledge and specific realization can be understood if it is explained by the Lord Himself." *Bhagavad-gītā* gives us that knowledge, specifically knowledge of the self. The living entities are parts and parcels of the Lord, and therefore they are simply meant to serve the Lord. This consciousness is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. So, from the very beginning of life one has to learn this Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and thereby one may become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious and act accordingly.

Lust is only the perverted reflection of the love of God which is natural for every living entity. But if one is educated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness from the very beginning, that natural love of God cannot deteriorate into lust. When love of God deteriorates into lust, it is very difficult to return to the normal condition. Nonetheless, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is so powerful that even a late beginner can become a lover of God by following the regulative principles of devotional service. So, from any stage of life, or from the time of understanding its urgency, one can begin regulating the senses in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotional service of the Lord, and turn the lust into love of Godhead-the highest perfectional stage of human life.

TEXT 42

*indriyāṇi parāṇy āhur
indriyebhyaḥ param manaḥ
manasas tu parā buddhir
yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ*

SYNONYMS

indriyāṇī-senses; *parāṇi*-superior; *āhuḥ*-is said; *indriyebhyaḥ*-more than the senses; *param*-superior; *manaḥ*-the mind; *manasaḥ*-more than the mind; *tu*-also; *parā*-superior; *buddhiḥ*-intelligence; *yaḥ*-one which; *buddheḥ*-more than the intelligence; *parataḥ*-superior; *tu*-but; *saḥ*-he.

TRANSLATION

The working senses are superior to dull matter; mind is higher than the senses; intelligence is still higher than the mind; and he [the soul] is even higher than the intelligence.

PURPORT

The senses are different outlets for the activities of lust. Lust is reserved within the body, but it is given vent through the senses. Therefore, the senses are superior to the body as a whole. These outlets are not in use when there is superior consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness the soul makes direct connection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead; therefore the bodily functions, as described here, ultimately end in the Supreme Soul. Bodily action means the functions of the senses, and stopping the senses means stopping all bodily actions. But since the mind is active, then, even though the body may be silent and at rest, the mind will act-as it does during dreaming. But, above the mind there is the determination of the intelligence, and above the intelligence is the soul proper. If, therefore, the soul is directly engaged with the Supreme, naturally all other subordinates, namely, the intelligence, mind and the senses, will be automatically engaged. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* there is a passage in which it is said that the objects of sense gratification are superior

to the senses, and mind is superior to the sense objects. If, therefore, the mind is directly engaged in the service of the Lord constantly, then there is no chance of the senses becoming engaged in other ways. This mental attitude has already been explained. If the mind is engaged in the transcendental service of the Lord, there is no chance of its being engaged in the lower propensities. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* the soul has been described as *mahān*, the great. Therefore the soul is above all—namely, the sense objects, the senses, the mind and the intelligence. Therefore, directly understanding the constitutional position of the soul is the solution of the whole problem.

With intelligence one has to seek out the constitutional position of the soul and then engage the mind always in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That solves the whole problem. A neophyte spiritualist is generally advised to keep aloof from the objects of senses. One has to strengthen the mind by use of intelligence. If by intelligence one engages one's mind in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, by complete surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then, automatically, the mind becomes stronger, and even though the senses are very strong, like serpents, they will be no more effective than serpents with broken fangs. But even though the soul is the master of intelligence and mind, and the senses also, still, unless it is strengthened by association with Kṛṣṇa in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is every chance of falling down due to the agitated mind.

TEXT 43

*evam buddheḥ param buddhvā
saṁstabhyātmānam ātmanā
jahi śatrum mahā-bāho
kāma-rūpaṁ durāsadam*

SYNONYMS

evam—thus; *buddheḥ*—of intelligence; *param*—superior; *buddhvā*—so knowing; *saṁstabhya*—by steadying; *ātmānam*—the mind; *ātmanā*—by deliberate intelligence; *jahi*—conquer; *śatrum*—the enemy; *mahā-bāho*—O mighty-armed one; *kāma-rūpaṁ*—the form of lust; *durāsadam*—formidable.

TRANSLATION

Thus knowing oneself to be transcendental to material senses, mind and intelligence, one should control the lower self by the higher self and thus-by spiritual strength-conquer this insatiable enemy known as lust.

PURPORT

This Third Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* is conclusively directive to Kṛṣṇa consciousness by knowing oneself as the eternal servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without considering impersonal voidness as the ultimate end. In the material existence of life, one is certainly influenced by propensities for lust and desire for dominating the resources of material nature. Desire for overlordship and sense gratification are the greatest enemies of the conditioned soul; but by the strength of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can control the material senses, the mind and the intelligence. One may not give up work and prescribed duties all of a sudden; but by gradually developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can be situated in a transcendental position without being influenced by the material senses and the mind-by steady intelligence directed toward one's pure identity. This is the sum total of this chapter. In the immature stage of material existence, philosophical speculations and artificial attempts to control the senses by the so-called practice of yogic postures can never help a man toward spiritual life. He must be trained in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by higher intelligence.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the Third Chapter of the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of Karma-yoga, or the Discharge of One's Prescribed Duty in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

4. Transcendental Knowledge

TEXT 1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
imam vivasvate yogam
proktavān aham avyayam
vivasvān manave prāha
manur ikṣvākave 'bravīt*

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *imam*-this; *vivasvate*-unto the sun-god; *yogam*-the science of one's relationship to the Supreme; *proktavān*-instructed; *aham*-I; *avyayam*-imperishable; *vivasvān*-Vivasvān (the sun-god's name); *manave*-unto the father of mankind (of the name Vaivasvata); *prāha*-told; *manuḥ*-the father of mankind; *ikṣvākave*-unto King Ikṣvāku; *abravīt*-said.

TRANSLATION

The Blessed Lord said: I instructed this imperishable science of yoga to the sun-god, Vivasvān, and Vivasvān instructed it to Manu, the father of mankind, and Manu in turn instructed it to Ikṣvāku.

PURPORT

Herein we find the history of the *Bhagavad-gītā* traced from a remote time when it was delivered to the royal order, the kings of all planets. This science is especially meant for the protection of the inhabitants and therefore the royal order should understand it in order to be able to rule the citizens and protect them from the material bondage to lust. Human life is meant for cultivation of spiritual knowledge, in eternal relationship with the

Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the executive heads of all states and all planets are obliged to impart this lesson to the citizens by education, culture and devotion. In other words, the executive heads of all states are intended to spread the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness so that the people may take advantage of this great science and pursue a successful path, utilizing the opportunity of the human form of life.

In this millennium, the sun-god is known as Vivasvān, the king of the sun, which is the origin of all planets within the solar system. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated:

*yac-caṣur eṣa savitā sakala-grahāṇām
rājā samasta-sura-mūrttir aśeṣa-tejāḥ
yasyājñayā bhramati sambhṛta-kālacakro
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

"Let me worship," Lord Brahmā said, "the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda [Kṛṣṇa], who is the original person and under whose order the sun, which is the king of all planets, is assuming immense power and heat. The sun represents the eye of the Lord and traverses its orbit in obedience to His order."

The sun is the king of the planets, and the sun-god (at present of the name Vivasvān) rules the sun planet, which is controlling all other planets by supplying heat and light. He is rotating under the order of Kṛṣṇa, and Lord Kṛṣṇa originally made Vivasvān His first disciple to understand the science of *Bhagavad-gītā*. The *Gītā* is not, therefore, a speculative treatise for the insignificant mundane scholar but is a standard book of knowledge coming down from time immemorial. In the *Mahābhārata* (*Śānti-parva* 348.51-52) we can trace out the history of the *Gītā* as follows:

*tretā-yugādau ca tato vivasvān manave dadau
manuś ca loka-bhṛty-arthaṁ sutāyekṣvākave dadau
ikṣvākunā ca kathito vyāpya lokān avasthitāḥ*

"In the beginning of the Tretā-yuga [millennium] this science of the relationship with the Supreme was delivered by Vivasvān to Manu. Manu, being the father of mankind, gave it to his son Mahārāja Ikṣvāku, the King of this earth planet and forefather of the Raghu dynasty in which Lord

Rāmacandra appeared. Therefore, *Bhagavad-gītā* existed in the human society from the time of Mahārāja Ikṣvāku."

At the present moment we have just passed through five thousand years of the Kali-yuga, which lasts 432,000 years. Before this there was Dvāpara-yuga (800,000 years), and before that there was Tretā-yuga (1,200,000 years). Thus, some 2,005,000 years ago, Manu spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā* to his disciple and son Mahārāja Ikṣvāku, the King of this planet earth. The age of the current Manu is calculated to last some 305,300,000 years, of which 120,400,000 have passed. Accepting that before the birth of Manu, the *Gītā* was spoken by the Lord to His disciple, the sun-god Vivasvān, a rough estimate is that the *Gītā* was spoken at least 120,400,000 years ago; and in human society it has been extant for two million years. It was respoken by the Lord again to Arjuna about five thousand years ago. That is the rough estimate of the history of the *Gītā*, according to the *Gītā* itself and according to the version of the speaker, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It was spoken to the sun-god Vivasvān because he is also a *kṣatriya* and is the father of all *kṣatriyas* who are descendants of the sun-god, or the *sūrya-varṇśa kṣatriyas*. Because *Bhagavad-gītā* is as good as the *Vedas*, being spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, this knowledge is *apauruṣeya*, superhuman. Since the Vedic instructions are accepted as they are, without human interpretation, the *Gītā* must therefore be accepted without mundane interpretation. The mundane wranglers may speculate on the *Gītā* in their own ways, but that is not *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is. Therefore, *Bhagavad-gītā* has to be accepted as it is, from the disciplic succession, and it is described herein that the Lord spoke to the sun-god, the sun-god spoke to his son Manu, and Manu spoke to his son Ikṣvāku.

TEXT 2

*evam paramparā-prāptam
imaṁ rājarṣayo viduḥ
sa kāleneha mahatā
yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa*

SYNONYMS

evam-thus; *paramparā*-disciplic succession; *prāptam*-received; *imam*-this science; *rājarṣayaḥ*-the saintly kings; *viduḥ*-understood; *sah*-that knowledge; *kālena*-in the course of time; *iha*-in this world; *mahatā*-by great; *yogaḥ*-the science of one's relationship with the Supreme; *naṣṭaḥ*-scattered; *parantapa*-O Arjuna, subduer of the enemies.

TRANSLATION

This supreme science was thus received through the chain of disciplic succession, and the saintly kings understood it in that way. But in course of time the succession was broken, and therefore the science as it is appears to be lost.

PURPORT

It is clearly stated that the *Gītā* was especially meant for the saintly kings because they were to execute its purpose in ruling over the citizens. Certainly *Bhagavad-gītā* was never meant for the demonic persons, who would dissipate its value for no one's benefit and would devise all types of interpretations according to personal whims. As soon as the original purpose was scattered by the motives of the unscrupulous commentators, there arose the need to reestablish the disciplic succession. Five thousand years ago it was detected by the Lord Himself that the disciplic succession was broken, and therefore He declared that the purpose of the *Gītā* appeared to be lost. In the same way, at the present moment also there are so many editions of the *Gītā* (especially in English), but almost all of them are not according to authorized disciplic succession. There are innumerable interpretations rendered by different mundane scholars, but almost all of them do not accept the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, although they make a good business on the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This spirit is demonic, because demons do not believe in God but simply enjoy the property of the Supreme. Since there is a great need of an edition of the *Gītā* in English, as it is received by the *paramparā* (disciplic succession) system, an attempt is made herewith to fulfill this great want. *Bhagavad-gītā*-accepted as it is-is a great boon to humanity; but if it is accepted as a treatise of philosophical speculations, it is simply a waste of time.

TEXT 3

*sa evāyaṁ mayā te 'dya
yogaḥ proktaḥ purātanaḥ
bhakto 'si me sakhā ceti
rahasyaṁ hy etad uttamam*

SYNONYMS

saḥ-the same ancient; *eva*-certainly; *ayaṁ*-this; *mayā*-by Me; *te*-unto you; *adya*-today; *yogaḥ*-the science of *yoga*; *proktaḥ*-spoken; *purātanaḥ*-very old; *bhaktaḥ*-devotee; *asi*-you are; *me*-My; *sakhā*-friend; *ca*-also; *iti*-therefore; *rahasyaṁ*-mystery; *hi*-certainly; *etat*-this; *uttamam*-transcendental.

TRANSLATION

That very ancient science of the relationship with the Supreme is today told by Me to you because you are My devotee as well as My friend; therefore you can understand the transcendental mystery of this science.

PURPORT

There are two classes of men, namely the devotee and the demon. The Lord selected Arjuna as the recipient of this great science owing to his becoming the devotee of the Lord, but for the demon it is not possible to understand this great mysterious science. There are a number of editions of this great book of knowledge, and some of them have commentaries by the devotees, and some of them have commentaries by the demons. Commentation by the devotees is real, whereas that of the demons is useless. Arjuna accepts Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and any commentary on the *Gītā* following in the footsteps of Arjuna is real devotional service to the cause of this great science. The demonic, however, concoct something about Kṛṣṇa and mislead the public and general readers from the path of Kṛṣṇa's instructions. One should try to follow the disciplic succession from Arjuna, and thus be benefitted.

TEXT 4

arjuna uvāca
aparaṁ bhavato janma
paraṁ janma vivasvataḥ
katham etad vijānīyāṁ
tvam ādau proktavān iti

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca-Arjuna said; *aparam*-junior; *bhavataḥ*-Your; *janma*-birth; *param*-superior; *janma*-birth; *vivasvataḥ*-of the sun-god; *katham*-how; *etat*-this; *vijānīyāṁ*-shall I understand; *tvam*-You; *ādau*-in the beginning; *proktavān*-instructed; *iti*-thus.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: The sun-god Vivasvān is senior by birth to You. How am I to understand that in the beginning You instructed this science to him?

PURPORT

Arjuna is an accepted devotee of the Lord, so how could he not believe Kṛṣṇa's words? The fact is that Arjuna is not inquiring for himself but for those who do not believe in the Supreme Personality of Godhead or for the demons who do not like the idea that Kṛṣṇa should be accepted as the Supreme Personality of Godhead; for them only Arjuna inquires on this point, as if he were himself not aware of the Personality of Godhead, or Kṛṣṇa. As it will be evident from the Tenth Chapter, Arjuna knew perfectly well that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the fountainhead of everything and the last word in Transcendence. Of course, Kṛṣṇa also appeared as the son of Devakī on this earth. How Kṛṣṇa remained the same Supreme Personality of Godhead, the eternal, original person, is very difficult for an ordinary man to understand. Therefore, to clarify this point, Arjuna put this question before Kṛṣṇa so that He Himself could speak authoritatively. That Kṛṣṇa is the supreme authority is accepted by the

whole world, not only at present, but from time immemorial, and the demons alone reject Him. Anyway, since Kṛṣṇa is the authority accepted by all, Arjuna put this question before Him in order that Kṛṣṇa would describe Himself without being depicted by the demons who always try to distort Him in a way understandable to the demons and their followers. It is necessary that everyone, for his own interest, know the science of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, when Kṛṣṇa Himself speaks about Himself, it is auspicious for all the worlds. To the demons, such explanations by Kṛṣṇa Himself may appear to be strange because the demons always study Kṛṣṇa from their own standpoint, but those who are devotees heartily welcome the statements of Kṛṣṇa when they are spoken by Kṛṣṇa Himself. The devotees will always worship such authoritative statements of Kṛṣṇa because they are always eager to know more and more about Him. The atheists, who consider Kṛṣṇa an ordinary man, may in this way come to know that Kṛṣṇa is superhuman, that He is *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*-the eternal form of bliss and knowledge-that He is transcendental, and that He is above the domination of the modes of material nature and above the influence of time and space. A devotee of Kṛṣṇa's, like Arjuna, is undoubtedly above any misunderstanding of the transcendental position of Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna's putting this question before the Lord is simply an attempt by the devotee to defy the atheistic attitude of persons who consider Kṛṣṇa to be an ordinary human being subject to the modes of material nature.

TEXT 5

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
bahūni me vyatītāni
janmāni tava cārjuna
tāny ahaṁ veda sarvāṇi
na tvam vettha parantapa*

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Personality of Godhead said; *bahūni*-many; *me*-of Mine; *vyatītāni*-have passed; *janmāni*-births; *tava*-of yours; *ca*-and also;

arjuna-O Arjuna; *tāni*-all those; *aham*-I; *veda*-do know; *sarvāṇi*-all; *na*-not; *tvam*-yourself; *vettha*-know; *parantapa*-O subduer of the enemy.

TRANSLATION

The Blessed Lord said: Many, many births both you and I have passed. I can remember all of them, but you cannot, O subduer of the enemy!

PURPORT

In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* we have information of many, many incarnations of the Lord. It is stated there:

*advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam
ādyam purāṇa-puruṣam nava-yauvanam ca
vedeṣu durllabham adurllabham ātma-bhaktau
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi.*

(Bs. 5.33)

"I worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda [Kṛṣṇa], who is the original person-absolute, infallible, without beginning, although expanded into unlimited forms, still the same original, the oldest, and the person always appearing as a fresh youth. Such eternal, blissful, all-knowing forms of the Lord are usually understood by the best Vedic scholars, but they are always manifest to pure, unalloyed devotees." It is also stated in *Brahma-saṁhitā*:

*rāmādi mūrttiṣu kalā-niyamena tiṣṭhan
nānāvatāram akarod bhuvaneṣu kintu
kṛṣṇaḥ svayaṁ samabhavat paramaḥ pumān yo
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

(Bs. 5.39)

"I worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda [Kṛṣṇa], who is always situated in various incarnations such as Rāma, Nṛsiṁha and many sub-incarnations as well, but who is the original Personality of Godhead known as Kṛṣṇa, and who incarnates personally also."

In the *Vedas* also it is said that the Lord, although one without a second, nevertheless manifests Himself in innumerable forms. He is like the *vaidurya* stone, which changes color yet still remains one. All those multi-forms are understood by the pure, unalloyed devotees, but not by a simple study of the *Vedas*: *vedeṣu durlabham adurlabham ātma-bhaktau*. Devotees like Arjuna are constant companions of the Lord, and whenever the Lord incarnates, the associate devotees also incarnate in order to serve the Lord in different capacities. Arjuna is one of these devotees, and in this verse it is understood that some millions of years ago when Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā* to the sun-god Vivasvān, Arjuna, in a different capacity, was also present. But the difference between the Lord and Arjuna is that the Lord remembered the incidence, whereas Arjuna could not remember. That is the difference between the part and parcel living entity and the Supreme Lord. Although Arjuna is addressed herein as the mighty hero who could subdue the enemies, he is unable to recall what had happened in his various past births. Therefore, a living entity, however great he may be in the material estimation, can never equal the Supreme Lord. Anyone who is a constant companion of the Lord is certainly a liberated person, but he cannot be equal to the Lord. The Lord is described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* as infallible (*acyuta*), which means that He never forgets Himself, even though He is in material contact. Therefore, the Lord and the living entity can never be equal in all respects, even if the living entity is as liberated as Arjuna. Although Arjuna is a devotee of the Lord, he sometimes forgets the nature of the Lord, but by the divine grace a devotee can at once understand the infallible condition of the Lord, whereas a nondevotee or a demon cannot understand this transcendental nature. Consequently these descriptions in the *Gītā* cannot be understood by demonic brains. Kṛṣṇa remembered acts which were performed by Him millions of years before, but Arjuna could not, despite the fact that both Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna are eternal in nature. We may also note herein that a living entity forgets everything due to his change of body, but the Lord remembers because He does not change His *sac-cid-ānanda* body. He is *advaita*, which means there is no distinction between His body and Himself. Everything in relation to Him is spirit-whereas the conditioned soul is different from his material body. And, because the Lord's body and self are identical, His position is always different from the ordinary living entity, even when He descends to the

material platform. The demons cannot adjust themselves to this transcendental nature of the Lord, as the Lord explains in the following verse.

TEXT 6

*ajo 'pi sann avyayātmā
bhūtānām īśvaro 'pi san
prakṛtiṁ svām adhiṣṭhāya
sambhavāmy ātma-māyayā*

SYNONYMS

ajaḥ-unborn; *api*-although; *san*-being so; *avyaya*-without deterioration; *ātmā*-body; *bhūtānām*-all those who are born; *īśvaraḥ*-the Supreme Lord; *api*-although; *san*-being so; *prakṛtiṁ*-transcendental form; *svām*-of Myself; *adhiṣṭhāya*-being so situated; *sambhavāmi*-I do incarnate; *ātma-māyayā*-by My internal energy.

TRANSLATION

Although I am unborn and My transcendental body never deteriorates, and although I am the Lord of all sentient beings, I still appear in every millennium in My original transcendental form.

PURPORT

The Lord has spoken about the peculiarity of His birth: although He may appear like an ordinary person, He remembers everything of His many, many past "births," whereas a common man cannot remember what he has done even a few hours before. If someone is asked what he did exactly at the same time one day earlier, it would be very difficult for a common man to answer immediately. He would surely have to dredge his memory to recall what he was doing exactly at the same time one day before. And yet, men often dare claim to be God, or Kṛṣṇa. One should not be misled by such meaningless claims. Then again, the Lord explains His *prakṛti* or His form. *Prakṛti* means nature as well as *svarūpa*, or one's own form. The Lord

says that He appears in His own body. He does not change His body, as the common living entity changes from one body to another. The conditioned soul may have one kind of body in the present birth, but he has a different body in the next birth. In the material world, the living entity has no fixed body but transmigrates from one body to another. The Lord, however, does not do so. Whenever He appears, He does so in the same original body, by His internal potency. In other words, Kṛṣṇa appears in this material world in His original eternal form, with two hands, holding a flute. He appears exactly in His eternal body, uncontaminated by this material world. Although He appears in the same transcendental body and is Lord of the universe, it still appears that He takes His birth like an ordinary living entity. Despite the fact Lord Kṛṣṇa grows from childhood to boyhood and from boyhood to youth, astonishingly enough He never ages beyond youth. At the time of the Battle of Kurukṣetra, He had many grandchildren at home; or, in other words, He had sufficiently aged by material calculations. Still He looked just like a young man twenty or twenty-five years old. We never see a picture of Kṛṣṇa in old age because He never grows old like us, although He is the oldest person in the whole creation-past, present, and future. Neither His body nor His intelligence ever deteriorates or changes. Therefore, it is clear that in spite of His being in the material world, He is the same unborn, eternal form of bliss and knowledge, changeless in His transcendental body and intelligence. Factually, His appearance and disappearance are like the sun's rising, moving before us, and then disappearing from our eyesight. When the sun is out of sight, we think that the sun is set, and when the sun is before our eyes, we think that the sun is on the horizon. Actually, the sun is always in its fixed position, but owing to our defective, insufficient senses, we calculate the appearance and disappearance of the sun in the sky. And, because His appearance and disappearance are completely different from that of any ordinary, common living entity, it is evident that He is eternal, blissful knowledge by His internal potency-and He is never contaminated by material nature. The *Vedas* also confirm that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is unborn, yet He still appears to take His birth in multi-manifestations. The Vedic supplementary literatures also confirm that even though the Lord appears to be taking His birth, He is still without change of body. In the *Bhāgavatam*, He appears before His mother as Nārāyaṇa, with four hands and the

decorations of the six kinds of full opulences. His appearance in His original eternal form is His causeless mercy, according to the *Viśvakośa* dictionary. The Lord is conscious of all of His previous appearances and disappearances, but a common living entity forgets everything about his past body as soon as he gets another body. He is the Lord of all living entities because He performs wonderful and superhuman activities while He is on this earth. Therefore, the Lord is always the same Absolute Truth and is without differentiation between His form and self, or between His quality and body. A question may now be raised as to why the Lord appears and disappears in this world. This is explained in the next verse.

TEXT 7

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya
glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya
tadātmānam sṛjāmy aham*

SYNONYMS

yadā-whenever; *yadā*-wherever; *hi*-certainly; *dharmasya*-of religion; *glāniḥ*-discrepancies; *bhavati*-manifested, becomes; *bhārata*-O descendant of Bharata; *abhyutthānam*-predominance; *adharmasya*-of irreligion; *tadā*-at that time; *ātmānam*-self; *sṛjāmi*-manifest; *aham*-I.

TRANSLATION

Whenever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of irreligion-at that time I descend Myself.

PURPORT

The word *sṛjāmi* is significant herein. *Sṛjāmi* cannot be used in the sense of creation. because, according to the previous verse, there is no creation of the Lord's form or body, since all of the forms are eternally existent. Therefore *sṛjāmi* means that the Lord manifests Himself as He is. Although

the Lord appears on schedule, namely at the end of Dvāpara-yuga of the twenty-eighth millennium of the eighth Manu, in one day of Brahmā, still He has no obligation to adhere to such rules and regulations because He is completely free to act in many ways at His will. He therefore appears by His own will whenever there is a predominance of irreligiosity and a disappearance of true religion. Principles of religion are laid down in the *Vedas*, and any discrepancy in the matter of properly executing the rules of the *Vedas* makes one irreligious. In the *Bhāgavatam* it is stated that such principles are the laws of the Lord. Only the Lord can manufacture a system of religion. The *Vedas* are also accepted as originally spoken by the Lord Himself to Brahmā, from within his heart. Therefore, the principles of *dharma*, or religion, are the direct orders of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*dharmam tu sākṣāt-bhagavat-praṇītam*). These principles are clearly indicated throughout the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The purpose of the *Vedas* is to establish such principles under the order of the Supreme Lord, and the Lord directly orders, at the end of the *Gītā*, that the highest principle of religion is to surrender unto Him only, and nothing more. The Vedic principles push one towards complete surrender unto Him; and, whenever such principles are disturbed by the demonic, the Lord appears. From the *Bhāgavatam* we understand that Lord Buddha is the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa who appeared when materialism was rampant and materialists were using the pretext of the authority of the *Vedas*. Although there are certain restrictive rules and regulations regarding animal sacrifice for particular purposes in the *Vedas*, people of demonic tendency still took to animal sacrifice without reference to the Vedic principles. Lord Buddha appeared to stop this nonsense and to establish the Vedic principles of nonviolence. Therefore each and every *avatāra*, or incarnation of the Lord, has a particular mission, and they are all described in the revealed scriptures. No one should be accepted as an *avatāra* unless he is referred to by scriptures. It is not a fact that the Lord appears only on Indian soil. He can advent Himself anywhere and everywhere, and whenever He desires to appear. In each and every incarnation, He speaks as much about religion as can be understood by the particular people under their particular circumstances. But the mission is the same—to lead people to God consciousness and obedience to the principles of religion. Sometimes He descends personally,

and sometimes He sends His bona fide representative in the form of His son, or servant, or Himself in some disguised form.

The principles of the *Bhagavad-gītā* were spoken to Arjuna, and, for that matter, to other highly elevated persons, because he was highly advanced compared to ordinary persons in other parts of the world. Two plus two equals four is a mathematical principle that is true both in the beginner's arithmetic class and in the advanced class as well. Still, there are higher and lower mathematics. In all incarnations of the Lord, therefore, the same principles are taught, but they appear to be higher and lower in varied circumstances. The higher principles of religion begin with the acceptance of the four orders and the four statuses of social life, as will be explained later. The whole purpose of the mission of incarnations is to arouse Kṛṣṇa consciousness everywhere. Such consciousness is manifest and nonmanifest only under different circumstances.

TEXT 8

*paritrāṇāya sādhūnām
vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām
dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya
sambhavāmi yuge yuge*

SYNONYMS

paritrāṇāya-for the deliverance; *sādhūnām*-of the devotees; *vināśāya*-for the annihilation; *ca*-also; *duṣkṛtām*-of the miscreants; *dharma*-principles of religion; *saṁsthāpana-arthāya*-to reestablish; *sambhavāmi*-I do appear; *yuge*-millennium; *yuge*-after millennium.

TRANSLATION

In order to deliver the pious and to annihilate the miscreants, as well as to reestablish the principles of religion, I advent Myself millennium after millennium.

PURPORT

According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, a *sādhū* (holymen) is a man in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A person may appear to be irreligious, but if he has the qualifications of Kṛṣṇa consciousness wholly and fully, he is to be understood to be a *sādhū*. And *duṣkṛtām* applies to one who doesn't care for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Such miscreants, or *duṣkṛtām*, are described as foolish and the lowest of mankind, even though they may be decorated with mundane education; whereas another person, who is one hundred percent engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is accepted as *sādhū*, even though such a person may neither be learned nor well cultured. As far as the atheistic are concerned, it is not necessary for the Supreme Lord to appear as He is to destroy them, as He did with the demons Rāvaṇa and Kāṁsa. The Lord has many agents who are quite competent to vanquish demons. But the Lord especially descends to appease His unalloyed devotees, who are always harassed by the demonic. The demon harasses the devotee, even though the latter may happen to be his kin. Although Prahlāda Mahārāja was the son of Hiraṇyakaśipu, he was nonetheless persecuted by his father; although Devakī, the mother of Kṛṣṇa, was the sister of Kāṁsa, she and her husband Vasudeva were persecuted only because Kṛṣṇa was to be born of them. So Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared primarily to deliver Devakī, rather than kill Kāṁsa, but both were performed simultaneously. Therefore it is said here that to deliver the devotee and vanquish the demon miscreants, the Lord appears in different incarnations.

In the Caitanya-caritāmṛta of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the following verses summarize these principles of incarnation:

*sṛṣṭi-hetu yei mūrti prapañce avatare
sei īśvara-mūrti 'avatāra' nāma dhare
māyātita paravyome savāra avasthāna
viśve 'avatāri' dhare 'avatāra' nāma.*

"The *avatāra*, or incarnation of Godhead, descends from the kingdom of God for material manifestation. And the particular form of the Personality of Godhead who so descends is called an incarnation, or *avatāra*. Such incarnations are situated in the spiritual world, the kingdom of God. When they descend to the material creation, they assume the name *avatāra*."

There are various kinds of *avatāras*, such as *puruṣāvatāras*, *guṇāvatāras*, *līlāvatāras*, *śaktyāveśa avatāras*, *manvantara-avatāras* and *yugāvatāras*-all appearing on schedule all over the universe. But Lord Kṛṣṇa is the primeval Lord, the fountainhead of all *avatāras*. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa descends for the specific purposes of mitigating the anxieties of the pure devotees, who are very anxious to see Him in His original Vṛndāvana pastimes. Therefore, the prime purpose of the Kṛṣṇa *avatāra* is to satisfy His unalloyed devotees.

The Lord says that He incarnates Himself in every millennium. This indicates that He incarnates also in the age of Kali. As stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the incarnation in the age of Kali is Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who spread the worship of Kṛṣṇa by the *saṅkīrtana* movement (congregational chanting of the holy names), and spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout India. He predicted that this culture of *saṅkīrtana* would be broadcast all over the world, from town to town and village to village. Lord Caitanya as the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, is described secretly but not directly in the confidential parts of the revealed scriptures, such as the *Upaniṣads*, *Mahābhārata*, *Bhāgavatam*, etc. The devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa are much attracted by the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya. This *avatāra* of the Lord does not kill the miscreants, but delivers them by the causeless mercy of the Lord.

TEXT 9

*janma karma ca me divyam
evam yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

SYNONYMS

janma-birth; *karma*-work; *ca*-also; *me*-of Mine; *divyam*-transcendental; *evam*-like this; *yaḥ*-anyone who; *vetti*-knows; *tattvataḥ*-in reality; *tyaktvā*-leaving aside; *dehaṁ*-this body; *punar*-again; *janma*-birth; *na*-never; *eti*-does attain; *mām*-unto Me; *eti*-does attain; *saḥ*-he; *arjuna*-O Arjuna.

TRANSLATION

One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna.

PURPORT

The Lord's descent from His transcendental abode is already explained in the 6th verse. One who can understand the truth of the appearance of the Personality of Godhead is already liberated from material bondage, and therefore he returns to the kingdom of God immediately after quitting this present material body. Such liberation of the living entity from material bondage is not at all easy. The impersonalists and the *yogīs* attain liberation only after much trouble and many, many births. Even then, the liberation they achieve—merging into the impersonal *brahmajyoti* of the Lord—is only partial, and there is the risk of returning again to this material world. But the devotee, simply by understanding the transcendental nature of the body and activities of the Lord, attains the abode of the Lord after ending this body and does not run the risk of returning again to this material world. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated that the Lord has many, many forms and incarnations: *advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam*. Although there are many transcendental forms of the Lord, they are still one and the same Supreme Personality of Godhead. One has to understand this fact with conviction, although it is incomprehensible to mundane scholars and empiric philosophers. As stated in the *Vedas*:

eko devo nitya-līlānuraḥto bhakta-vyāpī hṛdy antarātmā.

"The one Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternally engaged in many, many transcendental forms in relationships with His unalloyed devotees." This Vedic version is confirmed in this verse of the *Gītā* personally by the Lord. He who accepts this truth on the strength of the authority of the *Vedas* and of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and who does not waste time in philosophical speculations attains the highest perfectional stage of liberation. Simply by accepting this truth on faith, one can, without a doubt, attain liberation. The Vedic version, "*tattvamasi*," is actually applied in this case. Anyone who understands Lord Kṛṣṇa to be the Supreme, or who says

unto the Lord, "You are the same Supreme Brahman, the Personality of Godhead" is certainly liberated instantly, and consequently his entrance into the transcendental association of the Lord is guaranteed. In other words, such a faithful devotee of the Lord attains perfection, and this is confirmed by the following Vedic assertion:

tam eva viditvātimṛtyumeti nānyaḥ panthā vidyate ayanāya.

One can attain the perfect stage of liberation from birth and death simply by knowing the Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. There is no alternative because anyone who does not understand Lord Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead is surely in the mode of ignorance. Consequently he will not attain salvation, simply, so to speak, by licking the outer surface of the bottle of honey, or by interpreting the *Bhagavad-gītā* according to mundane scholarship. Such empiric philosophers may assume very important roles in the material world, but they are not necessarily eligible for liberation. Such puffed up mundane scholars have to wait for the causeless mercy of the devotee of the Lord. One should therefore cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness with faith and knowledge, and in this way attain perfection.

TEXT 10

*vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhā
man-mayā mām upāśritāḥ
bahavo jñāna-tapasā
pūtā mad-bhāvam āgatāḥ*

SYNONYMS

vīta-freed from; *rāga*-attachment; *bhaya*-fear; *krodhāḥ*-anger; *mat-mayā*-fully in Me; *mām*-unto Me; *upāśritāḥ*-being fully situated; *bahavaḥ*-many; *jñāna*-knowledge; *tapasā*-by penance; *pūtāḥ*-being purified; *mat-bhāvam*-transcendental love for Me; *āgatāḥ*-attained.

TRANSLATION

Being freed from attachment, fear and anger, being fully absorbed in Me and taking refuge in Me, many, many persons in the past became purified by knowledge of Me-and thus they all attained transcendental love for Me.

PURPORT

As described above, it is very difficult for a person who is too materially affected to understand the personal nature of the Supreme Absolute Truth. Generally, people who are attached to the bodily conception of life are so absorbed in materialism that it is almost impossible for them to understand that there is a transcendental body which is imperishable, full of knowledge and eternally blissful. In the materialistic concept, the body is perishable, full of ignorance and completely miserable. Therefore, people in general keep this same bodily idea in mind when they are informed of the personal form of the Lord. For such materialistic men, the form of the gigantic material manifestation is supreme. Consequently they consider the Supreme to be impersonal. And because they are too materially absorbed, the conception of retaining the personality after liberation from matter frightens them. When they are informed that spiritual life is also individual and personal, they become afraid of becoming persons again, and so they naturally prefer a kind of merging into the impersonal void. Generally, they compare the living entities to the bubbles of the ocean, which merge into the ocean. That is the highest perfection of spiritual existence attainable without individual personality. This is a kind of fearful stage of life, devoid of perfect knowledge of spiritual existence. Furthermore there are many persons who cannot understand spiritual existence at all. Being embarrassed by so many theories and by contradictions of various types of philosophical speculation, they become disgusted or angry and foolishly conclude that there is no supreme cause and that everything is ultimately void. Such people are in a diseased condition of life. Some people are too materially attached and therefore do not give attention to spiritual life, some of them want to merge into the supreme spiritual cause, and some of them disbelieve in everything, being angry at all sorts of spiritual speculation out of hopelessness. This last class of men take to the shelter of some kind of intoxication, and their affective hallucinations are sometimes accepted as

spiritual vision. One has to get rid of all three stages of attachment to the material world: negligence of spiritual life, fear of a spiritual personal identity, and the conception of void that underlies the frustration of life. To get free from these three stages of the material concept of life, one has to take complete shelter of the Lord, guided by the bona fide spiritual master, and follow the disciplines and regulative principles of devotional life. The last stage of the devotional life is called *bhāva*, or transcendental love of Godhead.

According to *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, the science of devotional service:

*ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā
tato 'nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ
athāsaktis tato bhāvas tataḥ premābhyudañcati
sādhakānām ayaṁ premṇaḥ prādurbhāve bhavet kramaḥ.*

"In the beginning one must have a preliminary desire for self-realization. This will bring one to the stage of trying to associate with persons who are spiritually elevated. In next stage one becomes initiated by an elevated spiritual master, and under his instruction the neophyte devotee begins the process of devotional service. By execution of devotional service under the guidance of the spiritual master, one becomes free from all material attachment, attains steadiness in self-realization, and acquires a taste for hearing about the Absolute Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This taste leads one further forward to attachment for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is matured in *bhāva*, or the preliminary stage of transcendental love of God. Real love for God is called *premā*, the highest perfectional stage of life." In the *premā* stage there is constant engagement in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. So, by the slow process of devotional service, under the guidance of the bona fide spiritual master, one can attain the highest stage, being freed from all material attachment, from the fearfulness of one's individual spiritual personality, and from the frustrations resulting from void philosophy. Then one can ultimately attain to the abode of the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 11

*ye yathā mām prapadyante
tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham
mama vartmānuvartante
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

SYNONYMS

ye-all of them; *yathā*-as; *mām*-unto Me; *prapadyante*-surrender; *tān*-unto them; *tathā*-so; *eva*-certainly; *bhajāmi*-do I reward; *aham*-I; *mama*-My; *vartma*-path; *anuvartante*-do follow; *manuṣyāḥ*-all men; *pārtha*-O son of Pṛthā; *sarvaśaḥ*-in all respects.

TRANSLATION

**All of them-as they surrender unto Me-I reward accordingly.
Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Pṛthā.**

PURPORT

Everyone is searching for Kṛṣṇa in the different aspects of His manifestations. Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is partially realized in His impersonal *brahmajyoti* effulgence and as the all-pervading Supersoul dwelling within everything, including the particles of atoms. But Kṛṣṇa is only fully realized by His pure devotees. Consequently, Kṛṣṇa is the object of everyone's realization, and thus anyone and everyone is satisfied according to one's desire to have Him. In the transcendental world also, Kṛṣṇa reciprocates with His pure devotees in the transcendental attitude, just as the devotee wants Him. One devotee may want Kṛṣṇa as supreme master, another as his personal friend, another as his son, and still another as his lover. Kṛṣṇa rewards all the devotees equally, according to their different intensities of love for Him. In the material world, the same reciprocations of feelings are there, and they are equally exchanged by the Lord with the different types of worshipers. The pure devotees both here and in the transcendental abode associate with Him in person and are able to render personal service to the Lord and thus derive transcendental bliss in His loving service. As for those who are impersonalists and who want to commit spiritual suicide by annihilating the individual existence of the

living entity, Kṛṣṇa helps also by absorbing them into His effulgence. Such impersonalists do not agree to accept the eternal, blissful Personality of Godhead; consequently they cannot relish the bliss of transcendental personal service to the Lord, having extinguished their individuality. Some of them, who are not situated even in the impersonal existence, return to this material field to exhibit their dormant desires for activities. They are not admitted in the spiritual planets, but they are again given a chance to act on the material planets. For those who are fruitive workers, the Lord awards the desired results of their prescribed duties, as the *yajñeśvara*; and those who are *yogīs* seeking mystic powers are awarded such powers. In other words, everyone is dependant for success upon His mercy alone, and all kinds of spiritual processes are but different degrees of success on the same path. Unless, therefore, one comes to the highest perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all attempts remain imperfect, as is stated in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*:

*akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā mokṣa-kāma udāradhīḥ
tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena yajeta puruṣaṁ param*

"Whether one is without desire [the condition of the devotees], or is desirous of all fruitive results, or is after liberation, one should with all efforts try to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead for complete perfection, culminating in Kṛṣṇa consciousness." (*Bhāg.* 2.3.10)

TEXT 12

*kāṅkṣantaḥ karmaṇām siddhim
yajanta iha devatāḥ
kṣipram hi mānuṣe loke
siddhir bhavati karma-jā*

SYNONYMS

kāṅkṣantaḥ-desiring; *karmaṇām*-of fruitive activities; *siddhim*-perfection; *yajante*-worship by sacrifices; *iha*-in the material world; *devatāḥ*-the demigods; *kṣipram*-very quickly; *hi*-certainly; *mānuṣe*-in human society;

loke-within this world; *siddhiḥ bhavati*-becomes successful; *karmajā*-the fruitive worker.

TRANSLATION

Men in this world desire success in fruitive activities, and therefore they worship the demigods. Quickly, of course, men get results from fruitive work in this world.

PURPORT

There is a great misconception about the gods or demigods of this material world, and men of less intelligence, although passing as great scholars, take these demigods to be various forms of the Supreme Lord. Actually, the demigods are not different forms of God, but they are God's different parts and parcels. God is one, and the parts and parcels are many. The *Vedas* say, *nityo nityānām*: God is one. *Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*. The Supreme God is one-Kṛṣṇa-and the demigods are delegated with powers to manage this material world. These demigods are all living entities (*nityānām*) with different grades of material power. They cannot be equal to the Supreme God-Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa. Anyone who thinks that God and the demigods are on the same level is called an atheist, or *pāṣaṇḍī*. Even the great demigods like Brahmā and Śiva cannot be compared to the Supreme Lord. In fact, the Lord is worshiped by demigods such as Brahmā and Śiva (*śiva-virīñci-nutam*). Yet curiously enough there are many human leaders who are worshiped by foolish men under the misunderstanding of anthropomorphism or zoomorphism. *Iha devatāḥ* denotes a powerful man or demigod of this material world. But Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, does not belong to this world. He is above, or transcendental to, material creation. Even Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya, the leader of the impersonalists, maintains that Nārāyaṇa, or Kṛṣṇa, is beyond this material creation. However, foolish people (*hṛt-añjana*) worship the demigods because they want immediate results. They get the results, but do not know that results so obtained are temporary and are meant for less intelligent persons. The intelligent person is in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and he has no need to worship the paltry demigods for some immediate, temporary benefit. The demigods of this material world, as well

as their worshipers, will vanish with the annihilation of this material world. The boons of the demigods are material and temporary. Both the material worlds and their inhabitants, including the demigods, and their worshipers, are bubbles in the cosmic ocean. In this world, however, human society is mad after temporary things such as the material opulence of possessing land, family and enjoyable paraphernalia. To achieve such temporary things, they worship the demigods or powerful men in human society. If a man gets some ministership in the government by worshiping a political leader, he considers that he has achieved a great boon. All of them are therefore kowtowing to the so-called leaders or "big guns" in order to achieve temporary boons, and they indeed achieve such things. Such foolish men are not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the permanent solution to the hardships of material existence. They are all after sense enjoyment, and to get a little facility for sense enjoyment they are attracted to worship empowered living entities known as demigods. This verse indicates that people are rarely interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They are mostly interested in material enjoyment, and therefore they worship some powerful living entity.

TEXT 13

*cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam
guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ
tasya kartāram api mām
viddhy akartāram avyayam*

SYNONYMS

cātur-varṇyam-the four divisions of human society; *mayā*-by Me; *sṛṣṭam*-created; *guṇa*-quality; *karma*-work; *vibhāgaśaḥ*-in terms of division; *tasya*-of that; *kartāram*-the father; *api*-although; *mām*-Me; *viddhi*-you may know; *akartāram*-as the non-doer; *avyayam*-being unchangeable.

TRANSLATION

According to the three modes of material nature and the work ascribed to them, the four divisions of human society were created by

Me. And, although I am the creator of this system, you should know that I am yet the non-doer, being unchangeable.

PURPORT

The Lord is the creator of everything. Everything is born of Him, everything is sustained by Him, and everything, after annihilation, rests in Him. He is therefore the creator of the four divisions of the social order, beginning with the intelligent class of men, technically called *brāhmaṇas* due to their being situated in the mode of goodness. Next is the administrative class, technically called the *kṣatriyas* due to their being situated in the mode of passion. The mercantile men, called the *vaiśyas*, are situated in the mixed modes of passion and ignorance, and the *śūdras*, or laborer class, are situated in the ignorant mode of material nature. In spite of His creating the four divisions of human society, Lord Kṛṣṇa does not belong to any of these divisions, because He is not one of the conditioned souls, a section of whom form human society. Human society is similar to any other animal society, but to elevate men from the animal status, the abovementioned divisions are created by the Lord for the systematic development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The tendency of a particular man toward work is determined by the modes of material nature which he has acquired. Such symptoms of life, according to different modes of material nature, are described in the Eighteenth Chapter of this book. A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, is above even the *brāhmaṇas*, because a *brāhmaṇa* by quality is supposed to know about Brahman, the Supreme Absolute Truth. Most of them approach the impersonal Brahman manifestation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, but only a man who transcends the limited knowledge of a *brāhmaṇa* and reaches the knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, becomes a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness-or, in other words, a *Vaiṣṇava*. Kṛṣṇa consciousness includes knowledge of all different plenary expansions of Kṛṣṇa, namely Rāma, Nṛsiṃha, Varāha, etc. However, as Kṛṣṇa is transcendental to this system of the four divisions of human society, a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is also transcendental to all divisions of human society, whether we consider the divisions of community, nation or species.

TEXT 14

*na mām karmāṇi limpanti
na me karma-phale sprhā
iti mām yo 'bhijānāti
karmabhir na sa badhyate*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *mām*-unto Me; *karmāṇi*-all kinds of work; *limpanti*-do affect; *na*-nor; *me*-My; *karma-phale*-in fruitive action; *sprhā*-aspiration; *iti*-thus; *mām*-unto Me; *yaḥ*-one who; *abhijānāti*-does know; *karmabhiḥ*-by the reaction of such work; *na*-never does; *saḥ*-he; *badhyate*-become entangled.

TRANSLATION

There is no work that affects Me; nor do I aspire for the fruits of action. One who understands this truth about Me also does not become entangled in the fruitive reactions of work.

PURPORT

As there are constitutional laws in the material world stating that the king can do no wrong, or that the king is not subject to the state laws, similarly the Lord, although He is the creator of this material world, is not affected by the activities of the material world. He creates and remains aloof from the creation, whereas the living entities are entangled in the fruitive results of material activities because of their propensity for lording it over material resources. The proprietor of an establishment is not responsible for the right and wrong activities of the workers, but the workers are themselves responsible. The living entities are engaged in their respective activities of sense gratification, and these activities are not ordained by the Lord. For advancement of sense gratification, the living entities are engaged in the work of this world, and they aspire to heavenly happiness after death. The Lord, being full in Himself, has no attraction for so-called heavenly happiness. The heavenly demigods are only His engaged servants. The proprietor never desires the low-grade happiness such as the workers may

desire. He is aloof from the material actions and reactions. For example, the rains are not responsible for different types of vegetation that appear on the earth, although without such rains there is no possibility of vegetative growth. Vedic *smṛti* confirms this fact as follows:

*nimitta-mātram evāsau sṛjyānām sarga-karmaṇi
pradhāna-kāraṇī-bhūtā yato vai sṛjya-śaktayaḥ.*

In the material creations, the Lord is only the supreme cause. The immediate cause is material nature by which the cosmic manifestation is visible. The created beings are of many varieties, such as the demigods, human beings and lower animals, and all of them are subject to the reactions of their past good or bad activities. The Lord only gives them the proper facilities for such activities and the regulations of the modes of nature, but He is never responsible for their past and present activities. In the *Vedānta-sūtras* it is confirmed that the Lord is never partial to any living entity. The living entity is responsible for his own acts. The Lord only gives him facilities, through the agency of material nature, the external energy. Anyone who is fully conversant with all the intricacies of this law of *karma*, or fruitive activities, does not become affected by the results of his activities. In other words, the person who understands this transcendental nature of the Lord is an experienced man in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and thus he is never subjected to the laws of *karma*. One who does not know the transcendental nature of the Lord and who thinks that the activities of the Lord are aimed at fruitive results, as are the activities of the ordinary living entities, certainly becomes entangled himself in fruitive reaction. But one who knows the Supreme Truth is a liberated soul fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 15

*evam jñātvā kṛtaṁ karma
pūrvair api mumukṣubhiḥ
kuru karmaiva tasmāt tvaṁ
pūrvaiḥ pūrvataraṁ kṛtaṁ*

SYNONYMS

evam-thus; *jñātvā*-knowing well; *kṛtam*-performed; *karma*-work; *pūrvaiḥ*-by past authorities; *api*-although; *mumukṣubhiḥ*-who attained liberation; *kuru*-just perform; *karma*-prescribed duty; *eva*-certainly; *tasmāt*-therefore; *tvam*-you; *pūrvaiḥ*-by the predecessors; *pūrvataram*-ancient predecessors; *kṛtam*-as performed.

TRANSLATION

All the liberated souls in ancient times acted with this understanding and so attained liberation. Therefore, as the ancients, you should perform your duty in this divine consciousness.

PURPORT

There are two classes of men. Some of them are full of polluted material things within their hearts, and some of them are materially free. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is equally beneficial for both of these persons. Those who are full of dirty things can take to the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for a gradual cleansing process, following the regulative principles of devotional service. Those who are already cleansed of the impurities may continue to act in the same Kṛṣṇa consciousness so that others may follow their exemplary activities and thereby be benefitted. Foolish persons or neophytes in Kṛṣṇa consciousness often want to retire from activities without having knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Arjuna's desire to retire from activities on the battlefield was not approved by the Lord. One need only know how to act. To retire from the activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and to sit aloof making a show of Kṛṣṇa consciousness; is less important than actually engaging in the field of activities for the sake of Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna is here advised to act in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, following in the footsteps of the Lord's previous disciples, such as the sun-god Vivasvān, as mentioned hereinbefore. The Supreme Lord knows all His past activities, as well as those of persons who acted in Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the past. Therefore He recommends the acts of the sun-god, who learned this art from the Lord some millions of years before. All such students of Lord Kṛṣṇa are mentioned here as past liberated persons, engaged in the discharge of duties allotted by Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 16

*kiṁ karma kim akarmeti
kavayo 'py atra mohitāḥ
tat te karma pravakṣyāmi
yaj jñātvā mokṣyase 'śubhāt*

SYNONYMS

kim-what is; *karma*-action; *kim*-what is; *akarma*-inaction; *iti*-thus; *kavayaḥ*-the intelligent; *api*-also; *atra*-in this matter; *mohitāḥ*-bewildered; *tat*-that; *te*-unto you; *karma*-work; *pravakṣyāmi*-I shall explain; *yat*-which; *jñātvā*-knowing; *mokṣyase*-be liberated; *aśubhāt*-from ill fortune.

TRANSLATION

Even the intelligent are bewildered in determining what is action and what is inaction. Now I shall explain to you what action is, knowing which you shall be liberated from all sins.

PURPORT

Action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has to be executed in accord with the examples of previous bona fide devotees. This is recommended in the 15th verse. Why such action should not be independant will be explained in the text to follow.

To act in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one has to follow the leadership of authorized persons who are in a line of disciplic succession as explained in the beginning of this chapter. The system of Kṛṣṇa consciousness was first narrated to the sun-god, the sun-god explained it to his son Manu, Manu explained it to his son Ikṣvāku, and the system is current on this earth from that very remote time. Therefore, one has to follow in the footsteps of previous authorities in the line of disciplic succession. Otherwise even the most intelligent men will be bewildered regarding the standard actions of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For this reason, the Lord decided to instruct Arjuna in Kṛṣṇa consciousness directly. Because of the direct instruction of the Lord

to Arjuna, anyone who follows in the footsteps of Arjuna is certainly not bewildered.

It is said that one cannot ascertain the ways of religion simply by imperfect experimental knowledge. Actually, the principles of religion can only be laid down by the Lord Himself. *Dharmam hi sākṣāt-bhagavat-praṇītam*. No one can manufacture a religious principle by imperfect speculation. One must follow in the footsteps of great authorities like Brahmā, Śiva, Nārada, Manu, Kumāra, Kapila, Prahlāda, Bhīṣma, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Yamarāja, Janaka, etc. By mental speculation one cannot ascertain what is religion or self-realization. Therefore, out of causeless mercy to His devotees, the Lord explains directly to Arjuna what action is and what inaction is. Only action performed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can deliver a person from the entanglement of material existence.

TEXT 17

*karmaṇo hy api boddhavyam
boddhavyam ca vikarmaṇaḥ
akarmaṇas ca boddhavyam
gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ*

SYNONYMS

karmaṇaḥ-working order ; *hi*-certainly; *api*-also; *boddhavyam*-should be understood; *boddhavyam*-to be understood; *ca*-also; *vikarmaṇaḥ*-forbidden work; *akarmaṇaḥ*-inaction; *ca*-also; *boddhavyam*-should be understood; *gahanā*-very difficult; *karmaṇaḥ*-working order; *gatiḥ*-to enter into.

TRANSLATION

The intricacies of action are very hard to understand. Therefore one should know properly what action is, what forbidden action is, and what inaction is.

If one is serious about liberation from material bondage, one has to understand the distinctions between action, inaction and unauthorized actions. One has to apply oneself to such an analysis of action, reaction and

perverted actions because it is a very difficult subject matter. To understand Kṛṣṇa consciousness and action according to the modes, one has to learn one's relationship with the Supreme; i.e., one who has learned perfectly knows that every living entity is the eternal servitor of the Lord and that consequently one has to act in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The entire *Bhagavad-gītā* is directed toward this conclusion. Any other conclusions, against this consciousness and its attendant reactions, are *vikarmas*, or prohibitive actions. To understand all this one has to associate with authorities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and learn the secret from them; this is as good as learning from the Lord directly. Otherwise, even the most intelligent person will be bewildered.

TEXT 18

*karmaṇy akarma yaḥ paśyed
akarmaṇi ca karma yaḥ
sa buddhimān manuṣyeṣu
sa yuktaḥ kṛtsna-karma-kṛt*

SYNONYMS

karmaṇi-in action; *akarma*-inaction; *yaḥ*-one who; *paśyet*-observes; *akarmaṇi*-in inaction; *ca*-also; *karma*-fruitive action; *yaḥ*-one who; *saḥ*-he; *buddhimān*-is intelligent; *manuṣyeṣu*-in human society; *saḥ*-he; *yuktaḥ*-is in the transcendental position; *kṛtsna-karma-kṛt*-although engaged in all activities.

TRANSLATION

One who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction, is intelligent among men, and he is in the transcendental position, although engaged in all sorts of activities.

PURPORT

A person acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is naturally free from the bonds of *karma*. His activities are all performed for Kṛṣṇa; therefore he does not

enjoy or suffer any of the effects of work. Consequently he is intelligent in human society, even though he is engaged in all sorts of activities for Kṛṣṇa. *Akarma* means without reaction to work. The impersonalist ceases fruitive activities out of fear, so that the resultant action may not be a stumbling block on the path of self-realization, but the personalist knows rightly his position as the eternal servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore he engages himself in the activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Because everything is done for Kṛṣṇa, he enjoys only transcendental happiness in the discharge of this service. Those who are engaged in this process are known to be without desire for personal sense gratification. The sense of eternal servitorship to Kṛṣṇa makes one immune to all sorts of reactionary elements of work.

TEXT 19

*yasya sarve samārambhāḥ
kāma-saṅkalpa-varjitāḥ
jñānāgni-dagdha-karmāṇam
tam āhuḥ paṇḍitam budhāḥ*

SYNONYMS

yasya-one whose; *sarve*-all sorts of; *samārambhāḥ*-in all attempts; *kāma*-desire for sense gratification; *saṅkalpa*-determination; *varjitāḥ*-are devoid of; *jñāna*-of perfect knowledge; *āgni*-fire; *dagdha*-being burnt by; *karmāṇam*-the performer; *tam*-him; *āhuḥ*-declare; *paṇḍitam*-learned; *budhāḥ*-those who know.

TRANSLATION

One is understood to be in full knowledge whose every act is devoid of desire for sense gratification. He is said by sages to be a worker whose fruitive action is burned up by the fire of perfect knowledge.

PURPORT

Only a person in full knowledge can understand the activities of a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Because the person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is devoid of all kinds of sense-gratificatory propensities, it is to be understood that he has burned up the reactions of his work by perfect knowledge of his constitutional position as the eternal servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is actually learned who has attained to such perfection of knowledge. Development of this knowledge of the eternal servitorship of the Lord is compared to fire. Such a fire, once kindled, can burn up all kinds of reactions to work.

TEXT 20

*tyaktvā karma-phalāsaṅgam
nitya-tṛpto nirāśrayaḥ
karmaṇy abhipravṛtto 'pi
naiva kiñcit karoti saḥ*

SYNONYMS

tyaktvā-having given up; *karma-phala-āsaṅgam*-attachment for fruitive results; *nitya*-always; *tṛptaḥ*-being satisfied; *nirāśrayaḥ*-without any center; *karmaṇi*-in activity; *abhipravṛttaḥ*-being fully engaged; *api*-in spite of; *na*-does not; *eva*-certainly; *kiñcit*-anything; *karoti*-do; *saḥ*-he.

TRANSLATION

Abandoning all attachment to the results of his activities, ever satisfied and independent, he performs no fruitive action, although engaged in all kinds of undertakings.

PURPORT

This freedom from the bondage of actions is possible only in Kṛṣṇa consciousness when one is doing everything for Kṛṣṇa. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person acts out of pure love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore he has no attraction for the results of the action. He is not even attached to his personal maintenance, for everything is left to Kṛṣṇa. Nor is

he anxious to secure things, nor to protect things already in his possession. He does his duty to his best ability and leaves everything to Kṛṣṇa. Such an unattached person is always free from the resultant reactions of good and bad; it is as though he were not doing anything. This is the sign of *akarma*, or actions without fruitive reactions. Any other action, therefore, devoid of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is binding upon the worker, and that is the real aspect of *vikarma*, as explained hereinbefore.

TEXT 21

*nirāśīr yata-cittātmā
tyakta-sarva-parigrahaḥ
śārīram kevalam karma
kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣam*

SYNONYMS

nirāśīr-without desire for the results; *yata*-controlled; *citta-ātmā*-mind and intelligence; *tyakta*-giving up; *sarva*-all; *parigrahaḥ*-sense of proprietorship over all possessions; *śārīram*-in keeping body and soul together; *kevalam*-only; *karma*-work; *kurvan*-doing so; *na*-never; *āpnoti*-does not acquire; *kilbiṣam*-sinful reactions.

TRANSLATION

Such a man of understanding acts with mind and intelligence perfectly controlled, gives up all sense of proprietorship over his possessions and acts only for the bare necessities of life. Thus working, he is not affected by sinful reactions.

PURPORT

A Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not expect good or bad results in his activities. His mind and intelligence are fully controlled. He knows that he is part and parcel of the Supreme, and therefore the part played by him, as a part and parcel of the whole, is not his by choice but is chosen for him by the Supreme and is done only through His agency. When the hand moves, it

does not move out of its own accord, but by the endeavor of the whole body. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person is always dovetailed with the supreme desire, for he has no desire for personal sense gratification. He moves exactly like a part of a machine. As a machine part requires oiling and cleaning for maintenance, similarly, a Kṛṣṇa conscious man maintains himself by his work just to remain fit for action in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. He is therefore immune to all the reactions of his endeavors. Like an animal, he has no proprietorship even over his own body. A cruel proprietor of an animal sometimes kills the animal in his possession, yet the animal does not protest. Nor does it have any real independence. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person, fully engaged in self-realization, has very little time to falsely possess any material object. For maintaining body and soul, he does not require unfair means of accumulating money. He does not, therefore, become contaminated by such material sins. He is free from all reactions to his actions.

TEXT 22

*yadṛcchā-lābha-santuṣṭo
dvandvātīto vimatsaraḥ
samaḥ siddhāv asiddhau ca
kṛtvāpi na nibadhyate*

SYNONYMS

yadṛcchā-out of its own accord; *lābha*-gain; *santuṣṭaḥ*-satisfied; *dvandva*-duality; *atītaḥ*-surpassed; *vimatsaraḥ*-free from envy; *samaḥ*-steady; *siddhau*-in success; *asiddhau*-failure; *ca*-also; *kṛtvā*-doing; *api*-although; *na*-never; *nibadhyate*-is affected.

TRANSLATION

He who is satisfied with gain which comes of its own accord, who is free from duality and does not envy, who is steady both in success and failure, is never entangled, although performing actions.

PURPORT

A Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not make much endeavor even to maintain his body. He is satisfied with gains which are obtained of their own accord. He neither begs nor borrows, but he labors honestly as far as is in his power, and is satisfied with whatever is obtained by his own honest labor. He is therefore independent in his livelihood. He does not allow anyone's service to hamper his own service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. However, for the service of the Lord he can participate in any kind of action without being disturbed by the duality of the material world. The duality of the material world is felt in terms of heat and cold, or misery and happiness. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person is above duality because he does not hesitate to act in any way for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore he is steady both in success and in failure. These signs are visible when one is fully in transcendental knowledge.

TEXT 23

*gata-saṅgasya muktasya
jñānāvasthita-cetasah
yajñāyācarataḥ karma
samagram pravilīyate*

SYNONYMS

gata-saṅgasya-unattached to the modes of material nature; *muktasya*-of the liberated; *jñāna-avasthita*-situated in transcendence; *cetasah*-of such wisdom; *yajñāya*-for the sake of Yajña (Kṛṣṇa); *ācarataḥ*-so acting; *karma*-work; *samagram*-in total; *pravilīyate*-merges entirely.

TRANSLATION

The work of a man who is unattached to the modes of material nature and who is fully situated in transcendental knowledge merges entirely into transcendence.

PURPORT

Becoming fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, one is freed from all dualities and thus is free from the contaminations of the material modes. He can become liberated because he knows his constitutional position in relationship with Kṛṣṇa; and thus his mind cannot be drawn from Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Consequently, whatever he does, he does for Kṛṣṇa, who is the primeval Viṣṇu. Therefore, all his works are technically sacrifices because sacrifice involves satisfying the Supreme Person, Kṛṣṇa. The resultant reactions to all such work certainly merge into transcendence, and one does not suffer material effects.

TEXT 24

*brahmārpaṇaṁ brahma havir
brahmāgnau brahmaṇā hutam
brahmaiva tena gantavyam
brahma-karma-samādhinā*

SYNONYMS

brahma-spiritual nature; *arpaṇam*-contribution; *brahma*-the Supreme; *haviḥ*-butter; *brahma*-spiritual; *agnau*-in the fire of consummation; *brāhmaṇā*-by the spirit soul; *hutam*-offered; *brahma*-spiritual kingdom; *eva*-certainly; *tena*-by him; *gantavyam*-to be reached; *brahma*-spiritual; *karma*-activities; *samādhinā*-by complete absorption.

TRANSLATION

A person who is fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is sure to attain the spiritual kingdom because of his full contribution to spiritual activities, in which the consummation is absolute and that which is offered is of the same spiritual nature.

PURPORT

How activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can lead one ultimately to the spiritual goal is described here. There are various activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and all of them will be described in the following verses.

But, for the present, just the principle of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is described. A conditioned soul, entangled in material contamination, is sure to act in the material atmosphere, and yet he has to get out of such an environment. The process by which the conditioned soul can get out of the material atmosphere is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For example, a patient who is suffering from a disorder of the bowels due to overindulgence in milk products is cured by another milk product, namely curds. The materially absorbed conditioned soul can be cured by Kṛṣṇa consciousness as set forth here in the *Gītā*. This process is generally known as *yajña*, or activities (sacrifices) simply meant for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa. The more the activities of the material world are performed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or for Viṣṇu only, the more the atmosphere becomes spiritualized by complete absorption. Brahman means spiritual. The Lord is spiritual, and the rays of His transcendental body are called *brahmajyoti*, His spiritual effulgence. Everything that exists is situated in that *brahmajyoti*, but when the *jyoti* is covered by illusion (*māyā*) or sense gratification, it is called material. This material veil can be removed at once by Kṛṣṇa consciousness; thus the offering for the sake of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the consuming agent of such an offering or contribution; the process of consumption, the contributor, and the result are-all combined together-Brahman, or the Absolute Truth. The Absolute Truth covered by *māyā* is called matter. Matter dovetailed for the cause of the Absolute Truth regains its spiritual quality. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the process of converting the illusory consciousness into Brahman, or the Supreme. When the mind is fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it is said to be in *samādhi*, or trance. Anything done in such transcendental consciousness is called *yajña*, or sacrifice for the Absolute. In that condition of spiritual consciousness, the contributor, the contribution, the consumption, the performer or leader of the performance, and the result or ultimate gain-everything-becomes one in the Absolute, the Supreme Brahman. That is the method of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 25

*daivam evāpare yajñam
yoginaḥ paryupāsate
brahmāgnāv apare yajñam*

yajñenaivopajuhvati

SYNONYMS

daivam-in worshipping the demigods; *eva*-like this; *apare*-some; *yajñam*-sacrifices; *yoginaḥ*-the mystics; *paryupāsate*-worship perfectly; *brahma*-the Absolute Truth; *agnau*-in the fire of; *apare*-others; *yajñam*-sacrifice; *yajñena*-by sacrifice; *eva*-thus; *upajuhvati*-worship.

TRANSLATION

Some yogīs perfectly worship the demigods by offering different sacrifices to them, and some of them offer sacrifices in the fire of the Supreme Brahman.

PURPORT

As described above, a person engaged in discharging duties in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is also called a perfect *yogī* or a first-class mystic. But there are others also, who perform similar sacrifices in the worship of demigods, and still others who sacrifice to the Supreme Brahman, or the impersonal feature of the Supreme Lord. So there are different kinds of sacrifices in terms of different categories. Such different categories of sacrifice by different types of performers only superficially demark varieties of sacrifice. Factual sacrifice means to satisfy the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, who is also known as *Yajña*. All the different varieties of sacrifice can be placed within two primary divisions: namely, sacrifice of worldly possessions and sacrifice in pursuit of transcendental knowledge. Those who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness sacrifice all material possessions for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord, while others, who want some temporary material happiness, sacrifice their material possessions to satisfy demigods such as Indra, the sun-god, etc. And others, who are impersonalists, sacrifice their identity by merging into the existence of impersonal Brahman. The demigods are powerful living entities appointed by the Supreme Lord for the maintenance and supervision of all material functions like the heating, watering and lighting of the universe. Those who are interested in material benefits worship the demigods by various sacrifices according to the Vedic rituals.

They are called *bahv-īśvara-vādī*, or believers in many gods. But others, who worship the impersonal feature of the Absolute Truth and regard the forms of the demigods as temporary, sacrifice their individual selves in the supreme fire and thus end their individual existences by merging into the existence of the Supreme. Such impersonalists spend their time in philosophical speculation to understand the transcendental nature of the Supreme. In other words, the fruitive workers sacrifice their material possessions for material enjoyment, whereas the impersonalist sacrifices his material designations with a view to merging into the existence of the Supreme. For the impersonalist, the fire altar of sacrifice is the Supreme Brahman, and the offering is the self being consumed by the fire of Brahman. The Kṛṣṇa conscious person, like Arjuna, however, sacrifices everything for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa, and thus all his material possessions as well as his own self-everything-is sacrificed for Kṛṣṇa. Thus, he is the first-class *yogī*; but he does not lose his individual existence.

TEXT 26

*śrotrādīnīndriyāṇy anye
saṁyamāgniṣu juhvati
śabdādīn viṣayān anyā
indriyāgniṣu juhvati*

SYNONYMS

śrotra ādīni-hearing process; *indriyāṇi*-senses; *anye*-others; *saṁyama*-of restraint; *agniṣu*-in the fire; *juhvati*-offers; *śabda-ādīn*-sound vibration, etc.; *viṣayān*-objects of sense gratification; *anye*-others: *indriya*-of sense organs; *agniṣu*-in the fire; *juhvati*-sacrifice.

TRANSLATION

Some of them sacrifice the hearing process and the senses in the fire of the controlled mind, and others sacrifice the objects of the senses, such as sound, in the fire of sacrifice.

PURPORT

The four divisions of human life, namely the *brahmacārī*, the *gṛhastha*, the *vānaprastha*, and the *sannyāsī*, are all meant to help men become perfect *yogīs* or transcendentalists. Since human life is not meant for our enjoying sense gratification like the animals, the four orders of human life are so arranged that one may become perfect in spiritual life. The *brahmacārīs*, or students under the care of a bona fide spiritual master, control the mind by abstaining from sense gratification. They are referred to in this verse as sacrificing the hearing process and the senses in the fire of the controlled mind. A *brahmacārī* hears only words concerning Kṛṣṇa consciousness; hearing is the basic principle for understanding, and therefore the pure *brahmacārī* engages fully in *harer nāmānukīrtanam*-chanting and hearing the glories of the Lord. He restrains himself from the vibrations of material sounds, and his hearing is engaged in the transcendental sound vibration of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, the householders, who have some license for sense gratification, perform such acts with great restraint. Sex life, intoxication and meat eating are general tendencies of human society, but a regulated householder does not indulge in unrestricted sex life and other sense gratifications. Marriage on principles of religious life is therefore current in all civilized human society because that is the way for restricted sex life. This restricted, unattached sex life is also a kind of *yajña* because the restricted householder sacrifices his general tendency toward sense gratification for higher transcendental life.

TEXT 27

sarvāṇīndriya-karmāṇi
prāṇa-karmāṇi cāpare
ātma-saṁyama-yogāgnau
juhvati jñāna-dīpite

SYNONYMS

sarvāṇi-all; *indriya*-senses; *karmāṇi*-functions; *prāṇa-karmāṇi*-functions of the life breath; *ca*-also; *apare*-others; *ātma-saṁyama*-controlling the mind; *yoga*-linking process; *agnau*-in the fire of; *juhvati*-offers; *jñāna-dīpite*-because of the urge for self-realization.

TRANSLATION

Those who are interested in self-realization, in terms of mind and sense control, offer the functions of all the senses, as well as the vital force [breath], as oblations into the fire of the controlled mind.

PURPORT

The *yoga* system conceived by Patañjali is referred to herein. In the *Yoga-sūtra* of Patañjali, the soul is called *pratyag-ātmā* and *parag-ātmā*. As long as the soul is attached to sense enjoyment, it is called *parag-ātmā*. The soul is subjected to the functions of ten kinds of air at work within the body, and this is perceived through the breathing system. The Pātañjala system of *yoga* instructs one on how to control the functions of the body's air in a technical manner so that ultimately all the functions of the air within become favorable for purifying the soul of material attachment. According to this *yoga* system, *pratyag ātmā* is the ultimate goal. This *pratyag ātmā* is a withdrawal from activities in matter. The senses interact with the sense objects, like the ear for hearing, eyes for seeing, nose for smelling, tongue for tasting, hand for touching, and all of them are thus engaged in activities outside the self. They are called the functions of the *prāṇa-vāyu*. The *apāna-vāyu* goes downwards, *vyāna-vāyu* acts to shrink and expand, *samāna-vāyu* adjusts equilibrium, *udāna-vāyu* goes upwards-and when one is enlightened, one engages all these in searching for self-realization.

TEXT 28

dravya-yajñās tapo-yajñā
yoga-yajñās tathāpare
svādhyāya-jñāna-yajñās ca
yatayaḥ saṁśīta-vratāḥ

SYNONYMS

dravya-yajñāḥ-sacrificing one's possessions; *tapo-yajñāḥ*-sacrifice in austerities; *yoga-yajñāḥ*-sacrifice in eightfold mysticism; *tathā*-thus; *apare*-others; *svādhyāya*-sacrifice in the study of the *Vedas*; *jñāna-yajñāḥ*-

sacrifice in advancement of transcendental knowledge; *ca*-also; *yatayah*-enlightened; *samśita*-taken to strict; *vrataḥ*-vows.

TRANSLATION

There are others who, enlightened by sacrificing their material possessions in severe austerities, take strict vows and practice the yoga of eightfold mysticism, and others study the Vedas for the advancement of transcendental knowledge.

PURPORT

These sacrifices may be fitted into various divisions. There are persons who are sacrificing their possessions in the form of various kinds of charities. In India, the rich mercantile community or princely orders open various kinds of charitable institutions like *dharmaśālā*, *anna-kṣetra*, *atithi-śālā*, *anathalaya*, *vidyāpīṭha*, etc. In other countries, too, there are many hospitals, old age homes and similar charitable foundations meant for distributing food, education and medical treatment free to the poor. All these charitable activities are called *dravyamaya-yajña*. There are others who, for higher elevation in life or for promotion to higher planets within the universe, voluntarily accept many kinds of austerities such as *candrāyana* and *cāturmāsya*. These processes entail severe vows for conducting life under certain rigid rules. For example, under the *cāturmāsya* vow the candidate does not shave for four months during the year (July to October), he does not eat certain foods, does not eat twice in a day and does not leave home. Such sacrifice of the comforts of life is called *tapomaya-yajña*. There are still others who engage themselves in different kinds of mystic *yogas* like the Patañjali system (for merging into the existence of the Absolute), or *haṭha-yoga* or *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* (for particular perfections). And some travel to all the sanctified places of pilgrimage. All these practices are called *yoga-yajña*, sacrifice for a certain type of perfection in the material world. There are others who engage themselves in the studies of different Vedic literatures, specifically the *Upaniṣads* and *Vedānta-sūtras*, or the *sāṅkhya* philosophy. All of these are called *svādhyāya-yajña*, or engagement in the sacrifice of studies. All these *yogīs* are faithfully engaged in different types of sacrifice and are seeking a higher status of life. Kṛṣṇa

consciousness, is, however, different from these because it is the direct service of the Supreme Lord. Kṛṣṇa consciousness cannot be attained by any one of the above-mentioned types of sacrifices but can be attained only by the mercy of the Lord and His bona fide devotee. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is transcendental.

TEXT 29

*apāne juhvati prāṇam
prāṇe 'pānam tathāpare
prāṇāpāna-gatī ruddhvā
prāṇāyāma-parāyaṇāḥ
apare niyatāhārāḥ
prāṇān prāṇeṣu juhvati*

SYNONYMS

apāne-air which acts downward; *juhvati*-offers; *prāṇam*-air which acts outward; *prāṇe*-in the air going outward; *apānam*-air going downward; *tathā*-as also; *apare*-others; *prāṇa*-air going outward; *apāna*-air going downward; *gatī*-movement; *ruddhvā*-checking; *prāṇāyāma*-trance induced by stopping all breathing; *parāyaṇāḥ*-so inclined; *apare*-others; *niyata*-controlled; *āhārāḥ*-eating; *prāṇān*-outgoing air; *prāṇeṣu*-in the outgoing air; *juhvati*-sacrifices.

TRANSLATION

And there are even others who are inclined to the process of breath restraint to remain in trance, and they practice stopping the movement of the outgoing breath into the incoming, and incoming breath into the outgoing, and thus at last remain in trance, stopping all breathing. Some of them, curtailing the eating process, offer the outgoing breath into itself, as a sacrifice.

PURPORT

This system of *yoga* for controlling the breathing process is called *prāṇāyāma*, and in the beginning it is practiced in the *haṭha-yoga* system through different sitting postures. All of these processes are recommended for controlling the senses and for advancement in spiritual realization. This practice involves controlling the air within the body to enable simultaneous passage in opposite directions. The *apāna* air goes downward, and the *prāṇa* air goes up. The *prāṇāyāma yogī* practices breathing the opposite way until the currents are neutralized into *pūraka*, equilibrium. Similarly, when the exhaled breathing is offered to inhaled breathing, it is called *recaka*. When both air currents are completely stopped, it is called *kumbhaka-yoga*. By practice of *kumbhaka-yoga*, the *yogīs* increase the duration of life by many, many years. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person, however, being always situated in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, automatically becomes the controller of the senses. His senses, being always engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa, have no chance of becoming otherwise engaged. So at the end of life, he is naturally transferred to the transcendental plane of Lord Kṛṣṇa; consequently he makes no attempt to increase his longevity. He is at once raised to the platform of liberation. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person begins from the transcendental stage, and he is constantly in that consciousness. Therefore, there is no falling down, and ultimately he enters into the abode of the Lord without delay. The practice of reduced eating is automatically done when one eats only Kṛṣṇa *prasādam*, or food which is offered first to the Lord. Reducing the eating process is very helpful in the matter of sense control. And without sense control there is no possibility of getting out of the material entanglement.

TEXT 30

*sarve 'py ete yajña-vido
yajña-kṣapita-kalmaṣāḥ
yajña-śiṣṭāmṛta-bhujo
yānti brahma sanātanam*

SYNONYMS

sarve-all; *api*-although apparently different; *ete*-all these; *yajña-vidah*-conversant with the purpose of performing; *yajña*-sacrifices; *kṣapita*-being cleansed of the result of such performances; *kalmaṣāḥ*-sinful reactions; *yajña-śiṣṭa*-as a result of such performances of *yajña*; *amṛta-bhujah*-those who have tasted such nectar; *yānti*-do approach; *brahma*-the supreme; *sanātānam*-eternal atmosphere.

TRANSLATION

All these performers who know the meaning of sacrifice become cleansed of sinful reaction, and, having tasted the nectar of the remnants of such sacrifice, they go to the supreme eternal atmosphere.

PURPORT

From the foregoing explanation of different types of sacrifice (namely sacrifice of one's possessions, study of the *Vedas* or philosophical doctrines, and performance of the *yoga* system), it is found that the common aim of all is to control the senses. Sense gratification is the root cause of material existence; therefore, unless and until one is situated on a platform apart from sense gratification, there is no chance of being elevated to the eternal platform of full knowledge, full bliss and full life. This platform is in the eternal atmosphere, or Brahman atmosphere. All the above-mentioned sacrifices help one to become cleansed of the sinful reactions of material existence. By this advancement in life, one not only becomes happy and opulent in this life, but also, at the end, he enters into the eternal kingdom of God, either merging into the impersonal Brahman or associating with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 31

*nāyaṁ loko 'sty ayajñasya
kuto 'nyaḥ kuru-sattama*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *ayam*-this; *lokaḥ*-planet; *asti*-there is; *ayajñasya*-of the foolish;
kutaḥ-where is; *anyaḥ*-the other; *kuru-sattama*-O best amongst the Kurus.

TRANSLATION

**O best of the Kuru dynasty, without sacrifice one can never live
happily on this planet or in this life: what then of the next?**

PURPORT

Whatever form of material existence one is in, one is invariably ignorant of his real situation. In other words, existence in the material world is due to the multiple reactions to our sinful lives. Ignorance is the cause of sinful life, and sinful life is the cause of one's dragging on in material existence. The human form of life is the only loophole by which one may get out of this entanglement. The *Vedas*, therefore, give us a chance for escape by pointing out the paths of religion, economic comfort, regulated sense gratification and, at last, the means to get out of the miserable condition entirely. The path of religion, or the different kinds of sacrifice recommended above, automatically solves our economic problems. By performance of *yajña* we can have enough food, enough milk, etc.-even if there is a so-called increase of population. When the body is fully supplied, naturally the next stage is to satisfy the senses. The *Vedas* prescribe, therefore, sacred marriage for regulated sense gratification. Thereby one is gradually elevated to the platform of release from material bondage, and the highest perfection of liberated life is to associate with the Supreme Lord. Perfection is achieved by performance of *yajña* (sacrifice), as described above. Now, if a person is not inclined to perform *yajña* according to the *Vedas*, how can he expect a happy life? There are different grades of material comforts in different heavenly planets, and in all cases there is immense happiness for persons engaged in different kinds of *yajña*. But the highest kind of happiness that a man can achieve is to be promoted to the spiritual planets by practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A life of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is therefore the solution to all the problems of material existence.

TEXT 32

*evam̐ bahu-vidhā yajñā
vitatā brahmaṇo mukhe
karma-jān viddhi tān sarvān
evam̐ jñātvā vimokṣyase*

SYNONYMS

evam-thus; *bahu-vidhāḥ*-various kinds of; *yajñāḥ*-sacrifices; *vitatāḥ*-widespread; *brahmaṇaḥ*-of the *Vedas*; *mukhe*-in the face of; *karma-jān*-born of work; *viddhi*-you should know; *tān*-them; *sarvān*-all; *evam*-thus; *jñātvā*-knowing; *vimokṣyase*-be liberated.

TRANSLATION

All these different types of sacrifice are approved by the Vedas, and all of them are born of different types of work. Knowing them as such, you will become liberated.

PURPORT

Different types of sacrifice, as discussed above, are mentioned in the *Vedas* to suit the different types of worker. Because men are so deeply absorbed in the bodily concept, these sacrifices are so arranged that one can work either with the body, the mind, or the intelligence. But all of them are recommended for ultimately bringing about liberation from the body. This is confirmed by the Lord herewith from His own mouth.

TEXT 33

*śreyān dravya-mayād yajñāj
jñāna-yajñāḥ parantapa
sarvaṁ karmākhilam̐ pārtha
jñāne parisamāpyate*

SYNONYMS

śreyān-greater; *dravyamayāt*-than the sacrifice of material possessions; *yajñāt*-knowledge; *jñāna-yajñah*-sacrifice in knowledge; *parantapa*-O chastiser of the enemy; *sarvam*-all; *karma*-activities; *akhilam*-in totality; *pārtha*-O son of Prthā; *jñāne*-in knowledge; *parisamāpyate*-ends in.

TRANSLATION

O chastiser of the enemy, the sacrifice of knowledge is greater than the sacrifice of material possessions. O son of Prthā, after all, the sacrifice of work culminates in transcendental knowledge.

PURPORT

The purpose of all sacrifices is to arrive at the status of complete knowledge, then to gain release from material miseries, and, ultimately, to engage in loving transcendental service to the Supreme Lord (Kṛṣṇa consciousness). Nonetheless, there is a mystery about all these different activities of sacrifice, and one should know this mystery. Sacrifices sometimes take different forms according to the particular faith of the performer. When one's faith reaches the stage of transcendental knowledge, the performer of sacrifices should be considered more advanced than those who simply sacrifice material possessions without such knowledge, for without attainment of knowledge, sacrifices remain on the material platform and bestow no spiritual benefit. Real knowledge culminates in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the highest stage of transcendental knowledge. Without the elevation of knowledge, sacrifices are simply material activities. When, however, they are elevated to the level of transcendental knowledge, all such activities enter onto the spiritual platform. Depending on differences in consciousness, sacrificial activities are sometimes called *karma-kāṇḍa*, fruitive activities, and sometimes *jñāna-kāṇḍa*, knowledge in the pursuit of truth. It is better when the end is knowledge.

TEXT 34

*tad viddhi praṇipātena
paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānam*

jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ

SYNONYMS

tat-that knowledge of different sacrifices; *viddhi*-try to understand; *praṇipātena*-by approaching a spiritual master; *paripraśnena*-by submissive inquiries; *sevayā*-by the rendering of service; *upadekṣyanti*-initiate; *te*-unto you; *jñānam*-knowledge; *jñāninaḥ*-the self-realized; *tattva*-truth; *darśinaḥ*-the seers.

TRANSLATION

Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth.

PURPORT

The path of spiritual realization is undoubtedly difficult. The Lord therefore advises us to approach a bona fide spiritual master in the line of disciplic succession from the Lord Himself. No one can be a bona fide spiritual master without following this principle of disciplic succession. The Lord is the original spiritual master, and a person in the disciplic succession can convey the message of the Lord as it is to his disciple. No one can be spiritually realized by manufacturing his own process, as is the fashion of the foolish pretenders. The *Bhāgavatam* says: *dharmam hi sākṣād-bhagavat-praṇītam*-the path of religion is directly enunciated by the Lord. Therefore, mental speculation or dry arguments cannot help one progress in spiritual life. One has to approach a bona fide spiritual master to receive the knowledge. Such a spiritual master should be accepted in full surrender, and one should serve the spiritual master like a menial servant, without false prestige. Satisfaction of the self-realized spiritual master is the secret of advancement in spiritual life. Inquiries and submission constitute the proper combination for spiritual understanding. Unless there is submission and service, inquiries from the learned spiritual master will not be effective. One must be able to pass the test of the spiritual master, and when he sees the genuine desire of the disciple, he automatically blesses the disciple with

genuine spiritual understanding. In this verse, both blind following and absurd inquiries are condemned. One should not only hear submissively from the spiritual master; but one must also get a clear understanding from him, in submission and service and inquiries. A bona fide spiritual master is by nature very kind toward the disciple. Therefore when the student is submissive and is always ready to render service, the reciprocation of knowledge and inquiries becomes perfect.

TEXT 35

*yaj jñātvā na punar moham
evam yāsyasi pāṇḍava
yena bhūtāny aśeṣāṇi
drakṣyasi ātmany atho mayi*

SYNONYMS

yat-which; *jñātvā*-knowing; *na*-never; *punar*-again; *moham*-illusion; *evam*-like this; *yāsyasi*-you shall go; *pāṇḍava*-O son of Pāṇḍu; *yena*-by which; *bhūtāni*-all living entities; *aśeṣāṇi*-totally; *drakṣyasi*-you will see; *ātmani*-in the Supreme Soul; *atho*-or in other words; *mayi*-in Me.

TRANSLATION

And when you have thus learned the truth, you will know that all living beings are but part of Me-and that they are in Me, and are Mine.

PURPORT

The result of receiving knowledge from a self-realized soul, or one who knows things as they are, is learning that all living beings are parts and parcels of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The sense of a separated existence from Kṛṣṇa is called *māyā* (*mā*-not, *yā*-this). Some think that we have nothing to do with Kṛṣṇa, that Kṛṣṇa is only a great historical personality and that the Absolute is the impersonal Brahman. Factually, as it is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, this impersonal Brahman is the personal effulgence of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, as the Supreme Personality of

Godhead, is the cause of everything. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is clearly stated that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes. Even the millions of incarnations are only His different expansions. Similarly, the living entities are also expansions of Kṛṣṇa. The Māyāvādī philosophers wrongly think that Kṛṣṇa loses His own separate existence in His many expansions. This thought is material in nature. We have experience in the material world that a thing, when fragmentally distributed, loses its own original identity. But the Māyāvādī philosophers fail to understand that Absolute means that one plus one is equal to one, and that one minus one is also equal to one. This is the case in the absolute world.

For want of sufficient knowledge in the absolute science, we are now covered with illusion, and therefore we think that we are separate from Kṛṣṇa. Although we are separated parts of Kṛṣṇa, we are nevertheless not different from Him. The bodily difference of the living entities is *māyā*, or not actual fact. We are all meant to satisfy Kṛṣṇa. By *māyā* alone Arjuna thought that the temporary bodily relationship with his kinsmen was more important than his eternal spiritual relationship with Kṛṣṇa. The whole teaching of the *Gītā* is targetted toward this end: that a living being, as His eternal servitor, cannot be separated from Kṛṣṇa, and his sense of being an identity apart from Kṛṣṇa is called *māyā*. The living entities, as separate parts and parcels of the Supreme, have a purpose to fulfill. Having forgotten that purpose, since time immemorial they are situated in different bodies, as men, animals, demigods, etc. Such bodily differences arise from forgetfulness of the transcendental service of the Lord. But when one is engaged in transcendental service through Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one becomes at once liberated from this illusion. One can acquire such pure knowledge only from the bona fide spiritual master and thereby avoid the delusion that the living entity is equal to Kṛṣṇa. Perfect knowledge is that the Supreme Soul, Kṛṣṇa, is the supreme shelter for all living entities, and giving up such shelter, the living entities are deluded by the material energy, imagining themselves to have a separate identity. Thus, under different standards of material identity, they become forgetful of Kṛṣṇa. When, however, such deluded living entities become situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it is to be understood that they are on the path of liberation, as confirmed in the *Bhāgavatam*: *muktir hitvānyathā rūpaṁ svarūpeṇa*

vyavasthitiḥ. Liberation means to be situated in one's constitutional position as the eternal servitor of Kṛṣṇa (Kṛṣṇa consciousness).

TEXT 36

*api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ
sarvebhyaḥ pāpa-kṛt-tamaḥ
sarvaṁ jñāna-plavenaiva
vṛjinam santariṣyasi*

SYNONYMS

api-even; *cet*-if; *asi*-you are; *pāpebhyaḥ*-of sinners; *sarvebhyaḥ*-of all; *pāpa-kṛttamaḥ*-the greatest sinner; *sarvam*-all such sinful actions; *jñāna-plavena*-by the boat of transcendental knowledge; *eva*-certainly; *vṛjinam*-the ocean of miseries; *santariṣyasi*-you will cross completely.

TRANSLATION

Even if you are considered to be the most sinful of all sinners, when you are situated in the boat of transcendental knowledge, you will be able to cross over the ocean of miseries.

PURPORT

Proper understanding of one's constitutional position in relationship to Kṛṣṇa is so nice that it can at once lift one from the struggle for existence which goes on in the ocean of nescience. This material world is sometimes regarded as an ocean of nescience and sometimes as a blazing forest. In the ocean, however expert a swimmer one may be, the struggle for existence is very severe. If someone comes forward and lifts the struggling swimmer from the ocean, he is the greatest savior. Perfect knowledge, received from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the path of liberation. The boat of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is very simple, but at the same time the most sublime.

TEXT 37

*yathaidhāmsi samiddho 'gnir
bhasma-sāt kurute 'rjuna
jñānāgniḥ sarva-karmāṇi
bhasma-sāt kurute tathā*

SYNONYMS

yathā-just as; *edhāmsi*-firewood; *samiddhaḥ*-blazing; *agniḥ*-fire;
bhasmasāt-turns into ashes; *kurute*-so does; *arjuna*-O Arjuna; *jñāna-agniḥ*-
the fire of knowledge; *sarva-karmāṇi*-all reactions to material activities;
bhasmasāt-to ashes; *kurute*-it so does; *tathā*-similarly.

TRANSLATION

**As the blazing fire turns firewood to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the
fire of knowledge burn to ashes all reactions to material activities.**

PURPORT

Perfect knowledge of self and Superself and of their relationship is compared herein to fire. This fire not only burns up all reactions to impious activities, but also all reactions to pious activities, turning them to ashes. There are many stages of reaction: reaction in the making, reaction fructifying, reaction already achieved, and reaction *a priori*. But knowledge of the constitutional position of the living entity burns everything to ashes. When one is in complete knowledge, all reactions, both *a priori* and *a posteriori*, are consumed. In the *Vedas* it is stated: *ubhe uhaivaiṣa ete taraty amṛtaḥ sādhy-asādhūnī*: "One overcomes both the pious and impious interactions of work."

TEXT 38

*na hi jñānena sadṛśam
pavitram iha vidyate
tat svayaṁ yoga-saṁsiddhaḥ
kālenātmāni vindati*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *hi*-certainly; *jñānena*-with knowledge; *sadr̥śam*-in comparison; *pavitram*-sanctified; *iha*-in this world; *vidyate*-exists; *tat*-that; *svayam*-itself; *yoga*-devotion; *saṁsiddhaḥ*-matured; *kālena*-in course of time; *ātmani*-in himself; *vindati*-enjoys.

TRANSLATION

In this world, there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge is the mature fruit of all mysticism. And one who has achieved this enjoys the self within himself in due course of time.

PURPORT

When we speak of transcendental knowledge, we do so in terms of spiritual understanding. As such, there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge. Ignorance is the cause of our bondage, and knowledge is the cause of our liberation. This knowledge is the mature fruit of devotional service, and when one is situated in transcendental knowledge, he need not search for peace elsewhere, for he enjoys peace within himself. In other words, this knowledge and peace are culminated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is the last word in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

TEXT 39

*śraddhāvāl labhate jñānam
tat-paraḥ saṁyatendriyaḥ
jñānam labdhvā parām śāntim
acireṇādhigacchati*

SYNONYMS

śraddhāvān-a faithful man; *labhate*-achieves; *jñānam*-knowledge; *tat-paraḥ*-very much attached to it; *saṁyata*-controlled; *indriyaḥ*-senses; *jñānam*-knowledge; *labdhvā*-having achieved; *parām*-transcendental; *śāntim*-peace; *acireṇa*-very soon; *adhigacchati*-attains.

TRANSLATION

A faithful man who is absorbed in transcendental knowledge and who subdues his senses quickly attains the supreme spiritual peace.

PURPORT

Such knowledge in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be achieved by a faithful person who believes firmly in Kṛṣṇa. One is called a faithful man who thinks that, simply by acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he can attain the highest perfection. This faith is attained by the discharge of devotional service, and by chanting "*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare,*" which cleanses one's heart of all material dirt. Over and above this, one should control the senses. A person who is faithful to Kṛṣṇa and who controls the senses can easily attain perfection in the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness without delay.

TEXT 40

*ajñāś cāśraddadhānaś ca
saṁśayātmā vinaśyati
nāyaṁ loko 'sti na paro
na sukhaṁ saṁśayātmanaḥ*

SYNONYMS

ajñāḥ-fools who have no knowledge in standard scriptures; *ca*-and; *aśraddadhānaḥ*-without faith in revealed scriptures; *ca*-also; *saṁśaya*-doubts; *ātmā*-person; *vinaśyati*-falls back; *na*-never; *ayaṁ*-this; *lokaḥ*-world; *asti*-there is; *na*-neither; *paraḥ*-next life; *na*-not; *sukhaṁ*-happiness; *saṁśaya*-doubtful; *ātmanaḥ*-of the person.

TRANSLATION

But ignorant and faithless persons who doubt the revealed scriptures do not attain God consciousness. For the doubting soul there is happiness neither in this world nor in the next.

PURPORT

Out of many standard and authoritative revealed scriptures, the *Bhagavad-gītā* is the best. Persons who are almost like animals have no faith in, or knowledge of, the standard revealed scriptures; and some, even though they have knowledge of, or can cite passages from, the revealed scriptures, have actually no faith in these words. And even though others may have faith in scriptures like *Bhagavad-gītā*, they do not believe in or worship the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Such persons cannot have any standing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They fall down. Out of all the abovementioned persons, those who have no faith and are always doubtful make no progress at all. Men without faith in God and His revealed word find no good in this world, nor in the next. For them there is no happiness whatsoever. One should therefore follow the principles of revealed scriptures with faith and thereby be raised to the platform of knowledge. Only this knowledge will help one become promoted to the transcendental platform of spiritual understanding. In other words, doubtful persons have no status whatsoever in spiritual emancipation. One should therefore follow in the footsteps of great *ācāryas* who are in the disciplic succession and thereby attain success.

TEXT 41

*yoga-sannyasta-karmāṇaṁ
jñāna-sañchinna-saṁśayam
ātmavantam na karmāṇi
nibadhnanti dhanañjaya*

SYNONYMS

yoga-devotional service in *karma-yoga*; *sannyasta*-renounced; *karmāṇaṁ*-of the performers; *jñāna*-knowledge; *sañchinna*-cut by the advancement of knowledge; *saṁśayam*-doubts; *ātma-vantam*-situated in the self; *na*-never; *karmāṇi*-work; *nibadhnanti*-do bind up; *dhanañjaya*-O conquerer of riches.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, one who has renounced the fruits of his action, whose doubts are destroyed by transcendental knowledge, and who is situated firmly in the self, is not bound by works, O conqueror of riches.

PURPORT

One who follows the instruction of the *Gītā*, as it is imparted by the Lord, the Personality of Godhead Himself, becomes free from all doubts by the grace of transcendental knowledge. He, as a part and parcel of the Lord, in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is already established in self-knowledge. As such, he is undoubtedly above bondage to action.

TEXT 42

*tasmād ajñāna-sambhūtaṁ
hṛt-sthaṁ jñānāsinātmanaḥ
chittvainaṁ saṁśayaṁ yogam
ātiṣṭhottiṣṭha bhārata*

SYNONYMS

tasmāt-therefore; *ajñāna-sambhūtaṁ*-outcome of ignorance; *hṛt-sthaṁ*-situated in the heart; *jñāna*-knowledge; *asinā*-by the weapon of; *ātmanaḥ*-of the self; *chittvā*-cutting off; *enam*-this; *saṁśayaṁ*-doubt; *yogam*-in yoga; *ātiṣṭha*-be situated; *uttiṣṭha*-stand up to fight; *bhārata*-O descendant of Bharata.

TRANSLATION

Therefore the doubts which have arisen in your heart out of ignorance should be slashed by the weapon of knowledge. Armed with yoga, O Bhārata, stand and fight.

PURPORT

The *yoga* system instructed in this chapter is called *sanātana-yoga*, or eternal activities performed by the living entity. This *yoga* has two divisions of sacrificial actions: one is called sacrifice of one's material possessions,

and the other is called knowledge of self, which is pure spiritual activity. If sacrifice of one's material possessions is not dovetailed for spiritual realization, then such sacrifice becomes material. But one who performs such sacrifices with a spiritual objective, or in devotional service, makes a perfect sacrifice. When we come to spiritual activities, we find that these are also divided into two: namely, understanding of one's own self (or one's constitutional position), and the truth regarding the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One who follows the path of the *Gītā* as it is can very easily understand these two important divisions of spiritual knowledge. For him there is no difficulty in obtaining perfect knowledge of the self as part and parcel of the Lord. And such understanding is beneficial for such a person who easily understands the transcendental activities of the Lord. In the beginning of this chapter, the transcendental activities of the Lord were discussed by the Supreme Lord Himself. One who does not understand the instructions of the *Gītā* is faithless, and is to be considered to be misusing the fragmental independence awarded to him by the Lord. In spite of such instructions, one who does not understand the real nature of the Lord as the eternal, blissful, all-knowing Personality of Godhead, is certainly fool number one. Ignorance can be removed by gradual acceptance of the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is awakened by different types of sacrifices to the demigods, sacrifice to Brahman, sacrifice in celibacy, in household life, in controlling the senses, in practicing mystic *yoga*, in penance, in foregoing material possessions, in studying the *Vedas*, and in partaking of the social institution called *varṇāśrama-dharma*. All of these are known as sacrifice, and all of them are based on regulated action. But within all these activities, the important factor is self-realization. One who seeks *that* objective is the real student of *Bhagavad-gītā*, but one who doubts the authority of Kṛṣṇa falls back. One is therefore advised to study *Bhagavad-gītā*, or any other scripture, under a bona fide spiritual master, with service and surrender. A bona fide spiritual master is in the disciplic succession from time eternal, and he does not deviate at all from the instructions of the Supreme Lord as they were imparted millions of years ago to the sun-god, from whom the instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā* have come down to the earthly kingdom. One should, therefore, follow the path of *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is expressed in the *Gītā* itself and beware of self-interested people after personal aggrandizement who deviate others from

the actual path. The Lord is definitely the supreme person, and His activities are transcendental. One who understands this is a liberated person from the very beginning of his study of the *Gītā*.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the Fourth Chapter of the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of Transcendental Knowledge.

5. Karma-yoga-Action in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

TEXT 1

*arjuna uvāca
sannyāsam karmanām kṛṣṇa
punar yogam ca śaṁsasi
yac chreya etayor ekam
tan me brūhi su-niścitam*

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca-Arjuna said; *sannyāsam*-renunciation; *karmanām*-of all activities; *kṛṣṇa*-O Kṛṣṇa; *punaḥ*-again; *yogam*-devotional service; *ca*-also; *śaṁsasi*-You are praising; *yat*-which; *śreyas*-is beneficial; *etayoḥ*-of these two; *ekam*-one; *tat*-that; *me*-unto me; *brūhi*-please tell; *su-niścitam*-definitely.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa, first of all You ask me to renounce work, and then again You recommend work with devotion. Now will You kindly tell me definitely which of the two is more beneficial?

PURPORT

In this Fifth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Lord says that work in devotional service is better than dry mental speculation. Devotional service is easier than the latter because, being transcendental in nature, it frees one from reaction. In the Second Chapter, preliminary knowledge of the soul and its entanglement in the material body were explained. How to get out of this material encagement by *buddhi-yoga*, or devotional service, was also explained therein. In the Third Chapter, it was explained that a person who

is situated on the platform of knowledge no longer has any duties to perform. And, in the Fourth Chapter, the Lord told Arjuna that all kinds of sacrificial work culminate in knowledge. However, at the end of the Fourth Chapter, the Lord advised Arjuna to wake up and fight, being situated in perfect knowledge. Therefore, by simultaneously stressing the importance of both work in devotion and inaction in knowledge, Kṛṣṇa has perplexed Arjuna and confused his determination. Arjuna understands that renunciation in knowledge involves cessation of all kinds of work performed as sense activities. But if one performs work in devotional service, then how is work stopped? In other words, he thinks that *sannyāsam*, or renunciation in knowledge, should be altogether free from all kinds of activity because work and renunciation appear to him to be incompatible. He appears not to have understood that work in full knowledge is nonreactive and is therefore the same as inaction. He inquires, therefore, whether he should cease work altogether, or work with full knowledge.

TEXT 2

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
sannyāsaḥ karma-yogaś ca
niḥśreyasa-karāv ubhau
tayos tu karma-sannyāsāt
karma-yogo viśiṣyate*

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Personality of Godhead said; *sannyāsaḥ*-renunciation of work; *karma-yogaḥ*-work in devotion; *ca*-also; *niḥśreyasa-karau*-all leading to the path of liberation; *ubhau*-both; *tayoḥ*-of the two; *tu*-but; *karma-sannyāsāt*-in comparison to the renunciation of fruitive work; *karma-yogaḥ*-work in devotion; *viśiṣyate*-is better.

TRANSLATION

The Blessed Lord said: The renunciation of work and work in devotion are both good for liberation. But, of the two, work in

devotional service is better than renunciation of works.

PURPORT

Fruitive activities (seeking sense gratification) are cause for material bondage. As long as one is engaged in activities aimed at improving the standard of bodily comfort, one is sure to transmigrate to different types of bodies, thereby continuing material bondage perpetually. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* confirms this as follows:

*nūnaṁ pramattaḥ kurute vikarma yad indriya-prītaya āpr̥ṇoti
na sādhu manye yata ātmano 'yam asann api kleśada āsa dehaḥ*

*parābhavas tāvad abodha-jāto yāvanna jijñāsata ātma-tattvam
yāvat kriyās tāvad idaṁ mano vai karmātmakaṁ yena śarīra-bandhaḥ*

*evam manaḥ karma-vaśaṁ prayunkte avidyayātmany upadhīyamāne
prītir na yāvan mayi vāsudeve na mucyate deha-yogena tāvat*

"People are mad after sense gratification, and they do not know that this present body, which is full of miseries, is a result of one's fruitive activities in the past. Although this body is temporary, it is always giving one trouble in many ways. Therefore, to act for sense gratification is not good. One is considered to be a failure in life as long as he makes no inquiry about the nature of work for fruitive results, for as long as one is engrossed in the consciousness of sense gratification, one has to transmigrate from one body to another. Although the mind may be engrossed in fruitive activities and influenced by ignorance, one must develop a love for devotional service to Vāsudeva. Only then can one have the opportunity to get out of the bondage of material existence." (*Bhāg. 5.5.4-6*)

Therefore, *jñāna* (or knowledge that one is not this material body but spirit soul) is not sufficient for liberation. One has to *act* in the status of spirit soul, otherwise there is no escape from material bondage. Action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not, however, action on the fruitive platform. Activities performed in full knowledge strengthen one's advancement in real knowledge. Without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, mere renunciation of fruitive activities does not actually purify the heart of a conditioned soul. As long as the heart is not purified, one has to work on the fruitive platform. But action

in Kṛṣṇa consciousness automatically helps one escape the result of fruitive action so that one need not descend to the material platform. Therefore, action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is always superior to renunciation, which always entails a risk of falling. Renunciation without Kṛṣṇa consciousness is incomplete, as is confirmed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in his *Bhak ti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.

*prāpañcikatayā buddhyā hari-sambandhi-vastunaḥ
mumukṣubhiḥ parityāgo vairāgyaṁ phalgu kathyate.*

"Renunciation by persons eager to achieve liberation of things which are related to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, though they are material, is called incomplete renunciation." Renunciation is complete when it is in the knowledge that everything in existence belongs to the Lord and that no one should claim proprietorship over anything. One should understand that, factually, nothing belongs to anyone. Then where is the question of renunciation? One who knows that everything is Kṛṣṇa's property is always situated in renunciation. Since everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa, everything should be employed in the service of Kṛṣṇa. This perfect form of action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is far better than any amount of artificial renunciation by a *sannyāsī* of the Māyāvādī school.

TEXT 3

*jñeyah sa nitya-sannyāsī
yo na dveṣṭi na kāṅkṣati
nirdvandvo hi mahā-bāho
sukhaṁ bandhāt pramucyate*

SYNONYMS

jñeyah-should be known; *saḥ*-he; *nitya*-always; *sannyāsī*-renouncer; *yaḥ*-who; *na*-never; *dveṣṭi*-abhors; *na*-nor; *kāṅkṣati*-desires; *nirdvandvaḥ*-free from all dualities; *hi*-certainly; *mahā-bāho*-O mighty-armed one; *sukhaṁ*-happily; *bandhāt*-from bondage; *pramucyate*-completely liberated.

TRANSLATION

One who neither hates nor desires the fruits of his activities is known to be always renounced. Such a person, liberated from all dualities, easily overcomes material bondage and is completely liberated, O mighty-armed Arjuna.

PURPORT

One who is fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is always a renouncer because he feels neither hatred nor desire for the results of his actions. Such a renouncer, dedicated to the transcendental loving service of the Lord, is fully qualified in knowledge because he knows his constitutional position in his relationship with Kṛṣṇa. He knows fully well that Kṛṣṇa is the whole and that he is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. Such knowledge is perfect because it is qualitatively and quantitatively correct. The concept of oneness with Kṛṣṇa is incorrect because the part cannot be equal to the whole. Knowledge that one is one in quality yet different in quantity is correct transcendental knowledge leading one to become full in himself, having nothing to aspire to nor lament over. There is no duality in his mind because whatever he does, he does for Kṛṣṇa. Being thus freed from the platform of dualities, he is liberated-even in this material world.

TEXT 4

*sāṅkhya-yogau pṛthag bālāḥ
pravadanti na paṇḍitāḥ
ekam apy āsthitaḥ samyag
ubhayor vindate phalam*

SYNONYMS

sāṅkhya-analytical study of the material world; *yogau*-work in devotional service; *pṛthag*-different; *bālāḥ*-less intelligent; *pravadanti*-do talk; *na*-never; *paṇḍitāḥ*-the learned; *ekam*-in one; *api*-even though; *āsthitaḥ*-being situated; *samyak*-complete; *ubhayor*-of both; *vindate*-enjoys; *phalam*-result.

TRANSLATION

Only the ignorant speak of karma-yoga and devotional service as being different from the analytical study of the material world [sāṅkhya]. Those who are actually learned say that he who applies himself well to one of these paths achieves the results of both.

PURPORT

The aim of the analytical study of the material world is to find the soul of existence. The soul of the material world is Viṣṇu, or the Supersoul. Devotional service to the Lord entails service to the Supersoul. One process is to find the root of the tree, and next to water the root. The real student of *sāṅkhya* philosophy finds the root of the material world, Viṣṇu, and then, in perfect knowledge, engages himself in the service of the Lord. Therefore, in essence, there is no difference between the two because the aim of both is Viṣṇu. Those who do not know the ultimate end say that the purposes of *sāṅkhya* and *karma-yoga* are not the same, but one who is learned knows the unifying aim in these different processes.

TEXT 5

*yat sāṅkhyaiḥ prāpyate sthānam
tad yogair api gamyate
ekam sāṅkhyam ca yogam ca
yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati*

SYNONYMS

yat-what; *sāṅkhyaiḥ*-by means of *sāṅkhya* philosophy; *prāpyate*-is achieved; *sthānam*-place; *tad*-that; *yogaiḥ*-by devotional service; *api*-also; *gamyate*-one can attain; *ekam*-one; *sāṅkhyam*-analytical study; *ca*-and; *yogam*-action in devotion; *ca*-and; *yaḥ*-one who; *paśyati*-sees; *saḥ*-he; *paśyati*-actually sees.

TRANSLATION

One who knows that the position reached by means of renunciation can also be attained by works in devotional service and who therefore

sees that the path of works and the path of renunciation are one, sees things as they are.

PURPORT

The real purpose of philosophical research is to find the ultimate goal of life. Since the ultimate goal of life is self-realization, there is no difference between the conclusions reached by the two processes. By *sāṅkhya* philosophical research one comes to the conclusion that a living entity is not a part and parcel of the material world, but of the supreme spirit whole. Consequently, the spirit soul has nothing to do with the material world; his actions must be in some relation with the Supreme. When he acts in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he is actually in his constitutional position. In the first process of *sāṅkhya*, one has to become detached from matter, and in the devotional *yoga* process one has to attach himself to the work of Kṛṣṇa. Factually, both processes are the same, although superficially one process appears to involve detachment and the other process appears to involve attachment. However, detachment from matter and attachment to Kṛṣṇa are one and the same. One who can see this sees things as they are.

TEXT 6

*sannyāsas tu mahā-bāho
duḥkham āptum ayogataḥ
yoga-yukto munir brahma
na cireṇādhigacchati*

SYNONYMS

sannyāsaḥ-the renounced order of life; *tu*-but; *mahā-bāho*-O mighty-armed one; *duḥkham*-distress; *āptum*-to be afflicted with; *ayogataḥ*-without devotional service; *yoga-yuktaḥ*-one engaged in devotional service; *munir*-thinker; *brahma*-Supreme; *na*-without; *cireṇa*-delay; *adhigacchati*-attains.

TRANSLATION

Unless one is engaged in the devotional service of the Lord, mere renunciation of activities cannot make one happy. The sages, purified by works of devotion, achieve the Supreme without delay.

PURPORT

There are two classes of *sannyāsīs*, or persons in the renounced order of life. The Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* are engaged in the study of *sāṅkhya* philosophy, whereas the Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsīs* are engaged in the study of *Bhāgavatam* philosophy, which affords the proper commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtras*. The Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* also study the *Vedānta-sūtras*, but use their own commentary, called *Śārīraka-bhāṣya*, written by Śaṅkarācārya. The students of the *Bhāgavata* school are engaged in devotional service of the Lord, according to *pāñcarātrikī* regulations, and therefore the Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsīs* have multiple engagements in the transcendental service of the Lord. The Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsīs* have nothing to do with material activities, and yet they perform various activities in their devotional service to the Lord. But the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*, engaged in the studies of *sāṅkhya* and *Vedānta* and speculation, cannot relish transcendental service of the Lord. Because their studies become very tedious, they sometimes become tired of Brahman speculation, and thus they take shelter of the *Bhāgavatam* without proper understanding. Consequently their study of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* becomes troublesome. Dry speculations and impersonal interpretations by artificial means are all useless for the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*. The Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsīs*, who are engaged in devotional service, are happy in the discharge of their transcendental duties, and they have the guarantee of ultimate entrance into the kingdom of God. The Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* sometimes fall down from the path of self-realization and again enter into material activities of a philanthropic and altruistic nature, which are nothing but material engagements. Therefore, the conclusion is that those who are engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are better situated than the *sannyāsīs* engaged in simple Brahman speculation, although they too come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, after many births.

TEXT 7

*yoga-yukto viśuddhātmā
vijitātmā jitendriyaḥ
sarva-bhūtātma-bhūtātmā
kurvann api na lipyate*

SYNONYMS

yoga-yuktaḥ-engaged in devotional service; *viśuddha-ātmā*-a purified soul; *vijita-ātmā*-self-controlled; *jita-indriyaḥ*-having conquered the senses; *sarvabhūta-ātmabhūta-ātmā*-compassionate to all living entities; *kurvan api*-although engaged in work; *na*-never; *lipyate*-is entangled.

TRANSLATION

One who works in devotion, who is a pure soul, and who controls his mind and senses, is dear to everyone, and everyone is dear to him. Though always working, such a man is never entangled.

PURPORT

One who is on the path of liberation by Kṛṣṇa consciousness is very dear to every living being, and every living being is dear to him. This is due to his Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Such a person cannot think of any living being as separate from Kṛṣṇa, just as the leaves and branches of a tree are not separate from the tree. He knows very well that by pouring water on the root of the tree, the water will be distributed to all the leaves and branches, or by supplying food to the stomach, the energy is automatically distributed throughout the body. Because one who works in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is servant to all, he is very dear to everyone. And, because everyone is satisfied by his work, he is pure in consciousness. Because he is pure in consciousness, his mind is completely controlled. And, because his mind is controlled, his senses are also controlled. Because his mind is always fixed on Kṛṣṇa, there is no chance of his being deviated from Kṛṣṇa. Nor is there a chance that he will engage his senses in matters other than the service of the Lord. He does not like to hear anything except topics relating to Kṛṣṇa; he does not like to eat anything which is not offered to Kṛṣṇa; and he does

not wish to go anywhere if Kṛṣṇa is not involved. Therefore, his senses are controlled. A man of controlled senses cannot be offensive to anyone. One may ask, "Why then was Arjuna offensive (in battle) to others? Wasn't he in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?" Arjuna was only superficially offensive because (as has already been explained in the Second Chapter) all the assembled persons on the battlefield would continue to live individually, as the soul cannot be slain. So, spiritually, no one was killed on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra. Only their dresses were changed by the order of Kṛṣṇa, who was personally present. Therefore Arjuna, while fighting on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, was not really fighting at all; he was simply carrying out the orders of Kṛṣṇa in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Such a person is never entangled in the reactions of work.

TEXTS 8-9

*naiva kiñcit karomīti
yukto manyeta tattva-vit
paśyañ śṛṇvan sprśaṇ jighraṇ
aśnan gacchan svapan śvasan*

*pralapan visṛjan grhṇann
unmiṣan nimiṣann api
indriyāṇīndriyārtheṣu
vartanta iti dhārayan*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *eva*-certainly; *kiñcit*-anything; *karomi*-do I do; *iti*-thus; *yuktaḥ*-engaged in the divine consciousness; *manyeta*-thinks; *tattvavit*-one who knows the truth; *paśyan*-by seeing; *śṛṇvan*-by hearing; *sprśan*-by touching; *jighraṇ*-by smelling; *aśnan*-by eating; *gacchan*-by going; *svapan*-by dreaming; *śvasan*-by breathing; *pralapan*-by talking; *visṛjan*-by giving up; *grhṇan*-by accepting; *unmiṣan*-opening; *nimiṣan*-closing; *api*-in spite of; *indriyāṇi*-the senses; *indriya-artheṣu*-in sense gratification; *vartante*-let them be so engaged; *iti*-thus; *dhārayan*-considering.

TRANSLATION

A person in the divine consciousness, although engaged in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving about, sleeping, and breathing, always knows within himself that he actually does nothing at all. Because while speaking, evacuating, receiving, opening or closing his eyes, he always knows that only the material senses are engaged with their objects and that he is aloof from them.

PURPORT

A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is pure in his existence, and consequently he has nothing to do with any work which depends upon five immediate and remote causes: the doer, the work, the situation, the endeavor and fortune. This is because he is engaged in the loving transcendental service of Kṛṣṇa. Although he appears to be acting with his body and senses, he is always conscious of his actual position, which is spiritual engagement. In material consciousness, the senses are engaged in sense gratification, but in Kṛṣṇa consciousness the senses are engaged in the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa's senses. Therefore, the Kṛṣṇa conscious person is always free, even though he appears to be engaged in things of the senses. Activities such as seeing, hearing, speaking, evacuating, etc., are actions of the senses meant for work. A Kṛṣṇa consciousness person is never affected by the actions of the senses. He cannot perform any act except in the service of the Lord because he knows that he is the eternal servitor of the Lord.

TEXT 10

*brahmaṇy ādhāya karmāṇi
saṅgam tyaktvā karoti yaḥ
lipyate na sa pāpena
padma-patram ivāmbhasā*

SYNONYMS

brahmaṇi-the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ādhāya*-resigning unto; *karmāṇi*-all works; *saṅgam*-attachment; *tyaktvā*-giving up; *karoti*-performs; *yaḥ*-who; *lipyate*-is affected; *na*-never; *saḥ*-he; *pāpena*-by sin; *padma-patram*-lotus leaf; *iva*-like; *ambhasā*-in the water.

TRANSLATION

One who performs his duty without attachment, surrendering the results unto the Supreme God, is not affected by sinful action, as the lotus leaf is untouched by water.

PURPORT

Here *brahmaṇi* means in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The material world is a sum total manifestation of the three modes of material nature, technically called the *pradhāna*. The Vedic hymns, *sarvam etad brahma, tasmād etad brahma nāma-rūpam annam ca jāyate*, and, in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *mama yonir mahad brahma*, indicate that everything in the material world is the manifestation of Brahman; and, although the effects are differently manifested, they are nondifferent from the cause. In the *Īsopaniṣad* it is said that everything is related to the Supreme Brahman or Kṛṣṇa, and thus everything belongs to Him only. One who knows perfectly well that everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa, that He is the proprietor of everything and that, therefore, everything is engaged in the service of the Lord, naturally has nothing to do with the results of his activities, whether virtuous or sinful. Even one's material body, being a gift of the Lord for carrying out a particular type of action, can be engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is beyond contamination by sinful reactions, exactly as the lotus leaf, though remaining in the water, is not wet. The Lord also says in the *Gītā*: *mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi sannyasya*: "Resign all works unto Me [Kṛṣṇa]." The conclusion is that a person without Kṛṣṇa consciousness acts according to the concept of the material body and senses, but a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness acts according to the knowledge that the body is the property of Kṛṣṇa and should therefore be engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 11

*kāyena manasā buddhyā
kevalair indriyair api
yoginaḥ karma kurvanti
saṅgam tyaktvātma-śuddhaye*

SYNONYMS

kāyena-with the body; *manasā*-with the mind; *buddhyā*-with the intelligence; *kevalaiḥ*-purified; *indriyaiḥ*-with the senses; *api*-even with; *yoginaḥ*-the Kṛṣṇa conscious persons; *karma*-actions; *kurvanti*-they act; *saṅgam*-attachment; *tyaktvā*-giving up; *ātma*-self; *śuddhaye*-for the purpose of purification.

TRANSLATION

The yogīs, abandoning attachment, act with body, mind, intelligence, and even with the senses, only for the purpose of purification.

PURPORT

By acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the satisfaction of the senses of Kṛṣṇa, any action, whether of the body, mind, intelligence or even of the senses, is purified of material contamination. There are no material reactions resulting from the activities of a Kṛṣṇa conscious person. Therefore, purified activities, which are generally called *sadācāra*, can be easily performed by acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* describes this as follows:

*īhā yasya harer dāsyē karmaṇā manasā girā
nikhilāśv apy avasthāsu jīvanmuktaḥ sa ucyate*

A person acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness (or, in other words, in the service of Kṛṣṇa) with his body, mind, intelligence and words is a liberated person even within the material world, although he may be engaged in many so-called material activities. He has no false ego, nor does he believe that he is this material body, nor that he possesses the body. He knows that he is not this body and that this body does not belong to him. He himself belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and the body too belongs to Kṛṣṇa. When he applies everything produced of the body, mind, intelligence, words, life, wealth, etc.-whatever he may have within his possession-to Kṛṣṇa's service, he is at once dovetailed with Kṛṣṇa. He is one with Kṛṣṇa and is devoid of the false ego that leads one to believe that he is the body, etc. This is the perfect stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 12

*yuktaḥ karma-phalam tyaktvā
śāntim āpnoti naiṣṭhikīm
ayuktaḥ kāma-kāreṇa
phale sakto nibadhyate*

SYNONYMS

yuktaḥ-one who is engaged in devotional service; *karma-phalam*-the results of all activities; *tyaktvā*-giving up; *śāntim*-perfect peace; *āpnoti*-achieves; *naiṣṭhikīm*-unflinching; *ayuktaḥ*-one who is not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *kāma-kāreṇa*-for enjoying the result of work; *phale*-in the result; *saktaḥ*-attached; *nibadhyate*-becomes entangled.

TRANSLATION

The steadily devoted soul attains unadulterated peace because he offers the result of all activities to Me; whereas a person who is not in union with the Divine, who is greedy for the fruits of his labor, becomes entangled.

PURPORT

The difference between a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and a person in bodily consciousness is that the former is attached to Kṛṣṇa, whereas the latter is attached to the results of his activities. The person who is attached to Kṛṣṇa and works for Him only is certainly a liberated person, and he is not anxious for fruitive rewards. In the *Bhāgavatam*, the cause of anxiety over the result of an activity is explained as being due to one's functioning in the conception of duality, that is, without knowledge of the Absolute Truth. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is no duality. All that exists is a product of Kṛṣṇa's energy, and Kṛṣṇa is all good. Therefore, activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are on the absolute plane; they are transcendental and have no material effect. One is, therefore, filled with peace in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One who is, however, entangled in profit calculation for

sense gratification cannot have that peace. This is the secret of Kṛṣṇa consciousness-realization that there is no existence besides Kṛṣṇa is the platform of peace and fearlessness.

TEXT 13

*sarva-karmāṇi manasā
sannyasyāste sukham vaśī
nava-dvāre pure dehī
naiva kurvan na kārayan*

SYNONYMS

sarva-all; *karmāṇi*-activities; *manasā*-by the mind; *sannyasya*-giving up; *āste*-remains; *sukham*-in happiness; *vaśī*-one who is controlled; *nava-dvāre*-in the place where there are nine gates; *pure*-in the city; *dehī*-the embodied soul; *na*-never; *eva*-certainly; *kurvan*-doing anything; *na*-not; *kārayan*-causing to be done.

TRANSLATION

When the embodied living being controls his nature and mentally renounces all actions, he resides happily in the city of nine gates [the material body], neither working nor causing work to be done.

PURPORT

The embodied soul lives in the city of nine gates. The activities of the body, or the figurative city of body, are conducted automatically by the particular modes of nature. The soul, although subjecting himself to the conditions of the body, can be beyond those conditions, if he so desires. Owing only to forgetfulness of his superior nature, he identifies with the material body, and therefore suffers. By Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he can revive his real position and thus come out of his embodiment. Therefore, when one takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one at once becomes completely aloof from bodily activities. In such a controlled life, in which his deliberations are

changed, he lives happily within the city of nine gates. The nine gates are described as follows:

*nava-dvāre pure dehī haṁso lelāyate bahiḥ
vaśī sarvasya lokasya sthāvarasya carasya ca.*

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is living within the body of a living entity, is the controller of all living entities all over the universe. The body consists of nine gates: two eyes, two nostrils, two ears, one mouth, the anus and the genital. The living entity in his conditioned stage identifies himself with the body, but when he identifies himself with the Lord within himself, he becomes just as free as the Lord, even while in the body." (Śvet. 3.18)

Therefore, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person is free from both the outer and inner activities of the material body.

TEXT 14

*na kartṛtvam na karmāṇi
lokasya sṛjati prabhuḥ
na karma-phala-saṁyogam
svabhāvas tu pravartate*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *kartṛtvam*-proprietorship; *na*-nor; *karmāṇi*-activities; *lokasya*-of the people; *sṛjati*-creates; *prabhuḥ*-the master of the city of the body; *na*-nor; *karma-phala*-results of activities; *saṁyogam*-connection; *svabhāvaḥ*-modes of material nature; *tu*-but; *pravartate*-acts.

TRANSLATION

The embodied spirit, master of the city of his body, does not create activities, nor does he induce people to act, nor does he create the fruits of action. All this is enacted by the modes of material nature.

PURPORT

The living entity, as will be explained in the Seventh Chapter, is one in nature with the Supreme Lord, distinguished from matter, which is another nature-called inferior-of the Lord. Somehow, the superior nature, the living entity, has been in contact with material nature since time immemorial. The temporary body or material dwelling place which he obtains is the cause of varieties of activities and their resultant reactions. Living in such a conditional atmosphere, one suffers the results of the activities of the body by identifying himself (in ignorance) with the body. It is ignorance acquired from time immemorial that is the cause of bodily suffering and distress. As soon as the living entity becomes aloof from the activities of the body, he becomes free from the reactions as well. As long as he is in the city of body, he appears to be the master of it, but actually he is neither its proprietor nor controller of its actions and reactions. He is simply in the midst of the material ocean, struggling for existence. The waves of the ocean are tossing him, and he has no control over them. His best solution is to get out of the water by transcendental Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That alone will save him from all turmoil.

TEXT 15

*nādatte kasyacit pāpam
na caiva sukṛtaṁ vibhuḥ
ajñānenāvṛtaṁ jñānam
tena muhyanti jantavaḥ*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *ādatte*-accepts; *kasyacit*-anyone's; *pāpam*-sin; *na*-nor; *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *sukṛtaṁ*-pious activities; *vibhuḥ*-the Supreme Lord; *ajñānena*-by ignorance; *āvṛtaṁ*-covered; *jñānam*-knowledge; *tena*-by that; *muhyanti*-bewildered; *jantavaḥ*-the living entities.

TRANSLATION

Nor does the Supreme Spirit assume anyone's sinful or pious activities. Embodied beings, however, are bewildered because of the ignorance which covers their real knowledge.

PURPORT

The Sanskrit word *vibhuḥ* means the Supreme Lord who is full of unlimited knowledge, riches, strength, fame, beauty and renunciation. He is always satisfied in Himself, undisturbed by sinful or pious activities. He does not create a particular situation for any living entity, but the living entity, bewildered by ignorance, desires to be put into certain conditions of life, and thereby his chain of action and reaction begins. A living entity is, by superior nature, full of knowledge. Nevertheless, he is prone to be influenced by ignorance due to his limited power. The Lord is omnipotent, but the living entity is not. The Lord is *vibhu*, or omniscient, but the living entity is *aṇu*, or atomic. Because he is a living soul, he has the capacity to desire by his free will. Such desire is fulfilled only by the omnipotent Lord. And so, when the living entity is bewildered in his desires, the Lord allows him to fulfill those desires, but the Lord is never responsible for the actions and reactions of the particular situation which may be desired. Being in a bewildered condition, therefore, the embodied soul identifies himself with the circumstantial material body and becomes subjected to the temporary misery and happiness of life. The Lord is the constant companion of the living entity as Paramātmā, or the Supersoul, and therefore He can understand the desires of the individual soul, as one can smell the flavor of a flower by being near it. Desire is a subtle form of conditioning of the living entity. The Lord fulfills his desire as he deserves: Man proposes and God disposes. The individual is not, therefore, omnipotent in fulfilling his desires. The Lord, however, can fulfill all desires, and the Lord, being neutral to everyone, does not interfere with the desires of the minute independent living entities. However, when one desires Kṛṣṇa, the Lord takes special care and encourages one to desire in such a way that one can attain to Him and be eternally happy. The Vedic hymn therefore declares:

eṣa u hy eva sādhu karma kārayati taṁ yamebhyo lokebhya unninīṣate
eṣa u evāsādhu karma kārayati yamadho ninīṣate.

ajñō jantur anīso 'yam ātmanaḥ sukha-duḥkhayoḥ
īśvara-prerito gacchet svargaṁ vāśvabhram eva ca.

"The Lord engages the living entity in pious activities so he may be elevated. The Lord engages him in impious activities so he may go to hell.

The living entity is completely dependant in his distress and happiness. By the will of the Supreme he can go to heaven or hell, as a cloud is driven by the air."

Therefore the embodied soul, by his immemorial desire to avoid Kṛṣṇa consciousness, causes his own bewilderment. Consequently, although he is constitutionally eternal, blissful and cognizant, due to the littleness of his existence he forgets his constitutional position of service to the Lord and is thus entrapped by nescience. And, under the spell of ignorance, the living entity claims that the Lord is responsible for his conditional existence. The *Vedānta-sūtras* also confirm this:

vaiṣamya-nairghrṇye na sāpekṣatvāt tathā hi darśayati.

"The Lord neither hates nor likes anyone, though He appears to."

TEXT 16

*jñānena tu tad ajñānam
yeṣāṁ nāśitam ātmanaḥ
teṣāṁ āditya-vaj jñānam
prakāśayati tat param*

SYNONYMS

jñānena-by knowledge; *tu*-but; *tat*-that; *ajñānam*-nescience; *yeṣāṁ*-of those; *nāśitam*-is destroyed; *ātmanaḥ*-of the living entity; *teṣāṁ*-of their; *ādityavat*-like the rising sun; *jñānam*-knowledge; *prakāśayati*-discloses; *tat param*-in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TRANSLATION

When, however, one is enlightened with the knowledge by which nescience is destroyed, then his knowledge reveals everything, as the sun lights up everything in the daytime.

PURPORT

Those who have forgotten Kṛṣṇa must certainly be bewildered, but those who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are not bewildered at all. It is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, "*sarvaṁ jñāna-plavena*," "*jñānāgniḥ sarva-karmāṇi*" and "*na hi jñānena sadṛśam*." Knowledge is always highly esteemed. And what is that knowledge? Perfect knowledge is achieved when one surrenders unto Kṛṣṇa, as is said in the Seventh Chapter, 19th verse: *bahūnāṁ janmanāṁ ante jñānavān mām prapadyate*. After passing through many, many births, when one perfect in knowledge surrenders unto Kṛṣṇa, or when one attains Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then everything is revealed to him, as the sun reveals everything in the daytime. The living entity is bewildered in so many ways. For instance, when he thinks himself God, unceremoniously, he actually falls into the last snare of nescience. If a living entity is God, then how can he become bewildered by nescience? Does God become bewildered by nescience? If so, then nescience, or Satan, is greater than God. Real knowledge can be obtained from a person who is in perfect Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore, one has to seek out such a bona fide spiritual master and, under him, learn what Kṛṣṇa consciousness is. The spiritual master can drive away all nescience, as the sun drives away darkness. Even though a person may be in full knowledge that he is not this body but is transcendental to the body, he still may not be able to discriminate between the soul and the Supersoul. However, he can know everything well if he cares to take shelter of the perfect, bona fide Kṛṣṇa conscious spiritual master. One can know God and one's relationship with God only when one actually meets a representative of God. A representative of God never claims that he is God, although he is paid all the respect ordinarily paid to God because he has knowledge of God. One has to learn the distinction between God and the living entity. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa therefore stated in the Second Chapter (2.12) that every living being is individual and that the Lord also is individual. They were all individuals in the past, they are individuals at present, and they will continue to be individuals in the future, even after liberation. At night we see everything as one in the darkness, but in day when the sun is up, we see everything in its real identity. Identity with individuality in spiritual life is real knowledge.

TEXT 17

*tad-buddhayaḥ tad-ātmānaḥ
tan-niṣṭhāḥ tat-parāyaṇāḥ
gacchanty apunar-āvṛttim
jñāna-nirdhūta-kalmaṣāḥ*

SYNONYMS

tad-buddhayaḥ-one whose intelligence is always in the Supreme; *tad-ātmānaḥ*-one whose mind is always in the Supreme; *tat-niṣṭhāḥ*-whose mind is only meant for the Supreme; *tat-parāyaṇāḥ*-who has completely taken shelter of Him; *gacchanti*-goes; *apunar-āvṛttim*-liberation; *jñāna*-knowledge; *nirdhūta*-cleanses; *kalmaṣāḥ*-misgivings.

TRANSLATION

When one's intelligence, mind, faith and refuge are all fixed in the Supreme, then one becomes fully cleansed of misgivings through complete knowledge and thus proceeds straight on the path of liberation.

PURPORT

The Supreme Transcendental Truth is Lord Kṛṣṇa. The whole *Bhagavad-gītā* centers around the declaration of Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is the version of all Vedic literature. *Paratattva* means the Supreme Reality, who is understood by the knowers of the Supreme as Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān. Bhagavān, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the last word in the Absolute. There is nothing more than that. The Lord says, *mattaḥ parataram nānyat kiñcit asti dhanañjaya*. Impersonal Brahman is also supported by Kṛṣṇa: *brahmaṇo pratiṣṭhāham*. Therefore in all ways Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Reality. One whose mind, intelligence, faith and refuge are always in Kṛṣṇa, or, in other words, one who is fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is undoubtedly washed clean of all misgivings and is in perfect knowledge in everything concerning transcendence. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person can thoroughly understand that there is duality (simultaneous identity and individuality) in Kṛṣṇa, and,

equipped with such transcendental knowledge, one can make steady progress on the path of liberation.

TEXT 18

*vidyā-vinaya-sampanne
brāhmaṇe gavi hastini
śuni caiva śva-pāke ca
paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ*

SYNONYMS

vidyā-education; *vinaya*-gentleness; *sampanne*-fully equipped; *brāhmaṇe*-in the *brāhmaṇa*; *gavi*-in the cow; *hastini*-in the elephant; *śuni*-in the dog; *ca*-and; *eva*-certainly; *śva-pāke*-in the dog-eater (the outcaste); *ca*-respectively; *paṇḍitāḥ*-those who are so wise; *sama-darśinaḥ*-do see with equal vision.

TRANSLATION

The humble sage, by virtue of true knowledge, sees with equal vision a learned and gentle brāhmaṇa, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater [outcaste] .

PURPORT

A Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not make any distinction between species or castes. The *brāhmaṇa* and the outcaste may be different from the social point of view, or a dog, a cow, or an elephant may be different from the point of view of species, but these differences of body are meaningless from the viewpoint of a learned transcendentalist. This is due to their relationship to the Supreme, for the Supreme Lord, by His plenary portion as Paramātmā, is present in everyone's heart. Such an understanding of the Supreme is real knowledge. As far as the bodies are concerned in different castes or different species of life, the Lord is equally kind to everyone because He treats every living being as a friend yet maintains Himself as Paramātmā regardless of the circumstances of the living entities. The Lord as Paramātmā is present both in the outcaste and in the *brāhmaṇa*, although

the body of a *brāhmaṇa* and that of an outcaste are not the same. The bodies are material productions of different modes of material nature, but the soul and the Supersoul within the body are of the same spiritual quality. The similarity in the quality of the soul and the Supersoul, however, does not make them equal in quantity, for the individual soul is present only in that particular body, whereas the Paramātmā is present in each and every body. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person has full knowledge of this, and therefore he is truly learned and has equal vision. The similar characteristics of the soul and Supersoul are that they are both conscious, eternal and blissful. But the difference is that the individual soul is conscious within the limited jurisdiction of the body, whereas the Supersoul is conscious of all bodies. The Supersoul is present in all bodies without distinction.

TEXT 19

*ihaiva tair jitaḥ sargo
yeṣāṁ sāmye sthitam manaḥ
nirdoṣam hi samam brahma
tasmād brahmaṇi te sthitāḥ*

SYNONYMS

iha-in this life; *eva*-certainly; *taiḥ*-by them; *jitaḥ*-conquered; *sargaḥ*-birth and death; *yeṣāṁ*-of those; *sāmye*-in equanimity; *sthitam*-so situated; *manaḥ*-mind; *nirdoṣam*-flawless; *hi*-certainly; *samam*-in equanimity; *brahma*-the Supreme; *tasmāt*-therefore; *brahmaṇi*-in the Supreme; *te*-they; *sthitāḥ*-are situated.

TRANSLATION

Those whose minds are established in sameness and equanimity have already conquered the conditions of birth and death. They are flawless like Brahman, and thus they are already situated in Brahman.

PURPORT

Equanimity of mind, as mentioned above, is the sign of self-realization. Those who have actually attained to such a stage should be considered to have conquered material conditions, specifically birth and death. As long as one identifies with this body, he is considered a conditioned soul, but as soon as he is elevated to the stage of equanimity through realization of self, he is liberated from conditional life. In other words, he is no longer subject to take birth in the material world but can enter into the spiritual sky after his death. The Lord is flawless because He is without attraction or hatred. Similarly, when a living entity is without attraction or hatred, he also becomes flawless and eligible to enter into the spiritual sky. Such persons are to be considered already liberated, and their symptoms are described below.

TEXT 20

*na prahr̥ṣyet priyam prāpya
nodvijet prāpya cāpriyam
sthira-buddhir asammūḍha
brahma-vid brahmaṇi sthitaḥ*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *prahr̥ṣyet*-rejoice; *priyam*-pleasant; *prāpya*-achieving; *na*-does not; *udvijet*-agitated; *prāpya*-obtaining; *ca*-also; *apriyam*-unpleasant; *sthira-buddhiḥ*-self-intelligent; *asammūḍhaḥ*-unbewildered; *brahmavit*-one who knows the Supreme perfectly; *brahmaṇi*-in the Transcendence; *sthitaḥ*-situated.

TRANSLATION

A person who neither rejoices upon achieving something pleasant nor laments upon obtaining something unpleasant, who is self-intelligent, unbewildered, and who knows the science of God, is to be understood as already situated in Transcendence.

PURPORT

The symptoms of the self-realized person are given herein. The first symptom is that he is not illusioned by the false identification of the body with his true self. He knows perfectly well that he is not this body, but is the fragmental portion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is therefore not joyful in achieving something, nor does he lament in losing anything which is related to his body. This steadiness of mind is called *sthira-buddhi*, or self-intelligence. He is therefore never bewildered by mistaking the gross body for the soul, nor does he accept the body as permanent and disregard the existence of the soul. This knowledge elevates him to the station of knowing the complete science of the Absolute Truth, namely Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān. He thus knows his constitutional position perfectly well, without falsely trying to become one with the Supreme in all respects. This is called Brahman realization, or self-realization. Such steady consciousness is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 21

*bāhya-sparśeṣv asaktātmā
vindaty ātmani yat sukham
sa brahma-yoga-yuktātmā
sukham akṣayam aśnute*

SYNONYMS

bāhya-sparśeṣu-in external sense pleasure; *asakta-ātmā*-one who is not so attached; *vindati*-enjoys; *ātmani*-in the self; *yat*-that which; *sukham*-happiness; *sa*-that; *brahma-yoga*-concentrated in Brahman; *yukta-ātmā*-self-connected; *sukham*-happiness; *akṣayam*-unlimited; *aśnute*-enjoys.

TRANSLATION

Such a liberated person is not attracted to material sense pleasure or external objects but is always in trance, enjoying the pleasure within. In this way the self-realized person enjoys unlimited happiness, for he concentrates on the Supreme.

PURPORT

Śrī Yāmunācārya, a great devotee in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, said:

*yadāvadhi mama cetaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravinde
nava-nava-rasa-dhāmanudyata rantum āsīt
tadāvadhi bata nārī-saṅgame smaryamāne
bhavati mukha-vikāraḥ suṣṭu niṣṭhīvanam ca*

"Since I have been engaged in the transcendental loving service of Kṛṣṇa, realizing ever-new pleasure in Him, whenever I think of sex pleasure, I spit at the thought, and my lips curl with distaste." A person in *brahma-yoga*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is so absorbed in the loving service of the Lord that he loses his taste for material sense pleasure altogether. The highest pleasure in terms of matter is sex pleasure. The whole world is moving under its spell, and a materialist cannot work at all without this motivation. But a person engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can work with greater vigor without sex pleasure, which he avoids. That is the test in spiritual realization. Spiritual realization and sex pleasure go ill together. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person is not attracted to any kind of sense pleasure due to his being a liberated soul.

TEXT 22

*ye hi saṁsparśa-jā bhogā
duḥkha-yonaya eva te
ādy-antavantah kaunteya
na teṣu ramate budhaḥ*

SYNONYMS

ye-those; *hi*-certainly; *saṁsparśajāḥ*-by contact with the material senses; *bhogāḥ*-enjoyment; *duḥkha*-distress; *yonayaḥ*-sources of; *eva*-certainly; *te*-they are; *ādi*-in the beginning; *antavantah*-subject to; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *na*-never; *teṣu*-in those; *ramate*-take delight; *budhaḥ*-the intelligent.

TRANSLATION

An intelligent person does not take part in the sources of misery, which are due to contact with the material senses. O son of Kuntī, such

pleasures have a beginning and an end, and so the wise man does not delight in them.

PURPORT

Material sense pleasures are due to the contact of the material senses, which are all temporary because the body itself is temporary. A liberated soul is not interested in anything which is temporary. Knowing well the joys of transcendental pleasures, how can a liberated soul agree to enjoy false pleasure? In the *Padma Purāṇa* it is said:

*ramante yogino 'nante satyānanda-cid-ātmani
iti rāma-padenāsau paraṁ brahmābhīdhīyate*

"The mystics derive unlimited transcendental pleasures from the Absolute Truth, and therefore the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, is also known as Rāma."

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also it is said:

*nāyaṁ deho deha-bhājāṁ nṛ-loke
kaṣṭhān kāmān arhate viḍ-bhājāṁ ye
tapo divyaṁ putrakā yena sattvaṁ
śuddhyed yasmād brahma-saukhyaṁ tv anantam.*

"My dear sons, there is no reason to labor very hard for sense pleasure while in this human form of life; such pleasures are available to the stool-eaters [hogs]. Rather, you should undergo penances in this life by which your existence will be purified, and, as a result, you will be able to enjoy unlimited transcendental bliss." (*Bhāg.* 5.5.1)

Therefore, those who are true *yogīs* or learned transcendentalists are not attracted by sense pleasures, which are the causes of continuous material existence. The more one is addicted to material pleasures, the more he is entrapped by material miseries.

TEXT 23

*śaknotīhaiva yaḥ soḍhuṁ
prāk śarīra-vimokṣaṇāt*

*kāma-krodhodbhavaṁ vegam
sa yuktaḥ sa sukhī naraḥ*

SYNONYMS

śaknoti-able to do; *iha eva*-in the present body; *yaḥ*-one who; *soḍhum*-to tolerate; *prāk*-before; *śarīra*-body; *vimokṣaṇāt*-giving up; *kāma*-desire; *krodha*-anger; *udbhavam*-generated from; *vegam*-urge; *saḥ*-he; *yuktaḥ*-in trance; *saḥ*-he; *sukhī*-happy; *naraḥ*-human being.

TRANSLATION

Before giving up this present body, if one is able to tolerate the urges of the material senses and check the force of desire and anger, he is a yogī and is happy in this world.

PURPORT

If one wants to make steady progress on the path of self-realization, he must try to control the forces of the material senses. There are the forces of talk, forces of anger, forces of mind, forces of the stomach, forces of the genitals, and forces of the tongue. One who is able to control the forces of all these different senses, and the mind, is called *gosvāmī*, or *svāmī*. Such *gosvāmīs* live strictly controlled lives, and forego altogether the forces of the senses. Material desires, when unsatiated, generate anger, and thus the mind, eyes and chest become agitated. Therefore, one must practice to control them before one gives up this material body. One who can do this is understood to be self-realized and is thus happy in the state of self-realization. It is the duty of the transcendentalist to try strenuously to control desire and anger.

TEXT 24

*yo 'ntaḥ-sukho 'ntar-ārāmas
tathāntar-jyotir eva yaḥ
sa yogī brahma-nirvāṇam
brahma-bhūto 'dhigacchati*

SYNONYMS

yah-one who; *antaḥ-sukhaḥ*-happy from within; *antaḥ-ārāmaḥ*-active within; *tathā*-as well as; *antaḥ-jyotiḥ*-aiming within; *eva*-certainly; *yah*-anyone; *saḥ*-he; *yogī*-mystic; *brahma-nirvāṇam*-liberated in the Supreme; *brahma-bhūtaḥ*-self-realized; *adhigacchati*-attains.

TRANSLATION

One whose happiness is within, who is active within, who rejoices within and is illumined within, is actually the perfect mystic. He is liberated in the Supreme, and ultimately he attains the Supreme.

PURPORT

Unless one is able to relish happiness from within, how can one retire from the external engagements meant for deriving superficial happiness? A liberated person enjoys happiness by factual experience. He can, therefore, sit silently at any place and enjoy the activities of life from within. Such a liberated person no longer desires external material happiness. This state is called *brahma-bhūta*, attaining which one is assured of going back to Godhead, back to home.

TEXT 25

labhante brahma-nirvāṇam
ṛṣayaḥ kṣīṇa-kalmaṣāḥ
chinna-dvaidhā yatātmānaḥ
sarva-bhūta-hite ratāḥ

SYNONYMS

labhante-achieve; *brahma-nirvāṇam*-liberation in the Supreme; *ṛṣayaḥ*-those who are active within; *kṣīṇa-kalmaṣāḥ*-who are devoid of all sins; *chinna*-torn off; *dvaidhā*-duality; *yata-ātmānaḥ*-engaged in self-realization; *sarva-bhūta*-in all living entities; *hite*-in welfare work; *ratāḥ*-engaged.

TRANSLATION

One who is beyond duality and doubt, whose mind is engaged within, who is always busy working for the welfare of all sentient beings, and who is free from all sins, achieves liberation in the Supreme.

PURPORT

Only a person who is fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be said to be engaged in welfare work for all living entities. When a person is actually in the knowledge that Kṛṣṇa is the fountainhead of everything, then when he acts in that spirit he acts for everyone. The sufferings of humanity are due to forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa as the supreme enjoyer, the supreme proprietor, and the supreme friend. Therefore, to act to revive this consciousness within the entire human society is the highest welfare work. One cannot be engaged in first-class welfare work without being liberated in the Supreme. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person has no doubt about the supremacy of Kṛṣṇa. He has no doubt because he is completely freed from all sins. This is the state of divine love.

A person engaged only in ministering to the physical welfare of human society cannot factually help anyone. Temporary relief of the external body and the mind is not satisfactory. The real cause of one's difficulties in the hard struggle for life may be found in one's forgetfulness of his relationship with the Supreme Lord. When a man is fully conscious of his relationship with Kṛṣṇa, he is actually a liberated soul, although he may be in the material tabernacle.

TEXT 26

*kāma-krodha-vimuktānām
yatīnām yata-cetasām
abhito brahma-nirvāṇam
vartate viditātmanām*

SYNONYMS

kāma-desires; *krodha*-anger; *vimuktānām*-of those who are so liberated; *yatīnām*-of the saintly persons; *yata-cetasām*-of persons who have full control over the mind; *abhitaḥ*-assured in the near future; *brahma-nirvāṇam*-liberation in the Supreme; *vartate*-is there; *vidita-ātmanām*-of those who are self-realized.

TRANSLATION

Those who are free from anger and all material desires, who are selfrealized, self-disciplined and constantly endeavoring for perfection, are assured of liberation in the Supreme in the very near future.

PURPORT

Of the saintly persons who are constantly engaged in striving toward salvation, one who is in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the best of all. The *Bhāgavatam* confirms this fact as follows:

*yat-pāda-paṅkaja-palāśa-vilāsa-bhaktiā
karmāśayaṁ grathitam udgrathayanti santaḥ
tadvan na rikta-matayo yatayo 'pi ruddha-
srotogaṇās tam arañam bhaja vāsudevam.*

"Just try to worship, in devotional service, Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even great sages are not able to control the forces of the senses as effectively as those who are engaged in transcendental bliss by serving the lotus feet of the Lord, uprooting the deep grown desire for fruitive activities." (*Bhāg.* 4.22.39)

In the conditioned soul the desire to enjoy the fruitive results of work is so deep-rooted that it is very difficult even for the great sages to control such desires, despite great endeavors. A devotee of the Lord, constantly engaged in devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, perfect in self-realization, very quickly attains liberation in the Supreme. Owing to his complete knowledge in self-realization, he always remains in trance. To cite an analagous example of this:

*darśana-dhyāna-saṁsparśair matsya-kūrma-vihaṅgamāḥ
svānya patyāni puṣṇanti tathāham api padmaja.*

"By vision, by meditation and by touch only do the fish, the tortoise and the birds maintain their offspring. Similarly do I also, O Padmaja!"

The fish brings up its offspring simply by looking at them. The tortoise brings up its offspring simply by meditation. The eggs of the tortoise are laid on land, and the tortoise meditates on the eggs while in the water. Similarly, a devotee in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, although far away from the Lord's abode, can elevate himself to that abode simply by thinking of Him constantly-by engagement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He does not feel the pangs of material miseries; this state of life is called *brahma-nirvāṇa*, or the absence of material miseries due to being constantly immersed in the Supreme.

TEXTS 27-28

*sparśān kṛtvā bahir bāhyāṁś
cakṣuś caivāntare bhruvoḥ
prāṇāpānau samau kṛtvā
nāsābhyantara-cāriṇau*

*yatendriya-mano-buddhir
munir mokṣa-parāyaṇaḥ
vigatecchā-bhaya-krodho
yaḥ sadā mukta eva saḥ*

SYNONYMS

sparśān-external sense objects, such as sound, etc.; *kṛtvā*-doing so; *bahiḥ*-external; *bāhyān*-unnecessary; *cakṣuḥ*-eyes; *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *antare*-within; *bhruvoḥ*-of the eyebrows; *prāṇa-apānau*-up-and down-moving air; *samau*-in suspension; *kṛtvā*-doing so; *nāsā-abhyantara*-within the nostrils; *cāriṇau*-blowing; *yata*-controlled; *indriya*-senses; *manaḥ*-mind; *buddhiḥ*-intelligence; *muṇiḥ*-the transcendentalist; *mokṣa*-liberation; *parāyaṇaḥ*-being so destined; *vigata*-discarded; *icchā*-wishes; *bhaya*-fear; *krodhaḥ*-anger; *yaḥ*-one who; *sadā*-always; *muktaḥ*-liberated; *eva*-certainly; *saḥ*-he is.

TRANSLATION

Shutting out all external sense objects, keeping the eyes and vision concentrated between the two eyebrows, suspending the inward and outward breaths within the nostrils-thus controlling the mind, senses and intelligence, the transcendentalist becomes free from desire, fear and anger. One who is always in this state is certainly liberated.

PURPORT

Being engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can immediately understand one's spiritual identity, and then one can understand the Supreme Lord by means of devotional service. When he is well situated in devotional service, one comes to the transcendental position, qualified to feel the presence of the Lord in the sphere of one's activity. This particular position is called liberation in the Supreme.

After explaining the above principles of liberation in the Supreme, the Lord gives instruction to Arjuna as to how one can come to that position by the practice of mysticism or *yoga*, known as *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, which is divisible into an eightfold procedure called *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*. In the Sixth Chapter the subject of *yoga* is explicitly detailed, and at the end of the Fifth it is only preliminarily explained. One has to drive out the sense objects such as sound, touch, form, taste and smell by the *pratyāhāra* (breathing) process in *yoga*, and then keep the vision of the eyes between the two eyebrows and concentrate on the tip of the nose with half closed lids. There is no benefit in closing the eyes altogether, because then there is every chance of falling asleep. Nor is there benefit in opening the eyes completely, because then there is the hazard of being attracted by sense objects. The breathing movement is restrained within the nostrils by neutralizing the up- and down-moving air within the body. By practice of such *yoga* one is able to gain control over the senses, refrain from outward sense objects, and thus prepare oneself for liberation in the Supreme.

This *yoga* process helps one become free from all kinds of fear and anger and thus feel the presence of the Supersoul in the transcendental situation. In other words, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the easiest process of executing

yoga principles. This will be thoroughly explained in the next chapter. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person, however, being always engaged in devotional service, does not risk losing his senses to some other engagement. This is a better way of controlling the senses than by the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*.

TEXT 29

*bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasāṁ
sarva-loka-maheśvaram
suhṛdaṁ sarva-bhūtānāṁ
jñātvā mām śāntim ṛcchati*

SYNONYMS

bhoktāram-beneficiary; *yajña*-sacrifices; *tapasām*-of penances and austerities; *sarva-loka*-all planets and the demigods thereof; *maheśvaram*-the Supreme Lord; *suhṛdam*-benefactor; *sarva*-all; *bhūtānām*-of the living entities; *jñātvā*-thus knowing; *mām*-Me (Lord Kṛṣṇa); *śāntim*-relief from material pangs; *ṛcchati*-achieves.

TRANSLATION

The sages, knowing Me as the ultimate purpose of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Lord of all planets and demigods and the benefactor and well-wisher of all living entities, attain peace from the pangs of material miseries.

PURPORT

The conditioned souls within the clutches of illusory energy are all anxious to attain peace in the material world. But they do not know the formula for peace, which is explained in this part of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The greatest peace formula is simply this: Lord Kṛṣṇa is the beneficiary in all human activities. Men should offer everything to the transcendental service of the Lord because He is the proprietor of all planets and the demigods thereon. No one is greater than He. He is greater than the greatest of the demigods, Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā. In the *Vedas* the Supreme Lord is

described as *tam īśvarāṇām paramaṁ maheśvaram*. Under the spell of illusion, living entities are trying to be lords of all they survey, but actually they are dominated by the material energy of the Lord. The Lord is the master of material nature, and the conditioned souls are under the stringent rules of material nature. Unless one understands these bare facts, it is not possible to achieve peace in the world either individually or collectively. This is the sense of Kṛṣṇa consciousness: Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme predominator, and all living entities, including the great demigods, are His subordinates. One can attain perfect peace only in complete Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

This Fifth Chapter is a practical explanation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, generally known as *karma-yoga*. The question of mental speculation as to how *karma-yoga* can give liberation is answered herewith. To work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is to work with the complete knowledge of the Lord as the predominator. Such work is not different from transcendental knowledge. Direct Kṛṣṇa consciousness is *bhakti-yoga*, and *jñāna-yoga* is a path leading to *bhakti-yoga*. Kṛṣṇa consciousness means to work in full knowledge of one's relationship with the Supreme Absolute, and the perfection of this consciousness is full knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A pure soul is the eternal servant of God as His fragmental part and parcel. He comes into contact with *māyā* (illusion) due to the desire to lord it over *māyā*, and that is the cause of his many sufferings. As long as he is in contact with matter, he has to execute work in terms of material necessities. Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, brings one into spiritual life even while one is within the jurisdiction of matter, for it is an arousing of spiritual existence by practice in the material world. The more one is advanced, the more he is freed from the clutches of matter. The Lord is not partial toward anyone. Everything depends on one's practical performance of duties in an effort to control the senses and conquer the influence of desire and anger. And, attaining Kṛṣṇa consciousness by controlling the above-mentioned passions, one remains factually in the transcendental stage, or *brahman-nirvāṇa*. The eightfold yoga mysticism is automatically practiced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness because the ultimate purpose is served. There is gradual process of elevation in the practice of *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhyāna*, *dhāraṇā*, *prāṇāyāma*, and

samādhī. But these only preface perfection by devotional service, which alone can award peace to the human being. It is the highest perfection of life.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the Fifth Chapter of the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of Karma-yoga, or Action in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

6. Sāṅkhya-yoga

TEXT 1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
anāśritaḥ karma-phalam
kāryam karma karoti yaḥ
sa sannyāsī ca yogī ca
na niragnir na cākriyaḥ*

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Lord said; *anāśritaḥ*-without shelter; *karma-phalam*-the result of work; *kāryam*-obligatory; *karma*-work; *karoti*-performs; *yaḥ*-one who; *saḥ*-he; *sannyāsī*-in the renounced order; *ca*-also; *yogī*-mystic; *ca*-also; *na*-not; *nir*-without; *agniḥ*-fire; *na*-nor; *ca*-also; *akriyaḥ*-without duty.

TRANSLATION

The Blessed Lord said: One who is unattached to the fruits of his work and who works as he is obligated is in the renounced order of life, and he is the true mystic: not he who lights no fire and performs no work.

PURPORT

In this chapter the Lord explains that the process of the eightfold *yoga* system is a means to control the mind and the senses. However, this is very difficult for people in general to perform, especially in the age of Kali. Although the eightfold *yoga* system is recommended in this chapter, the Lord emphasizes that the process of *karma-yoga*, or acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is better. Everyone acts in this world to maintain his family

and their paraphernalia, but no one is working without some self-interest, some personal gratification, be it concentrated or extended. The criterion of perfection is to act in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and not with a view to enjoying the fruits of work. To act in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the duty of every living entity because all are constitutionally parts and parcels of the Supreme. The parts of the body work for the satisfaction of the whole body. The limbs of the body do not act for self-satisfaction but for the satisfaction of the complete whole. Similarly, the living entity who acts for satisfaction of the supreme whole and not for personal satisfaction is the perfect *sannyāsī*, the perfect *yogī*.

The *sannyāsīs* sometimes artificially think that they have become liberated from all material duties, and therefore they cease to perform *agnihotra yajñas* (fire sacrifices), but actually they are self-interested because their goal is becoming one with the impersonal Brahman. Such a desire is greater than any material desire, but it is not without self-interest. Similarly, the mystic *yogī* who practices the *yoga* system with half-open eyes, ceasing all material activities, desires some satisfaction for his personal self. But a person acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness works for the satisfaction of the whole, without self-interest. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person has no desire for self-satisfaction. His criterion of success is the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa, and thus he is the perfect *sannyāsī*, or perfect *yogī*. Lord Caitanya, the highest perfectional symbol of renunciation, prays in this way:

*na dhanam na janam na sundarīm kavitām vā jagadīśa kāmaya.
mama janmani janmanīśvare bhavatād bhaktir ahaitukī tvayi.*

"O Almighty Lord, I have no desire to accumulate wealth, nor to enjoy beautiful women. Nor do I want any number of followers. What I want only is the causeless mercy of Your devotional service in my life, birth after birth."

TEXT 2

*yam sannyāsam iti prāhur
yogam tam viddhi pāṇḍava
na hy asannyasta-saṅkalpo*

yogī bhavati kaścana

SYNONYMS

yam-what; *sannyāsam*-renunciation; *iti*-thus; *prāhuḥ*-they say; *yogam*-linking with the Supreme; *tam*-that; *viddhi*-you must know; *pāṇḍava*-O son of Pāṇḍu; *na*-never; *hi*-certainly; *asannyasta*-without giving up; *saṅkalpaḥ*-self-satisfaction; *yogī*-a mystic transcendentalist; *bhavati*-becomes; *kaścana*-anyone.

TRANSLATION

What is called renunciation is the same as yoga, or linking oneself with the Supreme, for no one can become a yogī unless he renounces the desire for sense gratification.

PURPORT

Real *sannyāsa-yoga* or *bhakti* means that one should know his constitutional position as the living entity, and act accordingly. The living entity has no separate independent identity. He is the marginal energy of the Supreme. When he is entrapped by material energy, he is conditioned, and when he is Kṛṣṇa conscious, or aware of the spiritual energy, then he is in his real and natural state of life. Therefore, when one is in complete knowledge, one ceases all material sense gratification, or renounces all kinds of sense gratificatory activities. This is practiced by the *yogīs* who restrain the senses from material attachment. But a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has no opportunity to engage his senses in anything which is not for the purpose of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person is simultaneously a *sannyāsī* and a *yogī*. The purpose of knowledge and of restraining the senses, as prescribed in the *jñāna* and *yoga* processes, is automatically served in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If one is unable to give up the activities of his selfish nature, then *jñāna* and *yoga* are of no avail. The real aim is for a living entity to give up all selfish satisfaction and to be prepared to satisfy the Supreme. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person has no desire for any kind of self-enjoyment. He is always engaged for the enjoyment of the Supreme. One who has no information of the Supreme must therefore be engaged in

self-satisfaction because no one can stand on the platform of inactivity. All these purposes are perfectly served by the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 3

*ārurukṣor muner yogam
karma kāraṇam ucyate
yogārūḍhasya tasyaiva
śamaḥ kāraṇam ucyate*

SYNONYMS

ārurukṣoḥ-of one who has just begun *yoga*; *muneh*-of the sage; *yogam*-the eightfold *yoga* system; *karma*-work; *kāraṇam*-the cause; *ucyate*-is said to be; *yoga*-eightfold *yoga*; *ārūḍhasya*-one who has attained; *tasya*-his; *eva*-certainly; *śamaḥ*-cessation of all material activities; *kāraṇam*-the cause; *ucyate*-is said to be.

TRANSLATION

For one who is a neophyte in the eightfold yoga system, work is said to be the means; and for one who has already attained to yoga, cessation of all material activities is said to be the means.

PURPORT

The process of linking oneself with the Supreme is called *yoga*, which may be compared to a ladder for attaining the topmost spiritual realization. This ladder begins from the lowest material condition of the living entity and rises up to perfect self-realization in pure spiritual life. According to various elevations, different parts of the ladder are known by different names. But all in all, the complete ladder is called *yoga* and may be divided into three parts, namely *jñāna-yoga*, *dhyāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga*. The beginning of the ladder is called the *yogārurukṣa* stage, and the highest rung is called *yogārūḍha*.

Concerning the eightfold *yoga* system, attempts in the beginning to enter into meditation through regulative principles of life and practice of different

sitting postures (which are more or less bodily exercises) are considered fruitive material activities. All such activities lead to achieving perfect mental equilibrium to control the senses. When one is accomplished in the practice of meditation, he ceases all disturbing mental activities.

A Kṛṣṇa conscious person is, however, situated from the beginning on the platform of meditation because he always thinks of Kṛṣṇa. And, being constantly engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa, he is considered to have ceased all material activities.

TEXT 4

*yadā hi nendriyārtheṣu
na karmasv anuṣajjate
sarva-saṅkalpa-sannyāsī
yogārūḍhas tadocyate*

SYNONYMS

yadā-when; *hi*-certainly; *na*-not; *indriya-artheṣu*-in sense gratification; *na*-never; *karmasu*-in fruitive activities; *anuṣajjate*-does necessarily engage; *sarva-saṅkalpa*-all material desires; *sannyāsī*-renouncer; *yoga-ārūḍhaḥ*-elevated in yoga; *tadā*-at that time; *ucyate*-is said to be.

TRANSLATION

A person is said to have attained to yoga when, having renounced all material desires, he neither acts for sense gratification nor engages in fruitive activities.

PURPORT

When a person is fully engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, he is pleased in himself, and thus he is no longer engaged in sense gratification or in fruitive activities. Otherwise, one must be engaged in sense gratification, since one cannot live without engagement. Without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one must be always seeking self-centered or extended selfish activities. But a Kṛṣṇa conscious person can do everything for the

satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa and thereby be perfectly detached from sense gratification. One who has no such realization must mechanically try to escape material desires before being elevated to the top rung of the *yoga* ladder.

TEXT 5

*uddhared ātmanātmānam
nātmānam avasādayet
ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur
ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ*

SYNONYMS

uddharet-one must deliver; *ātmanā*-by the mind; *ātmānam*-the conditioned soul; *na*-never; *ātmānam*-the conditioned soul; *avasādayet*-put into degradation; *ātmā*-mind; *eva*-certainly; *hi*-indeed; *ātmanaḥ*-of the conditioned soul; *bandhuḥ*-friend; *ātmā*-mind; *eva*-certainly; *ripuḥ*-enemy; *ātmanaḥ*-of the conditioned soul.

TRANSLATION

**A man must elevate himself by his own mind, not degrade himself.
The mind is the friend of the conditioned soul, and his enemy as well.**

PURPORT

The word *ātmā* denotes body, mind and soul-depending upon different circumstances. In the *yoga* system, the mind and the conditioned soul are especially important. Since the mind is the central point of *yoga* practice, *ātmā* refers here to the mind. The purpose of the *yoga* system is to control the mind and to draw it away from attachment to sense objects. It is stressed herein that the mind must be so trained that it can deliver the conditioned soul from the mire of nescience. In material existence one is subjected to the influence of the mind and the senses. In fact, the pure soul is entangled in the material world because of the mind's ego which desires to lord it over material nature. Therefore, the mind should be trained so that it will not be

attracted by the glitter of material nature, and in this way the conditioned soul may be saved. One should not degrade oneself by attraction to sense objects. The more one is attracted by sense objects, the more one becomes entangled in material existence. The best way to disentangle oneself is to always engage the mind in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The word *hi* is used for emphasizing this point, i.e., that one *must* do this. It is also said:

*mana eva manuṣyāṇāṁ kāraṇaṁ bandha-mokṣayoḥ
bandhāya viṣayāsaṅgo muktyai nirviṣayaṁ manaḥ.*

"For man, mind is the cause of bondage and mind is the cause of liberation. Mind absorbed in sense objects is the cause of bondage, and mind detached from the sense objects is the cause of liberation." Therefore, the mind which is always engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the cause of supreme liberation.

TEXT 6

*bandhur ātmātmanas tasya
yenātmaivātmanā jitaḥ
anātmanas tu śatrutve
vartetātmaiva śatru-vat*

SYNONYMS

bandhuḥ-friend; *ātmā*-mind; *ātmanaḥ*-of the living entity; *tasya*-of him; *yena*-by whom; *ātmā*-mind; *eva*-certainly; *ātmanā*-by the living entity; *jitaḥ*-conquered; *anātmanaḥ*-of one who has failed to control the mind; *tu*-but; *śatrutve*-because of enmity; *varteta*-remains; *ātmā eva*-the very mind; *śatruvat*-as an enemy.

TRANSLATION

For him who has conquered the mind, the mind is the best of friends; but for one who has failed to do so, his very mind will be the greatest enemy.

PURPORT

The purpose of practicing eightfold *yoga* is to control the mind in order to make it a friend in discharging the human mission. Unless the mind is controlled, the practice of *yoga* (for show) is simply a waste of time. One who cannot control his mind lives always with the greatest enemy, and thus his life and its mission are spoiled. The constitutional position of the living entity is to carry out the order of the superior. As long as one's mind remains an unconquered enemy, one has to serve the dictations of lust, anger, avarice, illusion, etc. But when the mind is conquered, one voluntarily agrees to abide by the dictation of the Personality of Godhead, who is situated within the heart of everyone as Paramātmā. Real *yoga* practice entails meeting the Paramātmā within the heart and then following His dictation. For one who takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness directly, perfect surrender to the dictation of the Lord follows automatically.

TEXT 7

*jitātmanah praśāntasya
paramātmā samāhitaḥ
śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkheṣu
tathā mānāpamānayoḥ*

SYNONYMS

jita-ātmanah-of one who has conquered his mind; *praśāntasya*-of one who has attained tranquility by such control over the mind; *paramātmā*-the Supersoul; *samāhitaḥ*-approached completely; *śīta*-cold; *uṣṇa*-heat; *sukha*-in happiness; *duḥkheṣu*-in distress; *tathā*-also; *māna*-honor; *apamānayoḥ*-in dishonor.

TRANSLATION

For one who has conquered the mind, the Supersoul is already reached, for he has attained tranquility. To such a man happiness and distress, heat and cold, honor and dishonor are all the same.

PURPORT

Actually, every living entity is intended to abide by the dictation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seated in everyone's heart as Paramātmā. When the mind is misled by the external illusory energy, one becomes entangled in material activities. Therefore, as soon as one's mind is controlled through one of the *yoga* systems, one is to be considered as having already reached the destination. One has to abide by superior dictation. When one's mind is fixed on the superior nature, he has no other alternative but to follow the dictation of the Supreme. The mind must admit some superior dictation and follow it. The effect of controlling the mind is that one automatically follows the dictation of the Paramātmā or Supersoul. Because this transcendental position is at once achieved by one who is in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the devotee of the Lord is unaffected by the dualities of material existence, namely distress and happiness, cold and heat, etc. This state is practical *samādhī*, or absorption in the Supreme.

TEXT 8

*jñāna-vijñāna-trptātmā
kūṭa-stho vijitendriyaḥ
yukta ity ucyate yogī
sama-loṣṭrāśma-kāñcanaḥ*

SYNONYMS

jñāna-acquired knowledge; *vijñāna*-realized knowledge; *trpta*-satisfied; *ātmā*-living entity; *kūṭasthaḥ*-spiritually situated; *vijita-indriyaḥ*-sensually controlled; *yuktaḥ*-competent for self-realization; *iti*-thus; *ucyate*-is said; *yogī*-the mystic; *sama*-equipoised; *loṣṭra*-pebbles; *aśma*-stone; *kāñcanaḥ*-gold.

TRANSLATION

A person is said to be established in self-realization and is called a yogī [or mystic] when he is fully satisfied by virtue of acquired knowledge and realization. Such a person is situated in transcendence and is self-controlled. He sees everything-whether it be pebbles, stones or gold-as the same.

PURPORT

Book knowledge without realization of the Supreme Truth is useless. This is stated as follows:

*ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ.*

"No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him." (*Padma Purāṇa*)

This *Bhagavad-gītā* is the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. No one can become Kṛṣṇa conscious simply by mundane scholarship. One must be fortunate enough to associate with a person who is in pure consciousness. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person has realized knowledge, by the grace of Kṛṣṇa, because he is satisfied with pure devotional service. By realized knowledge, one becomes perfect. By transcendental knowledge one can remain steady in his convictions, but by mere academic knowledge one can be easily deluded and confused by apparent contradictions. It is the realized soul who is actually self-controlled because he is surrendered to Kṛṣṇa. He is transcendental because he has nothing to do with mundane scholarship. For him mundane scholarship and mental speculation, which may be as good as gold to others, are of no greater value than pebbles or stones.

TEXT 9

*suhṛn-mitrāry-udāsīna-
madhyastha-dveṣya-bandhuṣu
sādhuṣv api ca pāpeṣu
sama-buddhir viśiṣyate*

SYNONYMS

suhṛt-by nature a well-wisher; *mitra*-benefactor with affection; *ari*-enemy; *udāsīna*-neutral between the belligerents; *madhyastha*-mediator between the

belligerents; *dveṣya*-envious; *bandhuṣu*-among the relatives or well-wishers; *sādhūṣu*-unto the pious; *api*-as well as; *ca*-and; *pāpeṣu*-unto the sinners; *sama-buddhiḥ*-having equal intelligence; *viśiṣyate*-is far advanced.

TRANSLATION

A person is said to be still further advanced when he regards all-the honest well-wisher, friends and enemies, the envious, the pious, the sinner and those who are indifferent and impartial-with an equal mind.

TEXT 10

*yogī yuñjīta satatam
ātmānam rahasi sthitaḥ
ekākī yata-cittātmā
nirāśīr aparigrahaḥ*

SYNONYMS

yogī-a transcendentalist; *yuñjīta*-must concentrate in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *satatam*-constantly; *ātmānam*-himself (by the body, mind and self); *rahasi*-in a secluded place; *sthitaḥ*-being so situated; *ekākī*-alone; *yata-cittātmā*-always careful in mind; *nirāśīr*-without being attracted by anything else; *aparigrahaḥ*-free from the feeling of possessiveness.

TRANSLATION

A transcendentalist should always try to concentrate his mind on the Supreme Self; he should live alone in a secluded place and should always carefully control his mind. He should be free from desires and feelings of possessiveness.

PURPORT

Kṛṣṇa is realized in different degrees as Brahman, Paramātmā and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Kṛṣṇa consciousness means, concisely, to be always engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. But those who are attached to the impersonal Brahman or the localized

Supersoul are also partially Kṛṣṇa conscious, because impersonal Brahman is the spiritual ray of Kṛṣṇa and Supersoul is the all-pervading partial expansion of Kṛṣṇa. Thus the impersonalist and the meditator are also indirectly Kṛṣṇa conscious. A directly Kṛṣṇa conscious person is the topmost transcendentalist because such a devotee knows what is meant by Brahman or Paramātmā. His knowledge of the Absolute Truth is perfect, whereas the impersonalist and the meditative *yogī* are imperfectly Kṛṣṇa conscious.

Nevertheless, all of these are instructed herewith to be constantly engaged in their particular pursuits so that they may come to the highest perfection sooner or later. The first business of a transcendentalist is to keep the mind always on Kṛṣṇa. One should always think of Kṛṣṇa and not forget Him even for a moment. Concentration of the mind on the Supreme is called *samādhi* or trance. In order to concentrate the mind, one should always remain in seclusion and avoid disturbance by external objects. He should be very careful to accept favorable and reject unfavorable conditions that affect his realization. And, in perfect determination, he should not hanker after unnecessary material things that entangle him by feelings of possessiveness.

All these perfections and precautions are perfectly executed when one is directly in Kṛṣṇa consciousness because direct Kṛṣṇa consciousness means self-abnegation, wherein there is very little chance for material possessiveness. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī characterizes Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this way:

*anāsaktasya viṣayān yathārham upayujjataḥ
nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe yuktaṁ vairāgyam ucyate
prāpañcikatayā buddhyā hari-sambandhi-vastunaḥ
mumukṣubhiḥ parityāgo vairāgyaṁ phalgu kathyate.*

(Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.255-256)

"When one is not attached to anything, but at the same time accepts everything in relation to Kṛṣṇa, one is rightly situated above possessiveness. On the other hand, one who rejects everything without knowledge of its relationship to Kṛṣṇa is not as complete in his renunciation."

A Kṛṣṇa conscious person well knows that everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and thus he is always free from feelings of personal possession. As such, he has no hankering for anything on his own personal account. He knows how to accept things in favor of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and how to reject things unfavorable to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He is always aloof from material things because he is always transcendental, and he is always alone, having nothing to do with persons not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the perfect *yogī*.

TEXTS 11-12

*śucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya
sthiram āsanam ātmanaḥ
nāty-ucchritam nāti-nīcam
cailājina-kuśottaram
tatraikāgram manaḥ kṛtvā
yata-cittendriya-kriyaḥ
upaviśyāsane yuñjyāt
yogam ātma-viśuddhaye*

SYNONYMS

śucau-in sanctified; *deśe*-in the land; *pratiṣṭhāpya*-placing; *sthiram*-firm; *āsanam*-seat; *ātmanaḥ*-self-dependant; *na*-not; *ati*-too; *ucchritam*-high; *na*-nor; *ati*-too; *nīcam*-low; *caila-ajna*-soft cloth and deerskin; *kuśottaram*-*kuśa* grass; *tatra*-thereupon; *ekāgram*-one attention; *manaḥ*-mind; *kṛtvā*-doing so; *yata-citta*-controlling the mind; *indriya*-senses; *kriyaḥ*-activities; *upaviśya*-sitting on; *āsane*-on the seat; *yuñjyāt*-execute; *yogam*-yoga practice; *ātma*-heart; *viśuddhaye*-for clarifying.

TRANSLATION

To practice yoga, one should go to a secluded place and should lay kuśa-grass on the ground and then cover it with a deerskin and a soft cloth. The seat should neither be too high nor too low and should be situated in a sacred place. The yogī should then sit on it very firmly and

should practice yoga by controlling the mind and the senses, purifying the heart and fixing the mind on one point.

PURPORT

"Sacred place" refers to places of pilgrimage. In India the *yogīs*, the transcendentalists or the devotees all leave home and reside in sacred places such as Prayāg, Mathurā, Vṛndāvana, Hṛṣīkeśa, and Hardwar and in solitude practice *yoga* where the sacred rivers like the Yamunā and the Ganges flow. But often this is not possible, especially for Westerners. The so-called *yoga* societies in big cities may be successful in earning material benefit, but they are not at all suitable for the actual practice of *yoga*. One who is not self-controlled and whose mind is not undisturbed cannot practice meditation. Therefore, in the *Bṛhan-Nārādīya Purāṇa* it is said that in the Kali-yuga (the present *yuga* or age) when people in general are short-lived, slow in spiritual realization and always disturbed by various anxieties, the best means of spiritual realization is chanting the holy name of the Lord.

*harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatiḥ anyathā.*

"In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is chanting the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way."

TEXTS 13-14

*samaṁ kāya-śiro-grīvaṁ
dhārayann acalaṁ sthiraḥ
samprekṣya nāsikāgraṁ svaṁ
diśaś cānavalokayan*

*praśāntātmā vigata-bhīr
brahmacāri-vrate sthitaḥ
manaḥ saṁyamya mac-citto
yukta āsīta mat-parah*

SYNONYMS

samam-straight; *kāya-śiraḥ*-body and head; *grīvam*-neck; *dhārayan*-holding; *acalam*-unmoved; *sthiraḥ*-still; *samprekṣya*-looking; *nāsikā*-nose; *agram*-tip; *svam*-own; *diśaḥ*-all sides; *ca*-also; *anavalokayan*-not seeing; *praśānta*-unagitated; *ātmā*-mind; *vigata-bhīḥ*-devoid of fear; *brahmacāri-vrate*-in the vow of celibacy; *sthitaḥ*-situated; *manaḥ*-mind; *saṁyamya*-completely subdued; *mat*-unto Me (Kṛṣṇa); *cittaḥ*-concentrated; *yuktaḥ*-actual *yogī*; *āsīta*-being so; *mat*-unto Me; *paraḥ*-ultimate goal.

TRANSLATION

One should hold one's body, neck and head erect in a straight line and stare steadily at the tip of the nose. Thus with an unagitated, subdued mind, devoid of fear, completely free from sex life, one should meditate upon Me within the heart and make Me the ultimate goal of life.

PURPORT

The goal of life is to know Kṛṣṇa, who is situated within the heart of every living being as Paramātmā, the four-handed Viṣṇu form. The *yoga* process is practiced in order to discover and see this localized form of Viṣṇu, and not for any other purpose. The localized Viṣṇu-mūrti is the plenary representation of Kṛṣṇa dwelling within one's heart. One who has no program to realize this Viṣṇu-murti is uselessly engaged in mock-*yoga* practice and is certainly wasting his time. Kṛṣṇā is the ultimate goal of life, and the Viṣṇu-murti situated in one's heart is the object of *yoga* practice. To realize this Viṣṇu-murti within the heart, one has to observe complete abstinence from sex life; therefore one has to leave home and live alone in a secluded place, remaining seated as mentioned above. One cannot enjoy sex life daily at home or elsewhere and attend a so-called *yoga* class and thus become a *yogī*. One has to practice controlling the mind and avoiding all kinds of sense gratification, of which sex life is the chief. In the rules of celibacy written by the great sage Yājñavalkya it is said:

*karmaṇā manasā vācā sarvāvasthāsu sarvadā
sarvatra maithuṇa-tyāgo brahmacaryam pracakṣate.*

"The vow of *brahmacarya* is meant to help one completely abstain from sex indulgence in work, words and mind-at all times, under all circumstances, and in all places." No one can perform correct *yoga* practice through sex indulgence. *Brahmacarya* is taught, therefore, from childhood when one has no knowledge of sex life. Children at the age of five are sent to the *guru-kula*, or the place of the spiritual master, and the master trains the young boys in the strict discipline of becoming *brahmacārīs*. Without such practice, no one can make advancement in any *yoga*, whether it be *dhyāna*, *jñāna* or *bhakti*. One who, however, follows the rules and regulations of married life, having sexual relationship only with his wife (and that also under regulation), is also called *brahmacārī*. Such a restrained householder *brahmacārī* may be accepted in the *bhakti* school, but the *jñāna* and *dhyāna* schools do not admit even householder *brahmacārīs*. They require complete abstinence without compromise. In the *bhakti* school, a householder *brahmacārī* is allowed controlled sex life because the cult of *bhakti-yoga* is so powerful that one automatically loses sexual attraction, being engaged in the superior service of the Lord. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said:

*viṣayā vinivartante nirāhārasya dehinaḥ
rasa-varjaṁ raso 'py asya param dṛṣṭvā nivartate*

Whereas others are forced to restrain themselves from sense gratification, a devotee of the Lord automatically refrains because of superior taste. Other than the devotee, no one has any information of that superior taste.

Vigatabhīḥ. One cannot be fearless unless one is fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A conditioned soul is fearful due to his perverted memory, his forgetfulness of his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. The *Bhāgavatam* says, *bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād īśād apetasya viparyayo 'smṛtiḥ*: Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the only basis for fearlessness. Therefore, perfect practice is possible for a person who is Kṛṣṇa conscious. And since the ultimate goal of *yoga* practice is to see the Lord within, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person is already the best of all *yogīs*. The principles of the *yoga* system mentioned herein are different from those of the popular so-called *yoga* societies.

TEXT 15

*yuñjann evaṁ sadātmānam
yogī niyata-mānasaḥ
śāntim nirvāṇa-paramām
mat-saṁsthām adhigacchati*

SYNONYMS

yuñjan-practicing like this; *evaṁ*-as mentioned above; *sadā*-constantly; *ātmānam*-body, mind and soul; *yogī*-the mystic transcendentalist; *niyata-mānasaḥ*-regulated mind; *śāntim*-peace; *nirvāṇa-paramām*-cessation of material existence; *mat-saṁsthām*-in the spiritual sky (the kingdom of God); *adhigacchati*-does attain.

TRANSLATION

Thus practicing control of the body, mind and activities, the mystic transcendentalist attains to the kingdom of God [or the abode of Kṛṣṇa] by cessation of material existence.

PURPORT

The ultimate goal in practicing *yoga* is now clearly explained. *Yoga* practice is not meant for attaining any kind of material facility; it is to enable the cessation of all material existence. One who seeks an improvement in health or aspires after material perfection is no *yogī* according to *Bhagavad-gītā*. Nor does cessation of material existence entail one's entering into "the void," which is only a myth. There is no void anywhere within the creation of the Lord. Rather, the cessation of material existence enables one to enter into the spiritual sky, the abode of the Lord. The abode of the Lord is also clearly described in the *Bhagavad-gītā* as that place where there is no need of sun, moon, nor electricity. All the planets in the spiritual kingdom are self-illuminated like the sun in the material sky. The kingdom of God is everywhere, but the spiritual sky and the planets thereof are called *param dhāma*, or superior abodes.

A consummate *yogī*, who is perfect in understanding Lord Kṛṣṇa, as is clearly stated herein (*mat-cittaḥ*, *mat-parah*, *mat-sthānam*) by the Lord

Himself, can attain real peace and can ultimately reach His supreme abode, the Kṛṣṇa-loka known as Goloka Vṛndāvana. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is clearly stated (*goloka eva nivasaty akhilātma-bhūtaḥ*) that the Lord, although residing always in His abode called Goloka, is the all-pervading Brahman and the localized Paramātmā as well by dint of His superior spiritual energies. No one can reach the spiritual sky or enter into the eternal abode (Vaikuṇṭha Goloka Vṛndāvana) of the Lord without the proper understanding of Kṛṣṇa and His plenary expansion Viṣṇu. Therefore a person working in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the perfect *yogī*, because his mind is always absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's activities. *Sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayoḥ*. In the *Vedas* also we learn: *tam eva viditvātimṛtyum eti*: "One can overcome the path of birth and death only by understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa." In other words, perfection of the *yoga* system is the attainment of freedom from material existence and not some magical jugglery or gymnastic feats to befool innocent people.

TEXT 16

*nāty-aśnatas 'tu yogo 'sti
na caikāntam anaśnataḥ
na cāti-svapna-śīlasya
jāgrato naiva cārjuna*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *ati*-too much; *aśnataḥ*-of one who eats so; *tu*-but; *yogaḥ*-linking with the Supreme; *asti*-there is; *na*-nor; *ca*-also; *ekāntam*-very low; *anaśnataḥ*-abstaining from eating; *na*-nor; *ca*-also; *ati*-too much; *svapna-śīlasya*-of one who sleeps too much; *jāgrataḥ*-or one who keeps night watch too much; *na*-not; *eva*-ever; *ca*-and; *arjuna*-O Arjuna.

TRANSLATION

There is no possibility of one's becoming a yogī, O Arjuna, if one eats too much, or eats too little, sleeps too much or does not sleep enough.

PURPORT

Regulation of diet and sleep is recommended herein for the *yogīs*. Too much eating means eating more than is required to keep the body and soul together. There is no need for men to eat animals because there is an ample supply of grains, vegetables, fruits and milk. Such simple foodstuff is considered to be in the mode of goodness according to the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Animal food is for those in the mode of ignorance. Therefore, those who indulge in animal food, drinking, smoking and eating food which is not first offered to Kṛṣṇa will suffer sinful reactions because of eating only polluted things. *Bhuñjate te tv agham papa ye pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt*. Anyone who eats for sense pleasure, or cooks for himself, not offering his food to Kṛṣṇa, eats only sin. One who eats sin and eats more than is allotted to him cannot execute perfect *yoga*. It is best that one eat only the remnants of foodstuff offered to Kṛṣṇa. A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness does not eat anything which is not first offered to Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, only the Kṛṣṇa conscious person can attain perfection in *yoga* practice. Nor can one who artificially abstains from eating, manufacturing his own personal process of fasting, practice *yoga*. The Kṛṣṇa conscious person observes fasting as it is recommended in the scriptures. He does not fast or eat more than is required, and he is thus competent to perform *yoga* practice. One who eats more than required will dream very much while sleeping, and he must consequently sleep more than is required. One should not sleep more than six hours daily. One who sleeps more than six hours out of twenty-four is certainly influenced by the mode of ignorance. A person in the mode of ignorance is lazy and prone to sleep a great deal. Such a person cannot perform *yoga*.

TEXT 17

*yuktāhāra-vihārasya
yukta-ceṣṭasya karmasu
yukta-svapnāvabodhasya
yogo bhavati duḥkha-hā*

SYNONYMS

yukta-regulated; *āhāra*-eating; *vihārasya*-recreation; *yukta*-regulated; *ceṣṭasya*-of one who works for maintenance; *karmasu*-in discharging duties; *yukta*-regulated; *svapna-avabodhasya*-regulated sleep and wakefulness; *yogaḥ*-practice of *yoga*; *bhavati*-becomes; *duḥkha-hā*-diminishing pains.

TRANSLATION

He who is temperate in his habits of eating, sleeping, working and recreation can mitigate all material pains by practicing the yoga system.

PURPORT

Extravagance in the matter of eating, sleeping, defending and mating—which are demands of the body—can block advancement in the practice of *yoga*. As far as eating is concerned, it can be regulated only when one is practiced to take and accept *prasādam*, sanctified food. Lord Kṛṣṇa is offered, according to the *Bhagavad-gītā* (Bg. 9.26), vegetables, flowers, fruits, grains, milk, etc. In this way, a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness becomes automatically trained not to accept food not meant for human consumption, or which is not in the category of goodness. As far as sleeping is concerned, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person is always alert in the discharge of his duties in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and therefore any unnecessary time spent sleeping is considered a great loss. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person cannot bear to pass a minute of his life without being engaged in the service of the Lord. Therefore, his sleeping is kept to a minimum. His ideal in this respect is Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, who was always engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa and who could not sleep more than two hours a day, and sometimes not even that. Ṭhākura Haridāsa would not even accept *prasādam* nor even sleep for a moment without finishing his daily routine of chanting with his beads three hundred thousand names. As far as work is concerned, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not do anything which is not connected with Kṛṣṇa's interest, and thus his work is always regulated and is untainted by sense gratification. Since there is no question of sense gratification, there is no material leisure for a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And because he is regulated in all his work, speech, sleep, wakefulness and all other bodily activities, there is no material misery for him.

TEXT 18

*yadā viniyatam cittam
ātmany evāvaṣṭhate
niṣprhaḥ sarva-kāmebhyo
yukta ity ucyate tadā*

SYNONYMS

yadā-when; *viniyatam*-particularly disciplined; *cittam*-the mind and its activities; *ātmani*-in the Transcendence; *eva*-certainly; *avaṣṭhate*-becomes situated; *niṣprhaḥ*-devoid of; *sarva*-all kinds of; *kāmebhyah*-material desires; *yuktaḥ*-well situated in *yoga*; *iti*-thus; *ucyate*-is said to be; *tadā*-at that time.

TRANSLATION

When the yogī, by practice of yoga, disciplines his mental activities and becomes situated in Transcendence-devoid of all material desires- he is said to have attained yoga.

PURPORT

The activities of the *yogī* are distinguished from those of an ordinary person by his characteristic cessation from all kinds of material desires-of which sex is the chief. A perfect *yogī* is so well disciplined in the activities of the mind that he can no longer be disturbed by any kind of material desire. This perfectional stage can automatically be attained by persons in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as is stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.4.18-20):

*sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayor vacāṁsi vaikunṭha-guṇānavarṇane
karau harer mandira-mārjanādiṣu śrutim cakārācyuta-sat-kathodaye
mukunda-līṅgālaya-darśane dṛṣau tad-bhṛtyagātra-sparśe 'ṅga-saṅgamam
ghrāṇam ca tat-pāda-saroja-saurabhe śrīmat tulasya rasanām tad-arpite
pāda hareḥ kṣetra-padānusarpaṇe śiro hrīṣīkeśa-padābhivandane
kāmaṁ ca dāsyē na tu kāma-kāmyayā yathottama-śloka-janāśrayā ratiḥ*

"King Ambarīṣa first of all engaged his mind on the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa; then, one after another, he engaged his words in describing the transcendental qualities of the Lord, his hands in mopping the temple of the Lord, his ears in hearing of the activities of the Lord, his eyes in seeing the transcendental forms of the Lord, his body in touching the bodies of the devotees, his sense of smell in smelling the scents of the lotus flower offered to the Lord, his tongue in tasting the *tulasī* leaf offered at the lotus feet of the Lord, his legs in going to places of pilgrimage and the temple of the Lord, his head in offering obeisances unto the Lord and his desires in executing the mission of the Lord. All these transcendental activities are quite befitting a pure devotee."

This transcendental stage may be inexpressible subjectively by the followers of the impersonalist path, but it becomes very easy and practical for a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as is apparent in the above description of the engagements of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa. Unless the mind is fixed on the lotus feet of the Lord by constant remembrance, such transcendental engagements are not practical. In the devotional service of the Lord, therefore, these prescribed activities are called *arcanā*, or engaging all the senses in the service of the Lord. The senses and the mind require engagements. Simple abnegation is not practical. Therefore, for people in general-especially those who are not in the renounced order of life-transcendental engagement of the senses and the mind as described above is the perfect process for transcendental achievement, which is called *yukta* in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

TEXT 19

*yathā dīpo nivāta-stho
neṅgate sopamā smṛtā
yogino yata-cittasya
yujñjato yogam ātmanaḥ*

SYNONYMS

yathā-as; *dīpaḥ*-a lamp; *nivāta-sthaḥ*-in a place without wind; *na*-does not; *ṅgate*-waver; *sā upamā*-compared to that; *smṛtā*-likened; *yoginaḥ*-of the

yogī; *yata-cittasya*-whose mind is controlled; *yuñjataḥ*-constantly engaged in; *yogam*-meditation; *ātmanah*-on Transcendence.

TRANSLATION

As a lamp in a windless place does not waver, so the transcendentalist, whose mind is controlled, remains always steady in his meditation on the transcendent Self.

PURPORT

A truly Kṛṣṇa conscious person, always absorbed in Transcendence, in constant undisturbed meditation on his worshipable Lord, is as steady as a lamp in a windless place.

TEXTS 20-23

*yatroparamate cittam
niruddham yoga-sevayā
yatra caivātmanātmānam
paśyann ātmani tuṣyati*

*sukham ātyantikam yat tad
buddhi-grāhyam atīndriyam
vetti yatra na caivāyam
sthitaś calati tattvataḥ*

*yam labdhvā cāparam lābham
manyate nādhikam tataḥ
yasmin sthito na duḥkhena
guruṇāpi vicālyate*

*taṁ vidyād duḥkha-saṁyoga-
viyogaṁ yoga-saṁjñitam*

SYNONYMS

yatra-in that state of affairs; *uparamate*-when one feels transcendental happiness; *cittam*-mental activities; *niruddham*-restrained from matter;

yoga-sevayā-by performance of *yoga*; *yatra*-in that; *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *ātmanā*-by the pure mind; *ātmānam*-self; *paśyan*-realizing the position; *ātmani*-in the self; *tuṣyati*-becomes satisfied; *sukham*-happiness; *ātyantikam*-supreme; *yat*-in which; *tat*-that; *buddhi*-intelligence; *grāhyam*-acceptable; *atīndriyam*-transcendental; *vetti*-knows; *yatra*-wherein; *na*-never; *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *ayam*-in this; *sthitaḥ*-situated; *calati*-moves; *tattvataḥ*-from the truth; *yam*-that which; *labdhvā*-by attainment; *ca*-also; *aparam*-any other; *lābham*-gain; *manyate*-does not mind; *na*-never; *adhikam*-more than that; *tataḥ*-from that; *yasmin*-in which; *sthitaḥ*-being situated; *na*-never; *duḥkhena*-by miseries; *guruṇāpi*-even though very difficult; *vicālyate*-becomes shaken; *tam*-that; *vidyāt*-you must know; *duḥkha-saṁyoga*-miseries of material contact; *viyogam*-extermination; *yoga-samjñitam*-trance in *yoga*.

TRANSLATION

The stage of perfection is called trance, or samādhi, when one's mind is completely restrained from material mental activities by practice of yoga. This is characterized by one's ability to see the self by the pure mind and to relish and rejoice in the self. In that joyous state, one is situated in boundless transcendental happiness and enjoys himself through transcendental senses. Established thus, one never departs from the truth, and upon gaining this he thinks there is no greater gain. Being situated in such a position, one is never shaken, even in the midst of greatest difficulty. This indeed is actual freedom from all miseries arising from material contact.

PURPORT

By practice of *yoga* one becomes gradually detached from material concepts. This is the primary characteristic of the *yoga* principle. And after this, one becomes situated in trance, or *samādhi* which means that the *yogī* realizes the Supersoul through transcendental mind and intelligence, without any of the misgivings of identifying the self with the Superself. *Yoga* practice is more or less based on the principles of the Patañjali system. Some unauthorized commentators try to identify the individual soul with the Supersoul, and the monists think this to be liberation, but they do not

understand the real purpose of the Patañjali system of *yoga*. There is an acceptance of transcendental pleasure in the Patañjali system, but the monists do not accept this transcendental pleasure out of fear of jeopardizing the theory of oneness. The duality of knowledge and knower is not accepted by the nondualist, but in this verse transcendental pleasure-realized through transcendental senses-is accepted. And this is corroborated by the Patañjali Muni, the famous exponent of the *yoga* system. The great sage declares in his *Yoga-sūtras*: *puruṣārtha-śūnyānām guṇānām pratiprasavaḥ kaivalyam svarūpa-pratiṣṭhā vā citi-śaktir iti*.

This *citi-śakti*, or internal potency, is transcendental. *Puruṣārtha* means material religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and, at the end, the attempt to become one with the Supreme. This "oneness with the Supreme" is called *kaivalyam* by the monist. But according to Patañjali, this *kaivalyam* is an internal, or transcendental, potency by which the living entity becomes aware of his constitutional position. In the words of Lord Caitanya, this state of affairs is called *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam*, or clearance of the impure mirror of the mind. This "clearance" is actually liberation, or *bhava-mahādāvāgni-nirvāṇam*. The theory of *nirvāṇa*-also preliminary-corresponds with this principle. In the *Bhāgavatam* this is called *svarūpeṇa vyavasthitiḥ*. The *Bhagavad-gītā* also confirms this situation in this verse.

After *nirvāṇa*, or material cessation, there is the manifestation of spiritual activities, or devotional service of the Lord, known as Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In the words of the *Bhāgavatam*, *svarūpeṇa vyavasthitiḥ*: this is the "real life of the living entity." *Māyā*, or illusion, is the condition of spiritual life contaminated by material infection. Liberation from this material infection does not mean destruction of the original eternal position of the living entity. Patañjali also accepts this by his words *kaivalyam svarūpa-pratiṣṭhā vā citi-śaktir iti*. This *citi-śakti* or transcendental pleasure, is real life. This is confirmed in the *Vedānta-sūtras* as *ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt*. This natural transcendental pleasure is the ultimate goal of *yoga* and is easily achieved by execution of devotional service, or *bhakti-yoga*. *Bhaktiyoga* will be vividly described in the Seventh Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

In the *yoga* system, as described in this chapter, there are two kinds of *samādhi*, called *samprajñāta-samādhi* and *asamprajñāta-samādhi*. When

one becomes situated in the transcendental position by various philosophical researches, it is called *samprajñāta-samādhi*. In the *asamprajñāta-samādhi* there is no longer any connection with mundane pleasure, for one is then transcendental to all sorts of happiness derived from the senses. When the *yogī* is once situated in that transcendental position, he is never shaken from it. Unless the *yogī* is able to reach this position, he is unsuccessful. Today's so-called *yoga* practice, which involves various sense pleasures, is contradictory. A *yogī* indulging in sex and intoxication is a mockery. Even those *yogīs* who are attracted by the *siddhis* (perfections) in the process of *yoga* are not perfectly situated. If the *yogīs* are attracted by the by-products of *yoga*, then they cannot attain the stage of perfection, as is stated in this verse. Persons, therefore, indulging in the make-show practice of gymnastic feats or *siddhis* should know that the aim of *yoga* is lost in that way.

The best practice of *yoga* in this age is Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is not baffling. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person is so happy in his occupation that he does not aspire after any other happiness. There are many impediments, especially in this age of hypocrisy, to practicing *haṭha-yoga*, *dhyāna-yoga*, and *jñāna-yoga*, but there is no such problem in executing *karma-yoga* or *bhakti-yoga*.

As long as the material body exists, one has to meet the demands of the body, namely eating, sleeping, defending and mating. But a person who is in pure *bhakti-yoga* or in Kṛṣṇa consciousness does not arouse the senses while meeting the demands of the body. Rather, he accepts the bare necessities of life, making the best use of a bad bargain, and enjoys transcendental happiness in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He is callous toward incidental occurrences-such as accidents, disease, scarcity and even the death of a most dear relative-but he is always alert to execute his duties in Kṛṣṇa consciousness or *bhakti-yoga*. Accidents never deviate him from his duty. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *āgamāpāyino 'nityās tāms titikṣasva bhārata*. He endures all such incidental occurrences because he knows that they come and go and do not affect his duties. In this way he achieves the highest perfection in *yoga* practice.

TEXT 24

*sa niścayena yuktavyo
yogo 'nirviṇṇa-cetasā
saṅkalpa-prabhavān kāmāms
tyaktvā sarvān aśeṣataḥ
manasaivendriya-grāmam
viniyamya samantataḥ*

SYNONYMS

saḥ-that yoga system; *niścayena*-with firm determination; *yuktavyaḥ*-must be practiced; *yogaḥ*-in such practice; *anirviṇṇa-cetasā*-without deviation; *saṅkalpa*-material desires; *prabhavān*-born of; *kāmān*-sense gratification; *tyaktvā*-giving up; *sarvān*-all; *aśeṣataḥ*-completely; *manasā*-by the mind; *eva*-certainly; *indriya-grāmam*-the full set of senses; *viniyamya*-regulating; *samantataḥ*-from all sides.

TRANSLATION

One should engage oneself in the practice of yoga with undeviating determination and faith. One should abandon, without exception, all material desires born of false ego and thus control all the senses on all sides by the mind.

PURPORT

The *yoga* practitioner should be determined and should patiently prosecute the practice without deviation. One should be sure of success at the end and pursue this course with great perserverance, not becoming discouraged if there is any delay in the attainment of success. Success is sure for the rigid practitioner. Regarding *bhakti-yoga*, Rupa Gosvāmī says:

*utsāhān niścayād dhairyāt tat tat karma-pravartanāt
saṅga-tyāgāt satovṛtteḥ ṣaḍbhir bhaktiḥ prasidhyati*

"The process of *bhakti-yoga* can be executed successfully with full-hearted enthusiasm, perseverance, and determination by following the prescribed

duties in the association of devotees and by engaging completely in activities of goodness."

As for determination, one should follow the example of the sparrow who lost her eggs in the waves of the ocean. A sparrow laid her eggs on the shore of the ocean, but the big ocean carried away the eggs on its waves. The sparrow became very upset and asked the ocean to return her eggs. The ocean did not even consider her appeal. So the sparrow decided to dry up the ocean. She began to pick out the water in her small beak, and everyone laughed at her for her impossible determination. The news of her activity spread, and at last Garuḍa, the gigantic bird carrier of Lord Viṣṇu, heard it. He became compassionate toward his small sister bird, and so he came to see the sparrow. Garuḍa was very pleased by the determination of the small sparrow, and he promised to help. Thus Garuḍa at once asked the ocean to return her eggs lest he himself take up the work of the sparrow. The ocean was frightened at this, and returned the eggs. Thus the sparrow became happy by the grace of Garuḍa.

Similarly, the practice of *yoga*, especially *bhakti-yoga* in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, may appear to be a very difficult job. But if anyone follows the principles with great determination, the Lord will surely help, for God helps those who help themselves.

TEXT 25

*śanaiḥ śanair upamed
buddhyā dhṛti-grhītayā
ātma-saṁsthāṁ manaḥ kṛtvā
na kiñcid api cintayet*

SYNONYMS

śanaiḥ-gradually; *śanaiḥ*-step by step; *upamet*-hesitated; *buddhyā*-by intelligence; *dhṛti-grhītayā*-carrying the conviction; *ātma-saṁsthāṁ*-placed in transcendence; *manaḥ*-mind; *kṛtvā*-doing so; *na*-nothing; *kiñcit*-anything else; *api*-even; *cintayet*-be thinking of.

TRANSLATION

Gradually, step by step, with full conviction, one should become situated in trance by means of intelligence, and thus the mind should be fixed on the Self alone and should think of nothing else.

PURPORT

By proper conviction and intelligence one should gradually cease sense activities. This is called *pratyāhāra*. The mind, being controlled by conviction, meditation, and cessation of the senses, should be situated in trance, or *samādhi*. At that time there is no longer any danger of becoming engaged in the material conception of life. In other words, although one is involved with matter as long as the material body exists, one should not think about sense gratification. One should think of no pleasure aside from the pleasure of the Supreme Self. This state is easily attained by directly practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 26

*yato yato niścalati
manaś cañcalam asthiram
tatas tato niyamyaitad
ātmany eva vaśam nayet*

SYNONYMS

yataḥ-whatever; *yataḥ*-wherever; *niścalati*-verily agitated; *manaḥ*-the mind; *cañcalam*-flickering; *asthiram*-unsteady; *tataḥ*-from there; *tataḥ*-and thereafter; *niyamyā*-regulating; *etat*-this; *ātmani*-in the self; *eva*-certainly; *vaśam*-control; *nayet*-must bring in.

TRANSLATION

From whatever and wherever the mind wanders due to its flickering and unsteady nature, one must certainly withdraw it and bring it back under the control of the Self.

PURPORT

The nature of the mind is flickering and unsteady. But a self-realized *yogī* has to control the mind; the mind should not control him. One who controls the mind (and therefore the senses as well) is called *gosvāmī*, or *svāmī*, and one who is controlled by the mind is called *godāsa*, or the servant of the senses. A *gosvāmī* knows the standard of sense happiness. In transcendental sense happiness, the senses are engaged in the service of Hṛṣīkeśa or the supreme owner of the senses-Kṛṣṇa. Serving Kṛṣṇa with purified senses is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is the way of bringing the senses under full control. What is more, that is the highest perfection of *yoga* practice.

TEXT 27

*praśānta-manasaṁ hy enam
yoginam sukham uttamam
upaiti śānta-rajasaṁ
brahma-bhūtam akalmaṣam*

SYNONYMS

praśānta-mind fixed on the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa; *manasaṁ*-of one whose mind is so fixed; *hi*-certainly; *enam*-this; *yoginam*-the *yogī*; *sukham*-happiness; *uttamam*-the highest; *upaiti*-attains; *śānta-rajasaṁ*-pacified passion; *brahma-bhūtam*-liberated by identification with the Absolute; *akalmaṣam*-freed from all past sinful reaction.

TRANSLATION

The *yogī* whose mind is fixed on Me verily attains the highest happiness. By virtue of his identity with Brahman, he is liberated; his mind is peaceful, his passions are quieted, and he is freed from sin.

PURPORT

Brahma-bhūta is the state of being free from material contamination and situated in the transcendental service of the Lord. *Mad-bhaktim labhate parām* (Bg. 18.54). One cannot remain in the quality of Brahman, the

Absolute, until one's mind is fixed on the lotus feet of the Lord. *Sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayoḥ*. To be always engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, or to remain in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is to be factually liberated from the mode of passion and all material contamination.

TEXT 28

*yuñjann evaṁ sadātmānam
yogī vigata-kalmaṣaḥ
sukhena brahma-saṁsparśam
atyantam sukham aśnute*

SYNONYMS

yuñjan-thus being engaged in *yoga* practice; *evam*-thus; *sadā*-always; *ātmānam*-self; *yogī*-one who is in touch with the Supreme Self; *vigata*-is freed from; *kalmaṣaḥ*-all material contamination; *sukhena*-in transcendental happiness; *brahma-saṁsparśam*-being in constant touch with the Supreme; *atyantam*-highest; *sukham*-happiness; *aśnute*-attains.

TRANSLATION

Steady in the Self, being freed from all material contamination, the yogī achieves the highest perfectional stage of happiness in touch with the Supreme Consciousness.

PURPORT

Self-realization means knowing one's constitutional position in relationship to the Supreme. The individual soul is part and parcel of the Supreme, and his position is to render transcendental service to the Lord. This transcendental contact with the Supreme is called *brahma-saṁsparśa*.

TEXT 29

*sarva-bhūta-stham ātmānam
sarva-bhūtāni cātmani*

*īkṣate yoga-yuktātmā
sarvatra sama-darśanaḥ*

SYNONYMS

sarva-bhūta-stham-situated in all beings; *ātmānam*-the Supersoul; *sarva*-all; *bhūtāni*-entities; *ca*-also; *ātmani*-in the Self; *īkṣate*-does see; *yoga-yukta-ātmā*-one who is dovetailed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *sarvatra*-everywhere; *sama-darśanaḥ*-seeing equally.

TRANSLATION

A true yogī observes Me in all beings, and also sees every being in Me. Indeed, the self-realized man sees Me everywhere.

PURPORT

A Kṛṣṇa conscious *yogī* is the perfect seer because he sees Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme, situated in everyone's heart as Supersoul (Paramātmā). *Īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṃ hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati*. The Lord in His Paramātmā feature is situated within both the heart of the dog and that of a *brāhmaṇa*. The perfect *yogī* knows that the Lord is eternally transcendental and is not materially affected by His presence in either a dog or a *brāhmaṇa*. That is the supreme neutrality of the Lord. The individual soul is also situated in the individual heart, but he is not present in all hearts. That is the distinction between the individual soul and the Supersoul. One who is not factually in the practice of *yoga* cannot see so clearly. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person can see Kṛṣṇa in the heart of both the believer and nonbeliever. In the *smṛti* this is confirmed as follows: *ātatatvāc ca mātrtvād ātmā hi paramo hariḥ*.

The Lord, being the source of all beings, is like the mother and the maintainer. As the mother is neutral to all different kinds of children, the Supreme Father (or Mother) is also. Consequently the Supersoul is always in every living being. Outwardly, also, every living being is situated in the energy of the Lord. As will be explained in the Seventh Chapter, the Lord has, primarily, two energies-the spiritual (or superior) and the material (or inferior). The living entity, although part of the superior energy, is conditioned by the inferior energy; the living entity is always in the Lord's

energy. Every living entity is situated in Him in one way or another. The *yogī* sees equally because he sees that all living entities, although in different situations according to the results of fruitive work, in all circumstances remain the servants of God. While in the material energy, the living entity serves the material senses; and while in spiritual energy, he serves the Supreme Lord directly. In either case the living entity is the servant of God. This vision of equality is perfect in a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 30

*yo mām paśyati sarvatra
sarvaṁ ca mayi paśyati
tasyāhaṁ na praṇaśyāmi
sa ca me na praṇaśyati*

SYNONYMS

yaḥ-whoever; *mām*-Me; *paśyati*-sees; *sarvatra*-everywhere; *sarvaṁ*-everything; *ca*-and; *mayi*-in Me; *paśyati*-he sees; *tasya*-his; *aham*-I; *na*-not; *praṇaśyāmi*-am lost; *saḥ*-he; *ca*-also; *me*-to Me; *na*-nor; *praṇaśyati*-is lost.

TRANSLATION

For one who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, I am never lost, nor is he ever lost to Me.

PURPORT

A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness certainly sees Lord Kṛṣṇa everywhere, and he sees everything in Kṛṣṇa. Such a person may appear to see all separate manifestations of the material nature, but in each and every instance he is conscious of Kṛṣṇa, knowing that everything is the manifestation of Kṛṣṇa's energy. Nothing can exist without Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of everything-this is the basic principle of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the development of love of Kṛṣṇa—a position transcendental even to material liberation. It is the stage beyond self-realization at which the devotee becomes one with Kṛṣṇa in the sense that Kṛṣṇa becomes everything for the devotee, and the devotee becomes full in loving Kṛṣṇa. An intimate relationship between the Lord and the devotee then exists. In that stage, the living entity attains his immortality. Nor is the Personality of Godhead ever out of the sight of the devotee. To merge in Kṛṣṇa is spiritual annihilation. A devotee takes no such risk. It is stated in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*:

*premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena
santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti
yaṁ śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

"I worship the primeval Lord, Govinda, who is always seen by the devotee whose eyes are anointed with the pulp of love. He is seen in His eternal form of Śyāmasundara situated within the heart of the devotee." (Bs. 5.38)

At this stage, Lord Kṛṣṇa never disappears from the sight of the devotee, nor does the devotee ever lose sight of the Lord. In the case of a *yogī* who sees the Lord as Paramātmā within the heart, the same applies. Such a *yogī* turns into a pure devotee and cannot bear to live for a moment without seeing the Lord within himself.

TEXT 31

*sarva-bhūta-sthitam yo mām
bhajaty ekatvam āsthitaḥ
sarvathā vartamāno 'pi
sa yogī mayi vartate*

SYNONYMS

sarva-bhūta-sthitam—situated in everyone's heart; *yaḥ*—he who; *mām*—unto Me; *bhajati*—serves in devotional service; *ekatvam*—oneness; *āsthitaḥ*—thus situated; *sarvathā*—in all respects; *vartamānaḥ*—being situated; *api*—in spite of; *saḥ*—he; *yogī*—transcendentalist; *mayi*—unto Me; *vartate*—remains.

TRANSLATION

The yogī who knows that I and the Supersoul within all creatures are one worships Me and remains always in Me in all circumstances.

PURPORT

A *yogī* who is practicing meditation on the Supersoul sees within himself the plenary portion of Kṛṣṇa as Viṣṇu-with four hands, holding conchshell, wheel, club and lotus flower. The *yogī* should know that Viṣṇu is not different from Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa in this form of Supersoul is situated in everyone's heart. Furthermore, there is no difference between the innumerable Supersouls present in the innumerable hearts of living entities. Nor is there a difference between a Kṛṣṇa conscious person always engaged in the transcendental loving service of Kṛṣṇa and a perfect *yogī* engaged in meditation on the Supersoul. The *yogī* in Kṛṣṇa consciousness-even though he may be engaged in various activities while in material existence-remains always situated in Kṛṣṇa. This is confirmed in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī: *nikhileṣu avasthāsu jīvanmukta sa ucyate*. A devotee of the Lord, always acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is automatically liberated. In the *Nārada-pañcarātra* this is confirmed in this way:

*dik-kālādy-anavacchinne kṛṣṇe ceto vidhāya ca
tanmayo bhavati kṣipraṁ jīvo brahmaṇi yojayet.*

"By concentrating one's attention on the transcendental form of Kṛṣṇa, who is all-pervading and beyond time and space, one becomes absorbed in thinking of Kṛṣṇa and then attains the happy state of transcendental association with Him."

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the highest stage of trance in *yoga* practice. This very understanding that Kṛṣṇa is present as Paramātmā in everyone's heart makes the *yogī* faultless. The *Vedas* confirm this inconceivable potency of the Lord as follows:

*eko 'pi san bahudhā yo 'vabhāti
aiśvaryād rūpam ekaṁ ca sūryavad bahudheyate.*

"Viṣṇu is one, and yet He is certainly all-pervading. By His inconceivable potency, in spite of His one form, He is present everywhere. As the sun, He appears in many places at once."

TEXT 32

*ātmaupamyena sarvatra
samam paśyati yo 'rjuna
sukham vā yadi vā duḥkham
sa yogī paramo mataḥ*

SYNONYMS

ātma-self; *aupamyena*-by comparison; *sarvatra*-everywhere; *samam*-equality; *paśyati*-sees; *yaḥ*-he who; *arjuna*-O Arjuna; *sukham*-happiness; *vā*-or; *yadi*-if; *vā*-or; *duḥkham*-distress; *saḥ*-such; *yogī*-transcendentalist; *paramaḥ*-perfect; *mataḥ*-considered.

TRANSLATION

He is a perfect yogī who, by comparison to his own self, sees the true equality of all beings, both in their happiness and distress, O Arjuna!

PURPORT

One who is Kṛṣṇa conscious is a perfect *yogī*; he is aware of everyone's happiness and distress by dint of his own personal experience. The cause of the distress of a living entity is forgetfulness of his relationship with God. And the cause of happiness is knowing Kṛṣṇa to be the supreme enjoyer of all the activities of the human being. Kṛṣṇa is the proprietor of all lands and planets. The perfect *yogī* is the sincerest friend of all living entities. He knows that the living being who is conditioned by the modes of material nature is subjected to the threefold material miseries due to forgetfulness of his relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Because one in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is happy, he tries to distribute the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa everywhere. Since the perfect *yogī* tries to broadcast the importance of becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious, he is the best philanthropist in the world, and he is the dearest servitor of the

Lord. *Na tasmāt kaścīd me priyakṛt tamaḥ*. In other words, a devotee of the Lord always looks to the welfare of all living entities, and in this way he is factually the friend of everyone. He is the best *yogī* because he does not desire perfection in *yoga* for his personal benefit, but tries for others also. He does not envy his fellow living entities. Here is a contrast between a pure devotee of the Lord and a *yogī* interested only in his personal elevation. The *yogī* who has withdrawn to a secluded place in order to meditate perfectly may not be as perfect as a devotee who is trying his best to turn every man toward Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 33

arjuna uvāca
yo 'yaṁ yogas tvayā proktaḥ
sāmyena madhusūdana
etasyāhaṁ na paśyāmi
cañcalatvāt sthitim sthirām

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca-Arjuna said; *yaḥ*-the system; *ayaṁ*-this; *yogaḥ*-mysticism; *tvayā*-by You; *proktaḥ*-described; *sāmyena*-generally; *madhusūdana*-O killer of the demon Madhu; *etasya*-of this; *ahaṁ*-I; *na*-do not; *paśyāmi*-see; *cañcalatvāt*-due to being restless; *sthitim*-situation; *sthirām*-stable.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O Madhusūdana, the system of yoga which you have summarized appears impractical and unendurable to me, for the mind is restless and unsteady.

PURPORT

The system of mysticism described by Lord Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna beginning with the words *śucau deśe* and ending with *yogī paramaḥ* is here being rejected by Arjuna out of a feeling of inability. It is not possible for an ordinary man to leave home and go to a secluded place in the mountains or

jungles to practice *yoga* in this age of Kali. The present age is characterized by a bitter struggle for a life of short duration. People are not serious about self-realization even by simple, practical means, and what to speak of this difficult *yoga* system, which regulates the mode of living, the manner of sitting, selection of place, and detachment of the mind from material engagements. As a practical man, Arjuna thought it was impossible to follow this system of *yoga*, even though he was favorably endowed in many ways. He belonged to the royal family and was highly elevated in terms of numerous qualities; he was a great warrior, he had great longevity, and, above all, he was the most intimate friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Five thousand years ago, Arjuna had much better facilities than we do now, yet he refused to accept this system of *yoga*. In fact, we do not find any record in history of his practicing it at any time. Therefore this system must be considered generally impossible in this age of Kali. Of course it may be possible for some very few, rare men, but for the people in general it is an impossible proposal. If this were so five thousand years ago, then what of the present day? Those who are imitating this *yoga* system in different so-called schools and societies, although complacent, are certainly wasting their time. They are completely in ignorance of the desired goal.

TEXT 34

*cañcalam hi manah kṛṣṇa
pramāthi balavad dṛḍham
tasyāham nigraham manye
vāyor iva su-duṣkaram*

SYNONYMS

cañcalam-flickering; *hi*-certainly; *manah*-mind; *kṛṣṇa*-O Kṛṣṇa; *pramāthi*-agitating; *balavat*-strong; *dṛḍham*-obstinate; *tasya*-its; *aham*-I; *nigraham*-subduing; *manye*-think; *vāyoḥ*-of the wind; *iva*-like; *suduṣkaram*-difficult.

TRANSLATION

For the mind is restless, turbulent, obstinate and very strong, O Kṛṣṇa, and to subdue it is, it seems to me, more difficult than controlling the wind.

PURPORT

The mind is so strong and obstinate that it sometimes overcomes the intelligence, although mind is supposed to be subservient to the intelligence. For a man in the practical world who has to fight so many opposing elements, it is certainly very difficult to control the mind. Artificially, one may establish a mental equilibrium toward both friend and enemy, but ultimately no worldly man can do so, for this is more difficult than controlling the raging wind. In the Vedic literatures it is said:

*ātmānam rathinam viddhi śarīram ratham eva ca
buddhintu sārathim viddhi manaḥ pragraham eva ca
indriyāṇi hayānāhur viṣayāms teṣu gocarān
ātmendriya-mano-yukto bhoktety āhur manīṣiṇaḥ.*

"The individual is the passenger in the car of the material body, and intelligence is the driver. Mind is the driving instrument, and the senses are the horses. The self is thus the enjoyer or sufferer in the association of the mind and senses. So it is understood by great thinkers." Intelligence is supposed to direct the mind, but the mind is so strong and obstinate that it often overcomes even one's own intelligence. Such a strong mind is supposed to be controlled by the practice of *yoga*, but such practice is never practical for a worldly person like Arjuna. And what can we say of modern man? The simile used here is appropriate: one cannot capture the blowing wind. And it is even more difficult to capture the turbulent mind. The easiest way to control the mind, as suggested by Lord Caitanya, is chanting "Hare Kṛṣṇa," the great *mantra* for deliverance, in all humility. The method prescribed is *sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayoḥ*: one must engage one's mind fully in Kṛṣṇa. Only then will there remain no other engagements to agitate the mind.

TEXT 35

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
asamśayaṁ mahā-bāho
mano durnigrahaṁ calam
abhyāsenā tu kaunteya
vairāgyeṇa ca grhyate*

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Personality of Godhead said; *asamśayaṁ*-undoubtedly; *mahā-bāho*-O mighty-armed one; *manaḥ*-mind; *durnigrahaṁ*-difficult to curb; *calam*-flickering; *abhyāsenā*-by practice; *tu*-but; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *vairāgyeṇa*-by detachment; *ca*-also; *grhyate*-can be so controlled.

TRANSLATION

The Blessed Lord said: O mighty-armed son of Kuntī, it is undoubtedly very difficult to curb the restless mind, but it is possible by constant practice and by detachment.

PURPORT

The difficulty of controlling the obstinate mind, as expressed by Arjuna, is accepted by the Personality of Godhead. But at the same time He suggests that by practice and detachment it is possible. What is that practice? In the present age no one can observe strict rules and regulations, such as placing oneself in a sacred place, focusing the mind on the Supersoul, restraining the senses and mind, observing celibacy, remaining alone, etc. By the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, one engages in nine types of devotional service to the Lord. The first and foremost of such devotional engagements is hearing about Kṛṣṇa. This is a very powerful transcendental method for purging the mind of all misgivings. The more one hears about Kṛṣṇa, the more one becomes enlightened and detached from everything that draws the mind away from Kṛṣṇa. By detaching the mind from activities not devoted to the Lord, one can very easily learn *vairāgya*. *Vairāgya* means detachment from matter and engagement of the mind in spirit. Impersonal spiritual detachment is more difficult than

attaching the mind to the activities of Kṛṣṇa. This is practical because by hearing about Kṛṣṇa one becomes automatically attached to the Supreme Spirit. This attachment is called *pareśānubhūti* spiritual satisfaction. It is just like the feeling of satisfaction a hungry man has for every morsel of food he eats. Similarly, by discharge of devotional service, one feels transcendental satisfaction as the mind becomes detached from material objectives. It is something like curing a disease by expert treatment and appropriate diet. Hearing of the transcendental activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa is therefore expert treatment for the mad mind, and eating the foodstuff offered to Kṛṣṇa is the appropriate diet for the suffering patient. This treatment is the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 36

*asam̐yatātmanā yogo
duṣprāpa iti me matiḥ
vaśyātmanā tu yatatā
śakyo 'vāptum upāyataḥ*

SYNONYMS

asam̐yata-unbridled; *ātmanā*-by the mind; *yogaḥ*-self-realization; *duṣprāpaḥ*-difficult to obtain; *iti*-thus; *me*-My; *matiḥ*-opinion; *vaśya*-controlled; *ātmanā*-by the mind; *tu*-but; *yatatā*-while endeavoring; *śakyaḥ*-practical; *avāptum*-to achieve; *upāyataḥ*-appropriate means.

TRANSLATION

For one whose mind is unbridled, self-realization is difficult work. But he whose mind is controlled and who strives by right means is assured of success. That is My opinion.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead declares that one who does not accept the proper treatment to detach the mind from material engagement can hardly achieve success in self-realization. Trying to practice *yoga* while

engaging the mind in material enjoyment is like trying to ignite a fire while pouring water on it. Similarly, *yoga* practice without mental control is a waste of time. Such a show of *yoga* practice may be materially lucrative, but it is useless as far as spiritual realization is concerned. Therefore, the mind must be controlled by engaging it constantly in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. Unless one is engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he cannot steadily control the mind. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person easily achieves the result of *yoga* practice without separate endeavor, but a *yoga* practitioner cannot achieve success without becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious.

TEXT 37

arjuna uvāca
ayatiḥ śraddhayopeto
yogāc calita-mānasaḥ
aprāpya yoga-saṁsiddhiṁ
kām gatiṁ kṛṣṇa gacchati

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca-Arjuna said; *ayatiḥ*-unsuccessful transcendentalist; *śraddhayā*-with faith; *upetaḥ*-engaged; *yogāt*-from the mystic link; *calita*-deviated; *mānasaḥ*-of one who has such a mind; *aprāpya*-failing; *yoga-saṁsiddhiṁ*-highest perfection in mysticism; *kām*-which; *gatiṁ*-destination; *kṛṣṇa*-O Kṛṣṇa; *gacchati*-achieves.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: What is the destination of the man of faith who does not persevere, who in the beginning takes to the process of self-realization but who later desists due to worldly-mindedness and thus does not attain perfection in mysticism?

PURPORT

The path of self-realization or mysticism is described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The basic principle of self-realization is knowledge that the living

entity is not this material body but that he is different from it and that his happiness is in eternal life, bliss and knowledge. These are transcendental, beyond both body and mind. Self-realization is sought by the path of knowledge, the practice of the eightfold system or by *bhakti-yoga*. In each of these processes one has to realize the constitutional position of the living entity, his relationship with God, and the activities whereby he can reestablish the lost link and achieve the highest perfectional stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Following any of the above-mentioned three methods, one is sure to reach the supreme goal sooner or later. This was asserted by the Lord in the Second Chapter: even a little endeavor on the transcendental path offers a great hope for deliverance. Out of these three methods, the path of *bhakti-yoga* is especially suitable for this age because it is the most direct method of God realization. To be doubly assured, Arjuna is asking Lord Kṛṣṇa to confirm His former statement. One may sincerely accept the path of self-realization, but the process of cultivation of knowledge and the practice of the eightfold *yoga* system are generally very difficult for this age. Therefore, despite constant endeavor, one may fail for many reasons. First of all, one may not be following the process. To pursue the transcendental path is more or less to declare war on illusory energy. Consequently, whenever a person tries to escape the clutches of the illusory energy, she tries to defeat the practitioner by various allurements. A conditioned soul is already allured by the modes of material energy, and there is every chance of being allured again, even while performing transcendental disciplines. This is called *yogāt calita-mānasaḥ*: deviation from the transcendental path. Arjuna is inquisitive to know the results of deviation from the path of self-realization.

TEXT 38

*kaccin nobhaya-vibhraṣṭaś
chinnābhram iva naśyati
apraṭiṣṭho mahā-bāho
vimūḍho brahmaṇaḥ pathi*

SYNONYMS

kaccit-whether; *na*-not; *ubhaya*-both; *vibhraṣṭaḥ*-deviated from; *chinna*-fallen; *abhram*-cloud; *iva*-likened; *naśyati*-perishes; *apratiṣṭhaḥ*-without any position; *mahā-bāho*-O mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa; *vimūḍhaḥ*-bewildered; *brahmaṇaḥ*-of Transcendence; *pathi*-on the path.

TRANSLATION

O mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa, does not such a man, being deviated from the path of Transcendence, perish like a riven cloud, with no position in any sphere?

PURPORT

There are two ways to progress. Those who are materialists have no interest in Transcendence; therefore they are more interested in material advancement by economic development, or in promotion to the higher planets by appropriate work. When one takes to the path of Transcendence, one has to cease all material activities and sacrifice all forms of so-called material happiness. If the aspiring transcendentalist fails, then he apparently loses both ways; in other words, he can enjoy neither material happiness nor spiritual success. He has no position; he is like a riven cloud. A cloud in the sky sometimes deviates from a small cloud and joins a big one. But if it cannot join a big one, then it is blown away by the wind and becomes a nonentity in the vast sky. The *brahmaṇaḥ pathi* is the path of transcendental realization through knowing oneself to be spiritual in essence, part and parcel of the Supreme Lord who is manifested as Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the fullest manifestation of the Supreme Absolute Truth, and therefore one who is surrendered to the Supreme Person is a successful transcendentalist. To reach this goal of life through Brahman and Paramātmā realization takes many, many births: *Bahūnām janmanām ante*. Therefore the supermost of transcendental realization is *bhakti-yoga* or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the direct method.

TEXT 39

*etan me saṁśayaṁ kṛṣṇa
chettum arhasy aśeṣataḥ*

*tvad-anyaḥ saṁśayasyāśya
chettā na hy upapadyate*

SYNONYMS

etat-this is; *me*-my; *saṁśayam*-doubt; *kṛṣṇa*-O Kṛṣṇa; *chettum*-to dispel; *arhasi*-requested to do; *aśeṣataḥ*-completely; *tvat*-Yourself; *anyaḥ*-without; *saṁśayāśya*-of the doubt; *asya*-of this; *chettā*-remover; *na*-never; *hi*-certainly; *upapadyate*-to be found.

TRANSLATION

This is my doubt O Kṛṣṇa, and I ask You to dispel it completely. But for Yourself, no one is to be found who can destroy this doubt.

PURPORT

Kṛṣṇa is the perfect knower of past, present and future. In the beginning of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Lord said that all living entities exist individually in the past, that they exist now in the present, and that they continue to retain individual identity in the future, even after liberation from the material entanglement. So He has already cleared up the question of the future of the individual living entity. Now, Arjuna wants to know of the future of the unsuccessful transcendentalist. No one is equal to or above Kṛṣṇa, and certainly the so-called great sages and philosophers who are at the mercy of material nature cannot equal Him. Therefore the verdict of Kṛṣṇa is the final and complete answer to all doubts because He knows past, present and future perfectly-but no one knows Him. Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees alone can know what is what.

TEXT 40

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
pārtha naiveha nāmutra
vināśas tasya vidyate
na hi kalyāṇa-kṛt kaścid
durgatiṁ tāta gacchati*

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *pārtha*-O son of Prthā; *na eva*-never is it so; *iha*-in this material world; *na*-never; *amutra*-in the next life; *vināśaḥ*-destruction; *tasya*-his; *vidyate*-exists; *na*-never; *hi*-certainly; *kalyāṇa-kṛt*-one who is engaged in auspicious activities; *kaścit*-anyone; *durgatim*-degradation; *tāta*-thereafter; *gacchati*-going.

TRANSLATION

The Blessed Lord said: Son of Pṛthā, a transcendentalist engaged in auspicious activities does not meet with destruction either in this world or in the spiritual world; one who does good, My friend, is never overcome by evil.

PURPORT

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.17) Śrī Nārada Muni instructs Vyāsadeva as follows:

*tyaktvā sva-dharmam caraṇāmbujam harer
bhajann apakko 'tha patet tato yadi
yatra kva vābhadram abhūd amuṣya kim
ko vārtha āpto 'bhajatām sva-dharmataḥ*

"If someone gives up all material prospects and takes complete shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no loss or degradation in any way. On the other hand a nondevotee may fully engage in his occupational duties and yet not gain anything." For material prospects, there are many activities both scriptural and customary. A transcendentalist is supposed to give up all material activities for the sake of spiritual advancement in life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One may argue that by Kṛṣṇa consciousness one may attain the highest perfection if it is completed, but if one does not attain such a perfectional stage, then he loses both materially and spiritually. It is enjoined in the scriptures that one has to suffer the reaction of not executing prescribed duties; therefore one who fails to discharge transcendental activities properly becomes subjected to these reactions. The *Bhāgavatam* assures the unsuccessful transcendentalist that there need be no worries.

Even though he may be subjected to the reaction of not perfectly executing prescribed duties, he is still not a loser, because auspicious Kṛṣṇa consciousness is never forgotten, and one so engaged will continue to be so even if he is lowborn in the next life. On the other hand, one who simply follows strictly the prescribed duties need not necessarily attain auspicious results if he is lacking in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The purport may be understood as follows: humanity may be divided into two sections, namely, the regulated and the nonregulated. Those who are engaged simply in bestial sense gratifications without knowledge of their next life or spiritual salvation belong to the nonregulated section. And those who follow the principles of prescribed duties in the scriptures are classified amongst the regulated section. The nonregulated section, both civilized and noncivilized, educated and noneducated, strong and weak, are full of animal propensities. Their activities are never auspicious because, enjoying the animal propensities of eating, sleeping, defending and mating, they perpetually remain in material existence, which is always miserable. On the other hand, those who are regulated by scriptural injunctions and thus gradually rise to Kṛṣṇa consciousness certainly progress in life.

Those who are then following the path of auspiciousness can be divided into three sections, namely, 1) the followers of scriptural rules and regulations who are enjoying material prosperity, 2) those who are trying to find out the ultimate liberation from material existence, and 3) those who are devotees in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Those who are following the rules and regulations of the scriptures for material happiness may be further divided into two classes: those who are fruitive workers and those who desire no fruit for sense gratification. Those who are after fruitive results for sense gratification may be elevated to a higher standard of life—even to the higher planets; but still, because they are not free from material existence, they are not following the truly auspicious path. The only auspicious activities are those which lead one to liberation. Any activity which is not aimed at ultimate self-realization or liberation from the material bodily concept of life is not at all auspicious. Activity in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the only auspicious activity, and anyone who voluntarily accepts all bodily discomforts for the sake of making progress on the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be called a perfect transcendentalist under severe

austerity. And because the eightfold *yoga* system is directed toward the ultimate realization of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, such practice is also auspicious, and no one who is trying his best in this matter need fear degradation.

TEXT 41

*prāpya puṇya-kṛtām lokān
uṣitvā śāśvatīḥ samāḥ
śucīnām śrīmatām gehe
yoga-bhraṣṭo 'bhijāyate*

SYNONYMS

prāpya-after achieving; *puṇya-kṛtām*-of those who performed pious activities; *lokān*-planets; *uṣitvā*-after dwelling; *śāśvatīḥ*-many; *samāḥ*-years; *śucīnām*-of the pious; *śrīmatām*-of the prosperous; *gehe*-in the house of; *yoga-bhraṣṭaḥ*-one who is fallen from the path of self-realization; *abhi-jāyate*-takes his birth.

TRANSLATION

The unsuccessful yogī, after many, many years of enjoyment on the planets of the pious living entities, is born into a family of righteous people, or into a family of rich aristocracy.

PURPORT

The unsuccessful *yogīs* are divided into two classes: one is fallen after very little progress, and one is fallen after long practice of *yoga*. The *yogī* who falls after a short period of practice goes to the higher planets where pious living entities are allowed to enter. After prolonged life there, he is sent back again to this planet, to take birth in the family of a righteous *brāhmaṇa vaiṣṇava* or of aristocratic merchants.

The real purpose of *yoga* practice is to achieve the highest perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But those who do not persevere to such an extent and fail due to material allurements are allowed, by the grace of the Lord, to

make full utilization of their material propensities. And after that, they are given opportunities to live prosperous lives in righteous or aristocratic families. Those who are born in such families may take advantage of the facilities and try to elevate themselves to full Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 42

*atha vā yoginām eva
kule bhavati dhīmatām
etat dhi durlabhataram
loke janma yad īdṛśam*

SYNONYMS

athavā-or; *yoginām*-of learned transcendentalists; *eva*-certainly; *kule*-in the family of; *bhavati*-takes birth; *dhīmatām*-of those who are endowed with great wisdom; *etat*-this; *hi*-certainly; *durlabhataram*-very rare; *loke*-in this world; *janma*-birth; *yad*-that which; *īdṛśam*-like this.

TRANSLATION

Or he takes his birth in a family of transcendentalists who are surely great in wisdom. Verily, such a birth is rare in this world.

PURPORT

Birth in a family of *yogīs* or transcendentalists-those with great wisdom-is praised herein because the child born in such a family receives spiritual impetus from the very beginning of his life. It is especially the case in the *ācārya* or *gosvāmī* families. Such families are very learned and devoted by tradition and training, and thus they become spiritual masters. In India there are many such *ācārya* families, but they have now degenerated due to insufficient education and training. By the grace of the Lord, there are still families that foster transcendentalists generation after generation. It is certainly very fortunate to take birth in such families. Fortunately, both our spiritual master, Oṃ Viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and our humble self, had the opportunity to take birth in

such families, by the grace of the Lord, and both of us were trained in the devotional service of the Lord from the very beginning of our lives. Later on we met by the order of the transcendental system.

TEXT 43

*tatra tam buddhi-saṁyogam
labhate paurva-dehikam
yatate ca tato bhūyaḥ
saṁsiddhau kuru-nandana*

SYNONYMS

tatra-thereupon; *tam*-that; *buddhi-saṁyogam*-revival of such consciousness; *labhate*-regains; *paurva*-previous; *dehikam*-bodily consciousness; *yatate*-endeavors; *ca*-also; *tataḥ*-thereafter; *bhūyaḥ*-again; *saṁsiddhau*-for perfection; *kuru-nandana*-O son of Kuru.

TRANSLATION

On taking such a birth, he again revives the divine consciousness of his previous life, and he tries to make further progress in order to achieve complete success, O son of Kuru.

PURPORT

King Bharata, who took his third birth in the family of a good *brāhmaṇa*, is an example of good birth for the revival of previous transcendental consciousness. King Bharata was the Emperor of the world, and since his time this planet is known among the demigods as Bhāratavarṣa. Formerly it was known as Ilāvartavarṣa. The Emperor, at an early age, retired for spiritual perfection but failed to achieve success. In his next life he took birth in the family of a good *brāhmaṇa* and was known as Jaḍabharata because he always remained secluded and did not talk to anyone. And later on, he was discovered as the greatest transcendentalist by King Rahūgaṇa. From his life it is understood that transcendental endeavors, or the practice

of *yoga*, never go in vain. By the grace of the Lord the transcendentalist gets repeated opportunities for complete perfection in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 44

*pūrvābhyāsenā tenaiva
hriyate hy avaśo 'pi saḥ
jijñāsur api yogasya
śabda-brahmātivartate*

SYNONYMS

pūrvā-previous; *abhyāsenā*-practice; *tena*-by the influence of that; *eva*-certainly; *hriyate*-is attracted; *hi*-surely; *avaśaḥ*-helpless; *api*-also; *saḥ*-he; *jijñāsuḥ*-willing to know; *api*-so; *yogasya*-of *yoga*; *śabda-brahma*-ritualistic principles of scripture; *ativartate*-transcends.

TRANSLATION

By virtue of the divine consciousness of his previous life, he automatically becomes attracted to the yogic principles-even without seeking them. Such an inquisitive transcendentalist, striving for yoga, stands always above the ritualistic principles of the scriptures.

PURPORT

Advanced *yogīs* are not very much attracted to the rituals of the scriptures, but they automatically become attracted to the *yoga* principles, which can elevate them to complete Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the highest *yoga* perfection. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.33.8), such disregard of Vedic rituals by the advanced transcendentalists is explained as follows:

*aho bata śvapaco 'to garīyān
yajjihvāgre vartate nāma tubhyam
tepus tapas te juhuvuḥ sasnur āryā
brahmānūcur nāma grṇanti ye te.*

"O my Lord! Persons who chant the holy names of Your Lordship are far, far advanced in spiritual life, even if born in families of dog-eaters. Such chanters have undoubtedly performed all kinds of austerities and sacrifices, bathed in all sacred places, and finished all scriptural studies."

The famous example of this was presented by Lord Caitanya, who accepted Ṭhākura Haridāsa as one of His most important disciples. Although Ṭhākura Haridāsa happened to take his birth in a Moslem family, he was elevated to the post of *nāmācārya* by Lord Caitanya due to his rigidly attended principle of chanting three hundred thousand holy names of the Lord daily: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. And because he chanted the holy name of the Lord constantly, it is understood that in his previous life he must have passed through all the ritualistic methods of the *Vedas*, known as *śabda-brahman*. Unless, therefore, one is purified, one cannot take to the principle of Kṛṣṇa consciousness nor become engaged in chanting the holy name of the Lord, Hare Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 45

*prayatnād yatamānaḥ tu
yogī saṁśuddha-kilbiṣaḥ
aneka-janma-saṁsiddhaḥ
tato yāti parām gatim*

SYNONYMS

prayatnāt-by rigid practice; *yatamānaḥ*-one who endeavors; *tu*-but; *yogī*-such a transcendentalist; *saṁśuddha*-washed off; *kilbiṣaḥ*-all kinds of sins; *aneka*-many, many; *janma*-births; *saṁsiddhaḥ*-so achieved perfection; *tataḥ*-thereafter; *yāti*-attains; *parām*-highest; *gatim*-destination.

TRANSLATION

But when the yogī engages himself with sincere endeavor in making further progress, being washed of all contaminations, then ultimately, after many, many births of practice, he attains the supreme goal.

PURPORT

A person born in a particularly righteous, aristocratic or sacred family becomes conscious of his favorable condition for executing *yoga* practice. With determination, therefore, he begins his unfinished task, and thus he completely cleanses himself of all material contaminations. When he is finally free from all contaminations, he attains the supreme perfection-Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the perfect stage of being freed of all contaminations. This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*:

*yeṣāṁ tvanta-gataṁ pāpaṁ janānāṁ puṇya-karmaṇām
te dvandva-moha-nirmuktā bhajante mām dṛḍha-vratāḥ*

"After many, many births of executing pious activities, when one is completely freed from all contaminations, and from all illusory dualities, one then becomes engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord."

TEXT 46

*tapasvibhyo 'dhiko yogī
jñānibhyo 'pi mato 'dhikaḥ
karmibhyaś cādhiko yogī
tasmād yogī bhavārjuna*

SYNONYMS

tapasvibhyaḥ-than the ascetic; *adhikaḥ*-greater; *yogī*-the yogī; *jñānibhyaḥ*-than the wise; *api*-also; *mataḥ*-considered; *adhikaḥ*-greater than; *karmibhyaḥ*-than the fruitive worker; *ca*-also; *adhikaḥ*-greater than; *yogī*-the yogī; *tasmāt*-therefore; *yogī*-a transcendentalist; *bhava*-just become; *arjuna*-O Arjuna.

TRANSLATION

A yogī is greater than the ascetic, greater than the empiricist and greater than the fruitive worker. Therefore, O Arjuna, in all circumstances, be a yogī.

PURPORT

When we speak of *yoga* we refer to linking up our consciousness with the Supreme Absolute Truth. Such a process is named differently by various practitioners in terms of the particular method adopted. When the linking up process is predominantly in fruitive activities, it is called *karma-yoga*, when it is predominantly empirical, it is called *jñāna-yoga*, and when it is predominantly in a devotional relationship with the Supreme Lord, it is called *bhakti-yoga*. *Bhakti-yoga* or Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the ultimate perfection of all *yogas*, as will be explained in the next verse. The Lord has confirmed herein the superiority of *yoga*, but He has not mentioned that it is better than *bhakti-yoga*. *Bhakti-yoga* is full spiritual knowledge, and as such, nothing can excel it. Asceticism without self-knowledge is imperfect. Empiric knowledge without surrender to the Supreme Lord is also imperfect. And fruitive work without Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a waste of time. Therefore, the most highly praised form of *yoga* performance mentioned here is *bhakti-yoga*, and this is still more clearly explained in the next verse.

TEXT 47

*yoginām api sarveṣām
mad-gatenāntar-ātmanā
śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām
sa me yuktatamo mataḥ*

SYNONYMS

yoginām-of all *yogīs*; *api*-also; *sarveṣām*-all types of; *mat-gatena*-abiding in Me; *antaḥ-ātmanā*-always thinking of Me within; *śraddhāvān*-in full faith; *bhajate*-renders transcendental loving service; *yaḥ*-one who; *mām*-Me (the Supreme Lord); *saḥ*-he; *me*-Mine; *yuktatamaḥ*-the greatest *yogī*; *mataḥ*-is considered.

TRANSLATION

**And of all yogīs, he who always abides in Me with great faith,
worshiping Me in transcendental loving service, is most intimately
united with Me in yoga and is the highest of all.**

PURPORT

The word *bhajete* is significant here. *Bhajete* has its root in the verb *bhaj*, which is used when there is need of service. The English word "worship" cannot be used in the same sense as *bhaja*. Worship means to adore, or to show respect and honor to the worthy one. But service with love and faith is especially meant for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One can avoid worshiping a respectable man or a demigod and may be called discourteous, but one cannot avoid serving the Supreme Lord without being thoroughly condemned. Every living entity is part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus every living entity is intended to serve the Supreme Lord by his own constitution. Failing to do this, he falls down. The *Bhāgavatam* confirms this as follows:

*ya eṣāṁ puruṣaṁ sāksād ātma-prabhavam īśvaram
na bhajanty avajānanti sthānād bhraṣṭā patanty adhaḥ.*

"Anyone who does not render service and neglects his duty unto the Primeval Lord, who is the source of all living entities, will certainly fall down from his constitutional position."

In this verse also the word *bhajanti* is used. Therefore, *bhajanti* is applicable to the Supreme Lord only, whereas the word "worship" can be applied to demigods or to any other common living entity. The word *avajānanti*, used in this verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, is also found in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *avajānanti mām mūḍhāḥ*: "Only the fools and rascals deride the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Kṛṣṇa." Such fools take it upon themselves to write commentaries on the *Bhagavad-gītā* without an attitude of service to the Lord. Consequently they cannot properly distinguish between the word *bhajanti* and the word "worship."

The culmination of all kinds of *yoga* practices lies in *bhakti-yoga*. All other *yogas* are but means to come to the point of *bhakti* in *bhakti-yoga*. *Yoga* actually means *bhakti-yoga*; all other *yogas* are progressions toward the destination of *bhakti-yoga*. From the beginning of *karma-yoga* to the

end of *bhakti-yoga* is a long way to self-realization. *Karma-yoga*, without fruitive results, is the beginning of this path. When *karma-yoga* increases in knowledge and renunciation, the stage is called *jñāna-yoga*. When *jñāna-yoga* increases in meditation on the Supersoul by different physical processes, and the mind is on Him, it is called *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*. And, when one surpasses the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* and comes to the point of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa, it is called *bhakti-yoga*, the culmination. Factually, *bhakti-yoga* is the ultimate goal, but to analyze *bhakti-yoga* minutely one has to understand these other *yogas*. The *yogī* who is progressive is therefore on the true path of eternal good fortune. One who sticks to a particular point and does not make further progress is called by that particular name: *karma-yogī*, *jñāna-yogī* or *dhyāna-yogī*, *rāja-yogī*, *haṭha-yogī*, etc. If one is fortunate enough to come to the point of *bhakti-yoga*, it is to be understood that he has surpassed all the other *yogas*. Therefore, to become Kṛṣṇa conscious is the highest stage of *yoga*, just as, when we speak of Himalayan, we refer to the world's highest mountains, of which the highest peak, Mount Everest, is considered to be the culmination.

It is by great fortune that one comes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness on the path of *bhakti-yoga* to become well situated according to the Vedic direction. The ideal *yogī* concentrates his attention on Kṛṣṇa, who is called Śyāmasundara, who is as beautifully colored as a cloud, whose lotus-like face is as effulgent as the sun, whose dress is brilliant with jewels and whose body is flower garlanded. Illuminating all sides is His gorgeous luster, which is called the *brahmajyoti*. He incarnates in different forms such as Rāma, Nṛsimha, Varāha and Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and He descends like a human being, as the son of Mother Yaśodā, and He is known as Kṛṣṇa, Govinda and Vāsudeva. He is the perfect child, husband, friend and master, and He is full with all opulences and transcendental qualities. If one remains fully conscious of these features of the Lord, he is called the highest *yogī*.

This stage of highest perfection in *yoga* can be attained only by *bhakti-yoga*, as is confirmed in all Vedic literature:

*yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau.
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanah.*

"Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed."

Bhaktir asya bhajanam tadihāmutropādhi nairāsyenāmuṣmin manaḥ kalpanam; etad eva naiṣkarmyam. "Bhakti means devotional service to the Lord which is free from desire for material profit, either in this life or in the next. Devoid of such inclinations, one should fully absorb the mind in the Supreme. That is the purpose of *naiṣkarmya*."

These are some of the means for performance of *bhakti* or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the highest perfectional stage of the *yoga* system.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the Sixth Chapter of the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of Sāṅkhya-yoga Brahma-vidyā.

7. Knowledge of the Absolute

TEXT 1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
mayy āsakta-manāḥ pārtha
yogaṁ yuñjan mad-āśrayaḥ
asamśayaṁ samagram māṁ
yathā jñāsyasi tac chrṇu*

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Supreme Lord said; *mayi*-unto Me; *āsakta-manāḥ*-mind attached; *pārtha*-O son of Pṛthā; *yogaṁ*-self-realization; *yuñjan*-so practicing; *mat-āśrayaḥ*-in consciousness of Me (Kṛṣṇa consciousness); *asamśayaṁ*-without doubt; *samagram*-completely; *māṁ*-unto Me; *yathā*-as much as; *jñāsyasi*-you can know; *tat*-that; *śrṇu*-try to hear.

TRANSLATION

Now hear, O son of Pṛthā [Arjuna], how by practicing yoga in full consciousness of Me, with mind attached to Me, you can know Me in full, free from doubt.

PURPORT

In this Seventh Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*, the nature of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is fully described. Kṛṣṇa is full in all opulences, and how He manifests such opulences is described herein. Also, four kinds of fortunate people who become attached to Kṛṣṇa, and four kinds of unfortunate people who never take to Kṛṣṇa are described in this chapter.

In the first six chapters of *Bhagavad-gītā*, the living entity has been described as nonmaterial spirit soul which is capable of elevating himself to

self-realization by different types of *yogas*. At the end of the Sixth Chapter, it has been clearly stated that the steady concentration of the mind upon Kṛṣṇa, or in other words Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is the highest form of all *yoga*. By concentrating one's mind upon Kṛṣṇa, one is able to know the Absolute Truth completely, but not otherwise. Impersonal *brahmajyoti* or localized Paramātmā realization is not perfect knowledge of the Absolute Truth because it is partial. Full and scientific knowledge is Kṛṣṇa, and everything is revealed to the person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In complete Kṛṣṇa consciousness one knows that Kṛṣṇa is ultimate knowledge beyond any doubts. Different types of *yoga* are only steppingstones on the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One who takes directly to Kṛṣṇa consciousness automatically knows about *brahmajyoti* and Paramātmā in full. By practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness *yoga*, one can know everything in full—namely the Absolute Truth, the living entities, the material nature, and their manifestations with paraphernalia.

One should therefore begin *yoga* practice as directed in the last verse of the Sixth Chapter. Concentration of the mind upon Kṛṣṇa the Supreme is made possible by prescribed devotional service in nine different forms, of which *śravaṇam* is the first and most important. The Lord therefore says to Arjuna, "*tat śṛṇu*," or "Hear from Me." No one can be a greater authority than Kṛṣṇa, and therefore by hearing from Him one receives the greatest opportunity for progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One has therefore to learn from Kṛṣṇa directly or from a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa—and not from a nondevotee upstart, puffed up with academic education.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* this process of understanding Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, is described in the Second Chapter of the First Canto as follows:

*śṛṇvatām sva-kathām kṛṣṇaḥ puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ
hṛdyantaḥstho hy abhadrāṇi vidbunoti suhṛt satām.*

*naṣṭa-prāyeṣv abhadreṣu nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā
bhagavatya uttama-śloke bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī.*

*tadā rajas-tamo-bhāvāḥ kāma-lobhodayaś ca ye
ceta etair anāviddham sthitam sattve prasīdati.*

*evam prasanna-manaso bhagavad-bhakti-yogataḥ
bhagavat-tattva-vijñānaṁ mukta-saṅgasya jāyate.*

*bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ
kṣīyante cāsyā karmāṇi dṛṣṭa evātmanīśvare.*

"To hear about Kṛṣṇa from Vedic literatures, or to hear from Him directly through the *Bhagavad-gītā*, is itself righteous activity. And for one who hears about Kṛṣṇa, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is dwelling in everyone's heart, acts as a best-wishing friend and purifies the devotee who constantly engages in hearing of Him. In this way, a devotee naturally develops his dormant transcendental knowledge. As he hears more about Kṛṣṇa from the *Bhāgavatam* and from the devotees, he becomes fixed in the devotional service of the Lord. By development of devotional service one becomes freed from the modes of passion and ignorance, and thus material lusts and avarice are diminished. When these impurities are wiped away, the candidate remains steady in his position of pure goodness, becomes enlivened by devotional service and understands the science of God perfectly. Thus *bhakti-yoga* severs the hard knot of material affection and enables one to come at once to the stage of '*asaṁśayaṁ samagram*,' understanding of the Supreme Absolute Truth Personality of Godhead." (*Bhāg.* 1.2.17-21)

Therefore only by hearing from Kṛṣṇa or from His devotee in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can one understand the science of Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 2

*jñānaṁ te 'haṁ sa-vijñānaṁ
idaṁ vakṣyāmy aśeṣataḥ
yaj jñātvā neha bhūyo 'nyaj
jñātavyam avaśiṣyate*

SYNONYMS

jñānam-phenomenal knowledge; *te*-unto you; *aham*-I; *sa*-with; *vijñānam*-noumenal knowledge; *idaṁ*-this; *vakṣyāmi*-shall explain; *aśeṣataḥ*-in full; *yaj*-which; *jñātvā*-knowing; *na*-not; *iha*-in this world; *bhūyaḥ*-further;

anyat-anything more; *jñātavyam*-knowable; *avaśiṣyate*-remains to be known.

TRANSLATION

I shall now declare unto you in full this knowledge both phenomenal and noumenal, by knowing which there shall remain nothing further to be known.

PURPORT

Complete knowledge includes knowledge of the phenomenal world and the spirit behind it. The source of both of them is transcendental knowledge. The Lord wants to explain the above-mentioned system of knowledge because Arjuna is Kṛṣṇa's confidential devotee and friend. In the beginning of the Fourth Chapter this explanation was given by the Lord, and it is again confirmed here: complete knowledge can be achieved only by the devotee of the Lord directly from the Lord in disciplic succession. Therefore one should be intelligent enough to know the source of all knowledge, who is the cause of all causes and the only object for meditation in all types of *yoga* practices. When the cause of all causes becomes known, then everything knowable becomes known, and nothing remains unknown. The *Vedas* say, "*yasmin vijñāte sarvam eva vijñatam bhavanti*."

TEXT 3

*manuṣyāṇām sahasreṣu
kaścid yatati siddhaye
yatatām api siddhānām
kaścin mām vetti tattvataḥ*

SYNONYMS

manuṣyāṇām-of men; *sahasreṣu*-out of many thousands; *kaścit*-someone; *yatati*-endeavors; *siddhaye*-for perfection; *yatatām*-of those so endeavoring; *api*-indeed; *siddhānām*-of those who have achieved perfection; *kaścit*-someone; *mām*-Me; *vetti*-does know; *tattvataḥ*-in fact.

TRANSLATION

Out of many thousands among men, one may endeavor for perfection, and of those who have achieved perfection, hardly one knows Me in truth.

PURPORT

There are various grades of men, and out of many thousands one may be sufficiently interested in transcendental realization to try to know what is the self, what is the body, and what is the Absolute Truth. Generally mankind is simply engaged in the animal propensities, namely eating, sleeping, defending and mating, and hardly anyone is interested in transcendental knowledge. The first six chapters of the *Gītā* are meant for those who are interested in transcendental knowledge, in understanding the self, the Superself and the process of realization by *jñāna-yoga*, *dhyāna-yoga*, and discrimination of the self from matter. However, Kṛṣṇa can only be known by persons who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Other transcendentalists may achieve impersonal Brahman realization, for this is easier than understanding Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person, but at the same time He is beyond the knowledge of Brahman and Paramātmā. The *yogīs* and *jñānīs* are confused in their attempts to understand Kṛṣṇa, although the greatest of the impersonalists, Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya, has admitted in his *Gītā* commentary that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But his followers do not accept Kṛṣṇa as such, for it is very difficult to know Kṛṣṇa, even though one has transcendental realization of impersonal Brahman.

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, the primeval Lord Govinda. *Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*. It is very difficult for the nondevotees to know Him. Although nondevotees declare that the path of *bhakti* or devotional service is very easy, they cannot practice it. If the path of *bhakti* is so easy, as the nondevotee class of men proclaim, then why do they take up the difficult path? Actually the path of *bhakti* is not easy. The so-called path of *bhakti* practiced by unauthorized persons without knowledge of *bhakti* may be easy, but when it is practiced factually

according to the rules and regulations, the speculative scholars and philosophers fall away from the path. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*:

*śruti-smṛti-purāṇādi-pañcarātra-vidhiṁ vinā
aikāntikī harer bhaktir utpātāyaiva kalpate.*

"Devotional service of the Lord that ignores the authorized Vedic literatures like the *Upaniṣads*, *Purāṇas*, *Nārada-pañcarātra*, etc., is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society."

It is not possible for the Brahman realized impersonalist or the Paramātmā realized *yogī* to understand Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the son of mother Yaśodā or the charioteer of Arjuna. Even the great demigods are sometimes confused about Kṛṣṇa: "*muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ*," "*mām tu veda na kaścana*." "No one knows Me as I am," the Lord says. And if one does know Him, then "*sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ*." "Such a great soul is very rare." Therefore unless one practices devotional service to the Lord, he cannot know Kṛṣṇa as He is (*tattvataḥ*), even though one is a great scholar or philosopher. Only the pure devotees can know something of the inconceivable transcendental qualities in Kṛṣṇa, in the cause of all causes, in His omnipotence and opulence, and in His wealth, fame, strength, beauty, knowledge and renunciation, because Kṛṣṇa is benevolently inclined to His devotees. He is the last word in Brahman realization, and the devotees alone can realize Him as He is. Therefore it is said:

*ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyāiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*

"No one can understand Kṛṣṇa as He is by the blunt material senses. But He reveals Himself to the devotees, being pleased with them for their transcendental loving service unto Him." (*Padma Purāṇa*)

TEXT 4

*bhūmir āpo 'nalo vāyuḥ
kham mano buddhir eva ca*

*ahaṅkāra itīyaṁ me
bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā*

SYNONYMS

bhūmiḥ-earth; *āpaḥ*-water; *analaḥ*-fire; *vāyuḥ*-air; *kham*-ether; *manaḥ*-mind; *buddhiḥ*-intelligence; *eva*-certainly; *ca*-and; *ahaṅkāraḥ*-false ego; *iti*-thus; *iyam*-all these; *me*-My; *bhinnā*-separated; *prakṛtiḥ*-energies; *aṣṭadhā*-total eight.

TRANSLATION

Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego-altogether these eight comprise My separated material energies.

PURPORT

The science of God analyzes the constitutional position of God and His diverse energies. Material nature is called *prakṛti*, or the energy of the Lord in His different *puruṣa* incarnations (expansions) as described in the *Svatvata Tantra*:

*viṣṇos tu trīṇi rūpāṇi puruṣākhyāny atho viduḥ
ekantu mahataḥ sraṣṭṛ dvitīyaṁ tv aṇḍa-saṁsthitam
tṛtīyaṁ sarvabhūta-sthaṁ tāni jñātvā vimucyate*

"For material creation, Lord Kṛṣṇa's plenary expansion assumes three Viṣṇus. The first one, Mahā-Viṣṇu, creates the total material energy, known as *mahat-tattva*. The second, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, enters into all the universes to create diversities in each of them. The third, Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, is diffused as the all-pervading Supersoul in all the universes and is known as Paramātmā, who is present even within the atoms. Anyone who knows these three Viṣṇus can be liberated from material entanglement."

This material world is a temporary manifestation of one of the energies of the Lord. All the activities of the material world are directed by these three Viṣṇu expansions of Lord Kṛṣṇa. These *Puruṣas* are called incarnations. Generally one who does not know the science of God (Kṛṣṇa) assumes that this material world is for the enjoyment of the living entities

and that the living entities are the causes (*Puruṣas*), controllers and enjoyers of the material energy. According to *Bhagavad-gītā* this atheistic conclusion is false. In the verse under discussion it is stated that Kṛṣṇa is the original cause of the material manifestation. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also confirms this. The ingredients of the material manifestation are separated energies of the Lord. Even the *brahmajyoti*, which is the ultimate goal of the impersonalists, is a spiritual energy manifested in the spiritual sky. There are no spiritual diversities in *brahmajyoti* as there are in the Vaikuṇṭhalokas, and the impersonalist accepts this *brahmajyoti* as the ultimate eternal goal. The Paramātmā manifestation is also a temporary all-pervasive aspect of the Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. The Paramātmā manifestation is not eternal in the spiritual world. Therefore the factual Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa. He is the complete energetic person, and He possesses different separated and internal energies.

In the material energy, the principal manifestations are eight, as above mentioned. Out of these, the first five manifestations, namely earth, water, fire, air and sky, are called the five gigantic creations or the gross creations, within which the five sense objects are included. They are the manifestations of physical sound, touch, form, taste and smell. Material science comprises these ten items and nothing more. But the other three items, namely mind, intelligence and false ego, are neglected by the materialists. Philosophers who deal with mental activities are also not perfect in knowledge because they do not know the ultimate source, Kṛṣṇa. The false ego-"I am," and "It is mine," which constitute the basic principle of material existence-includes ten sense organs for material activities. Intelligence refers to the total material creation, called the *mahat-tattva*. Therefore from the eight separated energies of the Lord are manifest the twenty-four elements of the material world, which are the subject matter of *sāṅkhya* atheistic philosophy; they are originally offshoots from Kṛṣṇa's energies and are separated from Him, but atheistic *sāṅkhya* philosophers with a poor fund of knowledge do not know Kṛṣṇa as the cause of all causes. The subject matter for discussion in the *sāṅkhya* philosophy is only the manifestation of the external energy of Kṛṣṇa, as it is described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

TEXT 5

*apareyam itas tv anyām
prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parām
jīva-bhūtām mahā-bāho
yayedam dhāryate jagat*

SYNONYMS

aparā-inferior; *iyam*-this; *itaḥ*-besides this; *tu*-but; *anyām*-another; *prakṛtiṁ*-energy; *viddhi*-just try to understand; *me*-My; *parām*-superior; *jīva-bhūtām*-the living entities; *mahā-bāho*-O mighty-armed one; *yayā*-by whom; *idam*-this; *dhāryate*-being utilized or exploited; *jagat*-the material world.

TRANSLATION

Besides this inferior nature, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is a superior energy of Mine, which are all living entities who are struggling with material nature and are sustaining the universe.

PURPORT

Here it is clearly mentioned that living entities belong to the superior nature (or energy) of the Supreme Lord. The inferior energy is matter manifested in different elements, namely earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego. Both forms of material nature, namely gross (earth, etc.) and subtle (mind, etc.), are products of the inferior energy. The living entities, who are exploiting these inferior energies for different purposes, are the superior energy of the Supreme Lord, and it is due to this energy that the entire material world functions. The cosmic manifestation has no power to act unless it is moved by the superior energy, the living entity. Energies are always controlled by the energetic, and therefore living entities are always controlled by the Lord-they have no independent existence. They are never equally powerful, as unintelligent men think. The distinction between the living entities and the Lord is described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as follows (10.87.30):

*aparimitā dhruvās tanubhṛto yadi sarva-gatās
tarhiṁ na śāsyateti niyamo dhruva netarathā
ajani ca yanmayam tad avimucya niyantr
bhavet samam anujānatām yad-amataṁ mata-duṣṭatayā*

"O Supreme Eternal! If the embodied living entities were eternal and all-pervading like You, then they would not be under Your control. But if the living entities are accepted as minute energies of Your Lordship, then they are at once subject to Your supreme control. Therefore real liberation entails surrender by the living entities to Your control, and that surrender will make them happy. In that constitutional position only can they be controllers. Therefore, men with limited knowledge who advocate the monistic theory that God and the living entities are equal in all respects are actually misleading themselves and others."

The Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa is the only controller, and all living entities are controlled by Him. These living entities are His superior energy because the quality of their existence is one and the same with the Supreme, but they are never equal to the Lord in quantity of power. While exploiting the gross and subtle inferior energy (matter), the superior energy (the living entity) forgets his real spiritual mind and intelligence. This forgetfulness is due to the influence of matter upon the living entity. But when the living entity becomes free from the influence of the illusory material energy, he attains the stage called *mukti*, or liberation. The false ego, under the influence of material illusion, thinks, "I am matter, and material acquisitions are mine." His actual position is realized when he is liberated from all material ideas, including the conception of his becoming one in all respects with God. Therefore one may conclude that the *Gītā* confirms the living entity to be only one of the multi-energies of Kṛṣṇa; and when this energy is freed from material contamination, it becomes fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, or liberated.

TEXT 6

*etad-yonīni bhūtāni
sarvāṇīty upadhāraya
aham kṛtsnasya jagataḥ
prabhavaḥ pralayas tathā*

SYNONYMS

etat-these two natures; *yonīni*-source of birth; *bhūtāni*-everything created; *sarvāṇi*-all; *iti*-thus; *upadhāraya*-know; *aham*-I; *kṛtsnasya*-all-inclusive; *jagataḥ*-of the world; *prabhavaḥ*-source of manifestation; *pralayaḥ*-annihilation; *tathā*-as well as.

TRANSLATION

Of all that is material and all that is spiritual in this world, know for certain that I am both its origin and dissolution.

PURPORT

Everything that exists is a product of matter and spirit. Spirit is the basic field of creation, and matter is created by spirit. Spirit is not created at a certain stage of material development. Rather, this material world is manifested only on the basis of spiritual energy. This material body is developed because spirit is present within matter; a child grows gradually to boyhood and then to manhood because of that superior energy, spirit soul, being present. Similarly, the entire cosmic manifestation of the gigantic universe is developed because of the presence of the Supersoul, Viṣṇu. Therefore spirit and matter, which combine together to manifest this gigantic universal form, are originally two energies of the Lord, and consequently the Lord is the original cause of everything. A fragmental part and parcel of the Lord, namely, the living entity, may by manipulation of material energy construct a skyscraper, factory or city, but he cannot create matter out of nothing, and he certainly cannot construct a planet or a universe. The cause of the universe is the Supersoul, Kṛṣṇa, the supreme creator of all individual souls and the original cause of all causes, as the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* confirms: *nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām*.

TEXT 7

*mattaḥ parataram nānyat
kiñcid asti dhanañjaya
mayi sarvam idaṁ protaṁ*

sūtre maṇi-gaṇā iva

SYNONYMS

mattaḥ-beyond Myself; *parataram*-superior; *na*-not; *anyat*-anything else; *kiñcit*-something; *asti*-there is; *dhanañjaya*-O conquerer of wealth; *mayi*-in Me; *sarvam*-all that be; *idam*-which we see; *protam*-strung; *sūtre*-on a thread; *maṇi-gaṇāḥ*-pearls; *iva*-likened.

TRANSLATION

O conquerer of wealth [Arjuna], there is no Truth superior to Me. Everything rests upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread.

PURPORT

There is a common controversy over whether the Supreme Absolute Truth is personal or impersonal. As far as *Bhagavad-gītā* is concerned, the Absolute Truth is the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and this is confirmed in every step. In this verse, in particular, it is stressed that the Absolute Truth is a person. That the Personality of Godhead is the Supreme Absolute Truth is also the affirmation of the *Brahma-saṁhitā*: *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*; that is, the Supreme Absolute Truth Personality of Godhead is Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the primeval Lord, the reservoir of all pleasure, Govinda, and the eternal form of complete bliss and knowledge. These authorities leave no doubt that the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Person, the cause of all causes. The impersonalist, however, argues on the strength of the Vedic version given in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*: *tato yad uttarataram tad arūpam anāmayam ya etad vidur amṛtās te bhavanti athetare duḥkham evāpi yanti*. "In the material world Brahmā, the primeval living entity within the universe, is understood to be the supreme amongst the demigods, human beings and lower animals. But beyond Brahmā there is the Transcendence who has no material form and is free from all material contaminations. Anyone who can know Him also becomes transcendental, but those who do not know Him suffer the miseries of the material world."

The impersonalist puts more stress on the word *arūpam*. But this *arūpam* is not impersonal. It indicates the transcendental form of eternity, bliss and knowledge as described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* quoted above. Other verses in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* substantiate this as follows:

*vedāham etaṁ puruṣaṁ mahāntaṁ āditya-varṇaṁ tamasaḥ parastāt
tam eva vidvān amṛta iha bhavati nānyaḥ panthā vidyate ayanāya
yasmāt paraṁ nāparaṁ asti kiñcid yasmānnāñīyo na jyāyo 'sti kiñcit*

"I know that Supreme Personality of Godhead who is transcendental to all material conceptions of darkness. Only he who knows Him can transcend the bonds of birth and death. There is no way for liberation other than this knowledge of that Supreme Person.

"There is no truth superior to that Supreme Person because He is the supermost. He is smaller than the smallest, and He is greater than the greatest. He is situated as a silent tree, and He illumines the transcendental sky, and as a tree spreads its roots, He spreads His extensive energies."

From these verses one concludes that the Supreme Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is all-pervading by His multi-energies, both material and spiritual.

TEXT 8

*raso 'ham apsu kaunteya
prabhāsmi śaśi-sūryayoḥ
praṇavaḥ sarva-vedeṣu
śabdaḥ khe pauruṣaṁ nṛṣu*

SYNONYMS

rasaḥ-taste; *aham*-I; *apsu*-in water; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *prabhā asmi*-I am the light; *śaśi-sūryayoḥ*-in the sun and the moon; *praṇavaḥ*-the three letters A.U.M.; *sarva*-in all; *vedeṣu*-in the *Vedas*; *śabdaḥ*-sound vibration; *khe*-in the ether; *pauruṣaṁ*-ability; *nṛṣu*-in man.

TRANSLATION

O son of Kuntī [Arjuna], I am the taste of water, the light of the sun and the moon, the syllable om in the Vedic mantras; I am the sound in ether and ability in man.

PURPORT

This verse explains how the Lord is all-pervasive by His diverse material and spiritual energies. The Supreme Lord can be preliminarily perceived by His different energies, and in this way He is realized impersonally. As the demigod in the sun is a person and is perceived by his all-pervading energy, the sunshine, similarly, the Lord, although in His eternal abode, is perceived by His all-pervading, diffusive energies. The taste of water is the active principle of water. No one likes to drink sea water because the pure taste of water is mixed with salt. Attraction for water depends on the purity of the taste, and this pure taste is one of the energies of the Lord. The impersonalist perceives the presence of the Lord in water by its taste, and the personalist also glorifies the Lord for His kindly supplying water to quench man's thirst. That is the way of perceiving the Supreme. Practically speaking, there is no conflict between personalism and impersonalism. One who knows God knows that the impersonal conception and personal conception are simultaneously present in everything and that there is no contradiction. Therefore Lord Caitanya established His sublime doctrine: *acintya-bheda* and *abheda-tattvam*-simultaneously one and different.

The light of the sun and the moon is also originally emanating from the *brahmajyoti*, which is the impersonal effulgence of the Lord. Similarly *praṇava* or the *omkāra* transcendental sound used in the beginning of every Vedic hymn to address the Supreme Lord also emanates from Him. Because the impersonalists are very much afraid of addressing the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa by His innumerable names, they prefer to vibrate the transcendental sound *omkāra*. But they do not realize that *omkāra* is the sound representation of Kṛṣṇa. The jurisdiction of Kṛṣṇa consciousness extends everywhere, and one who knows Kṛṣṇa consciousness is blessed. Those who do not know Kṛṣṇa are in illusion, and so knowledge of Kṛṣṇa is liberation, and ignorance of Him is bondage.

TEXT 9

*puṇyo gandhaḥ pṛthivyām ca
tejaś cāsmi vibhāvasau
jīvanam sarva-bhūteṣu
tapaś cāsmi tapasviṣu*

SYNONYMS

puṇyaḥ-original; *gandhaḥ*-fragrance; *pṛthivyām*-in the earth; *ca*-also; *tejaḥ*-temperature; *ca*-also; *asmi*-I am; *vibhāvasau*-in the fire; *jīvanam*-life; *sarva*-all; *bhūteṣu*-living entities; *tapaḥ*-penance; *ca*-also; *asmi*-I am; *tapasviṣu*-in those who practice penance.

TRANSLATION

I am the original fragrance of the earth, and I am the heat in fire. I am the life of all that lives, and I am the penances of all ascetics.

PURPORT

Puṇya means that which is not decomposed; *puṇya* is original. Everything in the material world has a certain flavor or fragrance, as the flavor and fragrance in a flower, or in the earth, in water, in fire, in air, etc. The uncontaminated flavor, the original flavor, which permeates everything, is Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, everything has a particular original taste, and this taste can be changed by the mixture of chemicals. So everything original has some smell, some fragrance, and some taste. *Vibhāva* means fire. Without fire we cannot run factories, we cannot cook, etc., and that fire is Kṛṣṇa. The heat in the fire is Kṛṣṇa. According to Vedic medicine, indigestion is due to a low temperature in the belly. So even for digestion fire is needed. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness we become aware that earth, water, fire, air and every active principle, all chemicals and all material elements are due to Kṛṣṇa. The duration of man's life is also due to Kṛṣṇa. Therefore by the grace of Kṛṣṇa, man can prolong his life or diminish it. So Kṛṣṇa consciousness is active in every sphere.

TEXT 10

*bījam mām sarva-bhūtānām
viddhi pārtha sanātanam
buddhir buddhimatām asmi
tejas tejasvinām aham*

SYNONYMS

bījam-seed; *mām*-unto Me; *sarva-bhūtānām*-of all living entities; *viddhi*-try to understand; *pārtha*-O son of Prthā; *sanātanam*-original, eternal; *buddhiḥ*-intelligence; *buddhimatām*-of the intelligent; *asmi*-I am; *tejaḥ*-prowess; *tejasvinām*-of the powerful; *aham*-I am.

TRANSLATION

O son of Prthā, know that I am the original seed of all existences, the intelligence of the intelligent, and the prowess of all powerful men.

PURPORT

Bījam means seed; Kṛṣṇa is the seed of everything. In contact with material nature, the seed fructifies into various living entities, movable and inert. Birds, beasts, men and many other living creatures are moving living entities; trees and plants, however, are inert-they cannot move, but only stand. Every entity is contained within the scope of 8,400,000 species of life; some of them are moving and some of them are inert. In all cases, however, the seed of their life is Kṛṣṇa. As stated in Vedic literature, Brahman, or the Supreme Absolute Truth, is that from which everything is emanating. Kṛṣṇa is Parabrahman, the Supreme Spirit. Brahman is impersonal and Parabrahman is personal. Impersonal Brahman is situated in the personal aspect-that is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Therefore, originally, Kṛṣṇa is the source of everything. He is the root. As the root of a tree maintains the whole tree, Kṛṣṇa, being the original root of all things, maintains everything in this material manifestation. This is also confirmed in the Vedic literature. *Yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante*. "The Supreme Absolute Truth is that from which everything is born." He is the prime eternal among all eternals. He is the supreme living entity of all living

entities, and He alone is maintaining all life. Kṛṣṇa also says that He is the root of all intelligence. Unless a person is intelligent he cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 11

*balam balavatām cāham
kāma-rāga-vivarjitam
dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu
kāmo 'smi bharatarṣabha*

SYNONYMS

balam-strength; *balavatām*-of the strong; *ca*-and; *aham*-I am; *kāma*-passion; *rāga*-attachment; *vivarjitam*-devoid of; *dharma-aviruddha*-not against the religious principles; *bhūteṣu*-in all beings; *kāmaḥ*-sex-life; *asmi*-I am; *bharatarṣabha*-O lord of the Bhāratas.

TRANSLATION

I am the strength of the strong, devoid of passion and desire. I am sex life which is not contrary to religious principles, O Lord of the Bhāratas [Arjuna].

PURPORT

The strong man's strength should be applied to protect the weak, not for personal aggression. Similarly, sex life, according to religious principles (*dharma*), should be for the propagation of children, not otherwise. The responsibility of parents is then to make their offspring Kṛṣṇa conscious.

TEXT 12

*ye caiva sāttvikā bhāvā
rājasās tāmasās ca ye
matta eveti tāt viddhi
na tv aham teṣu te mayi*

SYNONYMS

ye-all those; *ca*-and; *eva*-certainly; *sāttvikāḥ*-in goodness; *bhāvāḥ*-states of being; *rājasāḥ*-mode of passion; *tāmasāḥ*-mode of ignorance; *ca*-also; *ye*-although; *mattaḥ*-from Me; *eva*-certainly; *iti*-thus; *tān*-those; *viddhi*-try to know; *na*-not; *tu*-but; *aham*-I; *teṣu*-in those; *te*-they; *mayi*-unto Me.

TRANSLATION

All states of being-be they of goodness, passion or ignorance-are manifested by My energy. I am, in one sense, everything-but I am independant. I am not under the modes of this material nature.

PURPORT

All material activities in the world are being conducted under the three modes of material nature. Although these material modes of nature are emanations from the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, He is not subject to them. For instance, under the state laws one may be punished, but the king, the lawmaker, is not subject to that law. Similarly, all the modes of material nature-goodness, passion and ignorance-are emanations from the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa is not subject to material nature. Therefore He is *nirguṇa*, which means that these *guṇas*, or modes, although issuing from Him, do not affect Him. That is one of the special characteristics of Bhagavān, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 13

*tribhir guṇa-mayair bhāvair
ebhiḥ sarvam idaṁ jagat
mohitaṁ nābhijānāti
mām ebhyaḥ param avyayam*

SYNONYMS

tribhiḥ-three; *guṇamayaiḥ*-by the three *guṇas*; *bhāvaiḥ*-state of being; *ebhiḥ*-all this; *sarvam*-the whole world; *idaṁ*-in this world; *jagat*-universe;

mohitam-deluded; *na abhijānāti*-do not know; *mām*-unto Me; *ebhyaḥ*-above these; *param*-the Supreme; *avyayam*-inexhaustible.

TRANSLATION

Deluded by the three modes [goodness, passion and ignorance], the whole world does not know Me who am above the modes and inexhaustible.

PURPORT

The whole world is enchanted by three modes of material nature. Those who are bewildered by these three modes cannot understand that transcendental to this material nature is the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. In this material world everyone is under the influence of these three *guṇas* and is thus bewildered.

Bv nature living entities have particular types of body and particular types of psychic and biological activities accordingly. There are four classes of men functioning in the three material modes of nature. Those who are purely in the mode of goodness are called *brāhmaṇas*. Those who are purely in the mode of passion are called *kṣatriyas*. Those who are in the modes of both passion and ignorance are called *vaiśyas*. Those who are completely in ignorance are called *śūdras*. And those who are less than that are animals or animal life. However, these designations are not permanent. I may either be a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* or whatever-in any case, this life is temporary. But although life is temporary and we do not know what we are going to be in the next life, still, by the spell of this illusory energy, we consider ourselves in the light of this bodily conception of life, and we thus think that we are American, Indian, Russian or *brāhmaṇa*, Hindu, Muslim, etc. And if we become entangled with the modes of material nature, then we forget the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is behind all these modes. So Lord Kṛṣṇa says that men, deluded by these three modes of nature, do not understand that behind the material background is the Supreme Godhead.

There are many different kinds of living entities-human beings, demigods, animals, etc.-and each and every one of them is under the

influence of material nature, and all of them have forgotten the transcendent Personality of Godhead. Those who are in the modes of passion and ignorance, and even those who are in the mode of goodness, cannot go beyond the impersonal Brahman conception of the Absolute Truth. They are bewildered before the Supreme Lord in His personal feature, which possesses all beauty, opulence, knowledge, strength, fame and renunciation. When even those who are in goodness cannot understand, what hope is there for those in passion and ignorance? Kṛṣṇa consciousness is transcendental to all these three modes of material nature, and those who are truly established in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are actually liberated.

TEXT 14

*daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī
mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante
māyām etām taranti te*

SYNONYMS

daivī-transcendental; *hi*-certainly; *eṣā*-this; *guṇamayī*-consisting of the three modes of material nature; *mama*-My; *māyā*-energy; *duratyayā*-very difficult to overcome; *mām*-unto Me; *eva*-certainly; *ye*-those; *prapadyante*-surrender; *māyām etām*-this illusory energy; *taranti*-overcome; *te*-they.

TRANSLATION

This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead has innumerable energies, and all these energies are divine. Although the living entities are part of His energies and are therefore divine, due to contact with material energy, their original superior power is covered. Being thus covered by material energy,

one cannot possibly overcome its influence. As previously stated, both the material and spiritual natures, being emanations from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are eternal. The living entities belong to the eternal superior nature of the Lord, but due to contamination by the inferior nature, matter, their illusion is also eternal. The conditioned soul is therefore called *nitya-baddha*, or eternally conditioned. No one can trace out the history of his becoming conditioned at a certain date in material history. Consequently, his release from the clutches of material nature is very difficult, even though that material nature is an inferior energy, because material energy is ultimately conducted by the supreme will, which the living entity cannot overcome. Inferior material nature is defined herein as divine nature due to its divine connection and movement by the divine will. Being conducted by divine will, material nature, although inferior, acts so wonderfully in the construction and destruction of the cosmic manifestation. The *Vedas* confirm this as follows:

māyām tu prakṛtiṁ vidyān māyinaṁ tu maheśvaram.

"Although *māyā* [illusion] is false or temporary, the background of *māyā* is the supreme magician, the Personality of Godhead, who is Maheśvara, the supreme controller."

Another meaning of *guṇa* is rope; it is to be understood that the conditioned soul is tightly tied by the ropes of illusion. A man bound by the hands and feet cannot free himself—he must be helped by a person who is unbound. Because the bound cannot help the bound, the rescuer must be liberated. Therefore, only Lord Kṛṣṇa, or His bona fide representative the spiritual master, can release the conditioned soul. Without such superior help, one cannot be freed from the bondage of material nature. Devotional service, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, can help one gain such release. Kṛṣṇa, being the Lord of illusory energy, can order this insurmountable energy to release the conditioned soul. He orders this release out of His causeless mercy on the surrendered soul and out of His paternal affection for the living entity who is originally a beloved son of the Lord. Therefore surrender unto the lotus feet of the Lord is the only means to get free from the clutches of the stringent material nature.

The words *mām eva* are also significant. *Mām* means unto Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu) only, and not Brahmā or Śiva. Although Brahmā and Śiva are greatly elevated and are almost on the level of Viṣṇu, it is not possible for such incarnations of *rājo-guṇa* (passion) and *tamo-guṇa* (ignorance) to release the conditioned soul from the clutches of *māyā*. In other words, both Brahmā and Śiva are also under the influence of *māyā*. Only Viṣṇu is the master of *māyā*; therefore He can alone give release to the conditioned soul. The *Vedas* confirm this in the phrase *tvam eva viditvā* or "Freedom is possible only by understanding Kṛṣṇa." Even Lord Śiva affirms that liberation can be achieved only by the mercy of Viṣṇu. Lord Śiva says:

mukti-pradātā sarveṣāṁ viṣṇur eva na saṁśayaḥ.

"There is no doubt that Viṣṇu is the deliverer of liberation for everyone.

TEXT 15

*na mām duṣkṛtino mūḍhāḥ
prapadyante narādhamāḥ
māyayāpahṛta-jñānā
āsurāṁ bhāvam āśritāḥ*

SYNONYMS

na-not; *mām*-unto Me; *duṣkṛtinaḥ*-miscreants; *mūḍhāḥ*-foolish;
prapadyante-surrender; *narādhamāḥ*-lowest among mankind; *māyayā*-by
the illusory energy; *apahṛta*-stolen by illusion; *jñānāḥ*-knowledge; *asuram*-
demonic; *bhāvam*-nature; *āśritāḥ*-accepting.

TRANSLATION

Those miscreants who are grossly foolish, lowest among mankind, whose knowledge is stolen by illusion, and who partake of the atheistic nature of demons, do not surrender unto Me.

PURPORT

It is said in *Bhagavad-gītā* that simply by surrendering oneself unto the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality Kṛṣṇa, one can surmount the stringent laws of material nature. At this point a question arises: How is it that educated philosophers, scientists, businessmen, administrators and all the leaders of ordinary men do not surrender to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the all-powerful Personality of Godhead? *Mukti*, or liberation from the laws of material nature, is sought by the leaders of mankind in different ways and with great plans and perseverance for a great many years and births. But if that liberation is possible by simply surrendering unto the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then why don't these intelligent and hard-working leaders adopt this simple method?

The *Gītā* answers this question very frankly. Those really learned leaders of society like Brahmā, Śiva, Kapila, the Kumāras, Manu, Vyāsa, Devala, Asita, Janaka, Prahlāda, Bali, and later on Madhvācārya, Rāmānujācārya, Śrī Caitanya and many others—who are faithful philosophers, politicians, educators, scientists, etc.—surrender to the lotus feet of the Supreme Person, the all-powerful authority. Those who are not actually philosophers, scientists, educators, administrators, etc., but who pose themselves as such for material gain, do not accept the plan or path of the Supreme Lord. They have no idea of God; they simply manufacture their own worldly plans and consequently complicate the problems of material existence in their vain attempts to solve them. Because material energy (nature) is so powerful, it can resist the unauthorized plans of the atheists and baffle the knowledge of "planning commissions."

The atheistic plan-makers are described herein by the word *duṣkṛtina*, or "miscreants." *Kṛtina* means one who has performed meritorious work. The atheist planmaker is sometimes very intelligent and meritorious also, because any gigantic plan, good or bad, must take intelligence to execute. But because the atheist's brain is improperly utilized in opposing the plan of the Supreme Lord, the atheistic planmaker is called *duṣkṛtina*, which indicates that his intelligence and efforts are misdirected.

In the *Gītā* it is clearly mentioned that material energy works fully under the direction of the Supreme Lord. It has no independent authority. It works as the shadow moves, in accordance with the movements of the object. But still material energy is very powerful, and the atheist, due to his godless

temperament, cannot know how it works; nor can he know the plan of the Supreme Lord. Under illusion and the modes of passion and ignorance, all his plans are baffled, as in the case of Hiranyakaśipu and Rāvaṇa, whose plans were smashed to dust although they were both materially learned as scientists, philosophers, administrators and educators. These *duṣkṛtinas*, or miscreants, are of four different patterns, as outlined below:

(1) The *mūḍhas* are those who are grossly foolish, like hard-working beasts of burden. They want to enjoy the fruits of their labor by themselves, and so do not want to part with them for the Supreme. The typical example of the beast of burden is the ass. This humble beast is made to work very hard by his master. The ass does not really know for whom he works so hard day and night. He remains satisfied by filling his stomach with a bundle of grass, sleeping for a while under fear of being beaten by his master, and satisfying his sex appetite at the risk of being repeatedly kicked by the opposite party. The ass sings poetry and philosophy sometimes, but this braying only disturbs others. This is the position of the foolish fruitive worker who does not know for whom he should work. He does not know that *karma* (action) is meant for *yajña* (sacrifice).

Most often, those who work very hard day and night to clear the burden of self-created duties say that they have no time to hear of the immortality of the living being. To such *mūḍhas*, material gains, which are destructible, are life's all in all—despite the fact that the *mūḍhas* enjoy only a very small fraction of the fruit of labor. Sometimes they spend sleepless days and nights for fruitive gain, and although they may have ulcers or indigestion, they are satisfied with practically no food; they are simply absorbed in working hard day and night for the benefit of illusory masters. Ignorant of their real master, the foolish workers waste their valuable time serving mammon. Unfortunately, they never surrender to the supreme master of all masters, nor do they take time to hear of Him from the proper sources. The swine who eat the soil do not care to accept sweetmeats made of sugar and ghee. Similarly, the foolish worker will untiringly continue to hear of the sense-enjoyable tidings of the flickering mundane force that moves the material world.

(2) Another class of *duṣkṛtina*, or miscreant, is called the *narādhama*, or the lowest of mankind. *Nara* means human being, and *adhama* means the

lowest. Out of the 8,400,000 different species of living beings, there are 400,000 human species. Out of these there are numerous lower forms of human life that are mostly uncivilized. The civilized human beings are those who have regulated principles of social, political and religious life. Those who are socially and politically developed, but who have no religious principles, must be considered *narādhama*s. Nor is religion without God religion, because the purpose of following religious principles is to know the Supreme Truth and man's relation with Him. In the *Gītā* the Personality of Godhead clearly states that there is no authority above Him and that He is the Supreme Truth. The civilized form of human life is meant for man's *reviving the lost consciousness* of his eternal relation with the Supreme Truth, the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is all-powerful. Whoever loses this chance is classified as a *narādhama*. We get information from revealed scriptures that when the baby is in the mother's womb (an extremely uncomfortable situation) he prays to God for deliverance and promises to worship Him alone as soon as he gets out. To pray to God when he is in difficulty is a natural instinct in every living being because he is eternally related with God. But after his deliverance, the child forgets the difficulties of birth and forgets his deliverer also, being influenced by *māyā*, the illusory energy.

It is the duty of the guardians of children to revive the divine consciousness dormant in them. The ten processes of reformatory ceremonies, as enjoined in the *Manu-smṛti*, which is the guide to religious principles, are meant for reviving God consciousness in the system of *varṇāśrama*. However, no process is strictly followed now in any part of the world, and therefore 99.9 percent of the population is *narādhama*.

When the whole population becomes *narādhama*, naturally all their so-called education is made null and void by the all-powerful energy of physical nature. According to the standard of the *Gītā*, a learned man is he who sees on equal terms the learned *brāhmaṇa*, the dog, the cow, the elephant and the dog-eater. That is the vision of a true devotee. Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, who is the incarnation of Godhead as divine master, delivered the typical *narādhama*s, the brothers Jagai and Madhai, and showed how the mercy of a real devotee is bestowed upon the lowest of mankind. So the *narādhama* who is condemned by the Personality of

Godhead can again revive his spiritual consciousness only by the mercy of a devotee.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in propagating the *bhāgavata-dharma* or activities of the devotees, has recommended that people submissively hear the message of the Personality of Godhead. The essence of this message is *Bhagavad-gītā*. The lowest amongst human beings can be delivered by this submissive hearing process only, but unfortunately they even deny giving an aural reception to these messages, and what to speak of surrendering to the will of the Supreme Lord? *Narādhama*s, or the lowest of mankind, willfully neglect the prime duty of the human being.

(3) The next class of *duṣkṛtina* is called *māyayāpahṛta-jñāna*, or those persons whose erudite knowledge has been nullified by the influence of illusory material energy. They are mostly very learned fellows—great philosophers, poets, literati, scientists, etc.—but the illusory energy misguides them, and therefore they disobey the Supreme Lord.

There are a great number of *māyayāpahṛta-jñānas* at the present moment, even amongst the scholars of the *Gītā*. In the *Gītā*, in plain and simple language, it is stated that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. There is none equal to or greater than Him. He is mentioned as the father of Brahmā, the original father of all human beings. In fact, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is said to be not only the father of Brahmā but also the father of all species of life. He is the root of the impersonal Brahman and Paramātmā; the Supersoul in every entity is His plenary portion. He is the fountainhead of everything, and everyone is advised to surrender unto His lotus feet. Despite all these clear statements, the *māyayāpahṛta-jñāna* deride the Personality of the Supreme Lord and consider Him merely another human being. They do not know that the blessed form of human life is designed after the eternal and transcendental feature of the Supreme Lord.

All the unauthorized interpretations of the *Gītā* by the class of *māyayāpahṛta-jñāna*, outside the purview of the *paramparā* system, are so many stumbling blocks in the path of spiritual understanding. The deluded interpreters do not surrender unto the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, nor do they teach others to follow this principle.

(4) The last class of *duṣkṛtina* is called *āsuram bhāvam āśrita*, or those of demonic principles. This class is openly atheistic. Some of them argue that the Supreme Lord can never descend upon this material world, but they are unable to give any tangible reasons as to why not. There are others who make Him subordinate to the impersonal feature, although the opposite is declared in the *Gītā*. Envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the atheist will present a number of illicit incarnations manufactured in the factory of his brain. Such persons whose very principle of life is to decry the Personality of Godhead cannot surrender unto the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Yāmunācārya Albandru of South India said, "O my Lord! You are unknowable to persons involved with atheistic principles despite Your uncommon qualities, features, and activities and despite Your personality being confirmed by all the revealed scriptures in the quality of goodness, and despite Your being acknowledged by the famous authorities renowned for their depth of knowledge in the transcendental science and situated in the godly qualities."

Therefore, (1) grossly foolish persons, (2) the lowest of mankind, (3) the deluded speculators, and (4) the professed atheists, as above mentioned, never surrender unto the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead in spite of all scriptural and authoritative advice.

TEXT 16

*catur-vidhā bhajante mām
janāḥ sukṛtino 'rjuna
ārto jijñāsur arthārthī
jñānī ca bharatarṣabha*

SYNONYMS

catur-vidhāḥ-four kinds of; *bhajante*-render services; *mām*-unto Me; *janāḥ*-persons; *sukṛtinaḥ*-those who are pious; *arjuna*-O Arjuna; *ārtaḥ*-the distressed; *jijñāsuḥ*-the inquisitive; *artha-arthī*-one who desires material gain; *jñānī*-one who knows things as they are; *ca*-also; *bharatarṣabha*-O great one amongst the descendants of Bharata.

TRANSLATION

O best among the Bhāratas [Arjuna], four kinds of pious men render devotional service unto Me-the distressed, the desirer of wealth, the inquisitive, and he who is searching for knowledge of the Absolute.

PURPORT

Unlike the miscreants, these are adherents of the regulative principles of the scriptures, and they are called *sukṛtina*, or those who obey the rules and regulations of scriptures, the moral and social laws, and are, more or less, devoted to the Supreme Lord. Out of these there are four classes of men—those who are sometimes distressed, those who are in need of money, those who are sometimes inquisitive, and those who are sometimes searching after knowledge of the Absolute Truth. These persons come to the Supreme Lord for devotional service under different conditions. These are not pure devotees because they have some aspiration to fulfill in exchange for devotional service. Pure devotional service is without aspiration and without desire for material profit. The *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* defines pure devotion thus:

*anyābhilāṣitāśūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam bhaktir uttamā.*

"One should render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa favorably and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service."

When these four kinds of persons come to the Supreme Lord for devotional service and are completely purified by the association of a pure devotee, they also become pure devotees. As far as the miscreants are concerned, for them devotional service is very difficult because their lives are selfish, irregular and without spiritual goals. But even some of them, by chance, when they come in contact with a pure devotee, also become pure devotees.

Those who are always busy with fruitive activities come to the Lord in material distress and at that time associate with pure devotees and become,

in their distress, devotees of the Lord. Those who are simply frustrated also come sometimes to associate with the pure devotees and become inquisitive to know about God. Similarly, when the dry philosophers are frustrated in every field of knowledge, they sometimes want to learn of God, and they come to the Supreme Lord to render devotional service and thus transcend knowledge of the impersonal Brahman and the localized Paramātmā and come to the personal conception of Godhead by the grace of the Supreme Lord or His pure devotee. On the whole, when the distressed, the inquisitive, the seekers of knowledge, and those who are in need of money are free from all material desires, and when they fully understand that material remuneration has nothing to do with spiritual improvement, they become pure devotees. As long as such a purified stage is not attained, devotees in transcendental service to the Lord are tainted with fruitive activities, and they search after mundane knowledge, etc. So one has to transcend all this before one can come to the stage of pure devotional service.

TEXT 17

*teṣāṁ jñānī nitya-yukta
eka-bhaktir viśiṣyate
priyo hi jñānino 'tyartham
aham sa ca mama priyaḥ*

SYNONYMS

teṣāṁ-out of them; *jñānī*-one in full knowledge; *nitya-yuktaḥ*-always engaged; *eka*-only one; *bhaktiḥ*-devotional service; *viśiṣyate*-especially; *priyaḥ*-very dear; *hi*-certainly; *jñāninaḥ*-person in knowledge; *atyartham* highly; *aham*-I am; *saḥ*-he; *ca*-also; *mama*-Mine; *priyaḥ*-dear.

TRANSLATION

Of these, the wise one who is in full knowledge in union with Me through pure devotional service is the best. For I am very dear to him, and he is dear to Me.

PURPORT

Free from all contaminations of material desires, the distressed, the inquisitive, the penniless, and the seeker after supreme knowledge can all become pure devotees. But out of them, he who is in knowledge of the Absolute Truth and free from all material desires becomes a really pure devotee of the Lord. And of the four orders, the devotee who is in full knowledge and is at the same time engaged in devotional service is, the Lord says, the best. By searching after knowledge one realizes that his self is different from his material body, and when further advanced he comes to the knowledge of impersonal Brahman and Paramātmā. When one is fully purified, he realizes that his constitutional position is to be the eternal servant of God. So by association with pure devotees, the inquisitive, the distressed, the seeker after material amelioration and the man in knowledge all become themselves pure. But in the preparatory stage, the man who is in full knowledge of the Supreme Lord and is at the same time executing devotional service is very dear to the Lord. He who is situated in pure knowledge of the transcendence of the Supreme Personality of God is so protected in devotional service that material contaminations cannot touch him.

TEXT 18

*udārāḥ sarva evaite
jñānī tv ātmaiva me matam
āsthitaḥ sa hi yuktātmā
mām evānuttamām gatim*

SYNONYMS

udārāḥ-magnanimous; *sarve*-all; *eva*-certainly; *ete*-these; *jñānī*-one who is in knowledge; *tu*-but; *ātmā eva*-just like Myself; *me*-Mine; *matam*-opinion; *āsthitaḥ*-situated; *saḥ*-he; *hi*-certainly; *yukta-ātmā*-engaged in devotional service; *mām*-unto Me; *eva*-certainly; *anuttamām*-the highest goal; *gatim*-destination.

TRANSLATION

All these devotees are undoubtedly magnanimous souls, but he who is situated in knowledge of Me I consider verily to dwell in Me. Being engaged in My transcendental service, he attains Me.

PURPORT

It is not that other devotees who are less complete in knowledge are not dear to the Lord. The Lord says that all are magnanimous because anyone who comes to the Lord for any purpose is called a *mahātmā* or great soul. The devotees who want some benefit out of devotional service are accepted by the Lord because there is an exchange of affection. Out of affection they ask the Lord for some material benefit, and when they get it they become so satisfied that they also advance in devotional service. But the devotee in full knowledge is considered to be very dear to the Lord because his only purpose is to serve the Supreme Lord with love and devotion. Such a devotee cannot live a second without contacting or serving the Supreme Lord. Similarly, the Supreme Lord is very fond of His devotee and cannot be separated from him.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.4.57), the Lord says:

*aham bhakta-parādhīno hy asvatantra iva dvija
sādhubhir grasta-hṛdayo bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyaḥ*

"The devotees are always in My heart, and I am always in the heart of the devotees. The devotee does not know anything beyond Me, and I also cannot forget the devotee. There is a very intimate relationship between Me and the pure devotees. Pure devotees in full knowledge are never out of spiritual touch, and therefore they are very much dear to Me."

TEXT 19

*bahūnām janmanām ante
jñānavān mām prapadyate
vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti
sa mahātmā su-durlabhaḥ*

SYNONYMS

bahūnām-many; *janmanām*-births; *ante*-after; *jñānavān*-he possessing knowledge; *mām*-unto Me; *prapadyate*-surrenders; *vāsudevaḥ*-cause of all causes; *sarvam*-all; *iti*-thus; *saḥ*-such; *mahātmā*-great soul; *sudurlabhaḥ*-very rare.

TRANSLATION

After many births and deaths, he who is actually in knowledge surrenders unto Me, knowing Me to be the cause of all causes and all that is. Such a great soul is very rare.

PURPORT

The living entity, while executing devotional service or transcendental rituals after many, many births, may actually become situated in transcendental pure knowledge that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the ultimate goal of spiritual realization. In the beginning of spiritual realization, while one is trying to give up one's attachment to materialism, there is some leaning towards impersonalism, but when one is further advanced he can understand that there are activities in the spiritual life and that these activities constitute devotional service. Realizing this, he becomes attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and surrenders to Him. At such a time one can understand that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy is everything, that He is the cause of all causes and that this material manifestation is not independent from Him. He realizes the material world to be a perverted reflection of spiritual variegatedness and realizes that in everything there is a relationship with the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus he thinks of everything in relation to Vāsudeva, or Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Such a universal vision of Vāsudeva precipitates one's full surrender to the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the highest goal. Such surrendered great souls are very rare.

This verse is very nicely explained in the Third Chapter of *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*: "In this body there are powers of speaking, of seeing, of hearing, of mental activities, etc. But these are not important if not related to the Supreme Lord. And because Vāsudeva is all-pervading and everything is Vāsudeva, the devotee surrenders in full knowledge." (Cf. *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.17 and 11.40)

TEXT 20

*kāmais tais tair hr̥ta-jñānāḥ
prapadyante 'nya-devatāḥ
taṁ taṁ niyamam āsthāya
prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā*

SYNONYMS

kamaiḥ-by desires; *taiḥ*-by those; *taiḥ*-by those; *hr̥ta*-distorted; *jñānāḥ*-knowledge; *prapadyante*-surrender; *anya*-other; *devatāḥ*-demigods; *taṁ*-that; *taṁ*-that; *niyamam*-rules; *āsthāya*-following; *prakṛtyā*-by nature; *niyatāḥ*-controlled; *svayā*-by their own.

TRANSLATION

Those whose minds are distorted by material desires surrender unto demigods and follow the particular rules and regulations of worship according to their own natures.

PURPORT

Those who are freed from all material contaminations surrender unto the Supreme Lord and engage in His devotional service. As long as the material contamination is not completely washed off, they are by nature nondevotees. But even those who have material desires and who resort to the Supreme Lord are not so much attracted by external nature; because of approaching the right goal, they soon become free from all material lust. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is recommended that whether one is free from all material desires, or is full of material desires, or desires liberation from material contamination, or is a pure devotee and has no desire for material sense gratification, he should in all cases surrender to Vāsudeva and worship Him.

It is said in the *Bhāgavatam* that less intelligent people who have lost their spiritual sense take shelter of demigods for immediate fulfillment of material desires. Generally, such people do not go to the Supreme

Personality of Godhead, because they are in particular modes of nature (ignorance and passion) and therefore worship various demigods. Following the rules and regulations of worship, they are satisfied. The worshipers of demigods are motivated by small desires and do not know how to reach the supreme goal, but a devotee of the Supreme Lord is not misguided. Because in Vedic literature there are recommendations for worshiping different gods for different purposes (e.g., a diseased man is recommended to worship the sun), those who are not devotees of the Lord think that for certain purposes demigods are better than the Supreme Lord. But a pure devotee knows that the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa is the master of all. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is said that only the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is master and all others are servants. Therefore a pure devotee never goes to demigods for satisfaction of his material needs. He depends on the Supreme Lord. And the pure devotee is satisfied with whatever He gives.

TEXT 21

*yo yo yām yām tanum bhaktaḥ
śraddhayārcitum icchati
tasya tasyācalām śraddhām
tām eva vidadhāmy aham*

SYNONYMS

yaḥ-that; *yaḥ*-that; *yām*-which; *yām*-which; *tanum*-form of the demigods; *bhaktaḥ*-devotee; *śraddhayā*-with faith; *arcitum*-to worship; *icchati*-desires; *tasya*-of that; *tasya*-of that; *acalām*-steady; *śraddhām*-faith; *tām*-him; *eva*-surely; *vidadhāmi*-give; *aham*-I.

TRANSLATION

I am in everyone's heart as the Supersoul. As soon as one desires to worship the demigods, I make his faith steady so that he can devote himself to some particular deity.

PURPORT

God has given independence to everyone; therefore, if a person desires to have material enjoyment and wants very sincerely to have such facilities from the material demigods, the Supreme Lord, as Supersoul in everyone's heart, understands and gives facilities to such persons. As the supreme father of all living entities, He does not interfere with their independence, but gives all facilities so that they can fulfill their material desires. Some may ask why the all-powerful God gives facilities to the living entities for enjoying this material world and so lets them fall into the trap of the illusory energy. The answer is that if the Supreme Lord as Supersoul does not give such facilities, then there is no meaning to independence. Therefore He gives everyone full independence-whatever one likes-but His ultimate instruction we find in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: man should give up all other engagements and fully surrender unto Him. That will make man happy.

Both the living entity and the demigods are subordinate to the will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; therefore the living entity cannot worship the demigod by his own desire, nor can the demigod bestow any benediction without the supreme will. As it is said, not a blade of grass moves without the will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Generally, persons who are distressed in the material world go to the demigods, as they are advised in the Vedic literature. A person wanting some particular thing may worship such and such a demigod. For example, a diseased person is recommended to worship the sun-god; a person wanting education may worship the goddess of learning, Sarasvatī; and a person wanting a beautiful wife may worship the goddess Umā, the wife of Lord Śiva. In this way there are recommendations in the *śāstras* (Vedic scriptures) for different modes of worship of different demigods. And because a particular living entity wants to enjoy a particular material facility, the Lord inspires him with a strong desire to achieve that benediction from that particular demigod, and so he successfully receives the benediction. The particular mode of the devotional attitude of the living entity toward a particular type of demigod is also arranged by the Supreme Lord. The demigods cannot infuse the living entities with such an affinity, but because He is the Supreme Lord or the Supersoul who is present in the heart of all living entities, Kṛṣṇa gives impetus to man to worship certain demigods. The demigods are actually different parts of the universal body of the Supreme

Lord; therefore they have no independence. In the Vedic literature (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, First *Anuvāka*) it is stated: "The Supreme Personality of Godhead as Supersoul is also present within the heart of the demigod; therefore He arranges through the demigod to fulfill the desire of the living entity. But both the demigod and the living entity are dependant on the supreme will. They are not independant."

TEXT 22

*sa tayā śraddhayā yuktaḥ
tasyārādhanam īhate
labhate ca tataḥ kāmān
mayāiva vihitān hi tān*

SYNONYMS

saḥ-he; *tayā*-with that; *śraddhayā*-with faith; *yuktaḥ*-endowed; *tasya*-his; *ārādhanam*-worship; *īhate*-seeks; *labhate*-obtains; *ca*-and; *tataḥ*-from which; *kāmān*-desires; *mayā*-by Me; *eva*-alone; *vihitān*-regulated; *hi*-for; *tān*-those.

TRANSLATION

Endowed with such a faith, he seeks favors of a particular demigod and obtains his desires. But in actuality these benefits are bestowed by Me alone.

PURPORT

The demigods cannot award benediction to the devotees without the permission of the Supreme Lord. The living entity may forget that everything is the property of the Supreme Lord, but the demigods do not forget. So the worship of demigods and achievement of desired results are not due to the demigods but to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by arrangement. The less intelligent living entity does not know this, and therefore he foolishly goes to the demigods for some benefit. But the pure devotee, when in need of something, prays only to the Supreme Lord.

Asking for material benefit, however, is not a sign of a pure devotee. A living entity goes to the demigods usually because he is mad to fulfill his lust. This happens when something undue is desired by the living entity, and the Lord Himself does not fulfill the desire. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is said that one who worships the Supreme Lord and at the same time desires material enjoyment is contradictory in his desires. Devotional service of the Supreme Lord and the worship of a demigod cannot be on the same platform because worship of a demigod is material and devotional service to the Supreme Lord is completely spiritual.

For the living entity who desires to return to Godhead, material desires are impediments. A pure devotee of the Lord is therefore not awarded the material benefits desired by less intelligent living entities who prefer to worship demigods of the material world rather than engage in devotional service of the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 23

*antavat tu phalaṁ teṣāṁ
tad bhavaty alpa-medhasām
devān deva-yajo yānti
mad-bhaktā yānti mām api*

SYNONYMS

antavat tu-limited and temporary; *phalam*-fruits; *teṣām*-their; *tat*-that; *bhavati*-becomes; *alpa-medhasām*-of those of small intelligence; *devān*-demigods' planets; *deva-yajāḥ*-worshippers of demigods; *yānti*-achieve; *mat*-My; *bhaktāḥ*-devotees; *yānti*-attain; *mām*-unto Me; *api*-surely.

TRANSLATION

Men of small intelligence worship the demigods, and their fruits are limited and temporary. Those who worship the demigods go to the planets of the demigods, but My devotees ultimately reach My supreme planet.

PURPORT

Some commentators on the *Gītā* say that one who worships a demigod can reach the Supreme Lord, but here it is clearly stated that the worshipers of demigods go to the different planetary systems where various demigods are situated, just as a worshiper of the sun achieves the sun or a worshiper of the demigod of the moon achieves the moon. Similarly, if anyone wants to worship a demigod like Indra, he can attain that particular god's planet. It is not that everyone, regardless of whatever demigod is worshiped, will reach the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is denied here, for it is clearly stated that the worshipers of demigods go to different planets in the material world, but the devotee of the Supreme Lord goes directly to the supreme planet of the Personality of Godhead.

Here the point may be raised that if the demigods are different parts of the body of the Supreme Lord, then the same end should be achieved by worshiping them. However, worshipers of the demigods are less intelligent because they don't know to what part of the body food must be supplied. Some of them are so foolish that they claim that there are many parts and many ways to supply food. This isn't very sanguine. Can anyone supply food to the body through the ears or eyes? They do not know that these demigods are different parts of the universal body of the Supreme Lord, and in their ignorance they believe that each and every demigod is a separate God and a competitor of the Supreme Lord.

Not only are demigods parts of the Supreme Lord, but ordinary living entities are also. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated that the *brāhmaṇas* are the head of the Supreme Lord, the *kṣatriyas* are the arms, etc., and that all serve different functions. Regardless of the situation, if one knows that both the demigods and himself are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, his knowledge is perfect. But if he does not understand this, he achieves different planets where the demigods reside. This is not the same destination the devotee reaches.

The results achieved by the demigods' benedictions are perishable because within this material world the planets, the demigods and their worshipers are all perishable. Therefore it is clearly stated in this verse that all results achieved by worshiping demigods are perishable, and therefore

such worship is performed by the less intelligent living entity. Because the pure devotee engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness in devotional service of the Supreme Lord achieves eternal blissful existence that is full of knowledge, his achievements and those of the common worshiper of the demigods are different. The Supreme Lord is unlimited; His favor is unlimited; His mercy is unlimited. Therefore the mercy of the Supreme Lord upon His pure devotees is unlimited.

TEXT 24

*avyaktam vyaktim āpannam
manyante mām abuddhayaḥ
param bhāvam ajānanto
mamāvyayam anuttamam*

SYNONYMS

avyaktam-nonmanifested; *vyaktim*-personality; *āpannam*-achieved; *manyante*-think; *mām*-unto Me; *abuddhayaḥ*-less intelligent persons; *param*-supreme; *bhāvam*-state of being; *ajānantaḥ*-without knowing; *mama*-My; *avyayam*-imperishable; *anuttamam*-the finest.

TRANSLATION

Unintelligent men, who know Me not, think that I have assumed this form and personality. Due to their small knowledge, they do not know My higher nature, which is changeless and supreme.

PURPORT

Those who are worshipers of demigods have been described as less intelligent persons, and here the impersonalists are similarly described. Lord Kṛṣṇa in His personal form is here speaking before Arjuna, and still, due to ignorance, impersonalists argue that the Supreme Lord ultimately has no form. Yāmunācārya, a great devotee of the Lord in the disciplic succession from Rāmānujācārya, has written two very appropriate verses in this connection. He says, "My dear Lord, devotees like Vyāsadeva and

Nārada know You to be the Personality of Godhead. By understanding different Vedic literatures, one can come to know Your characteristics, Your form and Your activities, and one can thus understand that You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But those who are in the modes of passion and ignorance, the demons, the nondevotees, cannot understand You. They are unable to understand You. However expert such nondevotees may be in discussing *Vedānta* and the *Upaniṣads* and other Vedic literatures, it is not possible for them to understand the Personality of Godhead."

In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated that the Personality of Godhead cannot be understood simply by study of the *Vedānta* literature. Only by the mercy of the Supreme Lord can the Personality of the Supreme be known. Therefore in this verse it is clearly stated that not only the worshipers of the demigods are less intelligent, but those nondevotees who are engaged in *Vedānta* and speculation on Vedic literature without any tinge of true Kṛṣṇa consciousness are also less intelligent, and for them it is not possible to understand God's personal nature. Persons who are under the impression that the Absolute Truth is impersonal are described as *asuras*, which means one who does not know the ultimate feature of the Absolute Truth. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated that supreme realization begins from the impersonal Brahman and then rises to the localized Supersoul-but the ultimate word in the Absolute Truth is the Personality of Godhead. Modern impersonalists are still less intelligent, for they do not even follow their great predecessor, Śaṅkarācārya, who has specifically stated that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Impersonalists, therefore, not knowing the Supreme Truth, think Kṛṣṇa to be only the son of Devakī and Vasudeva, or a prince, or a powerful living entity. This is also condemned in *Bhagavad-gītā*: "Only the fools regard Me as an ordinary person." The fact is that no one can understand Kṛṣṇa without rendering devotional service and without developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The *Gītā* confirms this.

One cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, or His form, quality or name simply by mental speculation or by discussing Vedic literature. One must understand Him by devotional service. When one is fully engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, beginning by chanting the *mahāmantra*-Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare-then only can one understand the

Supreme Personality of Godhead. Nondevotee impersonalists think that Kṛṣṇa has a body made of this material nature and that all His activities, His form and everything, are *māyā*. These impersonalists are known as Māyāvādī. They do not know the ultimate truth.

The twentieth verse clearly states: "Those who are blinded by lusty desires surrender unto the different demigods." It is accepted that besides the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there are demigods who have their different planets (Bg. 7.23), and the Lord also has a planet. It is also stated that the worshipers of the demigods go to the different planets of the demigods, and those who are devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa go to the Kṛṣṇaloka planet. Although this is clearly stated, the foolish impersonalists still maintain that the Lord is formless and that these forms are impositions. From the study of the *Gītā* does it appear that the demigods and their abodes are impersonal? Clearly, neither the demigods nor Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are impersonal. They are all persons; Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and He has His own planet, and the demigods have theirs.

Therefore the monistic contention that ultimate truth is formless and that form is imposed does not hold true. It is clearly stated here that it is not imposed. From the *Gītā* we can clearly understand that the forms of the demigods and the form of the Supreme Lord are simultaneously existing and that Lord Kṛṣṇa is *sac-cid-ānanda*, eternal blissful knowledge. The *Vedas* also confirm that the Supreme Absolute Truth is *ānandamaya*, or full of blissful pleasure, and that He is *abhyāsāt*, by nature the reservoir of unlimited auspicious qualities. And in the *Gītā* the Lord says that although He is *aja* (unborn), He still appears. These are the facts that we should understand from the *Gītā*. We cannot understand how the Supreme Personality of Godhead can be impersonal; the imposition theory of the impersonalist monist is false as far as the statements of the *Gītā* are concerned. It is clear herein that the Supreme Absolute Truth, Lord Kṛṣṇa, has both form and personality.

TEXT 25

nāham prakāśaḥ sarvasya

yoga-māyā-samāvṛtaḥ
mūḍho 'yaṁ nābhijānāti
loko mām ajam avyayam

SYNONYMS

na-nor; *aham*-I; *prakāśaḥ*-manifest; *sarvasya*-to everyone; *yoga-māyā*-internal potency; *samāvṛtaḥ*-covered; *mūḍhaḥ*-foolish; *ayaṁ*-this; *na*-not; *abhijānāti*-can understand; *lokaḥ*-such less intelligent persons; *mām*-Me; *ajam*-unborn; *avyayam*-inexhaustible.

TRANSLATION

I am never manifest to the foolish and unintelligent. For them I am covered by My eternal creative potency [yoga-māyā]; and so the deluded world knows Me not, who am unborn and infallible.

PURPORT

It may be argued that since Kṛṣṇa was present on this earth and was visible to everyone, then why isn't He manifest to everyone now? But actually He was not manifest to everyone. When Kṛṣṇa was present there were only a few people who could understand Him to be the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the assembly of Kurus, when Śiśupāla spoke against Kṛṣṇa being elected president of the assembly, Bhīṣma supported Him and proclaimed Him to be the Supreme God. Similarly, the Pāṇḍavas and a few others knew that He was the Supreme, but not everyone. He was not revealed to the nondevotees and the common man. Therefore in the *Gītā* Kṛṣṇa says that but for His pure devotees, all men consider Him to be like themselves. He was manifest only to His devotees as the reservoir of all pleasure. But to others, to unintelligent nondevotees, He was covered by His eternal potency.

In the prayers of Kuntī in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.8.18), it is said that the Lord is covered by the curtain of *yoga-māyā* and thus ordinary people cannot understand Him. Kuntī prays: "O my Lord, You are the maintainer of the entire universe, and devotional service to You is the highest religious principle. Therefore, I pray that You will also maintain me. Your

transcendental form is covered by the *yoga-māyā*. The *brahmajyoti* is the covering of the internal potency. May You kindly remove this glowing effulgence that impedes my seeing Your *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*, Your eternal form of bliss and knowledge."

This *yoga-māyā* curtain is also mentioned in the Fifteenth Chapter of the *Gītā*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead in His transcendental form of bliss and knowledge is covered by the eternal potency of *brahmajyoti* and the less intelligent impersonalists cannot see the Supreme on this account. Also in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.7) there is this prayer by Brahmā: "O Supreme Personality of Godhead, O Supersoul, O master of all mystery, who can calculate Your potency and pastimes in this world? You are always expanding Your eternal potency, and therefore no one can understand You. Learned scientists and learned scholars can examine the atomic constitution of the material world or even the planets, but still they are unable to calculate Your energy and potency, although You are present before them." The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, is not only unborn, but He is *avyaya*, inexhaustible. His eternal form is bliss and knowledge, and His energies are all inexhaustible.

TEXT 26

*vedāham samatītāni
vartamānāni cārjuna
bhaviṣyāṇi ca bhūtāni
mām tu veda na kaścana*

SYNONYMS

veda-know; *aham*-I; *sama*-equally; *atītāni*-past; *vartamānāni*-present; *ca*-and; *arjuna*-O Arjuna; *bhaviṣyāṇi*-future; *ca*-also; *bhūtāni*-living entities; *mām*-Me; *tu*-but; *veda*-knows; *na*-not; *kaścana*-anyone.

TRANSLATION

O Arjuna, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I know everything that has happened in the past, all that is happening in the

present, and all things that are yet to come. I also know all living entities; but Me no one knows.

PURPORT

Here the question of personality and impersonality is clearly stated. If Kṛṣṇa, the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is considered by the impersonalists to be *māyā*, to be material, then He would, like the living entity, change His body and forget everything in His past life. Anyone with a material body cannot remember his past life, nor can he foretell his future life, nor can he predict the outcome of his present life; therefore he cannot know what is happening in past, present and future. Unless one is liberated from material contamination, he cannot know past, present and future.

Unlike the ordinary human being, Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly says that He completely knows what happened in the past, what is happening in the present, and what will happen in the future. In the Fourth Chapter we have seen that Lord Kṛṣṇa remembers instructing Vivasvān, the sun-god, millions of years ago. Kṛṣṇa knows every living entity because He is situated in every living being's heart as the Supreme Soul. But despite His presence in every living entity as Supersoul and His presence beyond the material sky, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the less intelligent cannot realize Him as the Supreme Person. Certainly the transcendental body of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not perishable. He is just like the sun, and *mayā* is like the cloud. In the material world we can see that there is the sun and that there are clouds and different stars and planets. The clouds may cover all these in the sky temporarily, but this covering is only apparent to our limited vision. The sun, moon and stars are not actually covered. Similarly, *māyā* cannot cover the Supreme Lord. By His internal potency He is not manifest to the less intelligent class of men. As it is stated in the third verse of this chapter, out of millions and millions of men, some try to become perfect in this human form of life, and out of thousands and thousands of such perfected men, hardly one can understand what Lord Kṛṣṇa is. Even if one is perfected by realization of impersonal Brahman or localized Paramātmā, he cannot possibly understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, without being in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 27

*icchā-dveṣa-samutthena
dvandva-mohena bhārata
sarva-bhūtāni sammohaṁ
sarge yānti parantapa*

SYNONYMS

icchā-desire; *dveṣa*-hate; *samutthena*-born; *dvandva*-duality; *mohena*-overcome; *bhārata*-O scion of Bharata; *sarva*-all; *bhūtāni*-living entities; *sammohaṁ*-into delusion; *sarge*-in creation; *yānti*-go; *parantapa*-O conquerer of enemies.

TRANSLATION

O scion of Bharata [Arjuna], O conquerer of the foe, all living entities are born into delusion, overcome by the dualities of desire and hate.

PURPORT

The real constitutional position of the living entity is that of subordination to the Supreme Lord, who is pure knowledge. When one is deluded into separation from this pure knowledge, he becomes controlled by illusory energy and cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The illusory energy is manifested in the duality of desire and hate. Due to desire and hate, the ignorant person wants to become one with the Supreme Lord and envies Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Pure devotees, who are not so deluded or contaminated by desire and hate, can understand that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa appears by His internal potencies, but those who are deluded by duality and nescience think that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is created by material energies. This is their misfortune. Such deluded persons, symptomatically, dwell in dualities of dishonor and honor, misery and happiness, woman and man, good and bad, pleasure and pain, etc., thinking, "This is my wife; this is my house; I am the master of this house; I am the husband of this wife." These are the

dualities of delusion. Those who are so deluded by dualities are completely foolish and therefore cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 28

*yeṣām tv anta-gataṁ pāpaṁ
janānām puṇya-karmaṇām
te dvandva-moha-nirmuktā
bhajante mām dṛḍha-vratāḥ*

SYNONYMS

yeṣām-whose; *tu*-but; *anta-gataṁ*-completely eradicated; *pāpaṁ*-sin; *janānām*-of the persons; *puṇya*-pious; *karmaṇām*-previous activities; *te*-they; *dvandva*-duality; *moha*-delusion; *nirmuktāḥ*-free from; *bhajante*-worship; *mām*-Me; *dṛḍha-vratāḥ*-with determination.

TRANSLATION

Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of delusion, engage themselves in My service with determination.

PURPORT

Those eligible for elevation to the transcendental position are mentioned in this verse. For those who are sinful, atheistic, foolish and deceitful, it is very difficult to transcend the duality of desire and hate. Only those who have passed their lives in practicing the regulative principles of religion, who have acted piously and have conquered sinful reactions can accept devotional service and gradually rise to the pure knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then, gradually, they can meditate in trance on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is the process of being situated on the spiritual platform. This elevation is possible in Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the association of pure devotees who can deliver one from delusion.

It is stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that if one actually wants to be liberated he must render service to the devotees; but one who associates with materialistic people is on the path leading to the darkest region of existence. All the devotees of the Lord traverse this earth just to recover the conditioned souls from their delusion. The impersonalists do not know that forgetting their constitutional position as subordinate to the Supreme Lord is the greatest violation of God's law. Unless one is reinstated in his own constitutional position, it is not possible to understand the Supreme Personality or to be fully engaged in His transcendental loving service with determination.

TEXT 29

*jarā-maraṇa-mokṣāya
mām āśritya yatanti ye
te brahma tad viduḥ kṛtsnam
adhyātmam karma cākhilam*

SYNONYMS

jarā-old age; *maraṇa*-death; *mokṣāya*-for the purpose of liberation; *mām*-unto Me; *āśritya*-taking shelter of; *yatanti*-endeavor; *ye*-all those; *te*-such persons; *brahma*-Brahman; *tad*-actually that; *viduḥ*-they know; *kṛtsnam*-everything; *adhyātmam*-transcendental; *karma*-fruitive activities; *ca*-also; *akhilam*-entirely.

TRANSLATION

Intelligent persons who are endeavoring for liberation from old age and death take refuge in Me in devotional service. They are actually Brahman because they entirely know everything about transcendental and fruitive activities.

PURPORT

Birth, death, old age and diseases affect this material body, but not the spiritual body. There is no birth, death, old age and disease for the spiritual

body, so one who attains a spiritual body, becomes one of the associates of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and engages in eternal devotional service, is really liberated. *Ahaṁ brahmāsmi*: I am spirit. It is said that one should understand that he is Brahman-spirit soul. This Brahman conception of life is also in devotional service, as described in this verse. The pure devotees are transcendently situated on the Brahman platform, and they know everything about transcendental and material activities.

Four kinds of impure devotees who engage themselves in the transcendental service of the Lord achieve their respective goals, and by the grace of the Supreme Lord, when they are fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, they actually enjoy spiritual association with the Supreme Lord. But those who are worshipers of demigods never reach the Supreme Lord in His supreme planet. Even the less intelligent Brahman-realized persons cannot reach the supreme planet of Kṛṣṇa known as Goloka Vṛndāvana. Only persons who perform activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness (*mām āśritya*) are actually entitled to be called Brahman, because they are actually endeavoring to reach the Kṛṣṇa planet. Such persons have no misgivings about Kṛṣṇa, and thus they are factually Brahman.

Those who are engaged in worshiping the form or *arcā* of the Lord or who are engaged in meditation on the Lord simply for liberation from material bondage, also know, by the grace of the Lord, the purports of Brahman, *adhibhūta*, etc., as explained by the Lord in the next chapter.

TEXT 30

*sādhībhūtādhidaivam mām
sādhiyajñam ca ye viduḥ
prayāṇa-kāle 'pi ca mām
te vidur yukta-cetasah*

SYNONYMS

sa-adhibhūta-the governing principle of the material manifestation;
adhidaivam-underlying all the demigods; *mām*-Me; *sa-adhiyajñam*-sustaining all sacrifices; *ca*-and; *ye*-those; *viduḥ*-know; *prayāṇa*-of death;

kāle-at the time; *api*-even; *ca*-and; *mām*-Me; *te*-they; *viduḥ*-know; *yukta-cetasah*-with steadfast mind.

TRANSLATION

Those who know Me as the Supreme Lord, as the governing principle of the material manifestation, who know Me as the one underlying all the demigods and as the one sustaining all sacrifices, can, with steadfast mind, understand and know Me even at the time of death.

PURPORT

Persons acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are never entirely deviated from the path of understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the transcendental association of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can understand how the Supreme Lord is the governing principle of the material manifestation and even of the demigods. Gradually, by such transcendental association, one becomes convinced of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, and at the time of death such a Kṛṣṇa conscious person can never forget Kṛṣṇa. Naturally he is thus promoted to the planet of the Supreme Lord, Goloka Vṛndāvana.

This Seventh Chapter particularly explains how one can become a fully Kṛṣṇa conscious person. The beginning of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is association of persons who are Kṛṣṇa conscious. Such association is spiritual and puts one directly in touch with the Supreme Lord, and, by His grace, one can understand Kṛṣṇa to be the Supreme God. At the same time one can really understand the constitutional position of the living entity and how the living entity forgets Kṛṣṇa and becomes entangled in material activities. By gradual development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in good association, the living entity can understand that due to forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa he has become conditioned by the laws of material nature. He can also understand that this human form of life is an opportunity to regain Kṛṣṇa consciousness and that it should be fully utilized to attain the causeless mercy of the Supreme Lord.

Many subjects have been discussed in this chapter: the man in distress, the inquisitive man, the man in want of material necessities, knowledge of Brahman, knowledge of Paramātmā, liberation from birth, death and diseases, and worship of the Supreme Lord. However, he who is actually elevated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness does not care for the different processes. He simply directly engages himself in activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and thereby factually attains his constitutional position as eternal servitor of Lord Kṛṣṇa. In such a situation he takes pleasure in hearing and glorifying the Supreme Lord in pure devotional service. He is convinced that by doing so, all his objectives will be fulfilled. This determined faith is called *dr̥ḍha-vrata*, and it is the beginning of *bhakti-yoga* or transcendental loving service. That is the verdict of all scriptures. This Seventh Chapter of the *Gītā* is the substance of that conviction.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the Seventh Chapter of the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of Knowledge of the Absolute.

8. Attaining the Supreme

TEXT 1

arjuna uvāca
kiṁ tad brahma kim adhyātmam
kiṁ karma puruṣottama
adhibhūtam ca kiṁ proktam
adhidaivam kim ucyate

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca-Arjuna said; *kim*-what; *tad*-that; *brahma*-Brahman; *kim*-what; *adhyātmam*-the self; *kiṁ*-what; *karma*-fruitive activities; *puruṣottama*-O Supreme Person; *adhibhūtam*-the material manifestation; *ca*-and; *kim*-what; *proktam*-is called; *adhidaivam*-the demigods; *kim*-what; *ucyate*-is called.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna inquired: O my Lord, O Supreme Person, what is Brahman? What is the self? What are fruitive activities? What is this material manifestation? And what are the demigods? Please explain this to me.

PURPORT

In this chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa answers these different questions of Arjuna beginning with, "What is Brahman?" The Lord also explains *karma*, fruitive activities, devotional service and *yoga* principles, and devotional service in its pure form. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* explains that the Supreme Absolute Truth is known as Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān. In addition, the living entity, individual soul, is also called Brahman. Arjuna also inquires

about *ātmā*, which refers to body, soul and mind. According to the Vedic dictionary, *ātmā* refers to the mind, soul, body and senses also.

Arjuna has addressed the Supreme Lord as *Puruṣottama*, Supreme Person, which means that he was putting these questions not simply to a friend but to the Supreme Person, knowing Him to be the supreme authority able to give definitive answers.

TEXT 2

*adhiyajñāḥ katham ko 'tra
dehe 'smin madhusūdana
prayāṇa-kāle ca katham
jñeyo 'si niyatātmabhiḥ*

SYNONYMS

adhiyajñāḥ-the Lord of sacrifice; *katham*-how; *kaḥ*-who; *atra*-here; *dehe*-in the body; *asmin*-in this; *madhusūdana*-O Madhusūdana; *prayāṇa-kāle*-at the time of death; *ca*-and; *katham*-how; *jñeyah*-be known; *asi*-You can; *niyata-ātmabhiḥ*-by the self-controlled.

TRANSLATION

How does this Lord of sacrifice live in the body, and in which part does He live, O Madhusūdana? And how can those engaged in devotional service know You at the time of death?

PURPORT

The Lord of sacrifice accepts Indra and Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu is the chief of the primal demigods, including Brahmā and Śiva, and Indra is the chief of the administrative demigods. Both Indra and Viṣṇu are worshiped by *yajña* performances. But here Arjuna asks who is actually the Lord of *yajña* (sacrifice), and how is the Lord residing within the body of the living entity.

Arjuna addresses the Lord as Madhusūdana because Kṛṣṇa once killed a demon named Madhu. Actually these questions, which are of the nature of doubts, should not have arisen in the mind of Arjuna because Arjuna is a

Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee. Therefore these doubts are like demons. Since Kṛṣṇa is so expert in killing demons, Arjuna here addresses Him as Madhusūdāna so that Kṛṣṇa might kill the demonic doubts that arise in Arjuna's mind.

Now the word *prayāṇa-kāle* in this verse is very significant because whatever we do in life will be tested at the time of death. Arjuna fears that at the time of death, those who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness will forget the Supreme Lord because at such a time body functions are disrupted and the mind may be in a panic-stricken state. Therefore Mahārāja Kulaśekhara, a great devotee, prays, "My dear Lord, may I die immediately now that I'm healthy so that the swan of my mind may enter into the stem of Thy lotus feet." This metaphor is used because the swan often takes pleasure in entering the stem of the lotus flower-similarly, the mind of the pure devotee is drawn to the lotus feet of the Lord. Mahārāja Kulaśekhara fears that at the moment of death his throat will be so choked up that he will not be able to chant the holy names, so it is better to "die immediately." Arjuna questions how one's mind can remain fixed on Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet at such times.

TEXT 3

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
akṣaram brahma paramam
svabhāvo 'dhyātmam ucyate
bhūta-bhāvodbhava-karo
visargaḥ karma-saṁjñitaḥ

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavān uvāca-the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *akṣaram*-indestructible; *brahma*-Brahman; *paramam*-transcendental; *svabhāvaḥ*-eternal nature; *adhyātmam*-the self; *ucyate*-is called; *bhūta-bhāva-udbhava-karaḥ*-action producing the material bodies of the living entities; *visargaḥ*-creation; *karma*-fruitive activities; *saṁjñitaḥ*-is called.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord said, The indestructible, transcendental living entity is called Brahman, and his eternal nature is called the self. Action pertaining to the development of these material bodies is called karma, or fruitive activities.

PURPORT

Brahman is indestructible and eternally existing, and its constitution is not changed at any time. But beyond Brahman there is Parabrahman. Brahman refers to the living entity, and Parabrahman refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The constitutional position of the living entity is different from the position he takes in the material world. In material consciousness, his nature is to try to be the lord of matter, but in spiritual (Kṛṣṇa) consciousness, his position is to serve the Supreme. When the living entity is in material consciousness, he has to take on various bodies in the material world. That is called *karma*, or varied creation by the force of material consciousness.

In Vedic literature the living entity is called *jīvātmā* and Brahman, but he is never called Parabrahman. The living entity (*jīvātmā*) takes different positions-sometimes he merges into the dark material nature and identifies himself with matter, and sometimes he identifies himself with the superior spiritual nature. Therefore he is called the Supreme Lord's marginal energy. According to his identification with material or spiritual nature, he receives a material or spiritual body. In material nature he may take a body from any of the 8,400,000 species of life, but in spiritual nature he has only one body. In material nature he is sometimes manifested as a man, demigod, an animal, a beast, bird, etc., according to his *karma*. To attain material heavenly planets and enjoy their facilities, he sometimes performs sacrifices (*yajña*), but when his merit is exhausted, he returns to earth again in the form of a man.

In the process of sacrifice, the living entity makes specific sacrifices to attain specific heavenly planets and consequently reaches them. When the merit of sacrifice is exhausted, then the living entity descends to earth in the form of rain, then takes on the form of grains, and the grains are eaten by man and transformed into semen, which impregnates a woman, and thus the living entity once again attains the human form to perform sacrifice and so

repeat the same cycle. In this way, the living entity perpetually comes and goes on the material path. The Kṛṣṇa conscious person, however, avoids such sacrifices. He takes directly to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and thereby prepares himself to return to Godhead.

Impersonalist commentators on the *Gītā* unreasonably assume that Brahman takes the form of *jīva* in the material world, and to substantiate this they refer to Chapter Fifteen, verse 7, of the *Gītā*. But this verse also speaks of the living entity as "an eternal fragment of Myself." The fragment of God, the living entity, may fall down into the material world, but the Supreme Lord (*Acyuta*) never falls down. Therefore this assumption that the Supreme Brahman assumes the form of *jīva* is not acceptable. It is important to remember that in Vedic literature Brahman (the living entity) is distinguished from Parabrahman (the Supreme Lord).

TEXT 4

*adhibhūtaṁ kṣaro bhāvaḥ
puruṣaś cādhidaivatam
adhiyajñō 'ham evātra
dehe deha-bhṛtām vara*

SYNONYMS

adhibhūtam-the physical manifestation; *kṣaraḥ*-constantly changing; *bhāvaḥ*-nature; *puruṣaḥ*-the universal form; *ca*-and; *adhidaivatam*-including all demigods like the sun and moon; *adhiyajñaḥ*-the Supersoul; *aham*-I (Kṛṣṇa); *eva*-certainly; *atra*-in this; *dehe*-body; *deha-bhṛtām*-of the embodied; *vara*-the Supreme.

TRANSLATION

Physical nature is known to be endlessly mutable. The universe is the cosmic form of the Supreme Lord, and I am that Lord represented as the Supersoul, dwelling in the heart of every embodied being.

PURPORT

The physical nature is constantly changing. Material bodies generally pass through six stages: they are born, they grow, they remain for some duration, they produce some by-products, they dwindle, and then they vanish. This physical nature is called *adhibhūtam*. Because it is created at a certain point and will be annihilated at a certain point, the conception of the universal form of the Supreme Lord that includes all the demigods and their different planets is called *adhidaivatam*. The individual soul (*jīva*) accompanies the body. The Supersoul, a plenary representation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, is called the Paramātmā or *adhiyajña* and is situated in the heart. The word *eva* is particularly important in the context of this verse because by this word the Lord stresses that the Paramātmā is not different from Him. The Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, seated beside the individual soul, is the witness of the individual soul's activities and is the source of consciousness. The Supersoul gives the *jīva* an opportunity to act freely, and He witnesses his activities. The functions of all these different manifestations of the Supreme Lord automatically become clarified for the pure Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee engaged in transcendental service of the Lord. The gigantic universal form of the Lord called *adhidaivatam* is contemplated by the neophyte who cannot approach the Supreme Lord in His manifestation as Supersoul. The neophyte is advised to contemplate the universal form whose legs are considered the lowest planets and whose eyes are considered the sun and moon, and whose head is considered the upper planetary system.

TEXT 5

*anta-kāle ca mām eva
smaran muktvā kalevaram
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvaṁ
yāti nāsty atra saṁśayaḥ*

SYNONYMS

anta-kāle-at the end of life; *ca*-also; *mām*-unto Me; *eva*-certainly; *smaran*-remembering; *muktvā*-quitting; *kalevaram*-the body; *yaḥ*-he who; *prayāti*-

goes; *sah*-he; *mad-bhāvam*-My nature; *yati*-achieves; *na*-not; *asti*-there is; *atra*-here; *saṁśayaḥ*-doubt.

TRANSLATION

And whoever, at the time of death, quits his body, remembering Me alone, at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt.

PURPORT

In this verse the importance of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is stressed. Anyone who quits his body in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is at once transferred to the transcendental abode of the Supreme Lord. The word *smaran* (remembering) is important. Remembrance of Kṛṣṇa is not possible for the impure soul who has not practiced Kṛṣṇa consciousness in devotional service. To remember Kṛṣṇa one should chant the *mahāmantra*, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, incessantly, following in the footsteps of Lord Caitanya, being more tolerant than the tree, humbler than the grass and offering all respect to others without requiring respect in return. In such a way one will be able to depart from the body successfully remembering Kṛṣṇa and so attain the supreme goal.

TEXT 6

*yam yam vāpi smaran bhāvam
tyajaty ante kalevaram
tam tam evaiti kaunteya
sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitāḥ*

SYNONYMS

yam yam-whatever; *vā*-either; *api*-also; *smaran*-remembering; *bhāvam*-nature; *tyajati*-give up; *ante*-at the end; *kalevaram*-this body; *tam tam*-similar; *eva*-certainly; *eti*-gets; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *sadā*-always; *tat*-that; *bhāva*-state of being; *bhāvitāḥ*-remembering.

TRANSLATION

Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, that state he will attain without fail.

PURPORT

The process of changing one's nature at the critical moment of death is here explained. How can one die in the proper state of mind? Mahārāja Bharata thought of a deer at the time of death and so was transferred to that form of life. However, as a deer, Mahārāja Bharata could remember his past activities. Of course the cumulative effect of the thoughts and actions of one's life influences one's thoughts at the moment of death; therefore the actions of this life determine one's future state of being. If one is transcendently absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's service, then his next body will be transcendental (spiritual), not physical. Therefore the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa is the best process for successfully changing one's state of being to transcendental life.

TEXT 7

*tasmāt sarveṣu kālēṣu
mām anusmara yudhya ca
mayy arpita-mano-buddhir
mām evaiṣyasy asaṁśayaḥ*

SYNONYMS

tasmāt-therefore; *sarveṣu*-always; *kālēṣu*-time; *mām*-unto Me; *anusmara*-go on remembering; *yudhya*-fight; *ca*-also; *mayi*-unto Me; *arpita*-surrender; *manaḥ*-mind; *buddhiḥ*-intellect; *mām*-unto Me; *eva*-surely; *eṣyasi*-will attain; *asaṁśayaḥ*-beyond a doubt.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, Arjuna, you should always think of Me in the form of Kṛṣṇa and at the same time carry out your prescribed duty of fighting.

With your activities dedicated to Me and your mind and intelligence fixed on Me, you will attain Me without doubt.

PURPORT

This instruction to Arjuna is very important for all men engaged in material activities. The Lord does not say that one should give up his prescribed duties or engagements. One can continue them and at the same time think of Kṛṣṇa by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. This will free one from material contamination and engage the mind and intelligence in Kṛṣṇa. By chanting Kṛṣṇa's names, one will be transferred to the supreme planet, Kṛṣṇaloka, without a doubt.

TEXT 8

*abhyāsa-yoga-yuktena
cetasā nānya-gāminā
paramam puruṣam divyam
yāti pārthānucintayan*

SYNONYMS

abhyāsa-practice; *yoga-yuktena*-being engaged in meditation; *cetasā*-by the mind and intelligence; *na anya-gāminā*-without being deviated; *paramam*-the Supreme; *puruṣam*-Personality of Godhead; *divyam*-transcendental; *yāti*-achieves; *pārtha*-O son of Pṛthā; *anucintayan*-constantly thinking of.

TRANSLATION

He who meditates on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, his mind constantly engaged in remembering Me, undeviated from the path, he, O Pārtha [Arjuna], is sure to reach Me.

PURPORT

In this verse Lord Kṛṣṇa stresses the importance of remembering Him. One's memory of Kṛṣṇa is revived by chanting the *mahāmantra*, Hare Kṛṣṇa. By this practice of chanting and hearing the sound vibration of the

Supreme Lord, one's ear, tongue and mind are engaged. This mystic meditation is very easy to practice, and it helps one attain the Supreme Lord. *Puruṣam* means enjoyer. Although living entities belong to the marginal energy of the Supreme Lord, they are in material contamination. They think themselves enjoyers, but they are not the supreme enjoyer. Here it is clearly stated that the supreme enjoyer is the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His different manifestations and plenary expansions as Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva, etc.

The devotees can constantly think of the object of worship, the Supreme Lord, in any of His features, Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, etc., by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. This practice will purify him, and at the end of his life, due to his constant chanting, he will be transferred to the kingdom of God. *Yoga* practice is meditation on the Supersoul within; similarly, by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa one fixes his mind always on the Supreme Lord. The mind is fickle, and therefore it is necessary to engage the mind by force to think of Kṛṣṇa. One example often given is that of the caterpillar that thinks of becoming a butterfly and so is transformed into a butterfly in the same life. Similarly, if we constantly think of Kṛṣṇa, it is certain that at the end of our lives we shall have the same bodily constitution as Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 9

*kaviṁ purāṇam anuśāsītāram
aṇor aṇīyāṁsam anusmared yaḥ
sarvasya dhātāram acintya-rūpam
āditya-varṇam tamasaḥ parastāt*

SYNONYMS

kaviṁ-one who knows everything; *purāṇam*-the oldest; *anuśāsītāram*-the controller; *aṇor*-of the atom; *aṇīyāṁsam*-smaller than; *anusmaret*-always thinking; *yaḥ*-one who; *sarvasya*-of everything; *dhātāram*-maintainer; *acintya*-inconceivable; *rūpam*-form; *āditya-varṇam*-illuminated like the sun; *tamasaḥ*-of the darkness; *parastāt*-transcendental.

TRANSLATION

One should meditate upon the Supreme Person as the one who knows everything, as He who is the oldest, who is the controller, who is smaller than the smallest, who is the maintainer of everything, who is beyond all material conception, who is inconceivable, and who is always a person. He is luminous like the sun and, being transcendental, is beyond this material nature.

PURPORT

The process of thinking of the Supreme is mentioned in this verse. The foremost point is that He is not impersonal or void. One cannot meditate on something impersonal or void. That is very difficult. The process of thinking of Kṛṣṇa, however, is very easy and is factually stated herein. First of all, He is *puruṣa*, spiritual, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, and is described herein as *kavim*; that is, He knows past, present and future and therefore knows everything. He is the oldest personality because He is the origin of everything; everything is born out of Him. He is also the supreme controller of the universe, maintainer and instructor of humanity. He is smaller than the smallest. The living entity is one 10,000th part of the tip of a hair, but the Lord is so inconceivably small that He enters into the heart of this particle. Therefore He is called smaller than the smallest. As the Supreme, He can enter into the atom and into the heart of the smallest and control him as the Supersoul. Although so small, He is still all-pervading and is maintaining everything. By Him all these planetary systems are sustained. We often wonder how these big planets are floating in the air. It is stated here that the Supreme Lord, by His inconceivable energy, is sustaining all these big planets and systems of galaxies. The word *acintya* (inconceivable) is very significant in this connection. God's energy is beyond our conception, beyond our thinking jurisdiction, and is therefore called inconceivable (*acintya*). Who can argue this point? He pervades this material world and yet is beyond it. We cannot even comprehend this material world, which is insignificant compared to the spiritual world-so how can we comprehend what is beyond? *Acintya* means that which is beyond this material world, that which our argument, logic and philosophical speculation cannot touch, that which is inconceivable. Therefore intelligent persons, avoiding useless argument and speculation,

should accept what is stated in scriptures like the *Vedas*, *Gītā*, and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and follow the principles they set down. This will lead one to understanding.

TEXT 10

*prayāṇa-kāle manasācalena
bhaktyā yukto yoga-balena caiva
bhruvor madhye prāṇam āveśya samyak
sa taṁ param puruṣam upaiti divyam*

SYNONYMS

prayāṇa-kāle-at the time of death; *manasā*-by the mind; *acalena*-without being deviated; *bhaktyā*-in full devotion; *yuktaḥ*-engaged; *yoga-balena*-by the power of mystic *yoga*; *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *bhruvor*-between the two eyebrows; *madhye*-in; *prāṇam*-the life air; *āveśya*-establishing; *samyak*-completely; *saḥ*-he; *taṁ*-that; *param*-transcendental; *puruṣam*-Personality of Godhead; *upaiti*-achieves; *divyam*-in the spiritual kingdom.

TRANSLATION

One who, at the time of death, fixes his life air between the eyebrows and in full devotion engages himself in remembering the Supreme Lord, will certainly attain to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

In this verse it is clearly stated that at the time of death the mind must be fixed in devotion on the Supreme Godhead. For those practiced in *yoga*, it is recommended that they raise the life force between the eyebrows, but for a pure devotee who does not practice such *yoga*, the mind should always be engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness so that at death he can remember the Supreme by His grace. This is explained in verse fourteen.

The particular use of the word *yoga-balena* is significant in this verse because without practice of *yoga* one cannot come to this transcendental state of being at the time of death. One cannot suddenly remember the

Supreme Lord at death unless he is practiced in some *yoga* system, especially the system of *bhakti-yoga*. Since one's mind at death is very disturbed, one should practice transcendence through *yoga* during one's life.

TEXT 11

*yad akṣaram veda-vido vadanti
viśanti yad yatayo vīta-rāgāḥ
yad icchanto brahmacaryam caranti
tat te padam saṅgrahaṇa pravakṣye*

SYNONYMS

yat-that which; *akṣaram*-inexhaustible; *veda-vidaḥ*-a person conversant with the *Vedas*; *vadanti*-say; *viśanti*-enters; *yat*-in which; *yatayaḥ*-great sages; *vīta-rāgāḥ*-in the renounced order of life; *yat*-that which; *icchantāḥ*-desiring; *brahmacaryam*-celibacy; *caranti*-practices; *tat*-that; *te*-unto you; *padam*-situation; *saṅgrahaṇa*-in summary; *pravakṣye*-I shall explain.

TRANSLATION

Persons learned in the Vedas, who utter omkāra and who are great sages in the renounced order, enter into Brahman. Desiring such perfection, one practices celibacy. I shall now explain to you this process by which one may attain salvation.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa explains that Brahman, although one without a second, has different manifestations and features. For the impersonalists, the syllable *om* is identical with Brahman. Kṛṣṇa here explains the impersonal Brahman in which the renounced order of sages enter.

In the Vedic system of knowledge, students, from the very beginning, are taught to vibrate *om* and learn of the ultimate impersonal Brahman by living with the spiritual master in complete celibacy. In this way they realize two of Brahman's features. This practice is very essential for the student's advancement in spiritual life, but at the moment such *brahmacārī*

(unmarried celibate) life is not at all possible. The social construction of the world has changed so much that there is no possibility of one's practicing celibacy from the beginning of student life. Throughout the world there are many institutions for different departments of knowledge, but there is no recognized institution where students can be educated in the *brahmacārī* principles. Unless one practices celibacy, advancement in spiritual life is very difficult. Therefore Lord Caitanya has announced, according to the scriptural injunctions for this age of Kali, that no process of realizing the Supreme is possible except the chanting of the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare, Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

TEXT 12

*sarva-dvārāṇi saṁyamya
mano hṛdi nirudhya ca
mūrdhny ādhāyātmanah prāṇam
āsthito yoga-dhāraṇām*

SYNONYMS

sarva-dvārāṇi-all the doors of the body; *saṁyamya*-controlling; *manah*-mind; *hṛdi*-in the heart; *nirudhya*-confined; *ca*-also; *mūrdhni*-on the head; *ādhāya*-fixed; *ātmanah*-soul; *prāṇam*-the life air; *āsthitah*-situated; *yoga-dhāraṇām*-the yogic situation.

TRANSLATION

The yogic situation is that of detachment from all sensual engagements. Closing all the doors of the senses and fixing the mind on the heart and the life air at the top of the head, one establishes himself in yoga.

PURPORT

To practice *yoga*, as suggested here, one first has to close the door of all sense enjoyment. This practice is called *pratyāhāra*, or withdrawing the

senses from the sense objects. Sense organs for acquiring knowledge, such as the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and touch, should be fully controlled and should not be allowed to engage in self-gratification. In this way the mind focuses on the Supersoul in the heart and the life force is raised to the top of the head. In the Sixth Chapter this process is described in detail. But as mentioned before, this practice is not practical in this age. The best process is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If one is always able to fix his mind on Kṛṣṇa in devotional service, it is very easy for him to remain in an undisturbed transcendental trance, or in *samādhī*.

TEXT 13

*om ity ekākṣaram brahma
vyāharan mām anusmaran
yaḥ prayāti tyajan deham
sa yāti paramām gatim*

SYNONYMS

om-the combination of letters, *omkāra*; *iti*-thus; *eka-akṣaram*-supreme, indestructible; *brahma*-absolute; *vyāharan*-vibrating; *mām*-Me (Kṛṣṇa); *anusmaran*-remembering; *yaḥ*-anyone; *prayāti*-leaves; *tyajan*-quitting; *deham*-this body; *saḥ*-he; *yāti*-achieves; *paramām*-supreme; *gatim*-destination.

TRANSLATION

After being situated in this yoga practice and vibrating the sacred syllable om, the supreme combination of letters, if one thinks of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and quits his body, he will certainly reach the spiritual planets.

PURPORT

It is clearly stated here that *om*, Brahman, and Lord Kṛṣṇa are not different. The impersonal sound of Kṛṣṇa is *om*, but the sound Hare Kṛṣṇa contains *om*. It is clearly recommended in this age that if one quits his body

at the end of this life chanting the *mahāmantra*, Hare Kṛṣṇa, he will reach the spiritual planets. Similarly, those who are devotees of Kṛṣṇa enter the Kṛṣṇa planet or Goloka Vṛndāvana, whereas the impersonalists remain in the *brahmajyoti*. The personalists also enter many innumerable planets in the spiritual sky known as Vaikuṇṭhas.

TEXT 14

*ananya-cetāḥ satatam
yo mām smarati nityaśaḥ
tasyāham sulabhaḥ pārtha
nitya-yuktasya yoginaḥ*

SYNONYMS

ananya-cetāḥ-without deviation; *satatam*-always; *yaḥ*-anyone; *mām*-Me (Kṛṣṇa); *smarati*-remembers; *nityaśaḥ*-regularly; *tasya*-to him; *aham*-I am; *sulabhaḥ*-very easy to achieve; *pārtha*-O son of Pṛthā; *nitya*-regularly; *yuktasya*-engaged; *yoginaḥ*-of the devotee.

TRANSLATION

For one who remembers Me without deviation, I am easy to obtain, O son of Pṛthā, because of his constant engagement in devotional service.

PURPORT

In this verse the *bhakti-yoga* of the unalloyed devotees of the Supreme Godhead is described. The preceding verses mention four different kinds of devotees-the distressed, the inquisitive, those who seek material gain, and the speculative philosophers. Different processes of liberation from material entanglement have also been described: *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga*, and *haṭha-yoga*. But here *bhakti-yoga*, without any mixture of these, is mentioned. In *bhakti-yoga* the devotees desire nothing but Kṛṣṇa. The pure *bhakti* devotee does not desire promotion to heavenly planets, nor does he seek salvation or liberation from material entanglement. A pure devotee

does not desire anything. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* the pure devotee is called *niṣkāma*, which means he has no desire for self-interest. Perfect peace belongs to him alone, not to them who strive for personal gain. The pure devotee only wants to please the Supreme Lord, and so the Lord says that for anyone who is unflinchingly devoted to Him, He is easy to attain. The devotee can render service to any of the transcendental forms of the Supreme Lord, and he meets with none of the problems that plague the practitioners of other *yogas*. *Bhakti-yoga* is very simple and pure and easy to perform. One can begin by simply chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is very merciful to those who engage in His service, and He helps in various ways that devotee who is fully surrendered to Him so he can understand Him as He is. The Lord gives such a devotee sufficient intelligence so that ultimately the devotee can attain Him in His spiritual kingdom.

The special qualification of the pure devotee is that he is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa without considering the time or place. There should be no impediments. He should be able to carry out his service anywhere and at any time. Some say that the devotee should remain in holy places like Vṛndāvana or some holy town where the Lord lived, but a pure devotee can live anywhere and create the atmosphere of Vṛndāvana by his devotional service. It was Śrī Advaita who told Lord Caitanya, "Wherever You are, O Lord-*there* is Vṛndavana."

A pure devotee constantly remembers Kṛṣṇa and meditates upon Him. These are qualifications of the pure devotee for whom the Lord is most easily attainable. *Bhakti-yoga* is the system that the *Gītā* recommends above all others. Generally, the *bhakti-yogīs* are engaged in five different ways: 1) *śānta-bhakta*, engaged in devotional service in neutrality; 2) *dāsyā-bhakta*, engaged in devotional service as servant; 3) *sākhya-bhakta*, engaged as friend; 4) *vātsalya-bhakta*, engaged as parent; and 5) *mādhurya-bhakta*, engaged as conjugal lover of the Supreme Lord. In any of these ways, the pure devotee is always constantly engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Supreme Lord and cannot forget the Supreme Lord, and so for him the Lord is easily attained. A pure devotee cannot forget the Supreme Lord for a moment, and similarly, the Supreme Lord cannot forget His pure devotee for a moment. This is the great blessing of the Kṛṣṇa conscious process of chanting the *mahāmantra*, Hare Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 15

*mām upetya punar janma
duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam
nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ
saṁsiddhim paramām gatāḥ*

SYNONYMS

mām-unto Me; *upetya*-achieving; *punar*-again; *janma*-birth; *duḥkha-ālayam*-place of miseries; *aśāśvatam*-temporary; *na*-never; *āpnuvanti*-attain; *mahātmānaḥ*-the great souls; *saṁsiddhim*-perfection; *paramām*-ultimate; *gatāḥ*-achieved.

TRANSLATION

After attaining Me, the great souls, who are yogīs in devotion, never return to this temporary world, which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection.

PURPORT

Since this temporary material world is full of the miseries of birth, old age, disease and death, naturally he who achieves the highest perfection and attains the supreme planet, Kṛṣṇaloka, Goloka Vṛndāvana, does not wish to return. The supreme planet is described in Vedic literature as beyond our material vision, and it is considered the highest goal. The *mahātmās* (great souls) receive transcendental messages from the realized devotees and thus gradually develop devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and become so absorbed in transcendental service that they no longer desire elevation to any of the material planets, nor do they even want to be transferred to any spiritual planet. They only want Kṛṣṇa's association and nothing else. Such great souls in Kṛṣṇa consciousness attain the highest perfection of life. In other words, they are the supreme souls.

TEXT 16

*ā-brahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ
punar āvartino 'rjuna
mām upetya tu kaunteya
punar janma na vidyate*

SYNONYMS

ābrahma-up to the Brahmaloḥka planet; *bhuvanāt*-from the planetary systems; *lokāḥ*-planets; *punaḥ*-again; *āvartinaḥ*-returning; *arjuna*-O Arjuna; *mām*-unto Me; *upetya*-arriving; *tu*-but; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *punaḥ janma*-rebirth; *na*-never; *vidyate*-takes to.

TRANSLATION

From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place. But one who attains to My abode, O son of Kuntī, never takes birth again.

PURPORT

All kinds of *yogīs-karma*, *jñāna*, *haṭha*, etc.-eventually have to attain devotional perfection in *bhakti-yoga*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, before they can go to Kṛṣṇa's transcendental abode and never return. Those who attain the highest material planets or the planets of the demigods are again subjected to repeated birth and death. As persons on earth are elevated to higher planets, people in higher planets such as Brahmaloḥka, Candraloḥka and Indraloḥka fall down to earth. The practice of sacrifice called *pañcāgni-vidyā*, recommended in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, enables one to achieve Brahmaloḥka, but if, in Brahmaloḥka, one does not cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then he must return to earth. Those who progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the higher planets are gradually elevated to higher and higher planets and at the time of universal devastation are transferred to the eternal spiritual kingdom. When there is devastation of this material universe, Brahmā and his devotees, who are constantly engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, are all transferred to the spiritual universe and to specific spiritual planets according to their desires.

TEXT 17

*sahasra-yuga-paryantam
ahar yad brahmaṇo viduḥ
rātrim yuga-sahasrāntām
te 'ho-rātra-vido janāḥ*

SYNONYMS

sahasra-thousand; *yuga*-millenniums; *prayingantam*-including; *ahaḥ*-day; *yat*-that; *brahmaṇaḥ*-of Brahmā; *viduḥ*-know it; *rātrim*-night; *yuga*-millenniums; *sahasra-antām*-similarly, at the end of one thousand; *te*-that; *ahaḥ-rātra*-day and night; *vidaḥ*-understand; *janāḥ*-people.

TRANSLATION

By human calculation, a thousand ages taken together is the duration of Brahmā's one day. And such also is the duration of his night.

PURPORT

The duration of the material universe is limited. It is manifested in cycles of *kalpas*. A *kalpa* is a day of Brahmā, and one day of Brahmā consists of a thousand cycles of four *yugas* or ages: Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara, and Kali. The cycle of Satya is characterized by virtue, wisdom and religion, there being practically no ignorance and vice, and the *yuga* lasts 1,728,000 years. In the Tretā-yuga vice is introduced, and this *yuga* lasts 1,296,000 years. In the Dvāpara-yuga there is an even greater decline in virtue and religion, vice increasing, and this *yuga* lasts 864,000 years. And finally in Kali-yuga (the *yuga* we have now been experiencing over the past 5,000 years) there is an abundance of strife, ignorance, irreligion and vice, true virtue being practically nonexistent, and this *yuga* lasts 432,000 years. In Kali-yuga vice increases to such a point that at the termination of the *yuga* the Supreme Lord Himself appears as the Kalki *avatara*, vanquishes the demons, saves His devotees, and commences another Satya-yuga. Then the process is set rolling again. These four *yugas*, rotating a thousand times, comprise one

day of Brahmā, the creator god, and the same number comprise one night. Brahmā lives one hundred of such "years" and then dies. These "hundred years" by earth calculations total to 311 trillion and 40 million earth years. By these calculations the life of Brahmā seems fantastic and interminable, but from the viewpoint of eternity it is as brief as a lightning flash. In the causal ocean there are innumerable Brahmās rising and disappearing like bubbles in the Atlantic. Brahmā and his creation are all part of the material universe, and therefore they are in constant flux.

In the material universe not even Brahmā is free from the process of birth, old age, disease and death. Brahmā, however, is directly engaged in the service of the Supreme Lord in the management of this universe—therefore he at once attains liberation. Elevated *sannyāsīs* are promoted to Brahmā's particular planet, Brahmaloka, which is the highest planet in the material universe and which survives all the heavenly planets in the upper strata of the planetary system, but in due course Brahmā and all inhabitants of Brahmaloka are subject to death, according to the law of material nature.

TEXT 18

*avyaktād vyaktayaḥ sarvāḥ
prabhavanti ahaṁ-āgame
rātry-āgame pralīyante
tatraivāvyakta-saṁjñake*

SYNONYMS

avyaktāt-from the unmanifest; *vyaktayaḥ*-living entities; *sarvāḥ*-all; *prabhavanti*-come into being; *ahaṁ-āgame*-at the beginning of the day; *rātri-āgame*-at the fall of night; *pralīyante*-are annihilated; *tatra*-there; *eva*-certainly; *avyakta*-the unmanifest; *saṁjñake*-called.

TRANSLATION

When Brahmā's day is manifest, this multitude of living entities comes into being, and at the arrival of Brahmā's night they are all annihilated.

PURPORT

The less intelligent *jīvas* try to remain within this material world and are accordingly elevated and degraded in the various planetary systems. During the daytime of Brahmā they exhibit their activities, and at the coming of Brahmā's night they are annihilated. In the day they receive various bodies for material activities, and at night these bodies perish. The *jīvas* (individual souls) remain compact in the body of Viṣṇu and again and again are manifest at the arrival of Brahmā's day. When Brahmā's life is finally finished, they are all annihilated and remain unmanifest for millions and millions of years. Finally, when Brahmā is born again in another millennium, they are again manifest. In this way the *jīvas* are captivated by the material world. However, those intelligent beings who take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Rāma in devotional service transfer themselves, even in this life, to the spiritual planet of Kṛṣṇa and become eternally blissful there, not being subject to such rebirths.

TEXT 19

*bhūta-grāmaḥ sa evāyaṁ
bhūtvā bhūtvā pralīyate
rātry-āgame 'vaśaḥ pārtha
prabhavaty ahar-āgame*

SYNONYMS

bhūta-grāmaḥ-the aggregate of all living entities; *saḥ*-they; *eva*-certainly; *ayam*-this; *bhūtvā bhūtvā*-taking birth; *pralīyate*-annihilate; *rātri*-night; *āgame*-on arrival; *avaśaḥ*-automatically; *pārtha*-O son of Pṛthā; *prabhavanti*-manifest; *ahaḥ*-during daytime; *āgame*-on arrival.

TRANSLATION

Again and again the day comes, and this host of beings is active; and again the night falls, O Pārtha, and they are helplessly dissolved.

TEXT 20

*paras tasmāt tu bhāvo 'nyo
'vyakto 'vyaktāt sanātanaḥ
yaḥ sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu
naśyatsu na vinaśyati*

paraḥ-transcendental; *tasmāt*-from that; *tu*-but; *bhāvaḥ*-nature; *anyaḥ*-another; *avyaktaḥ*-unmanifest; *avyaktāt*-from the unmanifest; *sanātanaḥ*-eternal; *yaḥ*-that; *saḥ*-which; *sarveṣu*-all; *bhūteṣu*-manifestation; *naśyatsu*-being annihilated; *na*-never; *vinaśyati*-annihilated.

TRANSLATION

Yet there is another nature, which is eternal and is transcendental to this manifested and unmanifested matter. It is supreme and is never annihilated. When all in this world is annihilated, that part remains as it is.

PURPORT

Kṛṣṇa's superior spiritual energy is transcendental and eternal. It is beyond all the changes of material nature, which is manifest and annihilated during the days and nights of Brahmā. Kṛṣṇa's superior energy is completely opposite in quality to material nature. Superior and inferior nature are explained in the Seventh Chapter.

TEXT 21

*avyakto 'kṣara ity uktas
tam āhuḥ paramām gatim
yam prāpya na nivartante
tad dhāma paramaṁ mama*

SYNONYMS

avyaktaḥ-unmanifested; *akṣaraḥ*-infallible; *iti*-thus; *uktaḥ*-said; *tam*-that which; *āhuḥ*-is known; *paramām*-ultimate; *gatim*-destination; *yam*-that

which; *prāpya*-gaining; *na*-never; *nivartante*-comes back; *tat-dhāma*-that abode; *paramam*-supreme; *mama*-Mine.

TRANSLATION

That supreme abode is called unmanifested and infallible, and it is the supreme destination. When one goes there, he never comes back. That is My supreme abode.

PURPORT

The supreme abode of the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* as *cintāmaṇi-dhāma*, a place where all desires are fulfilled. The supreme abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa known as Goloka Vṛndāvana is full of palaces made of touchstone. There are also trees which are called "desire trees" that supply any type of eatable upon demand, and there are cows known as *surabhi* cows which supply a limitless supply of milk. In this abode, the Lord is served by hundreds of thousands of goddesses of fortune (Lakṣmīs), and He is called Govinda, the primal Lord and the cause of all causes. The Lord is accustomed to blow His flute (*venum kvanantam*). His transcendental form is the most attractive in all the worlds—His eyes are like the lotus petals and the color of His body like clouds. He is so attractive that His beauty excels that of thousands of cupids. He wears saffron cloth, a garland around His neck and a peacock feather in His hair. In the *Gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa gives only a small hint of His personal abode (Goloka Vṛndāvana) which is the supermost planet in the spiritual kingdom. A vivid description is given in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. Vedic literature states that there is nothing superior to the abode of the Supreme Godhead, and that that abode is the ultimate destination. When one attains to it, he never returns to the material world. Kṛṣṇa's supreme abode and Kṛṣṇa Himself are nondifferent, being of the same quality. On this earth, Vṛndāvana, ninety miles southeast of Delhi, is a replica of that supreme Goloka Vṛndāvana located in the spiritual sky. When Kṛṣṇa descended on this earth, He sported on that particular tract of land known as Vṛndāvana in the district of Mathurā, India.

TEXT 22

*puruṣaḥ sa paraḥ pārtha
bhaktyā labhyaḥ tv ananyayā
yasyāntaḥ-sthāni bhūtāni
yena sarvam idaṁ tatam*

SYNONYMS

puruṣaḥ-the Supreme Personality; *saḥ*-He; *paraḥ*-the Supreme, than whom no one is greater; *pārtha*-O son of Pṛthā; *bhaktyā*-by devotional service; *labhyaḥ*-can be achieved; *tu*-but; *ananyayā*-unalloyed, undeviating devotion; *yasya*-His; *antaḥsthāni*-within; *bhūtāni*-all this material manifestation; *yena*-by whom; *sarvam*-all; *idaṁ*-whatever we can see; *tatam*-distributed.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is greater than all, is attainable by unalloyed devotion. Although He is present in His abode, He is all-pervading, and everything is situated within Him.

PURPORT

It is here clearly stated that the supreme destination from which there is no return is the abode of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person. The *Brahma-saṁhitā* describes this supreme abode as *ānanda-cinmaya-rasa*, a place where everything is full of spiritual bliss. Whatever variegatedness is manifest there is all of the quality of spiritual bliss-there is nothing material. All variegatedness is expanded as the spiritual expansion of the Supreme Godhead Himself, for the manifestation there is totally of the spiritual energy, as explained in Chapter Seven. As far as this material world is concerned, although the Lord is always in His supreme abode, He is nonetheless all-pervading by His material energy. So by His spiritual and material energies He is present everywhere-both in the material and in the spiritual universes. *Yasyāntaḥsthāni* means that everything is sustained by Him, whether it be spiritual or material energy.

It is clearly stated here that only by *bhakti*, or devotional service, can one enter into the Vaikuṇṭha (spiritual) planetary system. In all the Vaikuṇṭhas

there is only one Supreme Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, who has expanded Himself into millions and millions of plenary expansions. These plenary expansions are four-armed, and they preside over the innumerable spiritual planets. They are known by a variety of names-Puruṣottama, Trivikrama, Keśava, Mādhava, Aniruddha, Hṛṣīkeśa, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Śrīdhara, Vāsudeva, Dāmodara, Janārdana, Nārāyaṇa, Vāmana, Padmanābha, etc. These plenary expansions are likened unto the leaves of a tree, and the main tree is likened to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, dwelling in Goloka Vṛndāvana, His supreme abode, systematically conducts all affairs of both universes (material and spiritual) without a flaw by power of His all-pervasiveness.

TEXT 23

*yatra kāle tv anāvṛttim
āvṛttim caiva yoginaḥ
prayātā yānti taṁ kālaṁ
vakṣyāmi bharatarṣabha*

SYNONYMS

yatra-in that; *kāle*-time; *tu*-but; *anāvṛttim*-no return; *āvṛttim*-return; *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *yoginaḥ*-of different kinds of mystics; *prayātāḥ*-one who goes; *yānti*-departs; *taṁ*-that; *kālaṁ*-time; *vakṣyāmi*-describing; *bharatarṣabha*-O best of the Bhāratas.

TRANSLATION

O best of the Bhāratas, I shall now explain to you the different times at which, passing away from this world, one does or does not come back.

PURPORT

The unalloyed devotees of the Supreme Lord who are totally surrendered souls do not care when they leave their bodies or by what method. They leave everything in Kṛṣṇa's hands and so easily and happily return to Godhead. But those who are not unalloyed devotees and who depend

instead on such methods of spiritual realization as *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga*, *haṭha-yoga*, etc., must leave the body at a suitable time and thereby be assured whether or not they will return to the world of birth and death.

If the *yogī* is perfect, he can select the time and place for leaving this material world, but if he is not so perfect, then he has to leave at nature's will. The most suitable time to leave the body and not return is being explained by the Lord in these verses. According to Ācārya Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, the Sanskrit word *kāla* used herein refers to the presiding deity of time.

TEXT 24

*agnir jyotir ahaḥ śuklaḥ
ṣaṇ-māsā uttarāyaṇam
tatra prayātā gacchanti
brahma brahma-vido janāḥ*

SYNONYMS

agniḥ-fire; *jyotiḥ*-light; *ahaḥ*-day; *śuklaḥ*-white; *ṣaṇ-māsāḥ*-six months; *uttarāyaṇam*-when the sun passes on the northern side; *tatra*-there; *prayātāḥ*-one who goes; *gacchanti*-passes away; *brahma*-the Absolute; *brahma-vidāḥ*-one who knows the Absolute; *janāḥ*-person.

TRANSLATION

Those who know the Supreme Brahman pass away from the world during the influence of the fiery god, in the light, at an auspicious moment, during the fortnight of the moon and the six months when the sun travels in the north.

PURPORT

When fire, light, day and moon are mentioned, it is to be understood that over all of them there are various presiding deities who make arrangements for the passage of the soul. At the time of death, the *jīva* sets forth on the path to a new life. If one leaves the body at the time designated above,

either accidentally or by arrangement, it is possible for him to attain the impersonal *brahmajyoti*. Mystics who are advanced in *yoga* practice can arrange the time and place to leave the body. Others have no control-if by accident they leave at an auspicious moment, then they will not return to the cycle of birth and death, but if not, then there is every possibility that they will have to return. However, for the pure devotee in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is no fear of returning, whether he leaves the body at an auspicious or inauspicious moment, by accident or arrangement.

TEXT 25

*dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇaḥ
ṣaṇ-māsā dakṣiṇāyanam
tatra cāndramasaṁ jyotir
yogī prāpya nivartate*

SYNONYMS

dhūmaḥ-smoke; *rātriḥ*-night; *tathā*-also; *kṛṣṇaḥ*-the fortnight of the dark moon; *ṣaṭ-māsāḥ*-the six months; *dakṣiṇa-ayanam*-when the sun passes on the southern side; *tatra*-there; *cāndramasaṁ*-the moon planet; *jyotiḥ*-light, *yogī*-the mystic; *prāpya*-achieves; *nivartate*-comes back.

TRANSLATION

The mystic who passes away from this world during the smoke, the night, the moonlight fortnight, or in the six months when the sun passes to the south, or who reaches the moon planet, again comes back.

PURPORT

In the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we are informed that those who are expert in fruitive activities and sacrificial methods on earth attain to the moon at death. These elevated souls live on the moon for about 10,000 years (by demigod calculations) and enjoy life by drinking soma-rasa. They eventually return to earth. This means that on the moon there are higher

classes of living beings, though they may not be perceived by the gross senses.

TEXT 26

*śukla-kṛṣṇe gatī hy ete
jagataḥ śāśvate mate
ekayā yāty anāvṛttim
anyayāvartate punaḥ*

SYNONYMS

śukla-light; *kṛṣṇe*-darkness; *gatī*-passing away; *hi*-certainly; *ete*-all these; *jagataḥ*-of the material world; *śāśvate*-the *Vedas*; *mate*-in the opinion; *ekayā*-by one; *yāti*-goes; *anāvṛttim*-no return; *anyayā*-by the other; *āvartate*-comes back; *punaḥ*-again.

TRANSLATION

According to the Vedas, there are two ways of passing from this world-one in light and one in darkness. When one passes in light, he does not come back; but when one passes in darkness, he returns.

PURPORT

The same description of departure and return is quoted by Ācārya Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa from the *Chandogya Upaniṣad*. In such a way, those who are fruitive laborers and philosophical speculators from time immemorial are constantly going and coming. Actually they do not attain ultimate salvation, for they do not surrender to Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 27

*naite sṛtī pārtha jānan
yogī muhyati kaścana
tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu
yoga-yukto bhavārjuna*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *ete*-all these; *sṛtī*-different paths; *pārtha*-O son of Prthā; *jānan*-even if they know; *yogī*-the devotees of the Lord; *muhyati*-bewildered; *kaścana*-anyone; *tasmāt*-therefore; *sarveṣu kāleṣu*-always; *yoga-yuktaḥ*-being engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *bhava*-just become; *arjuna*-O Arjuna.

TRANSLATION

The devotees who know these two paths, O Arjuna, are never bewildered. Therefore be always fixed in devotion.

PURPORT

Kṛṣṇa is here advising Arjuna that he should not be disturbed by the different paths the soul can take when leaving the material world. A devotee of the Supreme Lord should not worry whether he will depart either by arrangement or by accident. The devotee should be firmly established in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. He should know that concern over either of these two paths is troublesome. The best way to be absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is to be always dovetailed in His service, and this will make one's path to the spiritual kingdom safe, certain, and direct. The word *yoga-yukta* is especially significant in this verse. One who is firm in *yoga* is constantly engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness in all his activities. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī advises that one should be unattached in the material world and that all affairs should be steeped in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In this way one attains perfection. Therefore the devotee is not disturbed by these descriptions because he knows that his passage to the supreme abode is guaranteed by devotional service.

TEXT 28

*vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu caiva
dāneṣu yat puṇya-phalaṁ pradiṣṭam
atyeti tat sarvaṁ idaṁ viditvā
yogī paraṁ sthānam upaiti cādyam*

SYNONYMS

vedeṣu-in the study of the *Vedas*; *yajñeṣu*-in the performances of *yajña*, sacrifice; *tapaḥsu*-undergoing different types of austerities; *ca*-also; *eva*-certainly; *dāneṣu*-in giving charities; *yat*-that which; *puṇya-phalam*-the result of pious work; *pradiṣṭam*-directed; *atyeti*-surpasses; *tat*-all those; *sarvam idam*-all those described above; *viditvā*-knowing; *yogī*-the devotee; *param*-supreme; *sthānam*-abode; *upaiti*-achieved peace; *ca*-also; *ādyam*-original.

TRANSLATION

A person who accepts the path of devotional service is not bereft of the results derived from studying the Vedas, performing austere sacrifices, giving charity or pursuing philosophical and fruitive activities. At the end he reaches the supreme abode.

PURPORT

This verse is the summation of the Seventh and Eighth Chapters, particularly as the chapters deal with Kṛṣṇa consciousness and devotional service. One has to study the *Vedas* under the guidance of the spiritual master and undergo many austerities and penances while living under his care. A *brahmacārī* has to live in the home of the spiritual master just like a servant, and he must beg alms from door to door and bring them to the spiritual master. He takes food only under the master's order, and if the master neglects to call the student for food that day, the student fasts. These are some of the Vedic principles for observing *brahmacarya*.

After the student studies the *Vedas* under the master for a period from five to twenty years, he may become a man of perfect character. Study of the *Vedas* is not meant for the recreation of armchair speculators, but for the formation of character. After this training, the *brahmacārī* is allowed to enter into household life and marry. When he is a householder, he also has to perform many sacrifices and strive for further enlightenment. Then after retiring from household life, upon accepting the order of *vānaprastha*, he undergoes severe penances, such as living in forests, dressing with tree bark, not shaving, etc. By carrying out the orders of *brahmacārī*,

householder, *vānaprastha* and finally *sannyāsa*, one becomes elevated to the perfectional stage of life. Some are then elevated to the heavenly kingdoms, and when they become even more advanced they are liberated in the spiritual sky, either in the impersonal *brahmajyoti* or in the *Vaikuṇṭha* planets or *Kṛṣṇaloka*. This is the path outlined by Vedic literatures.

The beauty of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, is that by one stroke, by engaging in devotional service, one can surpass all rituals of the different orders of life.

One should try to understand the Seventh and Eighth Chapters of the *Gītā* not by scholarship or mental speculation, but by hearing them in association with pure devotees. Chapters Six through Twelve are the essence of the *Gītā*. If one is fortunate to understand the *Gītā*-especially these middle six chapters-in the association of devotees, then his life at once becomes glorified beyond all penances, sacrifices, charities, speculations, etc. One should hear the *Gītā* from the devotee because at the beginning of the Fourth Chapter it is stated that the *Gītā* can only be perfectly understood by devotees. Hearing the *Gītā* from devotees, not from mental speculators, is called faith. Through association of devotees, one is placed in devotional service, and by this service Kṛṣṇa's activities, form, pastimes, name, etc., become clear, and all misgivings are dispelled. Then once doubts are removed, the study of the *Gītā* becomes extremely pleasurable, and one develops a taste and feeling for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In the advanced stage, one falls completely in love with Kṛṣṇa, and that is the beginning of the highest perfectional stage of life which prepares the devotee's transferral to Kṛṣṇa's abode in the spiritual sky, *Goloka Vṛndāvana*, where the devotee enters into eternal happiness.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the Eighth Chapter of the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of Attaining the Supreme.

9. The Most Confidential Knowledge

TEXT 1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
idaṁ tu te guhyatamaṁ
pravakṣyāmy anasūyave
jñānaṁ vijñāna-sahitaṁ
yaj jñātvā mokṣyase 'śubhāt*

SYNONYMS

śrī bhagavan uvāca-the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *idaṁ*-this; *tu*-but; *te*-unto you; *guhyatamaṁ*-most confidential; *pravakṣyāmi*-I am speaking; *anasūyave*-to the nonenvious; *jñānaṁ*-knowledge; *vijñāna*-realized knowledge; *sahitaṁ*-with; *yaj*-which; *jñātvā*-knowing; *mokṣyase*-be released; *śubhāt*-from this miserable material existence.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord said: My dear Arjuna, because you are never envious of Me, I shall impart to you this most secret wisdom, knowing which you shall be relieved of the miseries of material existence.

PURPORT

As a devotee hears more and more about the Supreme Lord, he becomes enlightened. This hearing process is recommended in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: "The messages of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are full of potencies, and these potencies can be realized if topics regarding the Supreme Godhead are discussed amongst devotees. This cannot be achieved by the association of mental speculators or academic scholars, for it is realized knowledge."

The devotees are constantly engaged in the Supreme Lord's service. The Lord understands the mentality and sincerity of a particular living entity who is engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and gives him the intelligence to understand the science of Kṛṣṇa in the association of the devotees. Discussion of Kṛṣṇa is very potent, and if a fortunate person has such association and tries to assimilate the knowledge, then he will surely make advancement toward spiritual realization. Lord Kṛṣṇa, in order to encourage Arjuna to higher and higher elevation in His potent service, describes in this Ninth Chapter matters more confidential than any He has already disclosed.

The very beginning of *Bhagavad-gītā*, the First Chapter, is more or less an introduction to the rest of the book; and in the Second and Third Chapters, the spiritual knowledge described is called confidential. Topics discussed in the Seventh and Eighth Chapters are specifically related to devotional service, and because they bring enlightenment in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they are called more confidential. But the matters which are described in the Ninth Chapter deal with unalloyed, pure devotion. Therefore this is called the most confidential. One who is situated in the most confidential knowledge of Kṛṣṇa is naturally transcendental; he therefore has no material pangs, although he is in the material world. In the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* it is said that although one who has a sincere desire to render loving service to the Supreme Lord is situated in the conditional state of material existence, he is to be considered liberated. Similarly, we shall find in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Tenth Chapter, that anyone who is engaged in that way is a liberated person.

Now this first verse has specific significance. Knowledge (*idaṁ jñānam*) refers to pure devotional service, which consists of nine different activities: hearing, chanting, remembering, serving, worshiping, praying, obeying, maintaining friendship and surrendering everything. By the practice of these nine elements of devotional service one is elevated to spiritual consciousness, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. At the time when one's heart is cleared of the material contamination, one can understand this science of Kṛṣṇa. Simply to understand that a living entity is not material is not sufficient. That may be the beginning of spiritual realization, but one should recognize the difference between activities of the body and spiritual activities by which one understands that he is not the body.

In the Seventh Chapter we have already discussed the opulent potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, His different energies, the inferior and superior natures, and all this material manifestation. Now in Chapters Nine and Ten the glories of the Lord will be delineated.

The Sanskrit word *anasūyave* in this verse is also very significant. Generally the commentators, even if they are highly scholarly, are all envious of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even the most erudite scholars write on *Bhagavad-gītā* very inaccurately. Because they are envious of Kṛṣṇa, their commentaries are useless. The commentaries given by devotees of the Lord are bona fide. No one can explain *Bhagavad-gītā*, or give perfect knowledge of Kṛṣṇa if he is envious. One who criticizes the character of Kṛṣṇa without knowing Him is a fool. So such commentaries should be very carefully avoided. For one who understands that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the pure and transcendental Personality, these chapters will be very beneficial.

TEXT 2

*rāja-vidyā rāja-guhyam
pavitram idam uttamam
pratyakṣāvagamam dharmyam
su-sukham kartum avyayam*

SYNONYMS

rāja-vidyā-the king of education; *rāja-guhyam*-the king of confidential knowledge; *pavitram*-the purest; *idam*-this; *uttamam*-transcendental; *pratyakṣa*-directly experienced; *avagamam*-understood; *dharmyam*-the principle of religion; *susukham*-very happy; *kartum*-to execute; *avyayam*-everlasting.

TRANSLATION

This knowledge is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets. It is the purest knowledge, and because it gives direct

perception of the self by realization, it is the perfection of religion. It is everlasting, and it is joyfully performed.

PURPORT

This chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* is called the king of education because it is the essence of all doctrines and philosophies explained before. There are seven principal philosophers in India: Gautama, Kaṇāda, Kapila, Yājñavalkya, Śāṇḍilya, Vaiśvānara, and, finally, Vyāsadeva, the author of the *Vedānta-sūtra*. So there is no dearth of knowledge in the field of philosophy or transcendental knowledge. Now the Lord says that this Ninth Chapter is the king of all such knowledge, the essence of all knowledge that can be derived from the study of the *Vedas* and different kinds of philosophy. It is the most confidential because confidential or transcendental knowledge involves understanding the difference between the soul and the body. And the king of all confidential knowledge culminates in devotional service.

Generally, people are not educated in this confidential knowledge; they are educated in external knowledge. As far as ordinary education is concerned, people are involved with so many departments: politics, sociology, physics, chemistry, mathematics, astronomy, engineering, etc. There are so many departments of knowledge all over the world and many huge universities, but there is, unfortunately, no university or educational institution where the science of the spirit soul is instructed. Yet the soul is the most important part of this body; without the presence of the soul, the body has no value. Still people are placing great stress on the bodily necessities of life, not caring for the vital soul.

The *Bhagavad-gītā*, especially from the Second Chapter on, stresses the importance of the soul. In the very beginning, the Lord says that this body is perishable and that the soul is not perishable. That is a confidential part of knowledge: simply knowing that spirit soul is different from this body and that its nature is immutable, indestructible and eternal. But that gives no positive information about the soul. Sometimes people are under the impression that the soul is different from the body and that when the body is finished, or one is liberated from the body, the soul remains in a void and becomes impersonal. But actually that is not the fact. How can the soul,

which is so active within this body, be inactive after being liberated from the body? It is always active. If it is eternal, then it is eternally active, and its activities in the spiritual kingdom are the most confidential part of spiritual knowledge. These activities of the spirit soul are therefore indicated here as constituting the king of all knowledge, the most confidential part of all knowledge.

This knowledge is the purest form of all activities, as is explained in Vedic literature. In the *Padma Purāṇa*, man's sinful activities have been analyzed and are shown to be the results of sin after sin. Those who are engaged in fruitive activities are entangled in different stages and forms of sinful reactions. For instance, when the seed of a particular tree is sown, the tree does not appear immediately to grow; it takes some time. It is first a small, sprouting plant, then it assumes the form of a tree, then it flowers, bears fruit, and, when it is complete, the flowers and fruits are enjoyed by persons who have sown the seed of the tree. Similarly, a man performs a sinful act, and like a seed it takes time to fructify. There are different stages. The sinful action may have already stopped within the individual, but the results or the fruit of that sinful action are still enjoyed. There are sins which are still in the form of a seed, and there are others which are already fructified and are giving us fruit, which we are enjoying as distress and pain, as explained in the twentieth verse of the Seventh Chapter.

A person who has completely ended the reactions of all sinful activities and who is fully engaged in pious activities, being freed from the duality of this material world, becomes engaged in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. In other words, those who are actually engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord are already freed from all reactions. For those who are engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, all sinful reactions, whether fructified, in the stock, or in the form of a seed, gradually vanish. Therefore the purifying potency of devotional service is very strong, and it is called *pavitram uttamam*, the purest. *Uttamam* means transcendental. *Tamas* means this material world or darkness, and *uttamam* means that which is transcendental to material activities. Devotional activities are never to be considered material, although sometimes it appears that devotees are engaged just like ordinary men. One who can see and is familiar with

devotional service, however, will know that they are not material activities. They are all spiritual and devotional, uncontaminated by the material modes of nature.

It is said that the execution of devotional service is so perfect that one can perceive the results directly. This direct result is actually perceived, and we have practical experience that any person who is chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa (Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare) in course of time feels some transcendental pleasure and very quickly becomes purified of all material contamination. This is actually seen. Furthermore, if one engages not only in hearing but in trying to broadcast the message of devotional activities as well, or if he engages himself in helping the missionary activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he gradually feels spiritual progress. This advancement in spiritual life does not depend on any kind of previous education or qualification. The method itself is so pure that by simply engaging in it one becomes pure.

In the *Vedānta-sūtra* this is also described in the following words: *prakāśaś ca karmaṇy abhyāsāt*. "Devotional service is so potent that simply by engaging in the activities of devotional service, one becomes enlightened without a doubt." Nārada, who happened to be the son of a maidservant, had no education, nor was he born into a high family. But when his mother was engaged in serving great devotees, Nārada also became engaged, and sometimes, in the absence of his mother, he would serve the great devotees himself. Nārada personally says, "Once only, by their permission, I took the remnants of their food, and by so doing all my sins were at once eradicated. Thus being engaged, I became purified in heart, and at that time the very nature of the transcendentalist became attractive to me." (*Bhāg.* 1.5.25) Nārada tells his disciple Vyāsadeva that in a previous life he was engaged as a boy servant of purified devotees during four months of their stay and that he was intimately associating with them. Sometimes those sages left remnants of food on their dishes, and the boy, who would wash their dishes, wanted to taste the remnants. So he asked the great devotees whether he could eat them, and they gave their permission. Nārada then ate those remnants and consequently became freed from all sinful reactions. As he went on eating, he gradually became as purehearted as the sages, and he

gradually developed the same taste. The great devotees relished the taste of unceasing devotional service of the Lord, hearing, chanting, etc., and by developing the same taste, Nārada wanted also to hear and chant the glories of the Lord. Thus by associating with the sages, he developed a great desire for devotional service. Therefore he quotes from the *Vedānta-sūtra* (*prakāśaś ca karmaṇy abhyāsāt*): If one is engaged simply in the acts of devotional service, everything is revealed to him automatically, and he can understand. This is called *prakāśaḥ*, directly perceived.

Nārada was actually a son of a maidservant. He had no opportunity to go to school. He was simply assisting his mother, and fortunately his mother rendered some service to the devotees. The child Nārada also got the opportunity and simply by association achieved the highest goal of all religions, devotional service. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is said that religious people generally do not know that the highest perfection of religion is the attainment of the stage of devotional service. Generally Vedic knowledge is required for the understanding of the path of self-realization. But here, although he was not educated in the Vedic principle, Nārada acquired the highest results of Vedic study. This process is so potent that even without performing the religious process regularly, one can be raised to the highest perfection. How is this possible? This is also confirmed in Vedic literature: *ācāryavān puruṣo veda*. One who is in association with great *ācāryas*, even if he is not educated or has not studied the *Vedas*, can become familiar with all the knowledge necessary for realization.

The process of devotional service is a very happy one. Why? Devotional service consists of *śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*, so one can simply hear the chanting of the glories of the Lord or can attend philosophical lectures on transcendental knowledge given by authorized *ācāryas*. Simply by sitting, one can learn; then one can eat the remnants of the food offered to God, nice palatable dishes. In every state devotional service is joyful. One can execute devotional service even in the most poverty-stricken condition. The Lord says, *patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalam*: He is ready to accept from the devotee any kind of offering, never mind what. Even a leaf, a flower, a bit of fruit, or a little water, which are all available in every part of the world, can be offered by *any* person, regardless of social position, and will be accepted if offered with love. There are many instances in history. Simply by tasting the

tulasī leaves offered to the lotus feet of the Lord, great sages like Sanatkumāra became great devotees. Therefore the devotional process is very nice, and it can be executed in a happy mood. God accepts only the love with which things are offered to Him.

It is said here that this devotional service is eternally existing. It is not as the Māyāvādī philosophers claim. They sometimes take to so-called devotional service, and as long as they are not liberated they continue their devotional service, but at the end, when they become liberated, they "become one with God." Such temporary time-serving devotional service is not accepted as pure devotional service. Actual devotional service continues even after liberation. When the devotee goes to the spiritual planet in the kingdom of God, he is also engaged there in serving the Supreme Lord. He does not try to become one with the Supreme Lord.

As it will be seen, actual devotional service begins after liberation. So in *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said, *brahma-bhūta*. After being liberated, or being situated in the Brahman position, one's devotional service begins. By executing devotional service, one can understand the Supreme Lord. No one can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead by executing *karma-yoga*, *jñāna*, or *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* or any other *yoga* independantly. Without coming to the stage of devotional service, one cannot understand what is the Personality of Godhead. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is also confirmed that when one becomes purified by executing the process of devotional service, especially by hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or *Bhagavad-gītā* from realized souls, then he can understand the science of Kṛṣṇa or the science of God. *Evam prasanna-manaso bhagavad-bhakti-yogataḥ*. When one's heart is cleared of all nonsense, then one can understand what God is. Thus the process of devotional service, of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is the king of all education and the king of all confidential knowledge. It is the purest form of religion, and it can be executed joyfully without difficulty. Therefore one should adopt it.

TEXT 3

*aśraddadhānāḥ puruṣā
dharmasyāśya parantapa*

*aprāpya mām nivartante
mṛtyu-saṁsāra-vartmani*

SYNONYMS

aśraddadhānāḥ-those who are faithless; *puruṣāḥ*-such persons; *dharmasya*-of this process of religion; *asya*-of it; *parantapa*-O killer of the enemies; *aprāpya*-without obtaining; *mām*-Me; *nivartante*-come back; *mṛtyu*-death; *saṁsāra*-material existence; *vartmani*-on the path of.

TRANSLATION

Those who are not faithful on the path of devotional service cannot attain Me, O conqueror of foes, but return to birth and death in this material world.

PURPORT

The faithless cannot accomplish this process of devotional service; that is the purport of this verse. Faith is created by association with devotees. Unfortunate people, even after hearing all the evidence of Vedic literature from great personalities, still have no faith in God. They are hesitant and cannot stay fixed in the devotional service of the Lord. Thus faith is a most important factor for progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is said that one should have complete conviction that simply by serving the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa he can achieve all perfection. That is called real faith. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.4.12) it is stated that by giving water to the root of a tree, its branches, twigs and leaves become satisfied, and by supplying food to the stomach all the senses of the body become satisfied, and, similarly, by engaging in the transcendental service of the Supreme Lord, all the demigods and all the living entities automatically become satisfied.

After reading *Bhagavad-gītā* one should promptly come to the conclusion of *Bhagavad-gītā*: one should give up all other engagements and adopt the service of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. If one is convinced of this philosophy of life, that is faith. Now the development of that faith is the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

There are three divisions of Kṛṣṇa conscious men. In the third class are those who have no faith. If they are engaged in devotional service officially, for some ulterior purpose, they cannot achieve the highest perfectional stage. Most probably they will slip, after some time. They may become engaged, but because they haven't complete conviction and faith, it is very difficult for them to continue in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We have practical experience in discharging our missionary activity that some people come and apply themselves to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness with some hidden motive, and as soon as they are economically a little well-situated, they give up this process and take to their old ways again. It is only by faith that one can advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As far as the development of faith is concerned, one who is well versed in the literatures of devotional service and has attained the stage of firm faith is called a first-class person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And in the second class are those who are not very advanced in understanding the devotional scriptures but who automatically have firm faith that Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* or service to Kṛṣṇa is the best course and so in good faith have taken it up. Thus they are superior to the third class who have neither perfect knowledge of the scriptures nor good faith but by association and simplicity are trying to follow. The third-class person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness may fall down, but when one is in the second class or first class, he does not fall down. One in the first class will surely make progress and achieve the result at the end. As far as the third-class person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is concerned, although he has faith in the conviction that devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is very good, he has no knowledge of Kṛṣṇa through the scriptures like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*. Sometimes these third-class persons in Kṛṣṇa consciousness have some tendency toward *karma-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga*, and sometimes they are disturbed, but as soon as the infection of *karma-yoga* or *jñāna-yoga* is vanquished, they become second-class or first-class persons in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Faith in Kṛṣṇa is also divided into three stages and described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. First-class attachment, second-class attachment, and third-class attachment are also explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in the Eleventh Canto. Those who have no faith even after hearing about Kṛṣṇa and the excellence of devotional service, who think that it is simply eulogy, find the path very difficult, even if they are supposedly engaged in

devotional service. For them there is very little hope in gaining perfection. Thus faith is very important in the discharge of devotional service.

TEXT 4

*mayā tatam idaṁ sarvaṁ
jagad avyakta-mūrtinā
mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni
na cāhaṁ teṣv avasthitaḥ*

SYNONYMS

mayā-by Me; *tatam*-spread; *idaṁ*-all these manifestations; *sarvaṁ*-all; *jagat*-cosmic manifestation; *avyakta-mūrtinā*-unmanifested form; *mat-sthāni*-unto Me; *sarva-bhūtāni*-all living entities; *na*-not; *ca*-also; *aham*-I; *teṣu*-in them; *avasthitaḥ*-situated.

TRANSLATION

By Me, in My unmanifested form, this entire universe is pervaded. All beings are in Me, but I am not in them.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is not perceivable through the gross material senses. It is said that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name, fame, pastimes, etc., cannot be understood by material senses. Only to one who is engaged in pure devotional service under proper guidance is He revealed. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated, *premañjanacchurita...* One can see the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda, always within himself and outside himself if he has developed the transcendental loving attitude towards Him. Thus for people in general He is not visible. Here it is said that although He is all-pervading, everywhere present, He is yet not conceivable by the material senses. But actually, although we cannot see Him, everything is resting in Him. As we have discussed in the Seventh Chapter, the entire material cosmic manifestation is only a combination of His two different energies, the superior spiritual energy and the inferior

material energy. Just as the sunshine is spread all over the universe, the energy of the Lord is spread all over the creation, and everything is resting in that energy.

Yet one should not conclude that because He is spread all over He has lost His personal existence. To refute such argument the Lord says, "I am everywhere, and everything is in Me, but still I am aloof." For example, a king heads a government which is but the manifestation of the king's energy; the different governmental departments are nothing but the energies of the king, and each department is resting on the king's power. But still one cannot expect the king to be present in every department personally. That is a crude example. Similarly, all the manifestations that we see, and everything that exists both in this material world and in the spiritual world, are resting on the energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The creation takes place by the diffusion of His different energies, and, as is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, He is everywhere present by His personal representation, the diffusion of His different energies.

TEXT 5

*na ca mat-sthāni bhūtāni
paśya me yogam aiśvaram
bhūta-bhṛn na ca bhūta-stho
mamātmā bhūta-bhāvanaḥ*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *ca*-also; *mat-sthāni*-situated in Me; *bhūtāni*-all creation; *paśya*-just see; *me*-My; *yogam aiśvaram*-inconceivable mystic power; *bhūta-bhṛt*-maintainer of all living entities; *na*-never; *ca*-also; *bhūta-sthaḥ*-in the cosmic manifestation; *mama*-My; *ātmā*-Self; *bhūta-bhāvanaḥ*-is the source of all manifestations.

TRANSLATION

And yet everything that is created does not rest in Me. Behold My mystic opulence! Although I am the maintainer of all living entities, and

although I am everywhere, still My Self is the very source of creation.

PURPORT

The Lord says that everything is resting on Him. This should not be misunderstood. The Lord is not directly concerned with the maintenance and sustenance of this material manifestation. Sometimes we see a picture of Atlas holding the globe on his shoulders; he seems to be very tired, holding this great earthly planet. Such an image should not be entertained in connection with Kṛṣṇa's upholding this created universe. He says that although everything is resting on Him, still He is aloof. The planetary systems are floating in space, and this space is the energy of the Supreme Lord. But He is different from space. He is differently situated. Therefore the Lord says, "Although they are situated on My inconceivable energy, still, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I am aloof from them." This is the inconceivable opulence of the Lord.

In the Vedic dictionary it is said, "The Supreme Lord is performing inconceivably wonderful pastimes, displaying His energy. His person is full of different potent energies, and His determination is itself actual fact. In this way the Personality of Godhead is to be understood." We may think to do something, but there are so many impediments, and sometimes it is not possible to do as we like. But when Kṛṣṇa wants to do something, simply by His willing, everything is performed so perfectly that one cannot imagine how it is being done. The Lord explains this fact: although He is the maintainer and sustainer of all material manifestation, He does not touch this material manifestation. Simply by His supreme will everything is created, everything is sustained, everything is maintained, and everything is annihilated. There is no difference between His mind and Himself (as there is a difference between ourselves and our present material mind) because He is absolute spirit. Simultaneously the Lord is present in everything; yet the common man cannot understand how He is also present personally. He is different from this material manifestation, yet everything is resting on Him. This is explained here as *yogam aiśvaram*, the mystic power of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 6

*yathākāśa-sthito nityam
vāyuḥ sarvatra-go mahān
tathā sarvāṇi bhūtāni
mat-sthānīty upadhāraya*

SYNONYMS

yathā-as much as; *ākāśa-sthitaḥ*-situated in space; *nityam*-always; *vāyuḥ*-wind; *sarvatra-gaḥ*-blowing everywhere; *mahān*-great; *tathā*-similarly; *sarvāṇi*-everything, *bhūtāni*-created beings; *mat-sthāni*-situated in Me; *iti*-thus; *upadhāraya*-try to understand.

TRANSLATION

As the mighty wind, blowing everywhere, always rests in ethereal space know that in the same manner all beings rest in Me.

PURPORT

For the ordinary person it is almost inconceivable how the huge material creation is resting in Him. But the Lord is giving an example which may help us to understand. Space is the biggest manifestation we can conceive. The cosmic manifestation rests in space. Space permits the movement of even the atoms and on up to the greatest planets, the sun and the moon. Although the sky (or wind or air) is great, still it is situated within space. Space is not beyond the sky.

Similarly, all the wonderful cosmic manifestations are existing by the supreme will of God, and all of them are subordinate to that supreme will. As we generally say, not a blade of grass moves without the will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus everything is moving under His will: by His will everything is being created, everything is being maintained, and everything is being annihilated. Still He is aloof from everything, as space is always aloof from the activities of the atmosphere. In the *Upaniṣads*, it is stated, "It is out of the fear of the Supreme Lord that the wind is blowing." In the *Garga Upaniṣad* also it is stated, "By the supreme order, under the superintendence of the Supreme Personality of

Godhead, the moon, the sun and the great planets are moving." In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* this is also stated. There is also a description of the movement of the sun, and it is said that the sun is considered to be one of the eyes of the Supreme Lord and that it has immense potency to diffuse heat and light. Still it is moving in its prescribed orbit by the order and the supreme will of Govinda. So, from the Vedic literature we can find evidence that this material manifestation, which appears to us to be very wonderful and great, is under the complete control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This will be further explained in the later verses of this chapter.

TEXT 7

*sarva-bhūtāni kaunteya
prakṛtiṁ yānti māmikām
kalpa-kṣaye punas tāni
kalpāḍau viśṛjāmy aham*

SYNONYMS

sarva-bhūtāni-all created entities; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *prakṛtim*-nature; *yānti*-enter; *māmikām*-unto Me; *kalpa-kṣaye*-at the end of the millennium; *punaḥ*-again; *tāni*-all those; *kalpa-āḍau*-in the beginning of the millennium; *viśṛjāmi*-I create; *aham*-I.

TRANSLATION

O son of Kuntī, at the end of the millennium every material manifestation enters into My nature, and at the beginning of another millennium, by My potency I again create.

PURPORT

The creation, maintenance and annihilation of this material cosmic manifestation is completely dependant on the supreme will of the Personality of Godhead. "At the end of the millennium" means at the death of Brahmā. Brahmā lives for one hundred years, and his one day is calculated at 4,300,000,000 of our earthly years. His night is of the same

duration. His month consists of thirty such days and nights, and his year of twelve months. After one hundred such years, when Brahmā dies, the devastation or annihilation takes place; this means that the energy manifested by the Supreme Lord is again wound up in Himself. Then again, when there is need to manifest the cosmic world, it is done by His will: "Although I am one, I shall become many." This is the Vedic aphorism. He expands Himself in this material energy, and the whole cosmic manifestation again takes place.

TEXT 8

*prakṛtiṁ svām avaṣṭabhya
visṛjāmi punaḥ punaḥ
bhūta-grāmam imam kṛtsnam
avaśam prakṛter vaśāt*

SYNONYMS

prakṛtim-material nature; *svām*-of My personal self; *avaṣṭabhya*-enter in; *visṛjāmi*-create; *punaḥ punaḥ*-again, again; *bhūta-grāmam*-all these cosmic manifestations; *imam*-this; *kṛtsnam*-total; *avaśam*-automatically; *prakṛteḥ*-by the force of nature; *vaśāt*-under obligation.

TRANSLATION

The whole cosmic order is under Me. By My will it is manifested again and again, and by My will it is annihilated at the end.

PURPORT

This matter is the manifestation of the inferior energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This has already been explained several times. At the creation, the material energy is let loose as *mahat-tattva*, into which the Lord as His first *Puruṣa* incarnation, Mahā-Viṣṇu, enters. He lies within the Causal Ocean and breathes out innumerable universes, and into each universe the Lord again enters as Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. Each universe is in that way created. He still further manifests Himself as Kṣīrodakaśāyī

Viṣṇu, and that Viṣṇu enters into everything-even into the minute atom. This fact is explained here. He enters into everything.

Now, as far as the living entities are concerned, they are impregnated into this material nature, and as a result of their past deeds they take different positions. Thus the activities of this material world begin. The activities of the different species of living beings are begun from the very moment of the creation. It is not that all is evolved. The different species of life are created immediately along with the universe. Men, animals, beasts, birds-everything is simultaneously created, because whatever desires the living entities had at the last annihilation are again manifested. It is clearly stated here that the living entities have nothing to do with this process. The state of being in their past life in the past creation is simply manifested again, and all this is done simply by His will. This is the inconceivable potency of the Supreme Personality of God. And after creating different species of life, He has no connection with them. The creation takes place to accommodate the inclinations of the various living entities, and so the Lord does not become involved with it.

TEXT 9

*na ca mām tāni karmāṇi
nibadhnanti dhanañjaya
udāsīna-vad āsīnam
asaktam teṣu karmasu*

SYNONYMS

na-never; *ca*-also; *mām*-Me; *tāni*-all those; *karmāṇi*-activities; *nibadhnanti*-bind; *dhanañjaya*-O conquerer of riches; *udāsīnavat*-as neutral; *āsīnam*-situated; *asaktam*-without attraction; *teṣu*-in them; *karmasu*-in activities.

TRANSLATION

O Dhanañjaya, all this work cannot bind Me. I am ever detached, seated as though neutral.

PURPORT

One should not think, in this connection, that the Supreme Personality of Godhead has no engagement. In His spiritual world He is always engaged. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated: "He is always involved in His eternal, blissful, spiritual activities, but He has nothing to do with these material activities." Material activities are being carried on by His different potencies. The Lord is always neutral in the material activities of the created world. This neutrality is explained here. Although He has control over every minute detail of matter, He is sitting as if neutral. The example can be given of a high court judge sitting on his bench. By his order so many things are happening: someone is being hanged, someone is being put into jail, someone is awarded a huge amount of wealth-but still he is neutral. He has nothing to do with all that gain and loss. Similarly, the Lord is always neutral, although He has His hand in every sphere of activity. In the *Vedānta-sūtra* it is stated that He is not situated in the dualities of this material world. He is transcendental to these dualities. Nor is He attached to the creation and annihilation of this material world. The living entities take their different forms in the various species of life according to their past deeds, and the Lord doesn't interfere with them.

TEXT 10

*mayādhyaṁṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ
sūyate sa-carācaram
hetunānena kaunteya
jagad viparivartate*

SYNONYMS

mayā-by Me; *adhyakṣeṇa*-by superintendence; *prakṛtiḥ*-material nature; *sūyate*-manifest; *sa*-with; *carācaram*-moving and nonmoving; *hetunā*-for this reason; *anena*-this; *kaunteya*-O son of Kuntī; *jagat*-the cosmic manifestation; *viparivartate*-is working.

TRANSLATION

This material nature is working under My direction, O son of Kuntī, and it is producing all moving and unmoving beings. By its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again.

PURPORT

It is clearly stated here that the Supreme Lord, although aloof from all the activities of the material world, remains the supreme director. The Supreme Lord is the supreme will and the background of this material manifestation, but the management is being conducted by material nature. Kṛṣṇa also states in *Bhagavad-gītā* that of all the living entities in different forms and species, "I am the Father." The father gives seeds to the womb of the mother for the child, and similarly the Supreme Lord by His mere glance injects all the living entities into the womb of material nature, and they come out in their different forms and species, according to their last desires and activities. All these living entities, although born under the glance of the Supreme Lord, still take their different bodies according to their past deeds and desires. So the Lord is not directly attached to this material creation. He simply glances over material nature; material nature is thus activated, and everything is created immediately. Because He glances over material nature, there is undoubtedly activity on the part of the Supreme Lord, but He has nothing to do with the manifestation of the material world directly. This example is given in the *smṛti*: when there is a fragrant flower before someone, the fragrance is touched by the smelling power of the person, yet the smelling and the flower are detached from one another. There is a similar connection between the material world and the Supreme Personality of Godhead; actually He has nothing to do with this material world, but He creates by His glance and ordains. In summary, material nature, without the superintendence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, cannot do anything. Yet the Supreme Personality is detached from all material activities.

TEXT 11

*avajānanti mām mūḍhā
mānuṣīm tanum āśritam*

*param bhāvam ajānanto
mama bhūta-maheśvaram*

SYNONYMS

avajānanti-deride; *mām*-Me; *mūḍhāḥ*-foolish men; *mānuṣīm*-in a human form; *tanum*-body; *āśritam*-assuming; *param*-transcendental; *bhāvam*-nature; *ajānantaḥ*-not knowing; *mama*-Mine; *bhūta*-everything that be; *maheśvaram*-supreme proprietor.

TRANSLATION

Fools deride Me when I descend in the human form. They do not know My transcendental nature and My supreme dominion over all that be.

PURPORT

From the other explanations of the previous verses in this chapter, it is clear that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although appearing like a human being, is not a common man. The Personality of Godhead, who conducts the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the complete cosmic manifestation, cannot be a human being. Yet there are many foolish men who consider Kṛṣṇa to be merely a powerful man and nothing more. Actually, He is the original Supreme Personality, as is confirmed in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (*iśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*); He is the Supreme Lord.

There are many *īśvaras*, controllers, and one appears greater than another. In the ordinary management of affairs in the material world, we find some official or director, and above him there is a secretary, and above him a minister, and above him a president. Each of them is a controller, but one is controlled by another. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is said that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme controller; there are many controllers undoubtedly both in the material and spiritual world, but Kṛṣṇa is the supreme controller (*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*), and His body is *sac-cid-ānanda*, non-material.

Material bodies cannot perform the wonderful acts described in previous verses. His body is eternal, blissful and full of knowledge. Although He is not a common man, the foolish deride Him and consider Him to be a man.

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