

SRIMAD BHAGAVAD-GITA

The Hidden Treasure of the Sweet Absolute

Editor:

The dearmost disciple and associate of
The King of Spiritual Teachers
Of Vaishnava Ontology

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Om Visnupada Paramahansa Parivrajakacharya-varya
Sarva-sastra-siddhanta-vit Astottara-sata-sri
Srimad Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara Deva
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Invocation

Meditation on Sri Gita

O Bhagavad-gita, sung by the Supreme Lord Himself, You are the bestower of the enlightenment of Arjuna. You have been interwoven within the scripture Mahabharata by Srila Vedavyasa, the writer of the Puranas. In eighteen chapters, You are the rain of ever-flowing nectar, and the almighty potency of the Supreme Lord which delivers the whole material world of suffering. O Mother, I keep You in my heart forever.

Obeisances unto Srila Vyasadeva

O master of great, formidable intelligence, Srila Vyasadeva, whose eyes resemble the long petals of a blooming lotus flower, and who lit

the lamp of knowledge which was filled with the oil of the Mahabharata - I offer my respectful obeisances unto you.

Obeisances unto the Lord as the chariot-driver of Arjuna

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna, who fulfills all the desires of His surrendered devotees. He holds a driving-rod in one hand while the other is poised in the gesture of instruction, and He is the extractor of the nectar of the Gita.

The glory of the Gita

The crest-jewels of the Vedas, the Upanisads, are like a cow, and the milker of the cow is Lord Sri Krsna, the son of Nanda Maharaj. Arjuna is the calf, the nectar of the Gita is the milk, and the virtuous devotees are the drinkers and enjoyers of that milk.

Obeisances unto Lord Sri Krsna

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of Lord Sri Krsna, who is the son of Vasudeva, the vanquisher of demons like Kamsa and Canura, the expander of the divine ecstasy of mother Devaki, the Supreme God of all gods, and the guru of the whole universe.

The battlefield represented as a river

The river, of which one bank is Bhisma and the other is Dronacarya; Jayadratha is the water, the sons of Gandhari are the blue lotus flower, and Salya is the crocodile; Krpa is the current, and Karna is the everchanging rising and ebbing tide; Asvatthama, Vikarna and company are the fearful sharks, and Duryodhana is the whirlpool - Sri Kesava is the fisherman of such a river of battle, which was crossed over by the Pandava brothers.

The Mahabharata as a lotus flower

The words of Sri Krsna Dvaipayana Vyasadeva, the son of Parasara Muni, are a pure lotus flower. The meaning of the Gita is the far-reaching fragrance of that lotus, and the various narrations are its stamens. The revelations of harikatha, narrations about the Supreme Lord, are the river. In this world, the pure devotees are the bees who are constantly absorbed in drinking the nectar of the lotus flower. May

that Mahabharata lotus, which is the vanquisher of all evils in this age of Kali, graciously bestow auspiciousness upon us.

Obeisances unto the Supreme Lord

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Lord whose glories are praised with celestial prayers by Lord Brahma, Lord Varuna, Lord Indra, Lord Rudra, and the Maruts, and whose glories are recited by the knowers of the Sama-veda; whose glories are sung by all the Vedas, along with their six subsidiary divisions and the Upanisads; who is seen within the hearts of the yogis absorbed in meditational trance, and whose infinite glories cannot be known, either by the gods or the demons. (Bhag. 12.13.1)

Before reciting or studying the scriptures, one must offer respectful obeisances unto the Lord's incarnations Nara-Narayana Rsi of Badarikasrama, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna, the goddess of speech Saraswati, and the writer of the scriptures, Srila Vyasadeva.

Preface

The Srimad Bhagavad-gita is unique in its wide publication and extensive circulation. Along with the commentaries of former great saints as well as modern scholars, this classic appears in various languages, both in India and other countries. The commentaries of the great Vaisnava acaryas such as Srimat Ramanuja, Srimat Madhvamuni, and Sri Sridhara Swamipada deserve special mention, while among the proponents of jnana-marga, or the scholastic path, the commentaries of Srimat Sankaracarya and Sri Madhusudana Saraswati are prominent. The commentaries of Sriyuta Bala Gangadhara Tilak and Sri Aurobindo favor the school of karma-yoga, or the path of action, and are also familiar to modern scholars. Furthermore, great thinkers of both Orient and Occident have ardently sung the glories of Sri Gita, being inspired by the ideals of its teaching. But fortunate persons of fine theistic intellect will experience the acintya-bhedabheda-siddhanta, or axiom of inconceivable simultaneous oneness and difference illustriously

promulgated by the authentic followers of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Gaudiya Acaryas Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti and Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana as eminently faithful to exclusive devotion to the Supreme Lord. The learned and faithful devotees are also inspired within the core of their hearts by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur's Bengali commentary on Sri Gita, realizing it to be an all-harmonious treasure of divine love for Lord Sri Krsna (Krsna-prema), which is the fifth and ultimate goal of life, transcendental to religiosity, economy, sense enjoyment, and liberation.

In the introduction to the present edition my worshipful divine master, Sri Gurupadapadma Om Visnupada Paramahansa Parivrajakacarya Sri Srimad Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaj has beautifully revealed to the readers the deep, internal devotional realization in his rendition. Among the numerous editions of Sri Gita presently available, few can be said to faithfully nurture pure devotion in accordance with the perfect conclusions of parampara, or bona fide descending disciplic succession. Therefore, our current endeavor has been justified. We shall consider ourselves blessed if our thoughtful readers will take the vital and all-auspicious essence of this sincere attempt to heart.

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Introduction

*vande sri-guru-gaurangau, radha-govinda-sundarau
sa-gunau giyate catha, gita-gudhartha-gauravam*

Bowing down to the holy feet of Sri Guru, Sri Gauranga, and Sri Sri Radha Govindasundara, all accompanied by Their associates, I shall sing the great glory of the hidden treasure of Srimad Bhagavad-gita. The Srimad Bhagavad-gita is well-known by the learned. Therefore, some explanation of the procedure adopted by this edition's editor must initially be given. The editor belongs to the school of thought descending in disciplic line from Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. We will therefore distinguish that the present edition is based on the

commentaries on Sri Gita as given by the preeminent, exalted Sri Gaudiya Vaisnava Acaryas, Sri Visvanatha, Sri Baladeva, and Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura. By the manifest grace of our worshipful spiritual master, Om Visnupada Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada, and from hints given by the aforementioned great pure devotees, some new light has been shed herein, unfolding deeper meanings throughout the text. The devotional reader will appreciate this distinction particularly in noting the purport of the four verses (10.8-11) which were explained by Sri Visvanathapada to be the four essential verses (catuh-sloki) of the book.

Generally, Sri Gita is known as an excellent study of the science of religion. The language of Sri Gita is simple and sweet; its mood is grave, extensive, and fundamental; its thought is brief, distinct, and impartial; and its logic is sound and natural. The prologue, epilogue, exposition, review, analysis, synthesis, and art of presentation of Sri Gita is unprecedented and charming to the extreme. Sri Gita is activation for the lazy, courage for the coward, hope for the hopeless, and new life for the dying. Sri Gita unifies and sustains all ranks, whether revolutionist, occultist, optimist, renunciationist, liberationist, or full-fledged theist. From the atheist of grossly crude vision to the most elevated saint the essential conceptions of all classes of philosophers are dealt with in clear and forceful logic. The fruitive worker, the learned, and the yoga practitioner (karmi, jnani, and yogi) and the devotee of the Lord will find herein a comprehensive and illuminating exposition on the substance of their respective philosophies, and thus the book is highly esteemed by all. The essential teachings of the Vedas and Upanisads of the Aryans is directly explained, and upon a little closer scrutiny, the gist of various non-Aryan doctrines may also be detected in the text. Within the purport of Sri Gita we find that the purification of consciousness through wisdom arises from materially unmotivated performance of scripturally enjoined duties, resulting in self-knowledge absolute existential knowledge, or divine realization. In full maturity, this pure, spotless perception culminates in the quest for loving service in pure cognition, in the divine ecstatic realm.

In the analysis of sambandha-jnana, or knowledge of divine

relationship, Sri Gita has revealed that the nature of the most original truth is a transcendental all-conscious personality. In the analysis of prayojana, or the supreme objective, internal inspiration of pure love in pursuit of the Supreme Absolute Reality has been mentioned as the perfectional attainment. And in the analysis of abhidheya, or the method of attaining the desired goal, the first stage has been revealed as offering all one's actions to the Supreme Lord, followed by the cultivation of internal self-knowledge, which arises according to one's progressive realization of the Lord. Finally, by giving up all other endeavors, one surrenders exclusively unto the Supreme Lord, Sri Krsna. In other words by taking shelter of pure unalloyed faith, one is situated in one's perfected divine identity and engages in divine loving service to the Lord, which is the ultimate goal of all devotional practices.

Sri Gita has clearly distinguished and delineated the characteristics of the nondevotional paths based on action (karma) and knowledge (jnana) and their corresponding achievable objectives of sense enjoyment (kama) and liberation (moksa). Therefore, the intelligent can note that by the statement, *yo yac chraddhah sa eva sah*, "One is identified by his particular faith", Sri Gita has drawn an objective comparison of different paths and their goals, thus disarming and exposing those who create confusion by supporting the concoction that the many paths and goals are "all one". In this respect, the following verses (6.46-47) deserve special attention:

*tapasvibhyo 'dhiko yogi, jnanibhyo 'pi mato 'dhikah
karmibhyas cadhiko yogi, tasmad yogi bhavarjuna*

*yoginam api sarvesam, mad-gatenantaratmana
sraddhavan bhajate yo mam, sa me yuktatamo matah*

Tyaga or renunciation has been completely condemned, and its futility has been emphatically asserted. This proclamation shows the conclusive, intrinsic gift of Sri Gita. Karma-yoga, or offering one's actions to the Supreme Lord without provincial interest, is preferred above karma-tyaga, or renunciation of action and finally, full self-surrender to the Supreme Lord, Sri Krsna, with every action dedicated by divine inspiration in his loving service is the ultimate and supreme

teaching of Sri Gita, one will find it to be the king of all scriptures as the bestower of the highest devotion. In its full-fledged nature, this devotion is the most supreme love divine, love for the all-attractive Supreme Personality Sri Krsna, Reality the Beautiful.

Sarva-dharman parityajya, mam ekam saranam vraja - the grand, vibrant, and resounding clarion call of Sri Gita has proclaimed the glories of life's superexcellent objective. Hidden, more hidden, and the most hidden treasures have been given, from the congregational chanting of the holy names of the Lord (sankirtana) up to spontaneous devotion (bhava-seva) in the life of total dedication to the cultivation of Krsna consciousness with exclusive surrender. This is the consistent and unanimous conclusion of the pure parampara, or descending spiritual succession, as corroborated by the genuine followers of the lotus footsteps of Sri Caitanyacandra, the original Supreme Lord, who descends to deliver the fallen souls of Kali-yuga, this iron age of quarrel and strife.

May this edition be an offering unto Lord Sri Krsna.

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Chapter One

Observing the Armies Sainya-darsana

1) Dhrtarastra said: O Sanjaya, what did my sons and the sons of Pandu do, after assembling for battle at the holy place of Kuruksetra?

2) Sanjaya said: Looking over the Pandavas' soldiers and armies arrayed in military formation, King Duryodhana approached Dronacarya and spoke as follows:

3) O master, please observe the great armies of the Pandavas,

arrayed in military formation by your intelligent disciple, Dhrstadyumna.

4-6) Among these soldiers are the expert bowmen Bhima and Arjuna, as well as others who are equally expert, such as Satyaki, King Virata, the great fighter Drupada, Dhrstaketu, Cekitana, the mighty hero Kasiraja, Purujit, Kuntibhoja, the noble King Saibya, valiant Yudhamanyu, heroic Uttamauja, Abhimanyu, and the sons of Draupadi all of whom are certainly great warriors.

7) O best of the twice-born, please also be informed of the great heroes and leaders of our armies. I shall now fully describe them for your consideration.

8-9) Besides your worthy self, who are always victorious in battle, and Bhisma, Karna, Krpacarya, Asvatthama, Vikarna, Saumadatti (Bhurisrava), and Jayadratha, there are many other heroes who are expert in the art of warfare; they are all armed with various weapons and are determined to lay down their very lives for me.

10) Our army, headed by Bhisma, is inadequate, whereas the army of the Pandavas, protected by Bhima, is competent.

11) Therefore, remaining in your respective divisions at the strategic points of the formation, please cooperate to protect Grandfather Bhisma.

12) Then, with a war-cry like the roar of a lion, Bhisma, the mighty grandsire of the Kurus, loudly blew his conchshell to encourage Duryodhana.

13) At once, conchshells, kettledrums, hand-drums, bugles, and other instruments were suddenly sounded, producing a tumultuous vibration.

14) On the other side, Lord Sri Krsna and Arjuna, in a grand chariot drawn by white horses, resounded their divine

conchshells.

15) Hrsikesa sounded His conchshell, Pancajanya; Dhananjaya sounded his, the Devadatta; and Bhimasena, the performer of mighty tasks, blew the great conchshell named Paundra.

16) King Yudhisthira, the son of Kunti, blew the Anantavijaya, while Nakula and Sahadeva sounded the conchshells named Sughosa and Manipuspaka respectively.

17, 18) O lord of the earth, the expert Bowman Kasiraja, the great warrior Sikhandi, Dhrstadyumna, King Virata, the unconquerable Satyaki, King Drupada, the sons of Draupadi and the mighty son of Subhadra, Abhimanyu all sounded their respective conchshells.

19) The tremendous sound of those conchshells, resounding throughout the land and heavens, pierced the hearts of the sons of Dhrtarastra.

20) O King, at that time, Dhananjaya (Arjuna), mounted on a chariot decorated with the flag of Hanuman, was ready to release his weapons. Seeing Duryodhana and his company poised for battle, he picked up his bow and spoke to Sri Krsna as follows:

21-23) Arjuna said: O Krsna, please place my chariot between the two armies, so I may observe the warriors with whom I must contend on this battlefield, and who have come to fight for the satisfaction of the wicked Duryodhana.

24-25) Sanjaya said: O descendant of Bharata, after the vigilant Arjuna spoke these words, Sri Krsna (the Lord of all senses) maneuvered the grand chariot between both armies, in front of Bhishma, Drona, and all the emperors. The Lord then said: O Partha, behold the Kauravas assembled here for battle.

26) There, within both armies, Arjuna could actually see fatherly elders, grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons,

grandsons, fathers-in-law, friends, and other well-wishers.

27) Thus, seeing his own kinsmen present on the battlefield, the son of Kunti, Arjuna, griefstricken and overwhelmed with great compassion, spoke the following words:

28) Arjuna said: O Krsna! Seeing my own relatives all standing before me eager for warfare, my limbs are being sapped of their strength and my mouth feels parched.

29) My whole body is trembling and bristling. I am losing grip of my bow Gandiva, and my skin is burning.

30) O Kesava! I cannot contain myself any longer. My mind is bewildered, and I see only hostile signs fraught with evil.

31) Nor do I see any good in killing my own relatives in this battle. O Krsna, I have no desire for victory, kingdom, or happiness.

32-34) O Govinda, of what value is our kingdom? What is the purpose of happiness and enjoyment, if those for whom we desire all this - teachers, fatherly elders, sons, grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law, and other relatives have today arrived for battle, ready to sacrifice their very lives and possessions? Therefore, O Madhusudana, even if they want to take my life, I do not wish to kill them.

35) O Janardana, even if we gain sovereignty over the three worlds, not to speak of ruling over the earth, what happiness shall we obtain by killing Duryodhana and company?

36) Only sin will befall us if we slay our teachers and guardians, even if they be our aggressors. We cannot take the lives of our own relatives, the sons of Dhrtarastra. O Madhava, how can we be happy by killing our own kinsmen?

37-38) Although these men, their hearts afflicted by greed, cannot see the grave sin of fighting with friends and killing family

members, why, O Janardana, should we not refrain from this heinous act, being in full knowledge of the grave consequences?

39) With the decline of the dynasty, the religious traditions of the family are curtailed. When religious practices are thus disrupted, the entire remaining dynasty is overwhelmed by irreligion.

40) O Krsna, descendant of the Vrsni dynasty, when the family is thus predominated by irreligion, the women of the family become depraved, and from adultery, unwanted and unvirtuous progeny is born.

41) Undesirable progeny forces both the family and its destroyers into a hellish condition. The same fate befalls the ancestors of that family, because the regular offerings of food and water to those ancestors are discontinued.

42) The heinous acts of such destroyers of the dynasty cause the outbreak of mongrelized progeny. By those acts, ageless family tradition and noble high lineage are utterly devastated.

43) O Janardana, we have heard that persons whose familial, social, and religious traditions are disrupted dwell always in hell.

44) Alas! What a grave sin we have decided to commit. Driven by our greed for trifling royal happiness, we are about to kill our own kinsmen.

45) If unarmed and unresisting, I were to be killed on this battlefield by the armed sons of Dhrtarastra, then that would be much more auspicious for me.

46) Sanjaya said: Having thus spoken on the battlefield, Arjuna cast aside his bow and arrows and sat down on the chariot, his heart overwhelmed with lamentation.

Chapter Two

The Constitution of the Soul

Sankhya-yoga

1) Sanjaya said: The Supreme Lord, Madhusudana, then spoke the following words unto griefstricken Arjuna, who was overwhelmed with compassion and whose sorrowful eyes were brimming with tears.

2) The Supreme Lord said: O Arjuna, why has such illusion overcome you at this critical moment? This is unbecoming a noble man (Aryan). It is an obstacle to the attainment of heaven, and a destroyer of good name and fame.

3) O son of Kunti, give up this cowardice, for it does not become you. O great hero, cast off this petty weakness of heart, and arise for battle!

4) Arjuna said: O Madhusudana, killer of the enemy, how can I counterattack, shooting arrows at my grandsire Bhishma and teacher Drona, who are worthy of my worship?

5) It is better to live in this world by begging, without taking the lives of our great, noble elders and teachers. Otherwise, by killing them we shall only live in this world to enjoy their wealth and properties tainted with their blood.

6) We cannot understand which will be better for us victory or defeat because those sons of Dhrtarastra, whom if we killed we should not care to live, now stand before us on the battlefield.

7) Now I am bewildered. What is my real duty? Overwhelmed by apprehension for the fall of our dynasty, I am begging You to please tell me clearly which course of action is most beneficial for me. I am Your surrendered disciple. Kindly instruct me.

8) Even if we obtain an unrivaled, expanding empire on Earth and supremacy over the kingdom of heaven, I cannot find anything to allay this sadness which is leaving me senseless.

9) Sanjaya said: In this way, the chastiser of the enemy, the intensely alert Arjuna, addressed Krsna who is the Lord of the senses of all beings. Then he declared, "Govinda, I will not fight", and fell silent.

10) O Bharata, thereafter Sri Hrsikesa, in the midst of both armies, smilingly addressed the griefstricken Arjuna as follows:

11) The Lord said: O Arjuna, you are mourning for that which is unworthy of grief, and yet speaking words of wisdom. But the wise lament neither for the living nor the dead.

12) Never was there a time when I, you, or all these kings did not exist. As we are at present, so have we been in the past, and shall continue to be in the future.

13) As the embodied living being gradually passes in this body from childhood to youth to old age, so also that soul attains yet another body at death. The learned are not deluded by such a transformation.

14) O son of Kunti, only the engagement of the senses with their objects gives rise to the sensations for cold, heat, pleasure, and pain. But these effects are temporary they come and go. Therefore, O Bharata, you are to endure them.

15) O noblest of men, a person of steady intelligence, equipoised in pleasure and pain, undisturbed by sensual experiences, is certainly eligible for liberation.

16) Of the changeable, such as the body, there is no everlasting existence; of the everlasting soul, there is no transformation or destruction. Seers of the truth have thus distinguished and analyzed the nature of both eternal reality and temporary illusion.

17) Know that the soul who pervades the entire body is imperishable. He is unchangeable and everlasting, and no one can destroy him.

18) Only these physical bodies of the eternal, indestructible, and immeasurable soul are subject to destruction. Therefore, fight, O Bharata, and do not give up your natural religious principles.

19) Those who think that the living being is a slayer, and those who think that he is slain, are both ignorant of the true nature of the soul - the soul neither slays nor is slain.

20) The soul is never born and he never dies, nor does he repeatedly come into being and undergo expansion, because he is unborn and eternal. He is inexhaustible ever-youthful yet ancient. Although the body is subject to birth and death, the soul is never destroyed.

21) O Partha, how can a person who knows the soul to be constant, indestructible, birthless, and inexhaustible, kill anyone or cause anyone to be killed?

22) As a person accepts new dress, rejecting that which is old and worn, so also the soul continues to accept a new body, giving up the old and useless one.

23) Weapons cannot pierce the soul, and fire cannot burn him. He can neither be moistened with water, nor dried by the air.

24-25) The soul is indivisible and cannot be burned, moistened, or dried up. He is everlasting, constant, unchangeable, and ever-existent. Nothing can obstruct his passage. This soul is imperceptible, inconceivable, and unaffected by the sixfold mutations (birth, existence, growth, maturity, diminution, and destruction). Therefore, knowing the soul in this way, you can no longer lament.

26-27) And, O best of warriors, even if you think that the soul is perpetually subject to birth and death, you still have no reason to lament. For one who is born, death is certain, and for one who dies, he must be reborn to undergo the reactions of his past actions. Therefore, you should not lament over the inevitable.

28) O Bharata, when all living entities are unmanifest before birth, manifest between birth and death, and again unmanifest at death, why lament for them? (This conclusion is not corroborated by saintly authorities; but if it is accepted for the sake of argument, your duty is still to fight to uphold your natural religious principles.)

29) Some see the soul as astonishing, some describe him as astonishing, some hear of him as astonishing, while others, even after hearing about him, cannot understand him at all.

30) O Bharata, the soul dwelling within the bodies of all living beings is eternal and cannot be slain. Therefore, you should not lament for anybody.

31) Moreover, considering your svadharma, you have no reason to waver, since no action is more beneficial for a ksatriya than fighting for religious justice.

Commentary: Svadharma, or the natural duty of the living entity, is of two types, according to the condition of either his bondage or liberation. In the liberated state, svadharma is devoid of the superfluous color or impetus which is found in the svadharma of material bondage. Actually, pure sva-dharma, suddha svadharma, is the liberated soul's absorption in engaging his every attempt for the divine pleasure of the Supreme Lord. On the other hand, the soul in material bondage accepts various birth throughout 8,400,000 species of life according to the fruits of his past actions, until by dint of pious or virtuous actions he obtains a human birth; then, according to his particular nature and movements he adopts a position in daiva-varnasrama, the God-centered, graded socio-religious system, as a favorable means of attaining pure svadharma of the liberated state. Thus, the practice of this favorable means is also known as svadharma in a general way. In other words, as smoke-covered fire is still known

as fire regardless of its covering, similarly, although the original suddha svadharma of the soul may appear to be slightly covered, it is nonetheless counted as svadharma, within the consideration of the God-centered socio-religious system of varnasrama-dharma.

32) O Partha, such a battle, present of its own accord like the open gates of heaven, can be gained only by the most fortunate warriors.

33) In fact, if you choose not to engage in this war of religious justice, your religious principles will be lost, fame will desert you, and sin will overcome you.

34) People will speak of your infamy for all time to come, and for the renowned, infamy is worse than death.

35) Those great warriors who have highly honored you will ridicule you, considering that you were afraid to fight.

36) Your enemies will scorn your abilities with many insulting words. What could be more painful?

37) O Kaunteya, if you are killed, you will attain heaven, and if you are victorious, you will enjoy the Earth. Therefore, being confident of your success, arise for battle!

38) Knowing pleasure and pain, gain and loss, and victory and defeat to be one and the same - fight. You will be unaffected by sin.

39) I have just explained to you the wisdom of the conception of reality. Now hear of the conception of devotional service, or bhakti-yoga. O Partha, by buddhi-yoga, engaging your intelligence in devotion, you will be able to completely cut the bondage of action.

Commentary: "It will be shown herein that buddhi-yoga is a singular path. When this buddhi-yoga is seen to be limited by the ideal of action, it is known as karma-yoga; when it extends beyond karma up

to the utmost limit of knowledge, it is known as jnana-yoga, or sankhya-yoga; and when, transcending the limitations of both jnana and karma, it touches bhakti, or devotion, it is then known as bhakti-yoga, or perfectly pure and complete buddhi-yoga." Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura

40) Even a small beginning in this devotional service cannot go in vain, nor can any loss be suffered. The most insignificant practice of such devotional service saves one from the all-devouring fear of repeated birth and death in this world.

Commentary: enerally, maha-bhaya is taken as the all-devouring fear of repeated birth and death in this world of exploitation. But maha-bhaya also refers to sayujya-mukti, the liberation of merging into the impersonal nondifferentiated consciousness of Brahmaloaka, Viraja, or samadhi. Renunciation leads to sayujya-mukti, the fullstop of birth and death, but not a life in the positive plane. It takes one to a permanent burial in Brahmaloaka. The demon of mukti will devour one wholesale, and therefore it is even more dangerous than this ordinary worldly life of action and reaction. Mukti means a strike in the organic system, so it must be avoided. To either abuse duties in a factory or to declare a strike by cessation of duties are both abnormal. Bhukti, exploitation, and mukti, renunciation, are both fearsome ghosts. Therefore, maha-bhaya means the great apprehension fo falling prey to both the ghost of exploitation leading to repeated birth and death, as well as the ghost of committing suicide by merging into the impersonalism of incarceration in Brahmaloaka fear of both bhoga-bhumi, the plane of exploitation, and tyaga-bhumi, the plane of renunciation. It is stated in the Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu:

*bhukti-mukti sprha yavat, pisaci hrdis vartate
tavat bhakti-sukhasyatra, katham abhyudayo bhavet*

"As long as the two ghosts of exploitation and renunciation remain haunting the heart, the ecstasy of devotion to Krsna will never awaken there." (B.r.s. 1.2.22)

anyabhilasita sunyam jnana-karmady anavrtam

anukulyena krsnanusilanam bhaktir uttama

"The highest devotion is that which pleases exclusively the Supreme Lord, Krsna, and it is devoid of any desire apart from His service. It is not covered by the action of daily or customary duties (karma), nor by the knowledge that searches for the impersonal nondifferentiated aspect of the Absolute (jnana), nor by the meditational attempt to become one with the Lord (yoga)." (B.r.s. 1.1.9)

Only the Supreme Lord is abhaya, beyond apprehension. Therefore only participation in His service can free one from the ghosts of exploitation and renunciation, bhukti and mukti. If we subtract bhukti and mukti, then only positive bhakti, devotion, is the remainder. Therefore without bhakti everything is maha-bhaya, great danger.

41) O descendant of the Kuru dynasty, intelligence engaged in exclusive devotion unto Me is one-pointed and firmly situated in Me, since I am its only goal. But the intelligence of those who avoid exclusive devotion to Me is splayed and characterized by endless desires because of its absorption in innumerable sense objects.

42-44) O Partha, those lascivious and ignorant persons who have no knowledge that the chief purpose of the Vedas is the attainment of the Supreme Truth, are always concerned with interpretations of its indirect, trivial aspects. They say "There is nothing worth knowing beyond this." Desirous of enjoying the fruits of their actions and seeking the attainment of heaven, those fools are attracted by the apparently enchanting (but ultimately poisonous) words of the karma-kanda section of the Vedas, wherein many processes of sacrifice and other rituals are described which yield wealth, sense enjoyment, good birth, and the fruits of one's actions. Deluded by these flowery words and enamored by worldly pleasures and opulence, the intelligence of such indiscriminate persons does not attain the resolute determination of exclusive and uninterrupted dedication to the Supreme Lord.

45) O Arjuna, when defining nondevotional paths based on action

and knowledge, the Vedas deal with the three modes of material nature. Foolish men, whose intelligence is covered by exploitation and renunciation, engage themselves in the cultivation of action and knowledge. Thus, they remain in ignorance of the principal object aimed at by the Vedas, which is transcendence beyond the three modes of material nature. But Arjuna, you be free from duality, live in the association of My eternal devotees, and give up all pursuits for gain and preservation. Then by buddhi-yoga, dedicating your intelligence to Me, reach that plane which is free from material qualities, and situate yourself in that transcendence which is the object of the Vedas. In other words, withdrawing yourself from the cultivation of action and knowledge, engage exclusively in the path of devotion as commanded by the Vedas.

46) All the purposes served by several tiny ponds can at once be served better by a large lake. Similarly, the results obtained by worshiping various demigods through respective Vedic prayers may at once be surpassed by exclusive devotion unto Me. Such devotion is the one and only direction of the Vedas. A self-realized person who is thus in full knowledge of the essence of the Vedas, fulfills all necessities by exclusively worshiping the Supreme Lord in devotion.

47) I shall now describe niskama karma-yoga the path of selfless action. You have a right to perform your natural prescribed duties, but you are not entitled to any fruits of that action. You should neither act with desire to enjoy the fruits of your work, nor, as a result, should you be attached to neglecting your duties.

48) O Dhananjaya, after giving up desire for the fruits of action, situate yourself on the path of devotion (bhakti-yoga). Equally disposed to success and failure, carry out the duties prescribed according to your nature. To remain equipoised in either success or failure of the outcome of action is certainly known as yoga.

49) O Dhananjaya, fruitive action is extremely abominable in comparison to buddhi-yoga, or equilibrium in selfless action. Those who crave the fruits of their actions are misers - they are

impoverished, being full of desires. Therefore, take shelter of the intelligence of which selfless action is the aim and objective.

50) A person who is not motivated by desire to enjoy the fruits of his actions rids himself of both good and bad deeds within this very life. Engage, therefore, in the path of selfless action, since such buddhi-yoga, or equilibrium in selfless action, is certainly the art of action.

51) Wise men of steady intelligence liberate themselves from the bondage of birth by renouncing the fruits born of action. Thus, they enter into that state of divine tranquillity which is attainable only by the devotees.

Chapter Three

The Path of Action

Karma-yoga

1) Arjuna said: O Janardana, O Kesava, if You consider that resolute and determined spiritual intelligence (vyavasayatmika buddhi) is better than action in goodness and passion, then why do You engage me in the violent activity of warfare?

2) My intelligence is confused by Your words. They appear to be ambiguous, sometimes supporting action and sometimes supporting knowledge. So please instruct me which of these two paths is most beneficial for me.

3) The Supreme Lord replied: I have already described the two types of faith to be found in this world. I have established that the learned who are aware of the conscious world, and those who are mainly active in the mundane plane, both engage in the (rudimentary) practice of the path of devotion (sadhana bhakti-yoga) by respectively following the path of knowledge and the path of selfless action offered to the Lord. Actually, the staircase

leading to the land of dedication is one, while only faith is twofold, according to the steps attained by the aspirants.

4) Without performing scripturally enjoined duties, one cannot attain knowledge leading to freedom from action and reaction. How can a person of impure heart obtain perfection by abandoning his prescribed duties?

5) No one can remain without acting even for a moment. Everyone is forced to act helplessly, stimulated by the modes of material nature. Therefore, it is improper for a person of impure consciousness to reject the purificatory duties prescribed by the scriptures.

6) One who externally restrains his hands, legs, and other senses of action, but whose mind dwells in sense objects, is a fool. Know him as a hypocrite.

7) O Arjuna, one in married life who has controlled his senses by the mind, and who, without attachment, has begun to perform karma-yoga, through his working senses, is far superior to such a hypocrite.

8) Perform your ablutions, worship, and other daily duties. Since even bodily sustenance is not possible without action, it is better for an unqualified person to perform his duty rather than renounce it. By giving up fruitive action and regularly performing your daily obligatory duties, your heart will be gradually purified. Then, surpassing the plane of renunciation, you will attain pure devotion, beyond the mundane plane.

9) Selfless duty performed as an offering to the Supreme Lord is called yajna, or sacrifice. O Arjuna, all action performed for any other purpose is the cause of bondage in this world of repeated birth and death. Therefore, remaining unattached to the fruits of action, perform all your duties in the spirit of such sacrifice. Such action is the means of entering the path of devotion, and with the awakening of true perception of the Lord, it will enable you to

attain to pure, unalloyed devotion, free from all material qualities (nirguna-bhakti).

10) In the beginning of creation, Lord Brahma created the populace along with sacrifices for the Supreme Lord Visnu. Brahma instructed thus: "Taking shelter of this religious principle of sacrifice, prosper and flourish. May this sacrifice fulfill all your desires."

11) "Propitiate the demigods by this sacrifice and those gods, thus pleased, may satisfy you by bestowing all your desired success. In this way, through mutual goodwill, you will be the gainer of great auspiciousness.

12) The demigods, who are integral parts of My external manifestation, certainly award all your necessities, being satisfied with the performance of sacrifice. By the grace of the demigods, who are all under My shelter, there is sufficient rain, sunlight, and other elements to provide ample food commodities. He who selfishly enjoys these gifts without offering them to the gods (generally by the five great sacrifices), incurs all the sins of a thief.

13) Virtuous souls are liberated from all sins arising from the five different kinds of violence towards all living entities, by accepting the remnants of foodstuffs from the five great sacrifices offered to the universal demigods. But miscreants who prepare food for their own gratification simply partake of sin.

14) From food, living beings arise, and from rains, food is produced. From the performance of sacrifice, rainfall ensues, and sacrifice is born of action.

15) Action arises from the Vedas, and the Vedas originate in Aksara, the Infallible One. Therefore, the allpervading, infallible Supreme Lord, is eternally situated within the acts of sacrifice offered unto Him.

16) O Arjuna, a man in either the stage of action or knowledge

who does not follow this causal cyclic system which is directly established by the Supreme Lord, certainly leads a sinful life. Such a compulsive sense-enjoyer maintains his life in vain.

17) But there is no duty to fulfill for one who delights within the self, rejoices in the self alone, and is fully self-satisfied within. He works only for the bare necessities of bodily sustenance.

18) In this world, a self-realized person who rejoices in the soul does not accrue piety by the performance of actions, nor does he incur sin by abstaining from duties. Amongst all living entities, from the highest life-forms of the planet of Lord Brahma down to the world of immobile organisms, he never depends on anyone for any personal demand whatsoever.

19) Therefore, giving up all attachment to the fruits of action, always perform your prescribed activities as a matter of duty. By the continual performance of action without attachment, a living being attains liberation. And true liberation is the state of exclusive devotion, attained in the ultimate maturity of selfless action.

20) King Janaka and other learned personalities attained to perfection in devotion by performing their prescribed duties. Therefore, it is proper that you perform your duty for the instruction of the masses.

21) The general masses imitate the ways of great men. They follow whatever the great personality accepts as the right conclusion.

22) O Arjuna, I, the Supreme Lord, have no duty whatsoever in the three worlds, since there is nothing unobtained or necessary to be obtained by Me; and yet, personally, I am active.

23) O Arjuna, if I ever avoid activity then all men, following in My footsteps, will give up their duties.

24) If I do not perform duties, then, following My example, all the

inhabitants of these worlds will renounce their duties and thereby come to ruination. Thus I will be the cause of social turmoil due to unvirtuous population, and in this way, I will be responsible for spoiling posterity.

25) O Arjuna, as ignorant, attached persons work, the wise must also work, but without attachment, in order to protect the svadharma or religious principles of those who are competent to follow the path of action. The difference is not in the actions of these two classes of men, but in their respective attitudes of attachment and indifference.

26) The scholarly proponents of the path of knowledge must not confuse ignorant, attached men by deviating them with the advice, "Leave aside action, and cultivate knowledge." Rather, controlling their own minds, the learned should perform all the various duties without desiring the results, and in this way, subsequently engage the common section in action.

27) All the various activities are in every way carried out by the (senses activated by the) modes of material nature. But a man deluded by identifying himself with his body and its extensions thinks, "I alone am accomplishing this."

28) However, O mighty-armed Arjuna, one who is in full knowledge of the classification of the material modes of goodness, passion, and ignorance, and their respective functions pertaining to the demigods, the senses, and the sense objects he does not falsely and egotistically assert himself as a performer of action, knowing well that the senses (ear, skin, eye, tongue, and nose) allotted by the controlling deities are simply engaging with their respective desirable sense objects (sound, touch, form, taste, and smell).

29) A person influenced by the modes of material nature is like a man possessed by a ghost. Completely captivated, he is addicted to sensual enjoyment of the various sense objects. One in perfect wisdom should not agitate such ignorant, dull-brained (and

unqualified) persons by revealing philosophical truths to them. Rather, they should instruct them in the performance of action devoid of desire for sense enjoyment, because such action nullifies the enchantment of the modes of nature.

30) Surrender all your activities unto Me with this understanding: "All my actions are under the control of the indwelling Lord." In such consciousness, free from all sense of possessiveness and lamentation take recourse to battle (as your svadharma, natural duty).

31) Faithful and unbegrudging men who constantly practice this yoga path of selfless action as favored by Me, attain liberation from the bondage of action - even though they are active.

32) However those, who, out of envy, do not follow these teachings of Mine, are devoid of all good sense. Know such men as completely ignorant and doomed to ruination.

33) Even a learned person tends to act according to his nature, that is, his inherent evil inclinations. Therefore, the result of the living beings' endeavor to act in this way is to become enslaved by such inclinations. Then, they can no longer be disciplined by fear of either scriptural or lawful punishments.

34) Although the senses are inevitably attracted to and repulsed by their various respective objects, do not be subjugated by these whims they are the greatest enemy of the candidate for self-realization. (Devotional attachment and detachment are not indicated herein.)

35) It is better to carry out one's own duties a little imperfectly rather than faultlessly perform another's duties. Know that even death is auspicious in the discharge of one's duties appropriate to his natural position in the ordained socio-religious system, because to pursue another's path is perilous.

Commentary: Pure devotion unto Adhoksaja, the Lord who is

beyond sensual purview, is the eternal superexcellent natural function of the soul. Therefore, even if such a function externally appears abominable, it is always far superior to conduct that is good in the estimation of mundane morality, which is always prejudiced by the material modes of goodness, passion, and ignorance. In the company of true saints, the progressive practice of cultivation in such pure devotion is the bestower of the ultimate merit, even if death occurs. Since ignorance-based intuition to perform unpredictable, spurious 'good' practices remains within *dvitiyabhinivesa*, or absorption in any object other than the Supreme Lord, such practices are *bhayavah* they simply lead to fear.

*bhayaṁ dvitīyabhīnivesataḥ syad-
iśad apetaśya viparyayo 'smṛtiḥ
tan mayayato budha abhajeṭ tam
bhaktyaikāyeśam guru-devatātma*
(Bhag. 11.2.37)

"Because persons who are averse to the devotional service of the Supreme Lord have forgotten their own internal identities (as servants of the Lord) due to the action of *maya*, the deluding potency of the Lord, they remain within the false ego of considering the body as the self. When the attention is absorbed in mundane objects to the exclusion of the Supreme Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa, one experiences fear on account of the body, family, friends, possessions, and so on.

Therefore, a person of fine intelligence will worship the Lord with exclusive devotion, knowing the genuine guru to be non-different from the Lord as His most beloved servant."

36) Arjuna inquired: O descendant of the Vṛṣṇis, by whom is the living being compelled to commit sinful activities, even against his own will?

37) The Supreme Lord replied: Certainly it is lust, born of the mode of passion, which induces a person to commit sin. Lust is the basis of the desire for sense enjoyment, and in different situations that lust becomes transformed into anger. It is utterly insatiable

and extremely malicious. Know this lust alone to be the greatest enemy of the living being in this world.

38) As fire is thinly veiled by smoke, as a mirror is thickly covered with dust, and as the embryo remains completely enclosed within the womb, similarly, this lust covers the consciousness of the living being in three degrees of intensity, according to the three modes of material nature goodness, passion, and ignorance respectively.

39) O Arjuna, this lust with its underlying nescience is the perpetual enemy of the man of knowledge. Like fire which is never satisfied (by offerings of clarified butter), it covers a man's good sense of judgement.

40) It is said that the senses, the mind, and the intelligence are the favorite haunts of this terrible enemy known as lust. Covering the good sense of the living being, lust beguiles him through these channels, and hurls him down into the quagmire of gross materialism.

41) Therefore, O noblest of the Bharatas, by first bringing your own senses under control, openly deal the death blow to this lust, the embodiment of sin which ruins both jnana (discriminative knowledge of the self and non-self, as delineated in the scriptures) and vijnana (subsequent realization in divine consciousness).

42) The learned proclaim that the senses are superior to inert objects, the mind is superior to the senses, and the faculty of resolute intelligence is superior to the mind. And he who is superior to the intelligence is the soul himself.

43) O mighty Arjuna! Knowing the soul to be thus perfectly distinct from the intelligence, steady the mind with resolute intelligence and destroy the indomitable enemy, lust.

Chapter Four

The Path of Divine Knowledge

Jnana-yoga

1) The Supreme Lord said: Previously, I imparted to Surya this changeless path of knowledge, which is achieved by selfless action. Surya, the presiding deity of the sun, delivered it to his son Vaivasvata Manu, exactly as he had heard it from Me. Thereafter, Manu instructed the same knowledge to his son Ikshvaku.

2) O conqueror of the enemy, in this way, the saintly kings such as Nimi, Janaka, and others, learned this path of knowledge through the divine succession. Presently, after the passage of a long period of time, this teaching has been almost completely lost.

3) Now, I shall deliver that eternal teaching to you. Because you are My devotee and friend, this supreme, hidden path is today revealed by Me to you.

4) Arjuna said: Vivasvan, the Sungod, was born in ancient times, and You were born only recently. Therefore, how is it to be believed, that You previously instructed these teachings to him?

5) The Supreme Lord said: O Arjuna, chastiser of the enemy, both you and I have passed through many births previously. Due to My position as the supreme controller, I am able to remember all those births, whereas you, a living being of finite consciousness, cannot.

6) Although My eternal form is transcendental to birth and death, and I am the controller of all beings, I appear within the world in My original form, by My own sweet will, extending My internal potency of yoga-maya.

7) O Bharata, whenever there is a decline of religion and an uprising of irreligion, I personally appear, like a being born in this

world.

8) I appear in every age to deliver the saintly devotees, to vanquish sinful miscreants, and to firmly establish true religion.

9) O Arjuna, one who actually perceives My supramundane birth and activities enacted by My sweet will, does not undergo rebirth. After giving up his present body, he attains Me. Having become subservient to My divine pleasure (hladini-sakti) in the form of My revealed divine potency, such a soul achieves eternal devotional service unto Me.

10) Freed from worldly infatuation, fear, and anger, many persons have taken refuge in Me, absorbing their hearts in hearing about Me, singing My divine glories, and remembering Me. Having become thoroughly purified by knowledge of Me and by penance endured for My sake, they attained divine love for Me.

11) As a person takes refuge in Me, I accordingly respond to him. Being the ultimate goal of all philosophies and doctrines, I am the objective to be attained by all. Certainly, O Partha, all men follow My various paths.

12) Worldly persons desiring easy success in material life worship Indra and other demigods. Such worship quickly yields the fruit of its endeavor in this world, such as the attainment of heaven.

13) I alone have created in human society the fourfold divisions of varna (brahmana etc.) according to the appropriate gradation to material qualities (goodness, etc.) and duties (sense control, etc.) In the entire world, there is no other creator apart from Me. Nonetheless, although I am the creator of the natural gradation of human society (varna-dharma), you should know Me as the nondoer since I am aloof, transcendental to the modes of material nature, and unchangable.

14) I am never implicated by the law of karma which I have created to fulfill the destinies of the living beings, nor do I ever

aspire for the results of action. (Since I am the Supreme Lord replete with all six opulences in full, the paltry fruits of worldly actions are totally insignificant to Me.) One who appreciates this conception of My singular independence from the actions of the beings of this world, and who can thus understand My unchangable existence such a person is never bound by any action. By practicing pure devotional service, he surely comes to Me.

15) Knowing this basic principle, liberationists of previous times renounced all fruitive action, and without provincial interest performed all their activities as an offering unto Me. Likewise, you should adopt this yoga path of selfless action as did the great saintly persons of yore.

16) Even very learned men are baffled in ascertaining the nature of action and inaction. Some cannot comprehend action, while others cannot comprehend inaction. Hence, I shall now teach you about such action and inaction, knowing which you will attain liberation from the evil world.

17) Action prescribed by the Vedas, action prohibited by the scriptures, and the renunciation of action should be understood. The performance of duties is known as action (karma); the performance of prohibited actions is sinful (vikarma); and the nonperformance of action, or renunciation of action, is known as inaction (akarma). It is extremely difficult to realize the internal principle of karma, vikarma, and akarma.

18) One who realizes that the selfless action performed by the man of pure knowledge is never subject to bondage and is therefore in fact inaction whereas the abnegation practiced by renunciate of impure heart is the ill-fated cause of bondage he is, among men, the intelligent yogi and factual executor of all works.

19) One whose every action is devoid of fruitive desire, and who burns all prescribed and prohibited actions in the fire of pure knowledge, is described by the conscientious as a man of true

wisdom.

20) Giving up attachment to the fruits of action, fully content in the eternal bliss within, and indifferent to the security of mundane acquisition and preservation such a person does not do anything at all, although he is fully engaged. That is, he is never bound by the fruits of his actions.

21) Having renounced all aspirations for fruitive enjoyment and all excessive endeavors for mundane acquisition, keeping his mind and body subjugated by the (developed) intelligence, if such a person even engages in spurious action for his minimal bodily sustenance, no sinful or pious reaction whatsoever is incurred by him.

22) Content with whatever is readily available, and never overwhelmed by duality based on pleasure and pain or attachment and hatred, such a person wards off envy. He is equipoised, being neither elated nor dejected in success or failure. Therefore, he is never bound by any action.

23) All actions are perfectly dissipated when performed in the spirit of sacrifice by the detached, liberated, and enlightened soul. (The actions of the worker on the path of selfless action do not lead to the consequence of apurva as postulated by the karma-mimamsaka section.)

Commentary: According to their ethical but atheistic ideology, the karma-mimamsaka philosophers (mundane rationalists) claim that pious actions produce an unseen, subtle potency known as apurva, which must fructify at the appropriate time after death. Their conception that this fruit can later be shared by others is meant to show the eternality of karma, or action, but it neglects the presence of the Supreme Autocrat. So the statement of *Sri Krsna, samagram praviliyate*, "All actions are dissipated", should not be misinterpreted to mean that the actions of liberated souls will cause some remote worldly consequence, or apurva. Rather, the Lord clearly points out that the pure actions offered to Him by the pure, selfless karma-yogi do not cause any subsequent reaction to be either enjoyed or suffered by others in this mundane plane.

24) According to the basic principles of sacrifice, the sacrificial spoon, ladle, and other paraphernalia, the various offerings with clarified butter, the sacrificial fire, the priest who performs the sacrifice, and the act of offering the sacrifice and its reward all are of the nature of Brahman, the Absolute. A person who, with this understanding is constantly absorbed in divine action with one-pointed attention, certainly attains to the divine plane of the Absolute.

25) Other karma-yogis perform sacrifice in the worship of demigods such as Indra and Varuna. Other jnana-yogis, simply by vibrating the pranava mantra, Omkara, offer the individual soul (as the sacrificial clarified butter) unto the Supersoul (as the sacrificial fire).

26) Strict celibates offers their senses of hearing, touching, seeing, tasting, and smelling into the sacrificial fire of mental control. Householders engaged in their natural duties (svadharma) offer for sacrifice the sense objects of sound, touch, form, taste, and smell into the fire of the senses.

27) The monist yogis (headed by the Patanjala school) who aspire to attain to the state of withdrawal of the soul from sense objects (pratyagatma), offer all the senses and their functions of hearing, seeing, etc., as well as all ten vital life-currents and their functions into the fire of self-purification ignited by knowledge.

28) Some persons are inclined to perform sacrifice by giving articles in charity, some by strict penances headed by candrayana, some by adopting the eightfold mystic yoga practice, and yet others, through recitation and study of the Vedic scriptures. All of these persons are very diligent in their practices and adopt strict VOWS.

29) Others practice breath-control. Stopping the right nostril and inhaling through the left, they bring the ascending air into union with the descending; closing the left nostril and exhaling through

the right, they similarly offer the descending air into the ascending; and lastly, stopping both nostrils, they check both ascending and descending airs. Yet other aspirants of sense-control offer all the senses into the life-air by reducing their food intake.

30) All these persons know well the principles of sacrifice. Having purified themselves from sins by their performance of sacrifice, they enjoy its remnants in the form of sense pleasure, wealth, and yogic perfections. And in the end they reach the aforementioned eternal plane of the Absolute.

31) O Arjuna, foremost of the Kurus, a person who never performs sacrifice cannot even attain the meager pleasures of this world; how then will it be possible for him to attain to other worlds, such as heaven?

32) All these varieties of sacrifice are mentioned either in the Vedas or allied scriptures. They all arise from vocal, mental, and bodily actions, and therefore their origin is action. When you can conceive of the principle of action (karma) in this way you will be able to attain liberation from its bondage.

33) O Arjuna, subduer of the enemy, of those various sacrifices, the sacrifice of knowledge as mentioned, brahmagnav apare ... is far superior to the sacrifice of various articles, indicated by brahmarpanam brahma havih ..., because all action ultimately culminates in knowledge.

34) You will be able to attain all this knowledge by satisfying the enlightened spiritual master with prostrate obeisances, relevant inquiry, and sincere service. Great souls who are most expert in scriptural knowledge and endowed with direct realization of the Supreme Absolute Truth will teach you that divine knowledge.

35) O Pandava, after receiving that knowledge of the truth as imparted by the guru, you will no longer be deluded. You will be able to realize that all species of life, whether man, bird, or beast,

are common in their individual identities of spirit soul, or jivatma. Their comparative mundane gradations are only due to external attributes, and they are all situated within Me as effect, Myself being the supreme cause.

36) Even if you have led the most abominable sinful life, you will cross the ocean of all miseries by boarding the ship of knowledge.

37) As a blazing fire reduces the wood and everything else within it to ashes, O Arjuna, so also does the fire of knowledge burn up all action.

38) Among the aforementioned practices of sacrifice, austerity, and yoga, there is nothing as pure as divine knowledge. After a long time, a person who has achieved perfection in his practice on the path of selfless action realizes such knowledge spontaneously within his heart.

39) After internal purification through nonfruitive action, genuine knowledge arises. Such knowledge is attained by the intelligent, sense-controlled theist who accepts this scriptural purport, and who with sublime faith remains devoted to the path of selfless action. He swiftly attains the profound tranquillity of eradicating the vicious cycle of recurring birth and death.

40) One who is a fool devoid of scriptural knowledge, just like an ignorant animal; or who, in spite of possessing knowledge of the scriptures is devoid of faith in their substance, due to being distracted by many diverse philosophies; or who possesses some faith, yet thinks, "Will I succeed or not?" any person whose heart is seized by doubt in this way can never achieve actual good fortune. Such a doubting soul does not attain happiness either in this life or the next, since the anxiety of uncertainty vanquishes his peace.

41) O Dhananjaya, after renouncing all actions by following the path of selfless action, one who destroys all doubts by following the path of divine knowledge and realizes his internal divine

nature, can certainly never be implicated by any action.

42) Therefore, O Bharata, with the sword of divine knowledge, slash to shreds all these doubts in your heart, which are born of ignorance alone. Take refuge in selfless duty, and arise for battle.

Chapter Five

The Path of Divine Harmony

Karma-sannyasa-yoga

1) Arjuna said: O Krsna, after instructing me in renunciation of action. You are again advocating the path of selfless action. Therefore, please give me a clear understanding which of the two is most beneficial for me.

2) The Supreme Lord said: Both renunciation of action and the path of selfless action are greatly beneficial. Yet, of the two, you will have to understand that the application of selfless action is superior.

3) It should be known that one who is free from the duality of attraction and hatred, and who neither desires nor abhors the fruits of action, remains a renunciate even though he engages in activities. Because, O mighty-armed Arjuna, such a person very easily attains liberation from this mundane plane of bondage.

4) The learned do not support the opinion of the childishly foolish mundane rationalists (known as karma-mimamsakas) who hold that the path of renunciation (sankhya-yoga) and the path of action (karma-yoga) are separate. One who carefully follows either of these paths will achieve the same result.

5) The goal achieved by the renunciation of action is also reached by the performance of selfless action. One who by careful analysis knows both these paths to be one and the same, certainly knows

their true meaning.

6) O mighty hero, to the exclusion of selfless action, mere renunciation of action is the cause of sorrow. But the wise man who engages in selfless action attains to the Absolute very swiftly.

7) Engaged in yoga in this way are three types of learned householders (jnani-grhastha): one of pure intelligence, one of controlled mind, and one of controlled senses. By their comparative practices, the former should be known as superior to the latter. All are the embodiment of goodwill for every living being. Although fully active, they are never implicated by action.

8-9) Although such a karma-yogi who is a knower of intrinsic truth performs all the activities of seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing, speaking, expelling waste matter, accepting things, blinking the eyes, and so on, he realizes: "My sense organs eyes, ears, skin, nose, and tongue are engaged with their respective objects of form, sound, touch, scent, and taste." In this way he constantly perceives, "I do not perform any action at all."

10) As a lotus leaf is not moistened although it remains on the water, one who selflessly offers all his actions to the Supreme Lord, remains unaffected by sinful or pious reactions.

11) For the sake of purification of the mind, karma-yogis give up all attachment to the fruits of action and perform their activities with body, mind, and intelligence. Otherwise, they may act through their senses only, with an attitude of disinterest.

12) The pure, materially unmotivated (niskama) karma-yogi, giving up attachment to the fruits of his action, attains constant peace, or liberation from reactionary work. But the ambitious (sakama) karmi, the fruit-hunter, is obsessed with the result of his action, and he becomes implicated by his endeavors.

13) Mentally renouncing all actions in the aforesaid manner, the

sense-controlled soul resides happily within the bodily abode of nine gates free from the false ego of considering himself a doer, although he externally performs all activities and free from the false ego of considering himself an inaugurator of action, although he engages others.

14) Due to their tendency towards ignorance since immeasurable time, the living beings act, considering themselves the doers or inaugurators of action. The Supreme Lord does not generate their misconception of considering themselves doers, nor does He generate their actions or their attachment to the fruits of those actions.

15) The fully self-satisfied Supreme Lord accepts neither the sin nor piety of anyone. Cognizance is the intrinsic nature of the living beings, but they are infatuated by the material body, thinking it to be themselves, on account of their original nature being enveloped by the deluding potency of the Lord.

16) Knowledge is of two types prakrta, mundane, and aprakrta, divine. Mundane knowledge is concerned with material nature, and is only the nescience of the living beings, whereas divine knowledge is genuine science. For persons whose divine knowledge has awakened, the mundane conception is vanquished and their supreme knowledge, like a mighty risen sun, reveals the Supreme Reality.

17) Those whose illusion has been previously dispelled by knowledge begin to relish within their hearts the hearing and singing of My unending glories, having devoted their thoughts to Me, meditated on Me, and developed continuous devotion for Me, the Supreme Lord. Then they completely transcend this world.

18) The intelligent souls who have attained divine qualities and abandoned all mundane prejudice, perceive the absolute transcendence within all living beings the humble and learned brahmaa, the cow, the elephant, the dog, or the outcast eater of dog-flesh. Therefore, they are known as 'pannita' men of true

wisdom.

19) Those whose minds are equipoised have conquered this world while present within it, because by their spiritual equilibrium they are free from attraction and repulsion. Therefore, although remaining in this world, they are eternally situated in transcendence.

20) Fully situated in transcendence, endowed with steady intelligence, and free from the delusion of thinking of his body and associated paraphernalia as 'me' and 'mine', the knower of the Absolute neither becomes elated by obtaining something desirable nor dejected by obtaining something objectionable.

21) Such a knower of the Absolute Truth, his mind detached from sensual pleasure, initially attains the happiness of self-realization. Thereafter, linking himself with the Absolute, he attains inexhaustible joy.

22) O son of Kunti, all pleasures that arise from the contact of the senses with their objects are the sole cause of distress, and they are subject to creation and destruction they are all temporary. A judicious person is never fond of such pleasures.

23) Know that one who, as long as he lives in this body, is able, by means of the yoga path of selfless action, to check the urges of desire and anger at the root such a person is actually situated in union with the Supreme, and he knows true happiness.

24) Such a follower of the yoga path of selfless action, who enjoys internal bliss, whose mind is constantly absorbed within, and who experiences self-realization attaining perception of his pure identity, he gains entry into the plane of the Absolute.

25) Sinless, free from doubt of controlled mind, and always engaged in activities for the welfare of all living beings, the seers of truth attain such liberation.

26) Those persons of renounced order who are free from desire and anger, and who have achieved knowledge of the original nature of the soul, unconditionally attain liberation in either life or death. Such liberation occurs when one's mentally-incited subtle body expires.

27-28) Expelling from the mind all external sense objects of sound, touch, form, taste, and smell, locking the eyesight at the point midway between the eyebrows, and practicing the discipline of equilibrium by suspending inhalation and exhalation, subjugating the senses, mind, and intelligence, one dedicates himself to liberation. Having overcome desire, fear, and anger, such a contemplative seeker of the soul is always liberated, even before the death of the body.

29) I am the enjoyer of the results of sacrifice performed by the fruit-hunter, as well as the results of austerity performed by the liberation-seeker I am their only worshipable object; I am Narayana, the indwelling monitor of all planes of life, and the Supreme Worshipable Personality who awards liberation. And I am the well-wisher of all I am Krsna, the devotees' most adorable friend. The soul who thus knows My true identity attains the ecstasy of knowing his own original divine identity.

Chapter Six

The Path of Meditation

Dhyana-yoga

1) The Supreme Lord said: Know a genuine sannyasi and genuine yogi as the person who performs obligatory duties as enjoined in the scriptures, without expecting the fruits of his actions. One is not a sannyasi merely by renouncing the performance of the fire sacrifice and other prescribed duties, and one is not a yogi merely by becoming physically inactive.

2) O Arjuna, you should know the path of selfless action, lauded by the learned as abnegation, to be nondifferent from the eightfold path of yoga meditation. This is because without the renunciation of fruitive desire and sensual craving (which is the essential characteristic of the path of selfless action), one can never be accepted as either a yogi on the path of wisdom or a yogi on the eightfold path of mystic meditation.

3) Initially, action alone is said to be the cause of elevation for the sage desirous of attaining unflickering yoga meditation. When he has achieved continuous meditation, renunciation of all activity is delineated as the cause of his perfect trance in yoga.

4) When the yoga practitioner is no longer addicted to the enjoyable sense objects of sound, touch, form, taste, and smell, and when he is no longer attached to any action in pursuance of enjoying them, having achieved complete renunciation of all plans of such action, then only can he be acclaimed as one who has truly attained to yoga.

5) The living being must be delivered from the dark well of material life by means of the mind detached from sense objects, and he must never in any way be flung down into the material world by the mind enchanted by sense objects because the mind is sometimes his friend, and in another situation the very same mind is rather the enemy.

6) For the soul who has conquered his mind, his mind is his friend and well-wisher. For a person unable to control it, his own mind remains constantly engaged in his disservice, like an enemy.

7) Free from attraction and aversion in the event of cold and heat, happiness and unhappiness, or honor and insult, the yogi who has mastered his mind remains deeply absorbed in yogic trance.

8) One who is always internally satisfied by dint of scriptural wisdom as well as by direct realization, who is always situated in divine consciousness, who is sense-controlled, and who has the

vision of equality for a lump of earth, a rock, or gold, is known as a yogi qualified for self-realization.

9) And know that superior to one with equal vision for earth, rocks, and gold, is the yogi who is capable of viewing with equipoised intelligence all living beings a natural well-wisher, an affectionate well-wisher, an enemy, an indifferent person, a mediator, one detestable, a friend, a saint, and a sinner.

10) A person beginning yoga practice should always reside alone at a solitary place, and controlling his mind and body, free from desire and sensual engagement, he should engage his mind in meditational trance.

11-12) At a pure place, not too high and not too low, the yogi should establish a secure seat of kusa-straw, deer-skin, and cloth. Then, sitting on that seat, subjugating all mental and sensual activity, and locking his mind at one point, he should practice meditational trance in order to purify his heart.

13-14) Soberly keeping his torso, head, and neck straight and upright, poised, the yogi should fix his gaze at the top of his nose without casting a glance in any other direction. Tranquil, fearless, and reposed in the vow of celibacy, he should then meditate on My four-armed Visnu form, and absorbing himself in devotion unto Me, he should practice yoga.

15) In this way, constantly absorbing his mind in the yoga of meditation (dhyana-yoga), the yogi whose heart has been purged of sensual desires achieves emancipation from mundanity by attaining to the nondifferentiated Brahman, the effulgence that emanates from My person. He attains liberation from the course of worldly existence.

16) O Arjuna, yoga practice is impossible for anyone who overeats, undereats, oversleeps, or undersleeps.

17) For a person who eats, relaxes, and exerts himself in all duties

in a regulated way, and who keeps regular hours in proper measure, the practice of yoga gradually becomes the source of dispelling all worldly suffering.

18) When a yogi, having checked all mental tendencies of worldliness situates his mind unwaveringly in soul-conception, then, devoid of mundane desires, he is said to be actually situated in yoga, or linked with the Absolute.

19) Know it surely that just as a lamp-flame situated in a windless place never wavers, similarly, the mind of the yogi absorbed in soul-conception never flickers in its concentration.

20-23) The state of perfect samadhi, or trance, is that in which the disciplined mind of the yogi gains detachment from even the slightest thought of mundane connotation. The yogi remains satisfied in the Lord alone, having directly seen the Supersoul by dint of his purified heart, and he experiences that happiness which is eternal, perceptible by the divine intelligence of the soul, and devoid of contact with the senses or sense objects; he never deviates from the intrinsic nature of the soul. By attaining to this state, he never considers any mundane acquisition as superior, and in the face of unbearable tribulation his heart never wavers. Therefore, by the very contact of distress, its absence is accomplished. Know certainly that such a state of perfect trance is defined as yoga. Such yoga should be practiced with perseverance and an untiring heart.

24) Utterly abandoning all mental desires along with their mental images, in full awareness of the futility of mundane prospect, one must withdraw the senses from all material objects and engage himself in the aforementioned yoga practice.

25) With the help of intelligence controlled by dharana (the limb of the eightfold yoga in which the seat of intellect is brought into concentration), one should completely steady the mind within the soul. Then, by gradual practice, with-drawing the mind from external objects, one should enter the trance of samadhi, and

should not think of anything but the soul for even a second.

26) The naturally fickle and unsteady mind should be carefully withdrawn from whatever objects it pursues, and brought back under the control of the self.

27) Devoid of passionate agitation, peaceful-hearted, free from the blemishes of attachment, fear, and anger, and endowed with the conception of the Absolute, such a yogi is blessed with the joy of realizing the divine nature of the soul.

28) In this way, through constant realization of his internal divine nature, the sinless yogi easily attains the profound ecstasy of Supersoul realization. (At this point the yoga practice mentioned herein is in accordance with the path of devotion [bhakti].)

29) His heart united with the infinite consciousness, that master of yoga perceives consciousness in all beings. He sees the Supreme Soul within everyone, and everyone within the Supreme.

30) For one who sees Me in everything and sees the whole creation in Me alone, I am never unseen for him, and he is never unwitnessed by Me he never fails in thinking of Me.

31) Although one, I am separately situated within the heart of every living being as the Supersoul, in My four-armed form measuring one pradesa (the distance between one's thumb and forefinger). Realizing Me, Syamasundara, as nondifferent from the Supersoul, the yogi who surrenders unto Me and worships Me in devotion beginning with hearing, chanting and remembering irrespective of performing scripturally prescribed duties or not, he resides in Me eternally.

32) I consider highest of all masters of yoga the one who sees, as in his own case, the happiness and unhappiness of all beings to be equal he knows the joy and sorrow of others as his own.

33) Arjuna said: O Madhusudana, due to the fickle nature of the

mind, I cannot visualize the infinite stability of such a state of equilibrium in yoga as described by You.

34) O Krsna, the mind is by its very nature fickle, the source of disturbing one's judgement and agitating the senses and body. It is unconquerable and extremely obstinate. Therefore, I consider control of the mind by eightfold yoga practice to be practically unapproachable, just as by mere breath-control, one cannot control the wind blowing through the skies.

35) The Supreme Lord said: O heroic Arjuna, undoubtedly the mind is fickle and extremely difficult to control. However, O son of Kunti, it is subjugated by repeatedly practicing the yoga of meditation on the Supersoul as taught by a bona fide spiritual master and abandoning mundane sense enjoyment.

36) In My consideration, no doubt the yoga described by Me for controlling the mental faculty is difficult for the person of unrestrained mind. But one who zealously subjugates the mind by the authentic practice is definitely successful in yoga.

37) Arjuna said: O Krsna, a mediocre person may, due to his faith in scripture, engage in yoga practice. However, lacking proper practice and abnegation, he subsequently deviates due to mundane propensities. It seems that he will surely be unsuccessful in yoga. What, then, is his destination?

38) O mighty hero, O Krsna, having deviated from the yoga path of attaining the Absolute, shelterless and fallen from the paths of both action and meditation, is not such a person utterly lost like a fragmented cloud?

39) O Krsna! No one but You can dispel this doubt of mine. Please mercifully slash it at the root.

40) The Supreme Lord said: O Arjuna, son of Kunti, the unsuccessful yogi does not suffer ruination either in this life or the next. He is not deprived of the pleasures of the heavenly planetary

systems in this universe, nor is he denied the chance to personally see the Supersoul in the divine realm. This is so, O dear one, because a person who performs virtuous actions never becomes ill-fated.

41) After residing for many years in all those heavenly planets that are attainable by the performers of great sacrifices such as the Asvamedha, the unsuccessful yogi takes the supreme goal.

42) On the other hand, if a person falls from his attempt in yoga after a considerably long period of practice, then certainly he takes birth in the home or lineage of teachers of yoga who are absorbed in yoga practice. Know that birth in such a location is very rarely attained.

43) O son of Kuru, within one of the births I have just described to you, that unsuccessful yogi revives, from the practices of his previous life, his intelligence centered in the worship of the Supersoul. Thereafter, with renewed vigor, he again endeavors for the perfection of seeing Him.

44) Although undesirous due to some obstacle, he again becomes attracted to yoga, by dint of the practice he applied in his last life. And though he may be a practitioner still striving for perfection, he surpasses the path of fruitive action mentioned in the Vedas, and achieves a far superior fruit.

45) With more arduous endeavor than previously, the yogi who fully purifies his consciousness by rejecting the filth of all worldly desires and mental images, finally achieves the fruit of many lifetimes of yoga practice. Thereafter, he reaches the supreme goal.

46) The yogi who is a worshiper of the Supersoul is superior to persons engrossed in severe austerities such as the candrayana, superior to the worshipers of Brahman, and superior to the fruitive workers. Know this certainly to be My conclusion. Therefore, O Arjuna, be a yogi.

47) Among all types of yogis, the most elevated of all is the devotee who has full faith in the authoritative pure devotional scriptures, and who adores Me with all his heart by hearing and singing My divine glories, rendering all services unto Me. Certainly this is My opinion.

Chapter Seven

Relative and Absolute Conceptions of the Supreme

Jnana-vijnana-yoga

1) The Lord said: O Partha, hear from Me how, with your heart devoted to Me, the Supreme Lord, abandoning all non-devotional pursuits based on action and knowledge, taking refuge in Me and gradually achieving My association, you will doubtlessly be able to know Me, My holy abode, My opulences, and My associates.

2) Now I shall fully describe to you, with the taste of the flavor of My divine sweetness, this knowledge of My grand majestic splendor and opulences. After knowing all this, absolutely nothing will remain for you to know, being situated on this beautiful, joyful, and victorious path.

3) Out of countless souls, some have reached the human form, and among many thousands of human beings, some endeavor for perception of the individual soul and the Supersoul; and among many thousands of such endeavorers who have attained to seeing the soul and the Supersoul, only a few receive actual perception of Me, Syamasundara.

4) My deluding potency in this world is divided in eight ways: earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence, and false ego.

Commentary: In this verse, the purport being expressed is that jnana, or knowledge, in the true sense of the word and in accordance of the

precepts of devotion is actually bhagavad-aisvarya-jnana, or knowledge of the almighty, majestic lordship of the Supreme. In the opinion of the scholars who are generally known as jnani, knowledge is knowledge of the soul as distinct from the body and other mundane elements but this is not actual knowledge. Therefore, in order to confirm the conception of His personal almighty majesty, the Lord is revealing His various intrinsic personal forms and potencies as well as their characteristics.

"My different aspects are Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan. Of these, Brahman is a nondifferentiated, formless aspect of My potency. Paramatma, the Supersoul, is also a manifestation of My potency (as a fundamental factor in relation to the universe), and this aspect of Mine is not eternally manifest. Therefore only My form of Bhagavan, the Supreme Lord, is eternally manifest, and within this form My three eternal potencies are also present: antaranga- or cichakti the internal divine potency; bahiranga- or maya-sakti the external deluding potency, and tatastha- or jiva-sakti the marginal potency, comprising the innumerable living beings." In verse 4, the Lord has described His maya-sakti, or His external deluding potency.

5) O mighty hero, Arjuna, this worldly nature known as external, is inferior. But distinct from this nature, you should know My marginal potency, comprised of the individual souls, to be superior. This world is accepted by this superior conscious potency as an object of exploitation for sense enjoyment, by the agency of each individual's fruit-hunting actions and reactions. The divine world emanates from My internal potency and the mundane world from My external potency. The potency of the living beings is known as marginal, on account of their medial adaptability they may choose to reside either in the mundane plane or the divine.

6) Know it that all species, either moving or stationary, are produced from these two elemental natures, as the sphere of action and the knower of that sphere. And I alone am the cause of generation of the whole world, and the cause of its dissolution as well.

7) O Arjuna, there is nothing superior to Me. Like gems strung on a thread, this entire creation depends on Me.

8) O son of Kunti, by the potency of the primordial element of taste, I am situated as the basis of the flavor of water; and by the opulence of effulgence, I am present in the sun and moon. I am present in the Vedas as their primeval sound vibration, the letter Om; I am present in the atmosphere as the primordial element of sound; and as the Supreme Male, I am present in all men.

9) I dwell in the pure fragrance of the earth, and in the radiance of fire. In all beings, I am present as the lifespan, and in ascetics, I am the power to endure duality such as cold and heat.

10) O Partha, know Me as the eternal primordial cause of all life-forms. Of the intelligent, I am present as intelligence personified, and of the valiant, I am there as prowess personified.

11) O Arjuna, of the powerful, I am present as strength that is devoid of selfish interest and mundane attachment; and among all species of life, I am present as that sexual union which is in accordance with the principles of religion.

12) Furthermore, you should know that all objects that be of the nature of goodness, passion, and ignorance are born of Me alone. Nevertheless, I am not in them. They, being subordinate to Me, exist in Me.

13) The entire world of living beings is completely deluded by this creation of the nature of three material modes. Therefore, no one can know Me, the Supreme Lord, who am superior to this whole creation, transcendental to these modes, and immutable.

14) This 'trimodal', supernatural, (alluring) deluding energy of Mine is practically insurmountable. However, those who fully surrender exclusively unto Me can certainly surpass this formidable fantasy.

15) These four types of evil-doers do not surrender unto Me: fruitive workers, who are just like animals; fallen persons who embrace the highest path, devotion, but later reject it, considering

it inadequate or worthless; those whose knowledge is nullified by the deluding potency, maya, despite their scriptural knowledge, and who think that only the form of Lord Narayana is worshipable, whereas Lord Krsna, Lord Rama, and other authentic forms are merely human; and those who possess the nature of demons the impersonalists, who 'dismember' My form by their 'arrows' of false and blasphemous arguments, and who are just like the demon Jarasandha and others.

16) O Arjuna, best of the Bharatas, four types of persons worship Me: the afflicted, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of worldly or other-worldly enjoyment, and the pure-hearted seer of the soul. After attaining sufficient devotional merit (sukrti), they engage in My pure devotional service.

17) Among these four types of devotees, the enlightened soul, who is My exclusive devotee and whose consciousness is fully absorbed in Me, is the best of all. Because I in My form of Syamasundara am very dear to this sage, he also is dear to Me.

18) Since their hearts are free from the nasty selfishness of addiction to sensual pleasures, all these persons are certainly dear to Me. But due to his divine self-realization, the pure-hearted sage becomes inseparable from Me, and is therefore very dear to Me. This is certainly My opinion, since he, having offered Me his own heart, has ascertained that I, Syamasundara, am the supreme goal of life.

19) After many, many birds, the knowledgeable person (who happens to attain the association of such a pure devotee) finally comes to understand that the whole universe of moving and stationary being is of the nature of Vasudeva alone, inasmuch as all are subordinate to Vasudeva. Having grasped this conception, he surrenders unto Me. Know such a great soul to be extremely rare.

20) Persons whose good intelligence has been spoiled by illicit desires for exploitation and renunciation or other duplicitous

pursuits, worship other godly personalities such as the Sun-god and the many demigods. Being enslaved by their instinct, they adopt the corresponding rules and regulations of fasting and other tenets accordingly.

21) According to whichever demigod representing a form of Me a particular devotee desires to worship faithfully, I, as the Supersoul dwelling within his heart, make his faith strong for the deity of his choice.

22) After being endowed with this firm faith by Me, such a devotee goes on worshipping the deity of that demigod, and gains all his desired objects from that deity. Certainly this is enacted by My sanction alone, since I am the Supersoul situated within the heart of the demigod also.

23) But the fruit obtained by those provincially interested worshipers of the various demigods is temporary. They reach their respective gods, but My devotees obtain Me.

24) My eternal superexcellent nature, form, qualities, activities, pastimes, and associated paraphernalia are all transcendental to illusion. But unintelligent men, unable to know this reality, think of Me thus: 'Oh, the supra-mundane, formless impersonal Brahman has recently accepted birth in an illusory form in Vasudeva's chamber.'

25) By My own sweet will, remaining concealed by an illusory image, I am not manifest to anyone and everyone. Therefore, non of these foolish persons can ever really know Me as the son of Vasudeva, who am independent of mundane birth and ever-existent in My divine personal Syamasundara form of beautiful feature like a blackish rain-cloud.

26) O Arjuna, I alone know everything and everyone, moving or stationary, of the past, present, and future. But on account of their perception being obscured either by My external deluding energy or by the internal potency of My sweet will, certainly there is no

one whether a human of this world or anyone beyond it who can know Me as I am.

27) O Arjuna, chastiser of the enemy, from the very beginning of the universal creation, all forms of life are overwhelmed by ignorance born of duality based on happiness and unhappiness, which has its origin in desire and abhorrence of sensual predilection.

28) But on the other hand, the performers of virtuous deeds who have had the opportunity to associate with a pure devotee of Mine are purified of all sin. Free from the delusion born of duality based on happiness and unhappiness, and firmly established in continuous engagement in My service they enter into My pure devotion.

29) Desiring liberation from the miserable worldly current of all-devouring birth and death, those who take shelter of Me engage in My devotional service can know Brahman, the individual souls, and the many types of karma or exploitative action for which the souls are repeatedly bound within this unhappy worldly plane.

30) And those who know Me, as the basis of the universal principles of phenomenon, governance, and dispensation such persons, their hearts absorbed in Me, can know Me even at the time of death. Afflicted in the face of fearful death they do not forget Me.

Chapter Eight

The Path of Absolute Freedom

Taraka-brahma-yoga

1-2) Arjuna inquired: O Purusottama, what is Brahman, and what is the soul? What is karma, and what is considered to be phenomenal? Further, who is known as the universal presiding

governance? O Madhusudana, who is the Lord of sacrifice within this body, and how is He situated therein? And can you tell me, how do the selfcontrolled know You at the time of death?

3) The Supreme Lord said: Certainly Brahman is the instructible, unchangeable Absolute Truth, and the pure spirit soul is the genuine personality of the living being. The word 'karma' denotes abnegation for the sake of a demigod, which produces the bodies of humans and other species, created by the agency of gross and subtle material elements; this abnegation refers to the performance of charity, sacrifice, austerity, and all duties rendered for the propitiation of that god.

4) O most elevated of souls, Arjuna, perishable objects such as the material body are known as phenomenal; the universal governance refers to the aggregate universal form which encompasses and governs all the demigods, headed by the solar gods; and I alone am known as the Lord of all sacrifice the Supersoul situated within the bodies of all living beings and the impetus and rewarder of their actions of sacrifice, charity, and austerity.

5) One who continues to think of Me even at the time of death, and having left the body, departs from this world, surely attains to My nature. Of this there is no doubt.

6) O son of Kunti, at the time of leaving the body, whatever object a person meditates upon will be attained by him, due to his constant contemplation on that object.

7) Therefore remember Me at all times, and perform your natural duty to engage in battle. Dedicating your mind and intelligence to Me, you will attain My shelter by fulfilling your duty. Of this there is no doubt.

8) O Partha, with mind undeviatingly engaged in meditation, constantly thinking of the effulgent Supreme Person, the true yogi certainly reaches that Supreme Lord.

9-10) He, the Supreme Lord, is all-knowing, beginningless, and the merciful bestower of the teachings of devotion unto Him. In spite of being more subtle than the atom, He is enormous, since He is the support of everything. His form is divine, that is, medium-sized, and yet, like the sun, His characteristic nature is self-illuminating and all-illuminating. He is completely transcendental to illusion. Being fully engaged in continuous devotional remembrance of this Supreme Person by means of an unflickering mind strengthened by yoga practice, one who at the time of death establishes his vital life-air between the eyebrows (at the ajna-cakra) and meditates upon Him, surely reaches that effulgent Supreme Lord.

11) Along with the method of approaching it, I shall describe to you that attainable reality which is designated by the learned knowers of the Vedas as the monosyllable Om, the sound representation of the Absolute; within which all the desireless ascetics enter; and out of desire for reaching which the devout transcendentalists maintain the vow of celibacy.

12-13) Checking all the sensual gateways from accepting sense objects, holding the mind steadily within the heart, establishing the vital life-air between the eyebrows, and maintaining yogic trance centered in the soul while vibrating this monosyllable, Om, the sound representation of the Absolute one who continuously remembers Me upon leaving his body, attains to residence in My holy abode.

14) O Partha, having emptied his consciousness of all aspirations to attempt nondevotional pursuits motivated by exploitation or renunciation for the attainment of their respective goals of heaven or liberation, one who constantly remembers Me within, remaining indifferent to consideration of sanctity of time, place, or circumstances, and who constantly aspires for a divine relationship with Me in servitude, friendship, parenthood, or consortherhood - surely, for such a devotee, I am happily attainable.

15) The great devotees who attain to the status of participating in My divine pastimes, once having reached Me, never again accept a transitory birth which is the dwelling-house of agony.

16) O Arjuna, from the planet of Lord Brahma downwards, the residents of all planets are naturally subjected to repeated birth and death. But, O Kaunteya, upon reaching Me, there is no rebirth.

17) A day of Lord Brahma lasts for one thousand catur-yugas and his night is of the same duration. Persons who know this have the true conception of day and night. One yuga (age) in the time calculation of the demigods = the four yugas or one caturyuga in the time calculation of mankind, or 4.320.000 years.

18) With the approach of his day, all progeny along with their respective bodies, senses, enjoyable objects, provincial locations and associated paraphernalia are born from Lord Brahma, who has arisen from his slumber. And again at nightfall, they are absorbed within that same Lord Brahma, who is known as 'unmanifest'.

19) O Partha, this multitude of life-forms, subject to the law of karma, are repeatedly born at the dawn of the day of Lord Brahma and dissolved at his nightfall. And again they are born with the dawn of another day.

20) But far superior to that 'unmanifest' Lord Brahma (who is known as Hirayagarbha since he is born within the golden egg, the universe), there is another element which is eternal and imperceptible to the senses of the living being. Although all life-forms up to Hiranyagarbha Brahma are annihilated, that truth remains unaffected.

21) That which is described as the 'unmanifest invincible' is proclaimed the supreme goal (by the scriptures known as Vedanta), and having reached that, one does not return again to this material world. You should know that supreme destination to

be My holy abode.

22) O Partha, I, the Supreme Person, within whom all beings are situated, and by whom this whole universe is pervaded, am attainable only by exclusive devotion devoid of a touch of exploitation, renunciation, mystic yoga, and other empiric or theoretical methods.

23) O Bharatarsabha, now I shall describe to you the routes, determined by time calculation, on which the yogis or fruitive workers who traverse them attain liberation or rebirth respectively.

24) The followers of the path of knowledge who are in knowledge of the Absolute attain the Absolute by expiring at a time of day illuminated by fire, sun, and associated elements, within a fortnight of the bright moon during the sun's six-month northern orbit.

25) If he expires on a dark night within a fortnight of the dark moon, during the sun's six-month southern orbit, the fruitive worker on the path of action reaches the heavenly plane, but subsequently has to undergo rebirth.

26) These two paths of the residents of this world who are apt to follow the methods of renunciation and exploitation are known respectively as the bright and dark paths, and they are universally accepted as eternal. By the bright path one attains liberation, and by the dark path one takes rebirth in this material world.

27) O Partha, learning about these paths of brightness and darkness, a devotee (bhakti-yogi) is never deluded. Therefore, O Arjuna, always engage in exclusive devotion, (ananya bhakti-yoga), which is transcendental to both.

28) Coming to know about My preeminence and the superexcellence of devotion unto Me, the devoted soul surpasses all the scripturally cited fruits of piety achieved from studying and

reciting the Vedas, performing sacrifice, practicing austerity, and donating assets in charity. Then he attains My supreme holy abode My dhama.

Chapter Nine

The Hidden Treasure

Raja-guhya-yoga

1) The Supreme Lord said: Now I shall bestow upon you, who are devoid of jealousy and malice, this most hidden treasure in the form of pure devotion beginning with singing or narrating My transcendental glories, and the performance of related divine services up to the point of direct divine perception of Me. By finding this hidden treasure, you will attain freedom from the mundane plane freedom from all evils opposed to devotion.

2) Know this knowledge as the supreme wisdom and the supreme hidden treasure. It is perfectly pure, and although beyond the purview of sense perception, it is the object of direct perception (by those senses which are eagerly disposed towards devotional service [bhakti]). It is the efficacy of all religion, joyfully accessible, and completely devoid of mundane nature.

3) O conqueror of the enemy, men who have no faith in this hidden treasure of sublime pure love for Me are unable to reach Me, and thus they remain meandering in this deathly mundane plane.

4) In an unmanifest manner, I pervade this entire universe, and everything conceivable is situated within Me and yet, I am not situated within that total entity.

5) And again, that is also not situated in Me. Just behold My inconceivable simultaneous one and different (acintya-bhedabheda) nature as the perfect, omnipotent, omniscient originator and Lord of the universe! Although My very Self is the

mainstay and guardian of all beings, I am not implicated by them.

6) Air, although massively expansive by nature, is always situated within the jurisdiction of space, and yet, air and space remain distinct from one another. Similarly, know that all beings are situated within Me.

7) O son of Kunti, at the universal cataclysm, the multitude of beings are merged in My illusory nature, known as maya. And with the beginning of a new millenium, I create all the distinct species again.

8) By the agency of My potency of illusory material nature, I repeatedly create all life-forms according to the nature they acquire, which is determined by the results of their fruitive actions and aspirations of ancient bygone ages.

9) Thoroughly detached and situated indifferently within this exploitative plane of generation, sustenance, and decay, I, O conqueror of wealth, cannot be implicated by the entire universal operation of creation, maintenance, and annihilation.

10) O Kaunteya, My deluding potency, under My direction gives birth to this universe of moving and stationary beings. And for this reason, that is, since only a created object is subject to destruction, the universe is created again and again.

11) Unable to comprehend My superexcellent divine form of human features, ignorant men blaspheme Me the Supreme Lord of all beings by considering Me a mere human being.

12) Those fools are full of vain hopes and dreams in their futile fruit-hunting schemes and fruitless knowledge-seeking. Bereft of all good sense, they acquire the ignorant and passionate nature of godless fiends, which is the source of the darkness of delusion.

13) But, O Partha, the great souls take refuge in the divine and godly nature. With unalloyed hearts, they render loving service

exclusively unto Me Krsna, of human features knowing Me, in this eternal form, to be the primeval cause of all beings.

14) Disregarding the purity or impurity of time, place, and circumstances, those great souls are constantly absorbed in singing or narrating the glories of My holy name, form, qualities, pastimes, and paraphernalia. They are attentive to the irrevocable and conclusive definition of My nature, personality, and expansions, and they strictly follow the rules and regulations for taking the holy name and observing holy days such as Ekadasi. Following all the practices of devotion beginning with offering obeisances unto Me, the devotees, earnestly longing for their eternal relationship with Me in the future, worship Me by the path of engaging in My transcendental devotional service.

15) And of those who are worshipers on the path of knowledge, some are conscious of their own oneness with Me, others are conscious of the various demigods' oneness with Me, and still others are conscious of the oneness of My diverse universal opulence with Me. In so many ways they worship Me alone.

16) I am the Vedic Jyotistoma sacrifice and the five sacrifices to the Visva-deva demigods and others as enjoined in the Smṛti scriptures. I am the oblation to the ancestors, the auspicious offering of the autumnal crop, and the mantra. I am the sacrificial ingredients such as ghee, I am the consecrated fire, and I alone am the act of offering the sacrifice.

17) I am the father of this universe, the mother, the bestower of the fruits of all actions, the forefather, and the object of all knowledge. The purifying agent Om, the Rg, Sama, and Yajurvedas certainly I am all these.

18) And certainly I am everyone's goal, maintainer, controller, witness, refuge, guardian, and unconditional well-wisher. I am creation, dissolution, and sustenance. I am the reservoir and the seed, as the eternal Supreme Person.

19) O Arjuna, I, as the sun, bestow heat during summer, and during the rainy season I send forth the rains and sometimes withdraw them. Undoubtedly, I am liberation and death, and everything gross or subtle.

20) Person who perform the fruitive ritualistic sacrifices prescribed in three of the Vedas worship Lord Indra and other demigods. Factually, they worship Me alone, but in an indirect way. They drink the sacrificial remnants of Soma beverage, purify themselves of sin, and pray to attain to the heavenly plane. As the result of their piety, they reach heaven and enjoy celestial pleasures.

21) After enjoying that great heavenly delight, upon the depletion of their pious merits, they accept birth in this mortal world. In this way, lustful persons who follow the Vedic rules for demigod worship come and go they are born and they die over and over again in this material world.

22) I personally assume the whole responsibility of acquiring and protecting the necessities of My full dependent devotees who are always absorbed in thought of Me alone, and who worship Me exclusively in all respects.

23) O Kaunteya, persons who have alternately developed faith in the demigods and devoutly worship them certainly also worship Me, but improperly.

24) Because I alone am the enjoyer and rewarder of all sacrifices. But since they cannot know Me in this way, they again undergo birth, disease, infirmity, and death.

25) The demigod worshipers reach the appropriate demigod, the forefather worshipers go to the plane of their ancestors, and the worshipers of the ghostly section transfer to the ghostly plane. However, those who worship Me, undoubtedly come to Me.

26) Certainly, if he offers Me with devotion a leaf, flower, fruit,

and water, I partake of that whole offering from such a purehearted and affectionate devotee of Mine. With heartfelt love, I graciously accept.

27) O Kaunteya, whatever your action whether general or scriptural, whatever you eat, what you offer in sacrifice, whatever you donate in charity, and any vow you keep do everything as an offering unto Me.

28) In this way, although performing either general or scriptural duties, you will be liberated from the bondage of auspicious and inauspicious results of action. And due to remaining internally indifferent to the fruits of your every action, you will attain distinction among even the liberated souls, and proceed directly to Me.

29) I am equally disposed to all souls, therefore no one is My enemy or friend. Yet, for those who render devotional service unto Me with love, as they are bound by affection for Me, I am similarly bound by the tie of affection for them.

30) If even a person of extremely abominable practices, abandoning all nondevotional pursuits of exploitation and renunciation engages in My exclusive and uninterrupted devotional service, he is venerable as a true saint because he has embraced the revolutionary plane of life.

31) That most degraded person very swiftly becomes adorned with virtuous practices and attains to eternal tranquillity. O son of Kunti, declare it proclaim it My devotee is never vanquished!

or

31) O Arjuna, promise to the public that My exclusively devoted servitors will never come to ruin. He who declares this swiftly becomes virtuous, and truly attains eternal divine grace.

Commentary: The second interpretation of this verse was revealed to

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura in a dream. In the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.11.32) Lord Krsna says:

*ajnayaivam gunan dosan,
mayadistan api svakan
dharman samtyajya yah sarvan,
mam bhajet sa ca sattamah*

"The best of honest persons are those who have left behind the forms of duties that I Myself have recommended in the scriptures, for the general public. Although it is My direction, they cross it and come to render loving service to Me. They are the real honest men."

In society, one must obey the law, but there is also the situation of crossing law to show faithfulness to the king. If one risks his life and reputation, and crossing the general law, enters into the royal chamber to combat an assassin, then he will be considered the best and most loyal servitor. Similarly, the Lord is saying, "I have already given some direction for the general public. Do this, don't do that, don't cross these laws, etc. But if for My interest anyone takes the risk of committing sin, then he should be considered the best among all My devotees. So, Arjuna, you go and declare it, promise it to the public that the ananya-bhak (9.30), the exclusively devoted persons, will never come to ruin. Then you will get the benefit. You will become dharmatma, religious, and attain eternal divine happiness. The ananya-bhak, the exclusive devotees, have already crossed the threshold of dharma, the standard of dutifulness, and taken the risk to throw themselves fully into My service. Sarva dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja (18.66). There is no question of them again becoming virtuous or religious. They surpassed dharma long before, and took the risk and entered into prema-dharma, My loving service, rejecting both piety and sinfulness."

32) O son of Prtha, low-born persons of degraded lineage, women, merchants, or laborers they also attain the supreme destination by taking full refuge in Me.

33) So who can doubt that the pure devotee brahmanas and ksatriyas will achieve that supreme goal? Therefore, surely engage in My devotional service, since you have attained this temporary and miserable human body after wandering throughout many births.

34) Give Me your heart, be dedicated to Me in devotional service, and be absorbed in My worship. Offer prostrate obeisances unto Me alone. In this way, with mind and body dedicated in My service, taking full refuge in Me, you will certainly reach Me.

Chapter Ten

The Great Treasure

Vibhuti-yoga

1) The Supreme Lord said: O mighty-armed Arjuna, hear My divine exposition once again. Only desiring the ultimate benefit for you, who are very dear to Me, shall I speak.

2) Neither the demigods nor the great sages can understand My unique, superexcellent, divine birth in this world, because in all respects I am the primeval origin of all those celestial beings and great sages.

3) One who knows Me, the son of Devaki, as birthless, the origin of everything, and the Supreme Lord of all beings, is undeluded among men, and liberated from all sins.

4, 5) Intelligence, knowledge, peacefulness, forbearance, truthfulness, external sense-control, internal sense-control, happiness, unhappiness, birth, death, fear, courage, non-violence, equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, fame, and infamy all these various attributes of the living beings are born from Me alone.

6) The seven great sages headed by Marici, and preceding them, the four brahminical sages headed by Sanaka, and also the fourteen Manus or progenitors headed by Svayambhuva all are empowered by Me and are born of My mental expansion, Lord Brahma who is known as Hiranyagarbha. The entire population

of the universe whether brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya or sudra descends from these patriarchs.

7) One who is factually in knowledge of My almighty supremacy and devotional service, engages in My service, due to his resolute, absolute conception. Of this there is no doubt.

8) I am Krsna, the Sweet Absolute, I am the root cause of the all-comprehensive aspect of the Absolute, the all-permeating aspect of the Absolute, and also the personal aspect of the Absolute the Master of all potencies, who commands the respect of everyone Lord Narayana of Vaikuntha. The universe of mundane and divine flow, every attempt and movement, the Vedas and allied scriptures which guide everyone's worship all are initiated by Me alone. Realizing this hidden treasure, the virtuous souls who are blessed with fine theistic intellect surpass the standards of duty and nonduty, and embrace the paramount path of love divine, raga-marga, and adore Me forever.

Commentary: Verses 8-11) are the four principal verses of the Srimad Bhagavad-gita. The ontological substance of the book is contained within these four essential verses, beginning *ahaṃ sarvasya prabhavo* "Everything emanates from Me."

In the Srimad Bhagavatam (1.2.11), the three main conceptions of the Absolute are given as Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan. Brahman is the all-comprehensive aspect of the Absolute, Paramatma is the all-permeating aspect of the Absolute, and Bhagavan is the personal conception of the Absolute. The general definition of the word Bhagavan is given,

*aisvaryasya samagrasya, viryasya yasasah sriyah
jnana-vairagyayos caiva, sannam bhaga itingana*
(Visnu Purana 6.5.47)

Bhagavan, the Supreme Lord, is thus defined as 'He who is inseparably replete with the six inconceivable qualities of wealth, power fame, beauty, knowledge, and renunciation.'

The characteristic of Bhagavan, as Lord Narayana, is that all kinds of potencies are personally controlled by Him.

However, Srila Jiva Goswami has given a special and particularly fine interpretation: Bhagavan means bhajaniya guna-visis_a. His nature is such that whoever comes into contact with Him cannot resist serving Him. No one can resist feeling moved to worship and adore His charming personality. As Lord Krsna, He attracts the love of everyone.

Therefore by the word sarvasya, Lord Krsna indicates, "I am svayam Bhagavan, the Supreme Lord Himself. I am the origin of not only Brahman, the all-comprehensive aspect, and Paramatma, the all-permeating aspect. I am also the origin of the Master of all potencies, who commands the respect of everyone Lord Narayana of Vaikuntha."

Matta sarva pravartate "Every attempt and movement begins from Me, including the methods by which everyone worships and serves Me in devotion."

*nayam atma pravacanena labhyo
na medhaya na bahuna srutena
yam evaisa vrnute tena labhyas
tasyaisa atma vivrnute tanum svam*
(Kathopanisad 1.2.23)

"The Lord cannot be known by copious logic, intelligence, or deep study of the scriptures. But He reveals Himself personally to the soul who, having become eager to engage in His devotional service, prays to Him for His mercy."

In this way, matta^a sarvaṁ pravartate "I am the first to reveal to the public, 'Worship Me in this way.' I appear as guru, and through him, I worship Myself."

In the Srimad Bhagavatam, the guru is described by the Lord as His own direct manifestation.

*acaryam mam vijaniyan, navamanyeta karhicit
na martya buddhyasuyeta, sarva deva-mayo guruh*

(Bhag. 11.17.27)

(Lord Krsna said to His devotee, Uddhava:) "You should know the bona fide spiritual master as My very Self. Never dishonor him. The nature of gurudeva is everything that is godly, and he should never be envied by ascribing one's mundane conception of place, time, and circumstances upon him."

Furthermore, the Lord's finest potency is Srimati Radharani. Of course, there are many other eternal associates, but the highest order of devotional service is represented in Srimati Radharani. The Lord is therefore saying, "My worship is shown by Me. I, as My finest potency, worship Myself. Iti matva bhajante mam understanding this conception, the devotee will come to worship Me, always under the direction of My best worshiper My finest potency and representation Radharani, or gurudeva. Crossing Her, the highest and most desirable form of service to Me is not possible."

Radha-dasyam, the servitorship of Srimati Radharani, is indicated here. Only those who are blessed with divine intelligence will be able to appreciate this, and not persons with self-acquired intelligence from this mayika quarter, the world of misconception. In this verse the word budhah refers to sumedhasah as described in the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.5.32): persons of fine theistic intelligence arising from direct connection with the transcendental plane. The inner guidance and direction they receive is the outcome of sukrti, divine merit acquired by the association of pure devotees. Bhava-samanvitah means raga-samanvitah - anuraga - love and attraction which is affinity not by strictly following scriptural rules, or drawn from any plane of loss and gain, but from bhava, inner divine inspiration. Devotion of this high type is completely noncalculative (jnana-sunya bhakti), as described by Srila Rupa Goswami in Sri Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu:

*anyabhilasita sunyam, jnana-karmady anavrtam
anukulyena krsnanusilanam bhaktir uttama*

(B.r.s. 1.1.9)

"The highest devotion pleases the transcendental desires of Lord

Krsna, and is free from the external coverings of any pursuits based on action or knowledge."

The most rare and elevated stage of devotion is the line of spontaneous devotion, known as raga-marga. In that line, guided by the qualified guru, an elevated pure devotee may gradually come to render service to a leader of one of the groups of Krsna's personal associates, who serve the Lord in His pastimes in friendship (sakhyarasa), parenthood (vatsalya-rasa), or consortherhood (madhura-rasa). In Vrndavana, the Lord is being served in spontaneous devotion by His friends such as Subala Sakha, and by His parents, Nanda Maharaja and mother Yasoda. Gopis such as Lalita and Visakha serve Him in conjugal love. But amongst all His associates, and amongst all the gopis, the highest order of divine loving service is rendered to the Lord by Srimati Radharani. Therefore the acme of raga-marga is to render service unto Radharani (Radha-dasyam). This is the highest goal of the Rupanuga Gaudiya Sampradaya, the followers of pure devotion as taught by Srila Rupa Goswami Prabhupada, in the line of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

9) Those surrendered devotees take Me as their life and soul, and go on discussing My ambrosial narrations among one another exchanging the ecstasies of devotion unto Me. They constantly relish the nectar of their realized divine relationships with Me in their respective internal natures of servitorship, friendship, parenthood, or consortherhood.

Commentary: The Supreme Lord Krsna is speaking about His pure devotees:

mac-citta mad-gata-prana

"I am in their heart of hearts, in their every thought. Their entire energy their whole life is dedicated to My satisfaction. In private life they converse about Me to mutually enlighten one another, and in public life also, they always love to talk about Me, and nothing else. For every time, place, and circumstance, I am the only subject of their discussion."

Tu,yantica "They find very much satisfaction." Up to the divine

relationship of parenthood (vatsalya-rasa) there is a feeling of satisfaction. Furthermore, ramanti ca "Just as a wife enjoys conjugal relationship with her husband, the devotees similarly feel such ecstasy in My intimate company when speaking about Me." This has also been explained by Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana, and Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura.

10) To those devotees who are constantly dedicated to Me, and who engage in My service out of their love for Me, I bestow the internal divine inspiration by which they can approach Me and render various intimate services unto Me.

Commentary: In this verse, the Lord says, "The highest group of My servitors (whose sentiment was described in the previous verse by the word ramanti) are those who are constantly engaged (sataka-yukta) in My service in consorhood (madhura-rasa) with heartfelt love (bhajatam priti-purvakam). Then He says that He will give them further inspiration or inner instruction "by which they can come to Him" (yena mam upayanti te). When already in this and the previous verse the devotees' service to the Lord has been described as eternal (by the words nityam and satata-yukta), Lord Krsna's statement that He will give them further inspiration by which they can come to Him appears to be redundant. Therefore, in the expression mam upayanti te ("They will come to Me"), the word upayanti must be defined as parakiya-bhavana-upapati. Pati means husband, and upapati means paramour:

"For those who have already come into divine relationship with Me as My wife (ramanti), I give them the special inspiration to come to Me as a paramour (upapati)."

In Vrndavana, Lord Krsna is not considered a lawful husband, but He is the Lord of the heart, transcendental to even the husband (parakiya-rasa). Deceiving their husbands, the gopis of Vrndavana unite with Krsna. They do not allow a second party to come between them and Krsna. They cannot allow the interception of even scriptural regulation and social law, because Krsna's position is absolute, and such a relationship is more relishable to Him. This is Vrndavana bhajana, and this is the meaning of upapati.

*vikriditam vraja-vadhubhir idam ca visnoh
sraddhanvito 'nusrnuyad atha varnayed yah
bhaktim param bhagavati pratilabhya kamam
hrd-rogam asv apahinoty acirena dhirah*

(Bhag. 10.33.39)

"A self-controlled, sense-controlled person who, having become endowed with sublime faith in the divine pastimes transcendently enjoyed by Lord Krsna with the gopis (Rasa-lila), and who, having heard those divine pastimes from the lotus mouth of the bona fide guru, continuously sings or narrates their glories such a person swiftly achieves the most elevated form of pure devotion for the Lord, and is promptly able to ward off the heart disease of lust."

In his writings, Srila Jiva Goswami has laid stress on the word dhira, meaning 'self-controlled'. To hear these elevated subjects, one must enter into the culture of sense-control, otherwise he will be destroyed.

*naitat samacarej jatu, manasapi hy anisvarah
vinasyaty acaran maudhyad, yatharudro 'bdhi-jam visam*
(Bhag. 10.33.30)

"No one should ever even think of imitating this behavior of the Supreme Lord and the gopis. If out of gross foolishness anyone tries to imitate the pastimes of the Lord, he will be utterly destroyed, just as if he tried to imitate Lord Siva by drinking the poison which arose from the ocean." (It is described elsewhere in the Srimad Bhagavatam that once the demigods and the demons jointly engaged in churning the ocean. As a result of that churning, both nectar and poison were produced.)

"My relationship with them is independent of everything conceivable. It crosses law, society, scripture everything. It is most innate and natural, and it does not require any social or scriptural sanction. I say to them, 'You may show formal respect to all these restrictions and live in the society. But from the heart of your heart, you are Mine.' This is the special inspiration and insight I give to those devotees (yena mam upayanti te)."

"Externally there are social and scriptural demands, but My position is over and above them. Veda is My instruction for the benefit of the masses, who have deviated from Me, and the society is also under the jurisdiction of those general instructions given to the public by Me. But My divine relationship with everything is intrinsic and independent. It does not require recognition from anyone. Such a relationship is the highest. It is the constant. It supercedes all law and society which are guided by the Vedas; rather all the Vedas are searching for such a thing."

Srutibhir vimrgyam (Bhag. 10.47.61). *Visesa-mrgya* the Vedas are searching after this ideal divine position. In the section of the Srimad Bhagavatam which deals with Rasa-lila, the Vedas are begging forgiveness:

"We are generally supposed to give tidings of You, but we could not describe You as we now experience You here. Now we understand that we have committed an offense, because we could not distribute this Rasa-lila, this Vraja-lila, to the people."

Like signposts, all the revealed scriptures are only showing the direction; but where, how? "We don't know." Only, "In this direction He may be available."

Anywhere and everywhere, everything belongs to Him. For one who knows this, all possibilities of sensual pleasure and exploitation are uprooted. For example, an unmarried woman may have the possibility of being approached by many but there is less possibility for those who are married, because they are possessed by someone. Similarly, when we are able to know that everything is only for the satisfaction of Krsna, then we shall realize that all our exploiting tendencies have vanished forever. Nothing will remain to be utilized for the pleasure of our sensual experience. It will be very deeply felt in our hearts that everything has its existence only for His satisfaction, and there is no room for any other exploitation. And we are also included there our existence is also only for His satisfaction. Everything is meant for His divine pastimes (lila), and there is no possibility for any others' pastimes. All are included in that one lila. Encroachment will disappear when we learn the proper utility of everything. He is the owner, and His ownership is absolute. The scriptures, society, and law designate, "This is yours, that is another's, or that belongs to third party." This is something like a temporary lease, but the permanent ownership is in all respects with Him. All others possessor and property, master and servant are all relative, and only sanctioned by Him for the time being. The Absolute Owner, Possessor, and Enjoyer is He alone. When we arrive at such a conclusion, only then is complete purification of our hearts possible. Everyone is thinking of themselves as many masters of many things, but this is all heart disease (hrd-rogam). This is all conceived in a diseased state of consciousness. In a healthy state, when the heart is quite wholesome, we can see the Supreme whole, and we can see that everything is meant only for His satisfaction.

11) Out of compassion for them, I, situated within the hearts of all living beings, dispel the darkness of ignorance with the radiance of knowledge.

or

11) Being conquered by the love of those devotees who, in the most elevated position of noncalculative loving devotion (jnana-sunya prema-bhakti), are afflicted by all-devouring darkness born of the pangs of separation from Me, their Lord I, granting them the internal illumination of meeting Me personally, destroy the darkness of their agony of separation.

Commentary: The general interpretation is always given for this verse:

"Out of compassion for them, I, situated within their hearts, dispel the darkness of ignorance with the radiance of knowledge."

But if we appreciate pure, noncalculative devotion (jnana-sunya bhakti), the Lord's statement here may again appear redundant and inconsistent. When those high devotees are already admitted to be performing continuous and unadulterated service, and even above that, they are situated in the plane of pure love, spontaneous and automatic (raga-marga), how can it be harmonized that the Lord will now in the last stage destroy their ignorance (tamah) which is born from misunderstanding (ajnana-jam), by giving them knowledge (jnana)? Jnana is only a cover a futile, finite conception of the Infinite Absolute (jnana-karmady anavrtam ... bhaktir uttama). When they have achieved devotion devoid of the covering of knowledge (jnana-sunya bhakti), how will they again have to return to that knowledge (jnana)? In his commentary, Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura has mentioned that this knowledge is extraordinary (vilaksanam), but he did not enter into specific detail. To clarify this point, we have given the following explanation:

Lamentation and delusion are generally known to be symptoms of the mode of ignorance (tamo-guna). In jnana-sunya bhakti, the elevated devotees who take Krsna not as the Supreme God, but as a friend, son, husband, or lover, will come to experience lamentation and delusion, but this is only an outward appearance of ignorance. In fact, it is the pain of divine separation. They lament, "Where have You gone?"

In this verse, the Lord's statement, tesam evanukampa-artham generally means 'Fortunately for them', or, 'To favor them (I dispel their darkness, etc.)'. But it may also be interpreted, 'I want their favor. I aspire for the favor of those devotees of the highest order.'

The Lord also says in the Srimad Bhagavatam:

*mayi bhaktir hi bhutanam, amrtatvaya kalpate
distya yad asin mat-sneho, bhavatinaṃ mad-apanah*
(Bhag. 10.82.44)

"Devotion to Me is the only means for the living beings to attain eternal life. O Gopis, by your fortune, your love and affection for Me is the only reason for your getting My association."

This is the general meaning. However, in Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Srila Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Goswami has drawn out the inner meaning, which is just the opposite:

"Through devotion, everyone wants Me to help them attain the highest position of eternal benefit, and if they have a connection with Me, they consider themselves fortunate. But I consider Myself fortunate because I have come in touch with the valuable affection that I found in your hearts. By My fortune, I got your association."

Therefore here in Sri Gita, the Lord is saying, "Tesam evanukampartham being conquered by the love of those devotees, when I cannot tolerate their pain of separation, I at once come running to satisfy them, and I reveal to them with special light, special consciousness, 'I have returned to you see Me now.' With powerful brilliance (jñāna-dīpena) I show them My presence when they are very much in need of Me, and I relieve their pain of separation."

Atma-bhava-sthah: He reveals Himself according to His devotee's divine relationship with Him (rasa): to a friend, as a friend; to a mother, as a child; to a wife, as a husband; and to the sweethearts, as a paramour.

After Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu left home and accepted the renounced order of life, sannyāsa, mother Saci could not tolerate the deep separation, and she began to cry. Sacidevi was preparing excellent dishes, offering them to the Deity, and weeping, "Where is my Nīmai? He's very fond of these curries. His favorite dishes, and Nīmai is not here." Suddenly, Lord Caitanya came and began to eat. Sacidevi exclaimed, "Oh, Nīmai is eating!" and for the time being her separation was relieved. Moments later, she reconsidered, "Did I see Nīmai eating? But He is now a sannyāsī in Jagannātha Puri, so how could He have come here? Did I serve Him? There must be a mistake." Then she examined the pots again to see if there was food there. Finding them empty, she began to conjecture whether even a dog or some other animal had come and eaten it. But during that moment, Nīmai had actually come, and mother Saci saw Him in broad daylight. That illumination is transcendental, and not the 'knowledge' (jñāna) that is generally known in our vocabulary.

The acme of theism is parakiya-rasa. Parakiya means 'another's'. In every divine relationship (rasa), the Lord captures all. In the whole of Vrndavana, where everyone follows the path of love (raga-marga), this parakiya-rasa is infused. The friends of Krsna sometimes say, "Some people say that Krsna is a resident of Mathura. They say He's the son of Vasudeva, and He will soon go to Mathura. They say He is not our friend! Will we really lose His company? Then how will we be able to live in this jungle and drive the cows?" They experience this apprehension "We may lose Him at any time." This intensifies their friendly service to Him.

Similarly, mother Yasoda says, "Some say that Krsna is not my son, He's Devaki's son. What is this? I won't admit this. He's my child!" This idea enhances Yasoda's affection for Krsna: "I may lose Him? Then how shall I live?" Therefore, the parakiya-rasa stresses the rarity of Krsna's relationship, because the possibility of losing His company is always in the background. But the highest intensity of service is to be found in the madhura-rasa (conjugal) camp. In the other rasas, there is the idea of suspense that He may 'go away', but in the conjugal relationship in the divine abode of Vrndavana, the consorts cross the direction of the scriptures and the society, which guide everyone to remain as husband and wife (svakiya). Parakiya ('another's') has been accepted in the science of devotion as the highest conception above svakiya ('belonging'), because social and scriptural sanction is generally a stale conception. Parakiya or paramour relationship is necessary to deceive those who claim ownership over another, such as a husband over the wife, or a parent over a child. In the normally accepted connection (svakiya) the relationship is very cheap, but to cross the jurisdiction of the scriptures and society, as paramour, means a greater risk as if to commit sin. Thus, this relationship is very rare, and rarity enhances its intensity and value. The idea of deceiving the 'possessor' to favor the 'nonpossessor' is a beautiful ornamental conception. Actually in Krsna's case there cannot be any state of paramourship, because in truth He is the owner of everything. However the divine arrangement is fashioned in this way to enhance the devotee's internal devotion for the Lord, just as food appears more tasteful when hunger is present.

In the planets known as Vaikuntha, the nature of worship of the Lord Visnu is gorgeous, majestic, reverential, and awe-inspiring. But above that, the highest conception of Godhead is just like a human form and nature. It is stated in Sri Caitanya-caritamrta in the teachings to Sanatana Goswami:

krsnera yateka khela sarvottama nara-lila

*nara-vapu tahara svarupa
gopa-vesa veukara nava-kisora na_avara
nara-lila haya anurupa
krsnera madhura-rupa suna sanatana
ye rupera eka kaa dubaya saba tribhuvana
sarva-prani kare akarsana*

"The most supreme form of Godhead is Krsna, who plays in His eternal divine pastimes just like a human being. An ever-youthful cowherd boy of Vrndavana, He enacts His pastimes, always playing His flute. His beauty is so charming and sweet, that the whole universe is flooded by an atom of it, and all beings are drawn irresistibly to Him."

He is approachable by all. We can find God nearest of all in a human feature. It has been explained how Krsna's nature of human feature is the highest nature of the Absolute, according to the calculation of ecstasy (rasa), which is the common standard of measurement of the whole scope of the Infinite. By the development of santa-, dasya-, sakhya-, vatsalya-, and madhura-rasa, and then parakiya (peacefulness, servitude, friendship, parenthood, and consortherhood, and the paramour relationship), this is scientifically proved, without whimsical or blind faith. If we follow the line of Rupanuga-bhajana (devotion following the standard of Srila Rupa Goswami) which originates from Sri Caitanyadeva, the scientific basis can be appreciated. The previous acaryas have left for us, step by step, how we can follow, conceive, and attain all these things.

12-13) Arjuna said: O Lord, You are the Supreme Absolute Truth, the supreme shelter, and the supreme saviour. All the prominent sages as Devarsi Narada, Asita, Devala and Vyasa have described You as the self-illuminating, self-manifest eternal Supreme Person, the foundation of almighty majesty, and the origin from whose divine play everything emanates and now You are personally declaring this to be true.

14) O Kesava, I totally accept as factual all that You have told me, beginning from Your statement, 'na me viduh' "They do not know Me." O Lord, now it is confirmed that no one among either the demigods or the demons know your identity in full.

15) O Supreme Person, universal father, O Lord of all beings, Lord of all gods, Lord of the universe! By your own divine

cognizant potency, only You can know Yourself.

16) Please kindly describe to me in full those supernatural, personal opulences by which You pervade all these worlds.

17) O Almighty Lord of the creation, please tell me how I can meditate on You constantly and in all respects. What are the elements, qualities, situations, and forms by which I am to contemplate on You in devotion?

18) O Janardana, please once again describe Your majestic opulences and the process of devotion unto You, this time in an elaborate way, since I never become satiated by hearing Your ambrosial words and instructions.

19) The Supreme Lord said: O Arjuna, best of the Kurus, I shall describe to you simply the prominent, manifest, transcendental almighty opulences of Mine which arise from My divine conscious potency since My extensive glories are unlimited.

20) O Gudakesa, I am the Supersoul situated as the controller within the hearts of all souls, and I am the single cause of the birth, sustenance, and annihilation of all beings.

21) Of the twelve Adityas, I am Visnu, of the luminaries I am the great radiant sun; of the Vayus I am Marici, and of the stars I am the moon.

22) Of the Vedas, I am Sama-veda; of the demigods I am Lord Indra; of the senses I am the mind, and I am cognizance in all beings.

23) Of the eleven Rudras I am Sankara, and of the Yaksa and Raksasa races I am Kubera. Of the eight Vasus I am Agni, and of mountains I am Sumeru.

24) O Partha, you should know Me as the chief of priests, Brhaspati; among generals I am Kartikeya, and of reservoirs I am

the ocean.

25) Of sages, I am Bhrgu; of sound vibrations, Om; of all sacrifices, the repetition of the holy names; and of the immovable, the Himalayas.

26) I am the Asvattha among trees, Narada of godly sages, Citraratha of heavenly singers, and Kapila Muni of perfected beings.

27) Among horses know Me as Uccaihsrava, who was born at the time of churning of the ocean of nectar; know Me as Airavata among elephants, and the king among men.

28) Of weapons I am the thunderbolt, and of cows I am the heavenly desire-fulfilling cow. Of cupids I am he who ensures progeny, and among the single-headed venomous snakes I am Vasuki, the king of all snakes.

29) Of the multi-headed nonpoisonous serpents I am the Ananta-naga, and of aquatics I am Varunadeva. Of the deified ancestors I am Aryama, and of law-enforcers I am Yamaraja, the lord of punishment.

30) Of the Daityas (descendants of Diti) I am Prahlada Maharaja, and of subjugators I am time. Among all the animals I am the lion, and of the birds I am Garuda.

31) Of sanctifiers, or of the rapid, I am the wind; of weapon-wielding heroes I am Lord Parasurama; among fish I am the shark, and of rivers I am the Ganges.

32) O Arjuna, of created objects, beginning with the sky, I alone am the creation, dissolution, and sustenance. Of all wisdom I am the knowledge of the soul, and of the logicians' or philosophers' debate and criticism I am the demonstrated conclusion.

33) Of the primary letters of the alphabet I am the letter 'a', and

of compound words I am the dual. I alone am the endless flow of time, and of creators I am the four-headed Lord Brahma.

34) Of plunderers I am death, the vanquisher of all recollection; and of the predestined six transformations of the living beings I am birth, the foremost. Of ladies, I am the seven qualities of a good wife grace, beauty, perfect speech, remembrance, intelligence, patience, and forgiveness.

35) Of all the mantras in the Sama-veda I am the Brhatsama mantra which is uttered in prayer to Lord Indra, and of mantras in perfect prosody I am the holy Gayatri mantra. Of the months I am the foremost, Agrahayana, and of the seasons I am spring.

36) I am the dice-throwing of mutual cheaters, and influence of the influential. I am victory for the victorious, perseverance of the enterprising, and the strength of the mighty.

37) Of the Yadavas I am Vasudeva, of the Pandavas I am Arjuna, of the sages, I am Vyasadeva, and of the scholarly knowers of the scriptures I am Sukracarya.

38) I am the punishment meted out by chastisers, and the diplomatic policy of victory-seekers I am the silence of all secrets, and the wisdom of the wise.

39) O Arjuna, whatever has been considered the origin of all beings I am certainly that. No stationary or moving being, object or soul, can exist separately from Me.

40) O conqueror of the enemy, there is no end to My superexcellent opulences. Only for your edification have I described a few of them.

41) Know for certain that whatever is sublime, beautiful, and magnificent is born from a mere fraction of My potency.

42) But Arjuna, what is the need of your understanding this elaborate knowledge of My almighty grandeur? By My fractional expansion as the Supreme Soul of material nature, Maha-Visnu (Karanarnavasayi Visnu), I remain supporting this entire universe of moving and stationary beings.

Chapter Eleven

The Vision of the Universal Form

Visva-rupa-darsana-yoga

- 1) Arjuna said: Only by Your mercy has Your hidden treasure been revealed to me. My ignorance of Your supreme nature has now been completely dispelled.**
- 2) O beautiful lotus-eyed Lord, now I have heard Your elaborate and conclusive description of the Truth concerning the creation and dissolution of the living beings, and I have also heard of Your eternal, inexhaustible glories.**
- 3) O Lord, the manner in which You have described to me Your absolute supremacy is certainly as it is. Yet I long to actually see, O Purusottama, that almighty form of Yours.**
- 4) O Lord of all mystic power, I implore Thee, please exhibit Your almighty, imperishable form, if You think that I shall be able to behold it.**
- 5) The Supreme Lord said: O Partha, you will behold My hundreds of thousands of variegated, multi-colored, and multiform divine expansions.**
- 6) O Bharata, you will see all the forms of Aditya, Vasu, Rudra, the Asvini-kumara twins, the forty-nine forms of Vayu, and many others. You will also see all the many wondrous forms which are hitherto unseen.**

7) O vigilant Arjuna, the whole universe of moving and stationary beings, your future prospect of victory or defeat, or whatever you desire to see you will behold simultaneously in this singular form of Mine.

8) You will not be able to see Me through your present eyes, and therefore I give you supernatural vision by which to behold My almighty, supreme absolute power

9) Sanjaya said: O King Dhrtarastra, thus speaking to Arjuna, the Almighty Omnipotent Lord Sri Hari exhibited His form of supreme universal Lordship.

10-11) The Supreme Lord exhibited His universal form of unlimited faces and eyes, and endless miraculous revelations. Many dazzling ornaments adorned His body, and He was armed with many gleaming weapons. Superbly dressed in fine garments, resplendently garlanded, and anointed with celestial fragrant substances, His astounding effulgence and presence pervaded all around.

12) The radiance of a thousand rising sun might resemble something of the effulgence of that universal form of the Supreme Lord.

13) At that moment, there on the battlefield, Arjuna could see the whole universe reposed in a single place, yet divided into many facets, all within the form of Lord Sri Krsna, the Supreme God of gods.

14) Seeing that amazing form, wonderstruck Arjuna, his whole body tingling in ecstasy, bowed his head in obeisance to Lord Krsna, the Supreme God of all gods. His hands folded in prayer, Arjuna began to speak.



15) Arjuna said: O Lord of magnificent form, in Your body I can see the demigods, all species of life, transcendental sages and serpents, as well as Mahadeva, and Lord Brahma who is seated on the lotus flower.

16) O Lord of the universe! O universal form! In all directions I see Your unlimited body of many arms, bellies, eyes and faces yet I cannot catch a glimpse of Your beginning, middle, or end.

17) Resplendent with crowns, wielding clubs and disc weapons everywhere! do I see Your all-illuminating, effulgent image, radiant as blazing fire and sun, therefore very difficult to behold and completely beyond imagination.

18) You are the personification of the Supreme Absolute Truth

which is knowable by the Vedas, You are the exclusive reservoir of this universe, and You are the imperishable preserver of the eternal religion mentioned in the Vedas. You are certainly the eternal Supreme Personality, and this is my firm conviction.

19) Without beginning, middle, and end, unlimitedly powerful and possessing countless arms, with eyes like the sun and moon, and a countenance like blazing fire I see You searing the universe by Your intense radiance.

20) You alone pervade all directions and all space between heaven and Earth. O universal form, seeing this astonishing and ghastly form of Yours, all the residents of the three worlds are greatly fearful.

21) All these demigods are entering into You, some fearfully offering You prayers with cupped palms. The great sages and perfected beings are offering choice, worshipful prayers unto You, saying, "Let all auspiciousness be upon the universe."

22) The demigods known as Rudra, Aditya, Vasu, Sadhya, Visvadeva, the Asvini-kumara twins, deities of the air, deities of the forefathers, the Gandharva, Yaksha, Asura, and Siddha races indeed, they all behold You in amazement.

23) O Almighty One, seeing Your colossal form of many faces, eyes, arms, legs, feet, and bellies, ghastly with its many teeth all beings, including myself, are terrified.

24) O universal form! Seeing Your sky-touching, glowing form of myriad colors, of gaping mouth and gigantic glaring eyes, my heart is overwhelmed with fear and I cannot in any way remain composed or calm.

25) Just seeing Your faces resembling the fire of universal annihilation, ghastly with all their terrible teeth, I can no longer distinguish one direction from another, nor can I find peace of mind. O Supreme Lord of all the gods, O shelter of the universe,

please be merciful to me.

26-27) The sons of Dhrtarastra along with their kings, and Bhishma, Drona, that Karna together with our chief warriors all are rushing forward to enter into Your dreadful mouths which are ghastly with their teeth. And some are seen with crushed heads trapped between Your teeth.

28) As the many currents of rivers flow towards the ocean and finally enter into it, so these heroes of the world are entering the blazing cavity of Your mouths.

29) As moths irresistibly rush to their death into a blazing fire, similarly, all these persons are madly rushing to certain death, entering into Your mouths.

30) O Almighty Personality, poised to swallow all these victims, You are voraciously devouring everything with Your flaming mouths. The entire universe is being seared by Your all-pervading, personal glaring effulgence.

31) O fearsome one, please tell me who You are. O Lord of lords, I offer my obeisances unto You; please be merciful upon me. I wish to know more about You, the Original Person, since it is difficult for me to comprehend the underlying intention of Your actions.

32) The Supreme Lord said: I am time, the mighty force that vanquishes everyone, and My mission is to devour all who reside in this world. Of all fighters in the enemy party, even if not slain by you, not one will be spared.

33) Therefore take your stand for battle, take the glory, conquer all the enemies, and enjoy a flourishing kingdom. Actually, all these warriors have long before been killed by Me. O Savyasacin, you simply take all the credit.

34) Slay (again) Dronacarya, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Kara, and the many warriors, all of who have been already killed by Me. Do not

hesitate fight! Without any doubt, you will be able to conquer the enemies.

35) Sanjaya said: After hearing all these things spoken by Lord Kesava, Arjuna, his body trembling, offered Him respects with folded hands. With a fearful heart, again bowing down to the Lord, he began to speak with faltering words.

36) Arjuna said: O Hrsikesa, the entire universe feels great ecstasy in singing Your glories, and all achieve love for You. Being afraid, the demons flee in all directions, but the perfected beings offer respectful obeisances unto You. Certainly this is the proper order of things.

37) O mighty personality, O limitless one, O God of gods, O abode of the universe! Why, indeed, should all not offer respects unto You, who are the worshipable father of even Lord Brahma? You are also superior to Your impersonal aspect, which is the (general) cause and effect of everything (in the mundane plane).

38) You are the eternal origin of all the demigods, and the only refuge of this universe. You alone are the knower and the knowable, and the embodiment of transcendence. O unlimited one, this whole universe is pervaded by You.

39) You are the presiding demigods of the air, death, fire, the ocean, and the moon. You are Brahma, who is the grand-father of all beings, and You are his father as well. Obeisances unto You thousands and thousands of times, again and yet again.

40) O embodiment of all, my obeisances unto You from the front, from behind, and from all sides. O endless almighty, You are everything, because by unlimited potency You are pervading the entire universe.

41-42) Due to delusion and affection I have rashly addressed You as 'Krsna', 'Yadava', or 'friend', not knowing Your glories and this mighty universal form of Yours. O infallible one, I have also

disrespected You in jest while sporting, resting, sitting or eating and so on, either alone with You or before other companions. Therefore, I am begging You, who are inconceivable powerful, to kindly forgive me for all these offenses.

43) O almighty without a second, You are the father of the whole world of moving and stationary beings, the object of worship, the preceptor and You are superior to all these as well. Therefore within these three worlds no one can be Your equal, not to speak of Your superior.

44) O Lord, like a stick fallen on the ground I prostrate my body before You, praying for Your mercy, since You are my worshipable master. As a father, friend, or lover forgives the offenses of his son, companion, or beloved, please be merciful and similarly forgive my offenses to You.

45) O Lord, although I have become gladdened to behold this universal form of Yours which I have never seen before, my mind is distraught with fear. Therefore, O God of gods, please reveal Your previous four-armed form. O Jagannivasa! May You be gracious upon me.

46) I wish to see You as I have seen you before, with a crown on Your head, Your hands bearing a club and disc. O Lord of a thousand arms, O universal form, may You graciously appear in that four-armed form.

47) The Supreme Lord said: O Arjuna, being pleased with you, I have today revealed this effulgent, all-pervading, unlimited, and primeval form, by My divine potency. This foremost universal form has never been seen by anyone else before.

48) O Arjuna, best of the Kauravas, in this world no one but you can see this universal form of Mine, which cannot be perceived either by the performance of Vedic sacrifice, charity, study, rituals, or severe austerities.

49) Let not your fear and bewilderment remain, which has arisen from the vision of My ghastly universal form. With a peaceful, contented heart, perfectly see My four-armed form once again.

50) Sanjaya said: Having thus spoken to Arjuna, Krsna exhibited His form (of four-armed feature, in order to fulfil Arjuna's prayer). Thereafter, the Lord once again revealed His sweet personality the most merciful Lord, Sri Krsna (of charming human features, wearing yellow cloth and recognizable by His feature of divine beauty), thus reassuring the fearful Arjuna.

51) Arjuna said: O Janardana, my heart is fulfilled upon seeing Your charming form of human features. My fear is dispelled, and my inner peace has returned.

52) The Supreme Lord said: O Arjuna, the chance to see Me as you are now seeing Me before you, is very, very rarely attained. Even the gods constantly aspire for a glimpse of this humanlike form of truth, consciousness, and beauty.

53) Neither by study of the Vedas, nor by austerity, charity, or sacrifice, can anyone behold My eternal humanlike form of Supreme Absolute Truth (Para-brahman) which you are now seeing before you.

54) Arjuna, conqueror of the enemy, although in this form of Mine I am practically impossible to be seen by all other methods, the pure devotees, by their exclusive devotion unto Me, are capable of actually knowing Me, seeing Me, and entering into My divine pastimes.

55) O Arjuna, one who performs duties only for My service, accepts Me as the supreme shelter, engages in the devotional practices, remains detached from the mundane plane and free from enmity toward all beings such a person surely reaches Me.

Chapter Twelve

The Path of Devotion Bhakti-yoga

1) Arjuna inquired: You have now described the devotees who engage in Your exclusive devotional service and worship You (as Syamasundara, Your original humanlike form). You have also mentioned others who concentrate upon the impersonal aspect of the Absolute. Please tell me, which of the two is the superior?

2) The Supreme Lord said: Those who, with unalloyed faith, fully absorb their consciousness in thought of this divine Syamasundara form of Mine, and worship Me constantly by the path of exclusive devotion, are definitely the most superior knowers of divine unity (yoga). Indeed, this is My opinion.

3-4) However, those who fully control their senses, adopt the vision of equality towards everything, engage in deeds for the welfare of all beings, and engage in the worship of the indefinable, formless, attributeless, neverincreasing, neverdecreasing, all-pervading, and eternal impersonal aspect of the Absolute they can also approach Me. That is, they attain to My personal dazzling Brahman effulgence.

Commentar: The Lord's statement, "The worshipers of impersonal Brahman certainly also reach Me", must not be misconstrued to mean that the impersonalists (Mayavadis) are on an equal footing with the devotees (Vaisnavas). The clue to how the impersonalists can also reach Krsna has been given by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur in his commentary on Sri Gita:

"A person attains liberation from the mundane plane by following the path of selfless action up to the stage of meditation, as described in the first six chapters of the Gita. Then he may undergo great difficulty in searching for the Lord on the path of impersonalism. But when he progresses to the stage of dedicating himself to perform welfare work for others (sarva-bhuta-hite ratah), he may get the chance to render service to a pure devotee."

For example, if one engages in the general public welfare work of opening or running a hospital, if some service is even unknowingly

rendered to a Vaisnava, one's devotional merit begins (ajnata-sukrti). By the association with a devotee (sadhu-sanga), one develops faith in the original, divine personal form of the Lord, and automatically abandons the attempt of attaining to the impersonal Brahman. Having become faithful to the path of devotion, one takes shelter of a bona fide guru, engages in the devotional practices based on hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord, and progressing on the path back to home, back to Godhead. Thus Lord Krsna is saying:

"I am the ultimate goal, and the Brahman is only a relative position. It is not the final absolute, because the absolute position is Mine. Only if the Mayavadis serve others and thereby get the chance to serve a Vaisnava, can they actually come to Me because the only way to come to Me is through a Vaisnava."

*rahuganaitat tapasa na yati
na cejyaya nirvapanad grhad va
na cchandasa naiva jalagni-suryair
vina mahat-pada-rajo 'bhisekam*
(Bhag. 5.12.12)

(The sage Jada Bharata said to King Rahugana:) "O Rahugana, without bathing the soul in the dust of the holy feet of the pure devotees (mahabhagavata vaisnavas), one cannot know the Supreme Lord by adopting the religious life of brahmacarya, grhastha, vanaprastha, or sannyasa, or by worshiping the gods of water, fire, and sun, etc."

*naisam matis tavad urukramanghrim
sprsaty anarthapagamo yad arthah
mahiyasam pada-rajo 'bhisekam
niskincananam na vrnita yavat*
(Bhag. 7.5.32)

(Prahlada Maharaj said:) "As long as one has not been bathed by the dust of the feet of Lord Krsna's sold-out devotee, he cannot touch Krsna's lotus feet, which are the destroyer of all evils."
To consider that the Lord has taken the personal and impersonal aspects to be equal is a mistake very commonly committed. In reply to Arjuna's doubt in this respect, the Lord has clearly replied that the personalists are superior to the impersonalists yet, the impersonalists are also given a chance to reach Him, because without Him, no ultimate goal exists. Without coming to the path of devotion, the worshipers of impersonal Brahman will reach that Brahman, which is the dazzling effulgence of the divine form of Lord Sri Krsna.

5) Persons whose minds are attached to the impersonal Brahman undergo excessive tribulation, because for embodied souls, the means and end of impersonalism is attained in an unhappy way.

6-7) But those who offer their every action unto Me, take refuge in Me alone, think of Me constantly in pure devotion unadulterated by exploitation or renunciation, and who thus worship and adore Me O Partha, I swiftly deliver those devoted souls from the deathly ocean of material suffering.

8) Therefore, steady your mind exclusively upon Me Syamasundara and remember Me constantly. When your intelligence has thus become reposed in Me, you will definitely reside with Me after death. Of this there is no doubt.

9) O Dhananjaya, and if you cannot establish your mind in Me with firm faith, then try to reach Me by the repeated practice of remembering Me.

10) If you are ineffective in that practice as well, then engage devoutly in actions related to Me. You will surely attain to perfection even when engaged in actions, as long as they are conducted for My satisfaction and based on devotionally hearing and chanting My glories.

11) And if you cannot even do that, then perform your every action as an offering unto Me. With a controlled mind, taking shelter of such conviction, give up all consideration of the fruits of your actions.

12) Divine realization of Me is better than the attempt of self-exertion, and full absorption of the heart in pure devotional meditation on Me is better than that realization. From meditation, desire for heavenly happiness or liberation is dispelled, and when one finally becomes desireless, the peacefulness arising from indifference to mundane enjoyment becomes manifest.

13-14) That devotee of Mine who is devoid of violence toward all living beings, but rather, friendly toward them, who is compassionate toward the needy, free from undue attachment for son, wife, family and associated objects, free from the egoistic pride of bodily identification, equipoised in both happiness and unhappiness, forbearing, always content with due gain, engaged in devotional service, endowed with fortitude, fully resolved in exclusive devotion, and whose mind and intelligence are dedicated in Me certainly such a personality is My beloved.

15) One on whose account no one is ever disturbed, who is never disturbed by anyone, and who is liberated from mundane happiness, anger, fear, and agitation certainly he is very dear to Me.

16) My devotee who is free from expectations in his general dealings, who is detached, externally and internally pure, expert, undisturbed, and free from all kinds of exploitative endeavors certainly he is very dear to Me.

17) One who is neither elated by mundane gain nor disgusted by the contact of undesirable things, who neither laments over the loss of any material valuables nor yearns for any unattained objects, and who remains detached from both pious and sinful actions a truly devoted personality of that nature is near and dear to Me.

18-19) A person who sees equally enemies and friends, honor and dishonor; who maintains equilibrium in the presence of cold, heat, pleasure, and pain; who is completely free from obsession; who considers equally abuse and praise; whose speech is controlled; who is content in gain without endeavor; who is unattached to hearth and home; whose intelligence is steady in the divine, and who is a true devotee certainly he is My beloved.

20) And those devotees who take refuge in Me with sublime faith and worship this ambrosial path of devotion, are adored by Me as My very own.

Chapter Thirteen

The Predominated and the Predominator Prakrti-purusa-viveka-yoga

1) Arjuna said: O Kesava, I would like to know the principles of the predominated, the predominator, the sphere of action, the knower of that sphere, knowledge, and the knowable.

2) The Supreme Lord said: O Arjuna, this (gross and subtle or physical and mental) body is known as the sphere of action, or ksetra. The conscious entity (the soul) who experiences the existence of this body is described by seers of the truth as the knower of the sphere of action, or ksetra-jna.

3) O Bharata, you should also know Me as the knower of all spheres of action (as the Supersoul situated within the heart of all living beings). Such fundamental and essential knowledge of the sphere of action and the knowers of that sphere (knowledge of the mundane, the soul, and the Supersoul) is considered by Me to be actual knowledge.

4) Now hear from Me a summary of the substance and nature of this sphere of action, and in which way it is produced. Also hear of the fundamental form and potency of the knower of the sphere of action.

5) That fundamental principle of the sphere of action and its knower has been variously described in many, many ways by the Rsis, the different Vedic aphorisms, as well as the aphorisms of the Vedanta-sutra scripture, which is replete with sound logic and irrefutable conclusions.

6-7) The five major elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether), the personality component of ego, the element of intellect, the

primordial element of material nature, the five perceptual senses (eye, tongue, tactile sense, nose, and ear), the five senses of action (voice, hands, legs, anus, and genital), the internal sense (mind), the five acceptable objects of the senses (form, taste, touch, smell, and sound), desire, hatred, happiness, unhappiness, the body, the perceptual faculty of the mind, patience, and the six material transformations of birth, sustenance, growth, maturity, decline, and destruction summarily, all these are known as k,etra, the sphere of action.

8-12) Humility, pridelessness, nonviolence, tolerance, honesty, service to the guru, purity, stability, self-control, detachment from sensual delights, absence of egotism, an objective view of the miserable defects of material life, that is, birth, death, the infirmity of old age, disease, etc., freedom from infatuation with wife, son, home, etc., nonabsorption in the happiness and unhappiness of others, constant equal-mindedness in the contact of desirable or undesirable objects, unfaltering and unadulterated devotion to Me, preference for solitude, indifference to mundane socializing, perception of the eternality of self-knowledge, and realization of the goal of divine knowledge certainly all these have been declared as actual knowledge, and everything apart from this is ignorance.

13) Now I shall describe jneya, the knowable, knowing which the ambrosial taste of internal self-satisfaction can be realized. That element principle is delineated as Brahman. It is beginningless and eternal. Subordinate to Me, it is indescribable in terms of mundane cause and effect.

14) That superior principle presides over all directions, and pervades everything in the universe with His hands, legs, eyes, heads, faces, and ears everywhere (as Paramatma, the Supersoul).

15) Although that supreme principle is the illuminator of all the senses and their objects, He is devoid of material senses; although completely aloof, He is the maintainer of all (in the form of Lord Visnu); and although transcendental to the three modes of

material nature, He is servable by that modal nature.

16) Present within and without all beings, the supreme principle is the entirety of moving and stationary beings (as energetic transformation). Imperceptible to material science due to being subtle to the extreme, He is the most intimate, yet the most distant.

17) Although one indivisible element, He is situated as divided among all living beings. Although situated as an individual personality along with each and every soul, He is the indwelling monitor of all beings the singular, indivisible, omnipresent, aggregate Supreme Lord. He (in the form of Lord Narayana) is known as the maintainer, annihilator, and creator of all beings.

18) He is known as the illuminator of even the luminaries. He is known as the unmanifest, beyond even the darkness. He alone is the fundamental principle of knowledge and the knowable, and He is knowable by the aforementioned practices defined as knowledge. He remains situated within everyone's heart as the Supersoul, Paramatma.

19) Thus, the principles of the sphere of action, knowledge, and the knowable (ksetra, jnana, and jneya) have been summarily described by Me. (The knowable has been delineated as Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan.) Thoroughly understanding these truths, My devotees attain to bhavamaya-bhajana they adore Me with all their hearts (having become freed from the color of all designations).

20) You should certainly know material nature and the soul as beginningless; and all bodily, sensual, mental, intellectual, or egoistic transformations, as well as the consequences of the action of the material modes based on happiness, unhappiness, lamentation, and delusion to be born of material nature.

21) Material nature has been delineated as responsible for the cause as the domineering force of the senses, and the effect as the

material body; and the (conditioned) soul himself is known to be responsible for his accrued happiness and unhappiness.

22) Only due to being bewitched by material nature (prakṛti) does the person (puruṣa) accrue the various joys and sorrows of that nature. His infatuation with material qualities is the sole cause of his taking repeated births in the wombs of higher and lower species of life.

23) Within this same body (distinct from the soul) the Supreme Person or Parama Puruṣa is present as the soul's intimate witness, sanctioner, supporter, guardian, and Lord. He is known as the Supersoul.

24) One who thus understands these truths regarding the modal material nature, the predominated soul, and the predominating Supersoul such a person will not take birth again, regardless of his material situation.

25-26) Some persons directly perceive the Supersoul situated within their hearts by dint of their perfect, pure divine realization. Some perceive Him by discrimination of spirit and matter, and some by meditational yoga or by the yoga path of selfless action. Further, there are those who, not knowing any of these methods, engage in worship after hearing instruction from authorities. When their faith has deepened, by that hearing they certainly surpass this material world of deathly suffering.

27) O Arjuna, best of the Bharatas, whatever is born in the world, whether moving or stationary, know it to be born from the combination of the sphere of action and its knower.

28) One who sees the Supreme Lord (in the form of the Supersoul) situated equally within all species from Lord Brahma down to the immobile life-forms, and who sees the Lord's imperishable nature remaining within the perishable such a person actually sees.

29) One who thus perceives the impartial and full-fledged

almighty dominion does not degrade himself with wickedness he progresses toward the supreme destination.

30) One who sees that all action is performed by material nature (in the form of body, senses, and allied paraphernalia), actually sees himself, pure spirit soul, as the non-doer. He perceives that the pure spirit soul has no mundane nature or practice whatsoever.

31) When a truly perceptive person can understand that the differentiation of the various species of life occurs only within material nature (or bodily distinction), and that all are again expanded from the same nature (at the time of universal creation) then he experiences Brahman realization by seeing equally all knowers of the sphere of action (within the relativity of nature).

32) O Arjuna, since the Supersoul is by nature beginningless, transcendental, and eternally perfect, although He is situated in the body (along with the soul), He neither performs any action nor does He become implicated by the nature of the sphere of action (as the conditioned soul does).

33) As ether is situated everywhere (such as in mud) and yet due to its subtle nature does not mix with anything, similarly, although pervading the entire body, the discriminating soul does not mingle with the nature of the body.

34) O Bharata, as one sun illuminates the entire universe so does the knower of the sphere of action, the Supersoul, illuminate the whole universe (and the souls within it); and so does the knower of the sphere of action, the soul, illuminate the entire body.

35) Those who, by the vision of knowledge, can distinguish between the sphere of action and its two knowers, and who can thus know the path of liberation of the soul from matter such persons attain to the transcendental atmosphere.

Chapter Fourteen

The Three Modes of Material Nature

Gunatraya-vibhaga-yoga

- 1) The Supreme Lord said: I shall now again describe to you that supreme wisdom, knowing which all the sages attained the supreme perfection beyond this mundane plane.**

- 2) By taking refuge in this knowledge, the soul attains a nature (predominantly) similar to Mine. Then he is neither born at the time of universal creation, nor does he experience the pangs of death at the time of universal annihilation.**

- 3) O Bharata, material nature, known as pradhana, is the womb into which I cast the seed (in the form of the individual soul which is born of the marginal potency). From that place, all beings headed by Lord Brahma are generated.**

- 4) O Kaunteya, Brahman personified as mother nature is the progenitress of all the various bodies born within all species of life, headed by demigods and humans and I (as the causal consciousness) am the seed-giving father.**

- 5) O mighty hero, Arjuna, these three material modes of nature goodness, passion, and ignorance which are manifest from material nature, cause the unchangable, embodied spirit soul to be enslaved by mundane sentiments based on happiness, unhappiness, and delusion.**

- 6) O sinless one, due to its comparatively purer nature among these three material modes, the mode of goodness is an illuminator of the nature of things and is of a peaceful nature. It enslaves the spirit by attachment to happiness and knowledge.**

- 7) O son of Kunti, you should know the mode of passion to be the embodiment of obsessions for sensual enjoyment. The origin of covetousness and infatuation, it enslaves the soul by attachment to**

action.

8) And, O Bharata, you should know that the mode of ignorance is born from darkness, and is the deluder of all beings. That mode of ignorance captivates the embodied by carelessness, laziness, and slumber.

9) O Arjuna, goodness conditions the soul to happiness, and passion conditions him to action. But the mode of ignorance, covering the living being's knowledge, conditions him to indolence, slothfulness, and slumber.

10) O Bharata, goodness overcomes passion and ignorance, passion overcomes goodness and ignorance, and ignorance overcomes goodness and passion. Each mode in turn conquers the others in an unending battle for supremacy.

11) When cognizance of the factual nature of the sense objects abundantly appears within the perceptual senses of this body, you should surely know this to be the characteristic development of the mode of goodness. This will be recognized by the aforementioned symptom of happiness.

12) O Arjuna, most noble of the Bharata dynasty, know that greed, overexertion, ambitious attempts, incessant sensual pleasure, and desire are born when the mode of passion develops in a person.

13) O Kurunandana, with the influence of the mode of ignorance, all the symptoms of injudiciousness, despondency, indolence, and falsehood become manifest.

14) If any soul succumbs to the jaws of death at a time when predominantly the mode of goodness influences him, he goes to the pure planets of the worshipers of Hiranyagarbha (Brahma) and other gods.

15) When a person dies in the mode of passion, he takes birth in

the karmi society of men addicted to fruitive work. If one dies in the mode of ignorance, he takes birth amongst the animal or other grossly ignorant species.

16) It is proclaimed by the learned that good works bestow a result of peace and happiness, passionate works result in misery, and ignorant works result in darkness or deathliness.

17) From the mode of goodness, knowledge arises; from the mode of passion, greed arises; and from the mode of ignorance, insanity, delusion, and foolishness ensue.

18) Persons in the mode of goodness ascend (up to Satyaloka), those in the mode of passion remain in the middle (in human society), and abominable fellows of ignorant nature fall down to the lower planes (of hellish suffering).

19) When a person perceives that apart from the three modes of nature there is no other cause of action in this modal world, and when he can know the Lord of the three modes, who is transcendental to them, he becomes divinely inspired with love for Me.

20) When the soul transcends these three modes of material nature from which the body is produced, and becomes absolutely liberated from birth, death, old age, and misery, he then tastes the ambrosia of divine love unalloyed by the modes of nature.

21) Arjuna said: O Lord, (1) by which symptoms can a person transcendental to these three modes of material nature be identified? (2) How does he behave, and (3) how does he transcend the modes?

22-25) The Supreme Lord replied: O Pandava, (1) one who neither resents the appearance of revelation (the effect of the mode of goodness), activation (the effect of the mode of passion), and stupefaction (the effect of the mode of ignorance), nor hankers for their cessation; (2) who remains perfectly poised,

being situated indifferently and unperturbed by the modal effects (based on happiness and unhappiness), remembering, 'The modes are engaging (with their respective objects)'; who is equally disposed to joy and sorrow; who is situated in continuous self-perception; who sees a lump of earth, a rock, or a piece of gold with the vision of equality; who is equipoised upon receiving either desirable or undesirable things; who is intelligent, and remains situated in equilibrium in the face of abuse or praise, honor or dishonor; who sees alike both friend and foe; and who is completely aloof to all causes of obsession and abnegation certainly such a person is to be known as having transcended the three modes of material nature.

26) (3) A person who renders service exclusively unto Me (in My form of Syamasundara) by the path of pure devotion (unadulterated by all spurious attempts based on exploitation or renunciation), absolutely transcends these three modes of material nature. He thus becomes qualified for the cognizance of his internal divine identity.

27) I alone am the original mainstay of the undivided divine vitality, the inexhaustible nectar, the timeless pastimes, and the sweetness of the ambrosia of profound love divine.

Chapter Fifteen

The Supreme Person

Purusottama-yoga

1) The Supreme Lord said: The holy scriptures proclaim that this material world is like an unchangeable Banyan tree with its roots facing upwards and its branches down, known as an Asvattha (transitory) tree. Its nutriments are the Vedic aphorisms, which are represented by its leaves. Whoever knows this tree in this way is a genuine knower of the Vedas.

Commentary: The purport of the statement that the tree of this mundane world has its roots facing upwards, is that the root cause of the creation is to be found in the supreme, uppermost holy abode. Thus, it emanates from and subsequently away from the Supreme Lord. The statement that its branches face downwards indicates that due to the reactions of exploitative actions, progressively lower and lower births from the animals down to the most degraded species branch out from this tree. Therefore, the Banyan tree of this temporal world is known as 'Asvattha', which means 'ephemeral', or 'that which does not remain until tomorrow'. However, it is eternal in the sense that it constantly appears by virtue of the flow of causal and effectual current. That the leaves of the tree represent the world-sustaining section of the Vedas known as karma-kanda, means that inasmuch as the leaves of a tree nourish and beautify it, this section of the Vedas similarly nourishes the world, causing it to expand and flourish. In conclusion, although this mundane world evolves from the eternal deluding potency of the Lord (maya), it is perishable; and although it is nourished by the fruitive section of the Vedas (karma-kanda), it is enlightened by means of the indirect, veiled statements (paroksa-vada) of the Vedas. One who knows the purport of the Vedas in this way is a genuine knower of their essence.

It is stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.3.43-46)

*karmakarma vikarmeti, veda-vado na laukikah
vedasya cesvaratmatvat, tatra muhyanti surayah*

*parosa-vado vedo 'yam, balanam anusasanam
karma-moksay karmani, vidhatte hy agadam yatha*

*nacared yas tu vedoktau, svayam ajno 'jitendriyah
vikarmana hy adharmena, mrtyor mrtyum upaiti sah*

*vedoktam eva kurvano, nihsango 'rpitam isvare
naiskarmam labhate siddhim, rocanartha phala srutih*

"The conceptions of action, inaction, and prohibited action are delineated in the Vedas. Because the Vedas are the embodiment of the Supreme Lord, even great scholars are bewildered in determining their purport. The Vedic purport is presented in an indirect, veiled manner, in order to instruct undisciplined, childish, foolish persons. As a father entices a sick child to take medicine by displaying sweetmeats, the scriptures similarly display the heavenly fruits of pious action, with the underlying purpose of effecting cessation of mundane

action."

2) Some of its branches extend upwards (in the planets of the demigods and celestial beings), some of the branches extend downwards (in the planets of the humans, animals, and lower species), and its mature (three modes of) nature and aim and object (of sound, smell, touch, taste, and form) are its fresh, young shoots. Some aerial roots also extend downwards, to take root in the land of exploitation, within the human plane.

Commentary: Within the overall manifestation of this 'perishable yet constant' material world, some of the living beings, nourished by the modes of goodness, are wandering throughout the upper planetary system, having become enveloped by the egoistic conception of gods and celestial beings. Others, influenced by the modes of passion and ignorance, are wandering throughout the planets of the humans, animals, trees, and other lower species, having become enveloped by the egoistic conceptions of such species. The sense objects sound, smell, touch, taste, and form are represented by the new shoots of the branches of the tree of this material world, since they are merely transformations of the five unmixed primary elements (pancatanmatra) which evolve from the egoistic conception of the living beings of this plane.

Furthermore, although the principal root is situated upwards (inverted, and in aversion to the Supreme Lord), some of the subsequent down-going aerial roots of the Banyan tree remain rooted in the soil of the human plane of the land of exploitation. This indicates that the attempt to enjoy the fruits of one's action within human life the exploitative mentality of separate interest is supplying the nourishing sap in the form of a separate, secondary cause of the tree of this material world.

3-4) In the human plane, that inverted form of the Banyan tree representing this material world cannot be known, and its origin, end, and foundation cannot be perceived (except by the means of Vedic knowledge). From the association of true saints, one acquires the sharp axe of intense detachment from the mundane. Using this weapon to chop down that illusory Banyan tree (of one's own mundane existence) which is stubbornly rooted in aversion to the Supreme Lord, one attains to the plane of no return, which is none other than the lotus-feet of the Lord. Then, by the method of exclusive, uninterrupted devotion, one should

approach for shelter the holy lotus feet of the Supreme Lord Visnu, and pray, "I am now surrendering unto that Original Person, the Supreme Lord of all, from whose deluding potency (maya) this perpetual tree of the material world has emanated and expanded."

5) Devoid of vanity and delusion, aloof to unholy company, dedicated to realization of the eternal self, free from lusty desire, liberated from the joys and sorrows of duality, and liberated from ignorance, those surrendered souls reach the supreme destination.

6) My supreme holy abode is that place which the surrendered souls reach, never to return again. Neither sun, nor moon, nor fire nothing can illuminate that all-illuminating supreme abode.

7) The soul is a part of Me (as My separate fragmental particle or potency). Although he is eternal, he acquires the mind and five perceptual senses, which are parts of material nature (as creations of maya, My deluding potency).

8) The soul (jiva) is the proprietor of the body and its paraphernalia. When he departs from the body, he carries all these senses to enter into another body, just as the air carries the fragrance of a flower.

9) Adopting the fleshy ear, eye, skin, tongue, and nose, and also accepting the subtle mind, this soul exploits the sense objects sound, form, touch, taste, and smell.

10) Foolish men cannot perceive anything of the soul's departure from the body, residence within the body, or his exploitation of sensual objects. However, those endowed with eyes of wisdom are able to observe the entire operation.

11) Even some assiduous yogis can actually see the soul present within the body. But foolish persons of impure heart can never see the soul, despite their endeavors.

12) That effulgence which emanated from the sun and illuminates the whole universe, and which is present within the moon and within fire you should surely know that to arise from My personal effulgence.

13) Appearing within the soil of the Earth, I maintain all beings by My potency; and in the form of the nectarean moon, I nourish all the crops (such as rice and barley).

14) Entering into the body of the living being as the power of digestion, I digest the four types of eatables (chewed, sucked, licked, and drunk), by the agency of the ascending and descending vital airs.

15) I am situated (as the Supersoul) within the heart of all souls, and from Me arises the soul's remembrance, knowledge, and the dissipation of both (according to his karma, or action in the mundane plane). I am the exclusive knowable (ecstatic) principle of all the Vedas. I am the author of the Vedanta Vedavyasa, the expounder of the knowable meaning of the Vedas. And certainly I am the knower of the purport of the Vedas.

16) In this world, there are two kinds of souls: the fallible and the infallible. All being from Lord Brahma down to the lowest stationary life-forms are known as fallible (as they have deviated from their intrinsic nature). But the personalities who are eternally situated in their divine nature are known as infallible (personal associates of the Lord).

17) But totally distinct from both these types of souls, there is a Supreme Person who is known as Paramatma, the Supersoul. He is the Supreme Lord. Entering into the three worlds in His eternal form, He maintains all beings in the universe.

18) Because I am transcendental to the fallible souls and also superior to My infallible eternal associates, My glories are sung in the world and in the scriptures as Purusottama, the Supreme Person.

19) O Bharata, one who unmistakably knows Me in My eternal, all-conscious, ecstatic form as that Supreme Person, is the perfect knower of full-fledged theism, and he worships Me in all respects (in the devotional flavors of peacefulness, servitorship, friendship, parenthood, and consortherhood).

20) O purehearted Arjuna, I have thus explained to you this most hidden treasure of all the scriptures. O Bharata, embracing this nectar in the core of their hearts, the virtuous souls revel in the perfection of supreme success.

Chapter Sixteen

The Godly and Ungodly Temperaments

Daivasura-sampad-vibhaga-yoga

1-3) The Supreme Lord said: O Bharata, all these qualities appear in a man endowed with a virtuous and godly nature fearlessness, gracious-heartedness, absorption in self-knowledge, charity, control of the external senses, sacrifice, study of the Vedas, austerity, sincerity, nonviolence, truthfulness, freedom from anger, detachment from the mundane, tranquillity, disinclination to see other's faults, compassion for others, freedom from greed, gentleness, modesty, steadfastness, vigor, forgiveness, patience, cleanliness, nonenviousness, and freedom from egotism.

4) O Partha, these perverted qualities are found in a man of demoniac mentality: pride, conceit, egotism, anger, mercilessness, and injudiciousness.

5) The godly and virtuous qualities have been described as the cause of liberation, and the demoniac qualities have been described as the cause of certain bondage. O Pandava, you need not worry, for your nature is godly and virtuous from birth.

6) O Partha, the living beings in this world are seen to be of two natures godly and demoniac. I have already elaborately described the godly nature to you, so now hear from Me about the demoniac nature.

7) The demoniac nature cannot understand religious inclination or irreligious disinclination. Not a trace of purity, good practices, or truthfulness can be found in them.

8) The persons of demoniac nature say that the universe is nothing more than imaginary, baseless, godless, and born of their mutual cohabitation. They conclude that the whole world was created simply for lust.

9) Supporting such a conception, the demons, who are less intelligent bereft of self-knowledge, and the embodiment of ghastly deeds and inauspiciousness, become powerful simply for the purpose of world annihilation.

10) Resorting to insatiable lusty desires, totally infatuated and preoccupied in sensual pursuits, such demons, in a mad frenzy of arrogance and pride engage in ghastly malpractices.

11-12) Up until their last breath they remain stricken with unlimited fears and anxieties. They are convinced that gratification of their lust is the ultimate pursuit. Ensnared by hundreds of multifarious desires and overcome with lust and anger, they go on trying to amass wealth unlawfully just for the purpose of sense gratification.

13) The demoniac persons say, "Today I got what I wanted, and tomorrow I will get what I want. This is all my wealth, and in the future, more and more will be mine."

14) "I have killed one enemy, and I will kill others. I am the lord of all I survey, I am the enjoyer, I am successful, powerful and happy."

15-16) "What can match my wealth and aristocracy? I shall perform sacrifice and give charity to the needy, and I shall thereby enjoy." Deluded by ignorance, filled with anxiety, victimized by allurements, and addicted to sense enjoyment, those demoniac persons are doomed to detestable hells such as Vaitarani.

17) Always conceited, impertinent, and intoxicated by wealth and grandeur, all these demons (make a great show to) perform non-scriptural pseudo-sacrifices.

18) Steeped in egotism, mad with power, and carried away by lust and anger, utterly despising Me who am situated in their own and others' bodies as the Supersoul, they ascribe faults to all the good qualities (of the true saints).

19) Because those demons are envious, cruel, evil, and decadent, I continually cast them asunder to revolve in the cycle of birth and death, in the wombs of despicable demoniac species.

20) O Kaunteya, repeatedly taking birth in the demoniac species, these fools cannot come to Me, the embodiment of the Divinity. Thus, they descend lower and lower to the most vile and degraded condition of life.

21) The three suicidal gates leading to hell are lust, anger, and greed. Therefore, they must be completely abandoned.

22) O Kaunteya, one who is actually liberated from these three gateways to hell, acts for his best self-interest. Thus, he attains to the supreme destination.

23) A person who transgresses the injunctions of the scriptures and behaves whimsically can never attain perfection, happiness, or the supreme destination.

24) Therefore, the scriptural injunctions concerning duty and nonduty are your only precedent. Having understood the

scriptural command in this plane of action that is, to act exclusively for the Lord's pleasure it behooves you to now apply these teachings practically.

Chapter Seventeen

The Threefold Division of Faith

Sraddhatraya-vibhag-yoga

- 1) Arjuna inquired: O Krsna, what is the position of those who perform worship with faith, but neglect the injunctions of the scriptures? Is that considered to be in goodness, passion, or ignorance?**
- 2) The Supreme Lord said: Such faith is of three types, according to an embodied soul's previously developed tendencies good, passionate, or ignorant. Now please hear about this from Me.**
- 3) O Bharata, all men have a particular type of faith according to their individual mentalities. The very nature of the living being is based on faith their internal and external nature is modeled according to their faith. Therefore, their nature may be discerned according to the manner of worship or reverence in which they have faith.**
- 4) Persons endowed with the nature of goodness worship the good-natured demigods; persons of passionate nature worship the passionate Yaksa demigods and cannibalistic Raksasa demons, while those of ignorant faith worship the ghosts and the dead, in the plane of darkness.**
- 5-6) Proud and pretentious fools cause the derangement of the body's natural elements and torment the indwelling soul, which is My fragmental spiritual particle. Motivated by intense craving to display their mental and bodily prowess, they perform excruciating non-scriptural austerities. You should know them as**

first-class confirmed demons.

7) According to the three modes of material nature, there are also three preferences of food. In the same way, there are three kinds of sacrifice, three kinds of austerity, and three kinds of charity. Now hear of all these.

8) Edible or offerable foods which increase longevity, zeal, strength, health, happiness and satisfaction, and which are succulent, milky, wholesome, and attractive these are dear to persons of the nature of goodness.

9) Edibles dear to persons of passionate nature are too bitter (nimba, etc.), too sour, too salty, too hot, too pungent (chili pepper, etc.) too dry (dry-roasted chick-peas, etc.), and too heating (mustard seed, etc.). Such foods cause unhappiness, distress, and disease.

10) Such food is dear to the ignorant: food which is cold, due to being cooked more than three hours before; food which is tasteless, exudes a bad odor, or was cooked the day before; the remnants of others (with the exception of remnants left by one's guru); and impure foodstuffs (such as meat, wine, and onions).

11) Sacrifice of the nature of goodness is in accordance with scriptural injunctions, and performed with a resolute sense of duty by a person devoid of fruitive desire.

12) But, O Bharata, know that sacrifice which is performed in fruitive expectation and merely as a display of pomp and grandeur, to be sacrifice of the nature of passion.

13) And that sacrifice which ignores the injunctions of the scriptures, which is performed without the distribution of gifts such as foodstuffs, without uttering the appropriate mantras, without presentations to the guru, and without faith, is known as sacrifice in ignorance.

14) Worship of the deity, the brahmanas, the spiritual master, and the enlightened soul, as well as cleanliness, simplicity, celibacy, and nonviolence these all constitute austerity of the body.

15) Speech which does not disturb others, which is truthful, pleasing yet beneficial, as well as regular recitation of the Vedas all these are known as verbal austerity.

16) Self-satisfaction, graceful gravity, firmness, self-control, and purification of consciousness are all known as mental austerity.

17) When performed by a desireless, devout soul with sublime faith in the Supreme Lord, this threefold austerity is of the nature of goodness.

18) That unending and uncertain austerity which is proudly performed just for the sake of gain, worship, and name and fame, is known as austerity of the nature of passion.

19) That austerity which is performed with foolish and injudicious preoccupation, causing self-torture or meant to harm others, is known as austerity of the nature of ignorance.

20) Charity given without expectation of return, as a matter of duty, with due consideration of place, time, and recipient, is considered to be of the nature of goodness.

21) Otherwise, charity given with an agitated mentality, in anticipation of receiving something in return, or with a desire of gaining entry into the heavenly plane, is known as charity of the nature of passion.

22) Charity given disrespectfully and scornfully to an unworthy recipient at an improper place and time is known as charity of the nature of ignorance.

23) The phrase 'Om Tat Sat' is mentioned in the scriptures as indicative of Parabrahman, the Supreme Spirit. At the time of

universal creation, the brahmaas, the Vedas, and sacrifices were ordained by this threefold combination.

24) For this reason, the followers of the Vedas always begin the performance of their scripturally enjoined duties based on sacrifice, charity, and austerity, by uttering the vibration 'Om', which represents Brahman, the Absolute.

25) Vibrating the word 'Tat', which also represents Brahman, the Absolute, and rejecting the desire for the fruits of their actions, the liberation-seekers conduct the performance of different kinds of sacrifices and austerities, and execute the duty of giving charity.

26) O Partha, the word 'Sat' indicates the truth, as well as persons who are dedicated servants of truth. It is also applied in the performance of auspicious activities.

27) The word 'Sat' is employed to indicate both the eternality of the object of sacrifice, austerity, and charity, as well as duty performed for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord.

28) O Partha, sacrifice, charity, and austerity, or any duty performed without faith in the supreme objective, is known as 'asat', or depraved. Such works can never bestow an auspicious result, either in this world or the next.

Chapter Eighteen

The Supreme Goal of Divine Freedom

Moksa-yoga

1) Arjuna said: O Mahabaho, Hrsikesa, Kesinisudana, I wish to know the distinction between the principle of renunciation of action and the principle of renunciation of the fruits of action.

2) The Supreme Lord said: According to the learned, the

abandonment of all materially desirable actions is called renunciation (sannyasa), and the abandonment of the fruits of all kinds of action (whether daily, incidental, or based on material desire) is called detachment (tyaga).

3) Some scholars (of the Sankhya school) hold that action (on account of its faults such as violence) should be renounced. Others (of the Mimamsaka school) hold that (scripturally enjoined) duties based on sacrifice, charity, and austerity should never be abandoned.

4) O Best of the Bharatas, now hear My perfect conclusion regarding renunciation. O foremost among men, it has been clearly defined that renunciation is of three types.

5) Duties based on sacrifice, charity, and austerity should never be abandoned. Such duties must be performed, because they serve to purify the hearts of the intelligent.

6) Moreover, O Partha, all these actions are to be performed as a matter of duty, abandoning attachment and fruitive desire. Know this to be My irrevocable, perfect, supreme conclusion.

7) Renunciation of one's daily duties is never desirable. To abandon routine duties out of delusion is false renunciation, or renunciation of the nature of ignorance.

8) One who abandon his routine duties out of fear of bodily discomfort, considering them a cause of inconvenience, performs renunciation of the nature of passion. Thus, he does not attain (knowledge, which is) the fruit of genuine detachment.

9) O Arjuna, one who performs routine works as a matter of duty, and abandons attachment and fruitive desire such a person performs renunciation of the nature of goodness. This is My opinion.

10) A sharply intelligent, renounced person who is endowed with

the nature of goodness, and who is free from all doubts, neither resent troublesome duties, nor is he attached to those works which bestow happiness.

11) Actually, it is impossible for the embodied soul to utterly renounce all action. Therefore, one who is truly renounced is he who renounces the fruits of his actions.

12) Persons who aspire for the fruits of their actions acquire three types of rewards after death good, bad, and mixed. But a true renunciate (sannyasi) never touches such fruits of action.

13) O mighty hero, in the scripture known as Sankhya, or Vedanta, these five causes of the accomplishment of all actions have been described, and you may now learn of these from Me.

14) (With the help of these five factors, all actions are effected:) The body, ego (in the form of the knot of spirit and matter), the separate senses, the different endeavors, and destiny, or the intervention of the Supreme Universal Controller.

15) Whatever lawful or unlawful action a man performs with his body, mind, or speech, is caused by these five elements.

16) Therefore, a wicked fellow who considers himself to be the only performer of action can never perceive the actual situation, due to his irrational conception.

17) He who is free from egotism (arising from aversion to the Absolute), and whose intelligence is not implicated (in worldly activities) even if he kills every living being in the whole world, he does not kill at all, and neither does he suffer a murderer's consequences.

18) Knowledge, the knowable, and the knower these three are the impetus for action. The attempt, the work, and the performer these three form the basis of action.

19) In the Sankhya scripture, knowledge, action, and the performer have each been classified according to their (good, passionate, or ignorant) natures. Now hear of these categories from Me.

20) That knowledge by which one imperishable and undivided divine principle (My superior divine potency) is seen to be present in all the diverse living beings, is known as knowledge of the nature of goodness.

21) In the world of the living beings, that knowledge by which one experiences multifarious separate attempts (of conflicting nature, due to individual separate interests) and many separate (independent) conceptions of the truth such knowledge is known to be of the nature of passion.

22) And that knowledge by which one becomes attracted to trivialities (insignificant matters), considering them to be all in all (ultimate), and which is irrational, devoid of scriptural deliberation, and bigoted (like an animal's) that knowledge is known to be of the nature of ignorance.

23) That action which is constantly executed by a detached person who is indifferent to obsession and repulsion, is certainly action of the nature of goodness.

24) And that action which is performed with tremendous endeavor by an ambitious or egotistical person, is known as action of the nature of passion.

25) And action of the nature of ignorance is that which, out of illusion, is undertaken without consideration of its consequences, its injurious effects, mischievousness, and one's capability to perform it.

26) A worker of the nature of goodness is one who is fully detached, non-egotistic yet patient and enthusiastic, and unaffected in the face of success or failure.

27) A worker of the nature of passion is said to be one obsessed, a fruit-hunter, greedy, violent, engaged in unscriptural or abominable practices, and dominated by elation and lamentation.

28) A worker of the nature of ignorance is one who is fickle-minded, of gross mentality, pretentious, fraudulent, given to insulting others, lazy, morose, and a procrastinator.

29) O Dhananjaya, hear Me attentively, I shall clearly describe the three different types of intelligence and determination, classified according to the modes of nature.

30) O Partha, good intelligence is that by which the intrinsic nature of (religious) inclination and (irreligious) disinclination, duty and nonduty, fear and courage, as well as bondage and liberty (and all such distinctions) can be perceived in reality.

31) O Partha, passionate intelligence is that by which the intrinsic nature of religion, irreligion, duty, and nonduty can only be partly ascertained.

32) Intelligence spoiled by ignorance is that deluded perception by which irreligion is taken as religion, and everything is taken as its opposite.

33) O Partha, determination of the nature of goodness is that one-pointed determination which continuously controls the mind, the vital life forces, the senses, and all their activities.

34) O Partha, O Arjuna, determination of the nature of passion is that which, out of fruitive desire, always resorts to ritualistic religion for the purpose of amassing wealth in the attempt to fulfill mundane desires.

35) Determination of the nature of ignorance is that by which an unintelligent person does not give up sleep, fear, lamentation, dejection, and pride.

36-37) O Bharatarsabha, now hear from Me about three kinds of happiness. That which by cultivation gives birth to delight while causing the death of all miseries, which in the beginning troubles one like poison but subsequently pleases one like nectar, and which arises from pure self-knowledge that happiness is said to be of the nature of goodness.

38) Happiness of the nature of passion is said to be that which is born from the contact of the senses with their objects, and which in the beginning is perceived as nectar, but subsequently realized to be just like poison.

39) Happiness of the nature of ignorance is that which from beginning to end produces delusion of the soul, and arises from sleep, laziness, and negligence.

40) Either on Earth (among all life-forms, headed by the humans) or in the heavenly plane among the celestial gods, no one and nothing is liberated from these three modes which are born of material nature.

41) O Parantapa, according to the modes (of goodness, passion, and ignorance) which are born of their natures, all the duties of the brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, and sudra sections are divided in a projected manner (in graded classification).

42) Internal and external sense control, austerity, purity, forbearance, straightforwardness, knowledge, realization, and theism certainly these are all the natural duties of the brahmana section.

43) Valor, zeal, endurance, expertise, courage in battle, charitable disposition, and leadership certainly these are all the characteristic actions of the ksatriya section.

44) Agriculture, tending to the cows, and trade are the natural work for the vaisya section; and natural to the sudras is the

rendering of service to the brahmana, ksatriya, and vaisya sections (giving assistance to their various works).

45) Self-knowledge is attained by a person who dedicates himself to the appropriate action prescribed for his natural qualification. Now hear from Me how he attains perfection in this way.

46) A man achieves perfection by the performance of the appropriate duties prescribed for him according to his qualification. By the execution of his duties, he worships the Supreme Lord from whom the generation and impetus of all beings arises, and who permeates and pervades this entire universe (exercising His Supreme qualification of Lordship over one and all).

47) Although there may be imperfections in their execution, it is better to remain faithful to one's natural prescribed duties than to perform another's duties immaculately. Sin is never incurred by a man conforming to his natural duties.

48) O Kaunteya, despite imperfections in their execution, duties prescribed according to one's nature should not be abandoned. Verily, all action (karma) is (more or less) covered by imperfections, as fire is covered by smoke.

49) His intelligence detached from all mundane objects, the self-controlled and desireless person attains to the ultimate perfection of cessation of reactionary work by abandoning the fruits of all his actions.

50) O Kaunteya, now hear from Me in brief how the person who has attained the perfection of cessation of all reactionary work attains to the divine plane of the Absolute, the attainment of which is the supreme goal of (divine self-perceptive) knowledge.

51-53) Endowed with intelligence of the nature of goodness, mentally controlled with determination of the nature of goodness, detached from the sense objects of sound, touch, form, taste, and

smell, free from obsession and repulsion, aloof to the association of materialistic persons, a temperate eater, a controller of the body, mind, and speech, constantly absorbed in thought of the Supreme Lord, thoroughly detached from the mundane world; non-egotistic, devoid of despotism, vanity, lust, anger, and the acceptance of service from others such a person, devoid of all sense of possessiveness and absorbed in divine tranquillity, is certainly qualified to achieve divine self-perception.

54) The spotlessly purehearted and self-satisfied soul who has attained to his conscious divine nature neither grieves nor craves for anything. Seeing all beings equally (in the conception of My supreme energy), he gradually achieves supreme devotion (prema-bhakti) unto Me.

55) By the potency of that supreme devotion, he is able to completely know My nature of Almighty Lordship and majesty (aisvaryamaya-svarupa). Thereafter, acquiring the perception of his divine relationship with Me, he enters into a group of My intimate personal associates, whose nature is nondifferent from Mine.

56) Although always active in the performance of all kinds of duties, those who have taken exclusive refuge in Me attain to the eternal plane of flourishing service, by My grace.

57) By the art of service connection, offering all your actions unto Me with the understanding that I alone am the supreme goal, take refuge in linking your intelligence with Me (becoming detached from general duties) and thus be loyally devoted to Me always.

58) When you have devoted your heart to Me, you will be able to surpass all kinds of formidable obstacles and adversities by My grace. And if out of pride you do not hear My words, you will surely reap ruination.

59) Out of pride you are thinking, 'I shall not fight', but such a decision will surely be in vain because your nature (befitting a

ksatriya) will certainly compel you to engage in battle.

60) O Kaunteya, being compelled by the tendency of your nature, that very duty which out of delusion you are now avoiding will be (soon) inevitably executed by you.

61) O Arjuna, the indwelling Supreme Lord, by the potency of His deluding energy, causes the living beings to wander hither and thither (in many postures), as though each were merely a puppet on strings, riding on a carousel. Verily, that Lord is dwelling within the heart of all living beings.

62) O Bharata, surrender unto Him in all respects. By His grace you will attain the supreme peace and the eternal abode.

63) I have now disclosed more and more hidden treasures to you. Remember all this, and then do as you wish.

64) Now again hear My supreme teaching, the most hidden of all hidden treasures. You are extremely dear to Me, and really, this is why I am explaining this for your true benefit. Commentary

65) Think of Me, serve Me, worship Me, offer your very self unto Me, and surely you will reach Me. Sincerely, this is My promise to you because you are My dear friend.

66) Totally abandoning all kinds of religion, surrender exclusively unto Me. I will liberate you from all kinds of sins, so do not despair. Commentary

67) You should never disclose this hidden treasure to the ease-lover, the faithless, those who are averse to My service, or those malicious persons who are envious of Me.

68) One who recounts the glories of this most hidden of all hidden treasures to My devotees such a person, attaining supreme devotion for Me, will reach Me without a doubt.

69) In human society there is no one who pleases Me by his actions as does he (who preaches the glories of this Bhagavad-gita: the Hidden Treasure of the Sweet Absolute), and (in the future) there will never be one more dear to Me in the whole world than he.

70) And one who regularly reads, contemplates, or sings with a devoted heart this holy conversation between us, will thereby effect My worship through the sacrifice of wisdom. Certainly this is My opinion.

71) And the faithful and devout who simply hear this without jealousy will become liberated, and will attain to the auspicious abodes befitting those endowed with the merit of supreme virtue (sukrti).

72) O Partha, have you heard all this with singular alertness? O Dhananjaya, has your darkness of delusion been dispelled?

73) Arjuna said: O infallible one, by Your grace my delusion has been dispelled. I can now remember who I am, all my doubts have gone, and I have become reposed in surrender unto You. Now I shall follow Your order.

74) Sanjaya said: In this way I heard this amazing, ecstatic conversation between the Supreme Soul Vasudeva and Arjuna.

75) By the mercy of Srila Vyasadeva I heard this most hidden treasure which emanated directly from the holy lotus mouth of the Supreme Lord of all mystic power, Lord Sri Krsna Himself.

76) O King, repeatedly remembering this incredible divine conversation of Lord Sri Krsna and Arjuna, my heart rejoices, over and over again.

77) O King, and now I repeatedly remember I marvel at that amazing, tremendous universal form of the Supreme Lord Hari, and my whole being thrills with emotion.

78) Wherever there is the Supreme Lord of all mystic power, Lord Sri Krsna Himself, and wherever there is the conqueror of wealth who carries the bow, Arjuna himself at that very place the goddess of good fortune, at that very place the goddess of victory, at that very place flourishing prosperity, and at that very place supreme virtue prevails. Certainly that is my firm resolution.

Quotes

"The glory of Indian wisdom belongs to the oldest traditions in history. When people talk about the sources of philosophy, they make reference not only to the Orient at all, but especially towards India."

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

"The wonderful thing about the *Bhagavad-gita* is that, in it, a unlearned, experienced wisdom is revealed as helping goodness. This beautiful revelation, this wisdom of life, this philosophy, blossomed to religion, is what we are looking for and what we need ..."

Hermann Hesse

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Aldous Huxley