

CHAPTER FOUR



Jñāna-yoga Yoga through Transcendental Knowledge

ŚLOKA 1

श्रीभगवानुवाच—
इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।
विवस्वान् मनवे प्राह मनुरिष्ट्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥१॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
imam vivasvate yogam / proktavān aham avyayam
vivasvān manave prāha / manur ikṣvākave 'bravit'

śrī bhagavān uvāca—Śrī Bhagavān said; aham—I; proktavān—
instructed; imam—this; avyayam—imperishable; yogam—
science of yoga; vivasvān—unto the sun-god Vivasvān; (he)
prāha—told it; manave—unto Manu (the father of mankind);
manuh—Manu; abravīt—spoke (it); ikṣvākave—unto Ikṣvāku.

Śrī Bhagavān said: I instructed this imperishable science of *yoga* to the sun-god, Vivasvān, who instructed it to Manu. Manu then instructed it to Ikṣvāku.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In the Fourth Chapter, Śrī Bhagavān explains the reason for His appearance, the eternal nature of His birth and activities, the superiority of *jñāna* in the form of *brahma-yajña* and so on. *Jñāna-yoga*, which is the objective of *niṣkāma-karma*, is glorified in this śloka beginning with the word *imam*, as well as in the next chapter.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

An incarnation of Manu appears in every *manvantara*, the first being Svāyambhuva Manu. In the current Vaivasvata-manvantara, it was Manu's father, Vivasvān, who was the first to receive instructions on *jñāna-yoga*. In this śloka, Śrī Bhagavān has introduced the concept of *sāmpradāyika-dhārā*, the bona fide succession of self-realised spiritual masters. Without *sāmpradāyika-dhārā*, also known as *āmnāya-paramparā*, neither the principles of *jñāna-tattva* nor *bhakti-tattva* can manifest in their pure form in the material world. Only by *sāmpradāyika-dhārā* is the gravity, antiquity and significance of the subject specifically proven. It is seen that in India, even the common people have faith in the ancient *sāmpradāyika-dhārā*, and are devoted to it. That *guru-paramparā*, which bestows complete knowledge of *bhagavat-tattva*, is called *āmnāya* or *sampradāya*. Mantras that are not received from a bona fide *sampradāya* are fruitless. In Kali-yuga there are four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas*: Śrī, Brahmā, Rudra and Sanaka or Kumāra *sampradāyas*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original source of all *sampradāyas*. Only from Śrī Kṛṣṇa does knowledge of *bhagavat-tattva* flow into this material world: *dharmam tu sākṣāt bhāgavat-praṇītam*. "Real dharma comes directly from Śrī Bhagavān" (Śrimad-Bhāgavatam 6.3.19).

As stated in *Bhagavad-gitā*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa first instructed this *jñāna-yoga* to Sūrya-deva, Vivasvān, who then instructed Manu, who in turn gave these divine

instructions to Ikṣvāku. Thus the system of *guru-paramparā* is an ancient and reliable tradition that ensures the *sāmpradāyika-dhārā* (lineage) in which *divya-jñāna* (divine knowledge) has been preserved up to the present day. Whenever this *dhārā* is broken, Śrī Bhagavān again arranges for *divya-jñāna* to manifest in the material world. *Mahā-bhāgavatas* such as Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa and others in the *guru-paramparā* of the Brahma-Mādhwā Gauḍīya *saṃpradāya* realised *divya-jñāna* and instructed the common people through their realised commentaries. Even a person who is highly qualified in material knowledge can never understand the real import of *Bhagavad-gītā* unless he is properly situated in the *paramparā*.

It is important to protect oneself from self-made commentators, otherwise, realisation of the true meaning of the *Bhagavad-gītā* will not be possible. Although milk is pure and nourishing, when it has been touched by the lips of a serpent, it acts like poison. Similarly, topics of Śrī Hari are supremely purifying for the material world, but hearing such topics becomes the cause of one's destruction when they are recited by non-devotees such as impersonalists, or those who consider the body to be the self. In this connection, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has also said: *māyāvādī-bhāṣya śunile haya sarva-nāśa*. “If one hears the commentary of the impersonalists, everything is destroyed” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā* 6.169).

ŚLOKA 2

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।
स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परन्तप ॥२॥

*evam paramparā-prāptam / imam rājarṣayo viduh
sa kālēneha mahatā / yogo naṣṭah parantapa*

parantapa—O Arjuna; *imam*—this science of *yoga*; *prāptam*—was received; *paramparā*—by disciplic succession; *rājarṣayah*—

(and) the saintly kings; *viduh*—understood it; *evam*—thus; *mahatā*—by the powerful; *kālena*—influence of time; *sah*—that; *yogah*—science of one's relationship with the Supreme Lord; (is) *naṣṭah*—lost; *iha*—in this world.

O Arjuna, this *yoga* was thus received in *paramparā* and the *rājarṣis* (saintly kings) understood it in that way, but due to a prolonged lapse of time, it has almost become lost to this world.

ŚLOKA 3

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।
भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥३॥

*sa evāyam mayā te 'dy / yogah proktah purātanaḥ
bhakto 'si me sakha ceti / rahasyam hy etad uttamam*

adya—today; *hi*—certainly; *iti*—thus; *proktah*—spoken; *mayā*—by Me; *te*—to you; *etad*—this; *uttamam*—most; *rahasyam*—confidential (knowledge); *sah eva ayam*—of that very same; *purātanaḥ*—ancient; *yogah*—science of connection with the Supreme; *asi*—because you are; *me*—My; *bhaktaḥ*—devotee; *ca*—and; *sakhā*—friend.

Today I am explaining to you this supremely confidential knowledge of that same ancient *yoga*, because you are My *bhakta* as well as My friend.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “I am telling you this because of two sentiments which are inherent within our relationship. In the first place, you are My *bhakta*, which means you are My servant; and secondly, you are My *sakhā*, My friend. It is not appropriate to disclose this knowledge to anyone who does not possess these attributes. That is why it is confidential.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

A *sad-guru* instructs highly confidential principles, such as *jñāna-tattva* and *bhakti-tattva*, only to a disciple who is affectionate, surrendered and endowed with a service attitude. Those bereft of these qualities are unable to retain or realise such *jñāna*. Here, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, “You are My affectionate servant and dear friend, therefore I am explaining this mysterious secret of *karma-yoga* to you.”

ŚLOKA 4

अर्जुन उवाच—
अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।
कथमेतद्विजानीयां त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥४॥

*arjuna uvāca
aparam bhavato janma / param janma vivasvataḥ
katham etad vijānīyām / tvam ādau proktavān iti*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *bhavataḥ*—Your; *janma*—birth; (*is*) *aparam*—recent; (*whereas*) *janma*—the birth; *vivasvataḥ*—of Sūrya, the sun-god; (*is*) *param*—ancient; *katham*—how?; *vijānīyām*—may I understand; *iti*—that; *tvam*—You; *proktavān*—spoke; *etat*—this; *ādau*—in the beginning.

Arjuna said: Your birth is recent, whereas Sūrya was born in ancient times. How am I to understand that You spoke this *yoga* to him in a previous age?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Considering Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s previous statement to be impossible, Arjuna is questioning Him. “You were born recently (*aparam*), and Sūrya was born long ago (*param*), so how can I believe Your statement that You instructed this *yoga* to Sūrya in ancient times?”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Arjuna is Bhagavān's great *bhakta* and eternal friend (*nitya-sakha*). For this reason, he is also referred to as a *parikara* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and as such he knows *bhagavat-tattva* completely. Ignorant people generally think that Bhagavān Vāsudeva, the controller of all controllers, is an ordinary human being. Instead of accepting that He is omniscient and ever-existing, they consider Him to be a man of limited knowledge who is subject to death. They also think that the birth and activities of Bhagavān are temporary, not knowing that they are transcendental.

It is said in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.12):

*param brahma param dhāma / pavitraṁ paramaṁ bhavān
puruṣaṁ śāśvataṁ divyam / ādi-devam ajam vibhum*

Contrary to the meaning of this *śloka*, ignorant persons do not accept that Śrī Bhagavān is the Supreme Absolute Truth (*param brahma*), possessed of a spiritual form (*param dhāma*), and supremely pure (*parama pavitra*). They also do not believe that He is an eternal person (*śāśvata-puruṣa*), and the original God (*ādi-deva*), who is unborn (*aja*) and all-pervading (*sarva-vyāpaka*), and who is endowed with transcendental opulence (*divya-aiśvarya*). Although Arjuna is highly learned, for the welfare of humanity, he is inquiring from Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa as if he were an ignorant person, so that Bhagavān may deliver these *tattvas* from His own lotus mouth.

ŚLOKA 5

श्रीभगवानुवाच—
बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्थ परन्तप ॥५॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
bahūni me vyatītāni / janmāni tava cārjuna
tāny ahaṁ veda sarvāṇi / na tvam veththa parantapa

śrī bhagavān—the Lord, complete in six opulences; *uvāca*—said; *arjuna parantapa*—O Arjuna, chastiser of the enemy; *tava*—you have; *ca*—and; *me*—I have; *vyatitāni*—passed; *bahūni*—many; *janmāni*—births; *aham*—I; *veda*—remember; *tāni*—them; *sarvāṇi*—all; *tvam*—you; *na vettha*—do not remember.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O Parantapa, chastiser of the enemy, you and I have experienced many births. I remember all of them, whereas you do not.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this *śloka* beginning with *bahūni*, Śrī Bhagavān says, “I have also instructed this science in My other *avatāras*.” *Tava ca* means, “You have also appeared as My associate whenever I have descended and I, being omniscient (*sarva-jñā*) and omnipotent (*sarveśvara*), remember all My appearances. For the fulfilment of My *līlā*, I have covered your knowledge, that is why you do not remember your previous births. Now, with the *abhimāna* (identity) of a son of Kuntī, you are giving *tapa* (pain) to *para* (the enemy), O Parantapa.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here, Śrī Kṛṣṇa informs Arjuna, “Even prior to this present appearance, I have descended in many other *avatāras*, manifesting many different names, forms and pastimes. I remember all of them fully. You also appeared with Me, but because you are in the category of *jīva-tattva* (an atomic conscious particle), you do not remember them.”

At the time of Kṛṣṇa’s name-giving ceremony, Śrī Gargācārya also confirmed that He has many names, forms and pastimes.

*bahūni santi nāmāni / rūpāṇi ca sutasya te
guṇa-karmāṇi rūpāṇi / tāny aham veda no janāḥ*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.8.15)

According to His qualities (*guṇas*) and activities (*karma*), your son has many names and forms. I am aware of them, but others are not.

Similarly Bhagavān told Mucukunda:

janma-karmābhidhānāni santi me 'ṅga sahasraśah
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.51.36

O My dear Mucukunda, My name, births, activities and other characteristics are unlimited.

ŚLOKA 6

**अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय सम्भवाम्यात्ममायया ॥६॥**

*ajo 'pi sann avyayātma / bhūtānām īśvaro 'pi san
prakṛtim svām adhiṣṭhāya / sambhavāmy ātma-māyayā*

api—although; *san*—being; *ajah*—unborn; *avyaya-ātma*—(and having) an imperishable body; *api*—although; *san*—being; *īśvarah*—the Lord; *bhūtānām*—of (all) beings; *sambhavāmi*—I fully manifest; *ātma-māyayā*; by My *yogamāyā*; *adhiṣṭhāya*—situated; (in) *svām*—My original; *prakṛtim*—nature.

Although I am unborn, imperishable and the controller of all living entities, I appear by My *yogamāyā* potency in My original *sac-cid-ānanda-svarūpa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the principle behind His birth (*janma-tattva*). “Although I am unborn, I manifest in various species such as the *devas*, humans and animals.” One may ask, “What is so wonderful about this? In reality, the *jīva* is also unborn, and when his gross body is destroyed, he also accepts another birth.” In response, Śrī Bhagavān says, *avyayātma*. “My body is imperishable, whereas the body of the

jīva is perishable. Moreover, the unborn nature of the *jīva* is of a different type. His birth is due to his identifying with the body which has arisen out of ignorance. As Īśvara, I am non-different from My body. Consequently, My quality of being both born and unborn is perfectly natural. Such a nature, which is impossible to find elsewhere, is wonderful and beyond the scope of logic and reason. Thus there is no possibility of comparing My birth to that of the *jīva*, who takes birth in high and low species as a result of his piety and sin." To clarify this further, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, "Even though I am the Īśvara of the *jīvas*, which means that I am free from the control of *karma*, still I accept birth."

The following doubt may be raised: "The *jīva* also takes bodies in various species such as *devas*, humans and animals, due to the activities of his subtle body (*līṅga-sarīra*) which cause his bondage. You, Parameśvara, do not have a subtle body. You are all-pervading and the controller of all principles, including *kāla* (time) and *karma* (action). It is said in the śrutis that You desired to become many, *bahu syām*, 'I can become many.' According to this statement of śruti, You are everything in the entire universe. However, You specifically express in the śrutis: *evaṁ bhuto 'py aham sambhavāmi*. 'Although I appear to be everything in the universe, still I personally manifest Myself.' From this it is understood that You take birth only to manifest Your eternal form, which is categorically distinct from the whole universe."

This being the case, one may inquire, "What is the nature of these bodies of Yours?" In response to this, Śrī Bhagavān says in the second half of this śloka: *prakṛtim svām adhiṣṭhāya sambhāmy ātma-māyayā*. If the word *prakṛti* is taken to indicate the external *māyā-śakti*, the meaning here becomes 'Parameśvara, the presiding controller of *prakṛti*, who becomes the universe with the help of this *śakti*'. However, this does not describe the specific nature of Śrī Bhagavān. In the Sanskrit

dictionary it is said: *sam-siddhi-prakṛti* *tv ime svarūpañ ca sva bhāvaś ca.* *Svarūpa* (natural form) and *svabhāva* (intrinsic nature) are synonyms for *saṁsiddhi* or *prakṛti*. For this reason, the word *prakṛti* mentioned in this śloka indicates *svarūpa*. The nature of this *svarūpa* is *sac-cid-ānanda*.

Śrila Śridhara Svāmīpāda says, “Your *svarūpa* is not composed of *māyā-śakti*, but is *sac-cid-ānanda*. Therefore, Your *prakṛti* is by nature *śuddha-sattva*, pure goodness.”

According to Śrī Rāmānujācārya, *prakṛti* means *svabhāva*. “Remaining situated in Your *svabhāva*, that is, retaining Your entire divinity, You manifest Your own *svarūpa* only by Your independent will.” If we accept *prakṛti* as *svabhāva*, then the use of these qualifying adjectives, that is, *sac-cid-ānanda-ghana eka-rasa* (uniformly concentrated eternity, knowledge and bliss), distinguishes between Śrī Bhagavān’s form and *māyā*. *Svām* means one’s own *rūpa*. It is said in the *śruti*: *sa bhagavataḥ kasmīn pratiṣṭhitah sva-mahimni*. “Śrī Bhagavān is situated in full possession of all His divine glory.” According to Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, when Bhagavān appears, He still remains situated in His *svarūpa*. He behaves like an embodied living entity, although there is no difference between His body and His actual self.

If one raises the question, “Since You are eternal, when You accept indestructible forms such as Matsya and Kūrma, are Your past and present forms also simultaneously perceptible?” then in response Bhagavān says: *ātma-māyayā*. “This act is performed by My *ātma-bhūtā māyā* (internal potency or *yogamāyā*). My *svarūpa* is both concealed and manifested by *yogamāyā*, which is the function of *cit-śakti*. I appear only with the help of this *yogamāyā*, who is manifesting My present *svarūpa* and who has concealed My previous forms.”

Śrila Śridhara Svāmī writes in his commentary, “I appear only by My *ātma-māyā*, the potency of complete and infallible knowledge, strength, prowess, and so on.”

Śrī Rāmānujācārya writes in his commentary, “Śrī Bhagavān appears by His *ātma-māyā*, or through the potency of His own knowledge. *Ātma-jñāna-māyā vayūnam jñānam*. In this context the word *māyā* is a synonym for *jñāna*. This is also confirmed by the Sanskrit dictionary. Śrī Bhagavān knows the pious and impious *karma* of the eternal *jīvas* only by the help of this potency.”

According to Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, “It is simply illusion to apply the conception of the body and the embodied to Me, Bhagavān Vāsudeva, for I am transcendental to all such duality.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In the *Kūrma Purāṇa* it is stated: *deha-dehī-vibhāgaś ca neśvare vidyate kvacit.* “In regard to Śrī Bhagavān, there is no distinction between the body and the embodied.”

Regarding the *jīva*, however, the body is different from the embodied soul, meaning that his gross and subtle bodies are different from him, the *jīvātmā*. This is further clarified in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya līlā 17.132):

*deha-dehīr, nāma-nāmīr kṛṣṇe nāhi ‘bheda’
jīvera dharma—nāma-deha-svarūpe ‘vibheda’*

In Kṛṣṇa there is no distinction between *nāma* and *nāmī* (the name and the possessor of the name), or between *deha* and *dehī* (the body and the embodied). The embodied *jīva*'s *dharma* (character or nature), name and body, however, are different from his *svarūpa* (spiritual constitution).

Bhagavān is *aja*, unborn. By His own will He accepts the shelter of His *cit-śakti* in the form of *yogamāyā*, and by manifesting His eternal body in this material world, He performs simple and natural pastimes as though He is an ordinary boy. Still, His body, consisting of *sac-cid-ānanda*, is not covered by a gross or subtle body. The atomic *jīva*, on the

other hand, being overpowered by the influence of Bhagavān's *māyā-śakti*, accepts a subtle and a gross body according to his *samskāras*, impressions created by his previous *karma*, and in this way again takes birth.

In conclusion, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has commented that here Kṛṣṇa is explaining to Arjuna, "Although you and I appear in this world again and again, there is a specific difference between your descent and mine. I am Īśvara, the controller of all *jīvas*; I am *aja*, without birth, and My form is immutable. I appear through the agency of My *cit-śakti*, whereas the *jīvas* take birth in this world under the influence of My *māyā-śakti*, which deprives them of the memory of their past lives. *Jīvas* have to accept a subtle body as a result of their previous *karma*, and as a result of taking shelter of that subtle body, they have to repeatedly take birth. My appearance, however, in the *deva*, animal and other forms, occurs solely by My own will. Unlike the *jīvas*, My supremely pure conscious body is not covered by a subtle and a gross body. In this mundane plane I manifest that very same eternal body which exists naturally in Vaikuṇṭha."

"Someone may inquire, 'How is it possible for *cit-tattva*, the transcendental Personality, to manifest in the material world along with His realm?' Now hear My response. My *yogamāyā-śakti* is inconceivable, and consequently cannot be comprehended. No amount of reasoning, however clever, is able to comprehend and measure the acts performed by *yogamāyā*. You must understand, by naturally acquired knowledge that I, Bhagavān, with My inconceivable potency, am not bound by any rules governing the mundane plane. By My mere will, all the entities of Vaikuṇṭha can easily manifest their supremely pure forms in this material world. In other words, I can transform the complete phenomenal manifestation into *cit-svarūpa*. My *sac-cid-ānanda vigraha*, which is beyond all material laws, is indeed completely pure, even when it

manifests in the material world. What doubt can there be of this? That *māyā*, which controls the *jīva*, is also My *prakṛti*, energy, but understand that when I use the phrase ‘My *prakṛti*’, it only refers to the *cit-śakti*. Although My potency is one without a second, in My presense it is *cit-śakti*, however, for the *jīvas* bound by *karma*, it is *māyā-śakti*, endowed with its respective influences and various types of majestic, mystic powers, which forces them to rotate in the cycle of birth and death.”

ŚLOKA 7

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥७॥

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya / glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya / tadātmānam sṛjāmy aham*

bhārata—descendent of Bhārata; *hi*—assuredly; *yadā yadā*—whenever; *bhavati*—there is; *glāniḥ*—a decline; *dharmasya*—of *dharma*; (and) *abhyutthānam*—an increase; *adharmasya*—of *adharma*; *tadā*—then; *aham*—I; *sṛjāmi*—manifest; *ātmānam*—My own Self.

O Bhārata! Whenever there is a decline of *dharma* and an increase in *adharma*, at that time I manifest My eternally perfect form in this mundane world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

When does Śrī Bhagavān appear? To answer this question, Bhagavān replies with this śloka beginning with the word *yadā*. “Being unable to tolerate the decline of *dharma* and the increase of *adharma*, I appear for the purpose of changing or reversing the situation.”

According to Śrīpāda Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, *ātmānam sṛjāmy* means I create the body. “With the help of *yogamāyā*,

I exhibit My *nitya-siddha-deha*, My eternally perfect body, as if it were created by material nature.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In each birth, a *jīva* who is bound by the result of his *karma* takes a new body that is made from inert matter. But Śrī Bhagavān, by His own will and through the agency of His *māyā-sakti*, deludes the *asuras* in such a way that they consider His body to be an object of the material creation. Śrī Sukadeva Gosvāmī has confirmed this in Śrimad-Bhāgavatam (9.24.56):

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya kṣayo vṛddhiś ca pāpmanah
tadā tu bhagavān iśa ātmānam sr̄jate hariḥ*

Whenever there is a decline of *dharma* and an increase of sin, Bhagavān Śrī Hari manifests Himself in this world.

Various *ācāryas* have explained the word *dharma* used in this *śloka* in different ways. Śrī Rāmānujācārya has accepted the word *dharma* to mean the worship of Bhagavān. Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has explained *dharma* as *śuddha-bhakti-yoga*, characterised by the performance of *arcana* (worship) of Bhagavān, *dhyāna* (meditation) and other such practices as well as *varṇāśrama-dharma* prescribed in the *Vedas*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has quoted Kṛṣṇa as follows: “The only reason for My appearance is that I desire it; I descend of My own free will. Whenever there is a decline in *dharma* and a prevalence of *adharma*, I appear of My own accord. My laws, which govern the activities of this material world, are unconquerable. However, when in due course of time, these rules become ineffective for some undefinable and indescribable reason, *adharma* becomes prominent. No one except Me can put an end to this disorder. I thus appear in this mundane plane with the assistance of My *cit-sakti* and dispel the decline of *dharma*.

"It is not true that I only appear in the land of Bhārata, India. According to necessity I appear, by My will, among *devas*, animals, birds and all other species. Therefore, do not think that I do not appear among *mleccha*, *antyaja* and other outcastes. All those pitiable people also except a certain degree of *dharma* as their *sva-dharma* (natural religion). When their religion declines, I also appear among them as a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra* and protect their religion. In India people regularly perform their *sva-dharma* in the form of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. Because of this, I make a special endeavour to establish this system of *dharma* among them. For this reason, all the charming *avatāras*, such as the *yuga-avatāras* and the *amṛta-avatāras* (partial *avatāras*) can be seen to manifest only in India. In places where there is no *varṇāśrama-dharma*, people cannot properly practise *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, or its goals, *jñāna-yoga*, and its highest fruit, *bhakti-yoga*. Still, any tinge of *bhakti* which manifests among the outcastes (*antyaja*), can be attributed to the sudden devotional faith generated by the mercy of My *bhakta*."

ŚLOKA 8

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥८॥

*paritrāṇāya sādhūnām / vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām
dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya / sambhavāmi yuge yuge*

paritrāṇāya—for the protection; *sādhūnām*—of good men; *vināśāya*—for the destruction; *duṣkṛtām*—of evil-doers; *ca*—and; *arthāya*—for the purpose; *dharma-saṁsthāpana*—of establishing *dharma*; *sambhavāmi*—I appear; *yuge yuge*—in every age.

To protect My unalloyed *bhaktas*, annihilate the wicked and re-establish *dharma*, I appear in every age.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“O Arjuna, a question may arise in your heart regarding the necessity of My appearance when the *rājarṣis*, *brahmaṛṣis* and My *bhaktas* are capable of rectifying the decline of *dharma* and the increase of *adharma*. Listen to My answer. Although it is true that they can do this work, I appear in order to perform acts which are impossible for others. To explain this, I have spoken this *śloka* beginning with *paritrāṇāya*. *Paritrāṇāya* (protecting the *sādhus*) refers to protecting the acutely eager hearts of My *aikāntika-bhaktas* who are suffering from intense hankering to have My *darśana*. Just to remove that suffering I manifest Myself. *Duṣkṛtām* means that I appear to annihilate Rāvana, Kāṁsa, Keśi and the other *asuras* who give pain to My *bhaktas*, and who cannot be killed by anyone else. *Dharma-samsthāpanārthāya* means that I advent in order to perfectly establish *parama-dharma* (the eternal *dharma*), which is endowed with such characteristics as *bhajana*, *dhyāna*, *paricaryā* (service) to Me and *saṅkīrtana*. It is not possible for others to do this. *Yuge yuge* means that I appear in every *yuga* or *kalpa* (day of Brahmā). Although I punish the miscreants, one should not suspect that I am guilty of being biased. By killing these miscreants with My own hands, I protect them from going to hell as a result of their sinful deeds, and I deliver them from material existence. You should consider this punishment to be My mercy.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrī Bhagavān establishes *varṇāśrama-dharma* by transmitting *sakti* into the hearts of His prominent saintly *bhaktas* in the royal and *brāhmaṇical* orders. However, Bhagavān Himself descends for three reasons: to pacify the afflictions of those *bhaktas* who are suffering in separation from Him, to kill *asuras* like Kāṁsa who strongly oppose the *sādhus* and

who cannot be killed by others, and to propagate the message of *śuddha-bhakti*.

While defining the word *avatāra*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda writes: *avatāraś ca prākṛta-vaibhava 'vataraṇam iti.* "The descent of Śrī Bhagavān into this material creation is called *avatāra*."

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has elucidated on the same point in different words: *aprāpañcāt prapañce 'vataraṇam khalv avatārah.* "The descent of Bhagavān from His unmanifested eternal abode into the mundane plane is called *avatāra*."

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *avatāri*, the origin of unlimited *avatāras*. He is therefore called *Svayam Bhagavān*. His *avatāras* are of six types: (1) *puruṣa-avatāra*, (2) *guṇa-avatāra*, (3) *līlā-avatāra*, (4) *manvantara-avatāra*, (5) *yuga-avatāra* and (6) *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*.

There are four *yugas*: Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali. In Śrimad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.20), it is stated that Kṛṣṇa appears in all of them:

*kṛtam tretā dvāparam ca kalir ity eṣu keśavah
nānā-varṇābhidhākāro nānaiva vidhinejyate*

One day of Brahmā's life span is called a *kalpa*. There are fourteen *manvantaras* in one *kalpa*. There are one thousand *catur-yugas* (complete cycles of the four ages) in one day of Brahmā. According to the calculations of human solar years, one day of Brahmā equals 4,320,000,000 years. Three hundred and sixty such days make one year of Brahmā, and Brahmā lives for one hundred such years.

Although Bhagavān kills the wicked *asuras*, He remains aloof from their faults. In other words, He is free from the imperfection of being biased; His killing them is only an exhibition of His mercy towards them. Commenting on the *śloka*: *ajasya janmotpatha-nāśanāya* (Śrimad-Bhāgavatam 3.1.44), Śrila Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes, "Although Bhagavān

is *aja* (unborn), He descends to annihilate and liberate the *asuras* who impede the path of truth."

Śrīla Śridhara Svāmī has also commented in a similar manner:

*lālāne tāḍane mātūr nākāruṇya yathārbhake
tadvad eva maheśasya niyantur guṇa-doṣayoh*

Just as an affectionate mother is not considered hard-hearted or harsh if she chastises her child in the course of raising and caring for him, Parameśvara is also not cruel when He disciplines the *jivas* to bring out their good qualities and diminish their bad ones.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has quoted Śrī Kṛṣṇa as follows: "I establish *varṇāśrama-dharma* by infusing My *śakti* into the royal and *brāhmaṇical* saints who are devoted to Me. However, in order to protect My pure *bhaktas* from non-devotees, there is a need for Me to appear. Thus, appearing as the *yuga-avatāras*, I protect the *sādhus*. By eliminating the wicked *asuras*, I redress the decline in *dharma*, and by preaching the limbs of *bhakti*, such as *śravaṇa* and *kirtana*, I establish the eternal *dharma* of the *jivas*.

"I descend in every *yuga*. From this statement, one should understand that I also descend in Kali-yuga. My *avatāra* in Kali-yuga, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, will establish that most rarely attained *prema*, the eternal *dharma*, solely by the process of *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. This *avatāra* has no other purpose, and as the greatest of all *avatāras* I will remain concealed from the common man. My pure *bhaktas* will be naturally attracted to Me, and you, Arjuna, will realise this when you appear with Me in that age. The most wonderful feature of this hidden *avatāra*, who delivers the people of Kali-yuga, is that I reform the miscreants' wicked natures by blessing them with divine love through the chanting of *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, instead of completely annihilating them in the manner of My previous *avatāras*."

ŚLOKA 9

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेति तत्त्वतः ।
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥९॥

*janma karma ca me divyam / evam yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā deham punar janma / naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

arjuna—O Arjuna; *me*—My; *janma*—birth; *ca*—and; *karma*—activities; (*are*) *divyam*—transcendental; (*one*) *yah*—who; *vetti*—knows; *evam*—thus; *tattvataḥ*—in truth; *tyaktvā*—having given up; *deham*—the body; *na eti*—does not accept; *punah*—again; *janma*—(*re*) birth; *sah*—he; *eti*—comes; *mām*—to Me.

O Arjuna! My birth and activities are transcendental. One who knows this in truth does not take another birth after giving up the present body. He certainly attains Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“One will only become perfect when he has understood the essence of the transcendental nature of My birth (*janma*) and activities (*karma*), which are endowed with the characteristics described in the previous *ślokas*.” This *śloka*, beginning with the word *janma*, is spoken to explain this. Śrīpāda Rāmānujācārya and Śrīpāda Madhusūdana Sarasvatī explain that the word *divya* means *aprākṛta*, transcendental, and Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has translated it as *alaukika*, not of this material world. The material world is created by *prakṛti* (material nature), thus by the word *alaukika* Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda also implies *aprākṛta*. Consequently, because the birth and activities of Śrī Bhagavān are *aprākṛta* and beyond the modes, they are *nitya* (eternal).

In the *Bhagavat-sandarbha*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī refers to this present subject in his explanation of the *śloka*: *na vidyate yasya ca janma karma vā* (*Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* (8.3.8)). He

explains that, although this matter cannot be comprehended by logic, on the strength of statements from the Vedas and Smṛti it must be accepted as being beyond reason.

In this regard, it is also said in the *Puruṣa-bodhinī śruti* of *Piplāda-śākhā*:

eko deva nitya-lilānurakto / bhakta-hṛdy antar-ātmā

Eternally engaged in His pastimes, the one Lord in His form of Antaryāmī enters within the hearts of His *bhaktas*.

Regarding the eternity of Śrī Bhagavān's birth and activities (*janma* and *karma*), detailed descriptions have been given in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

"After hearing My statements such as: *yo vetti tattvataḥ* (*Gītā* 4.9), *ajo 'pi sann avyayātmā* (*Gītā* 4.6) and *janma karma ca me divyam* (*Gītā* 4.9), one who understands the eternal nature of My birth and activities with theistic intelligence—that is, who is not dependent on empiricism to accept it—does not have to take birth again in this material world."

"Those who in truth understand the word *tat* in the statement of *Gītā* (17.23)—*om tat sad iti nirdeśo brahmaṇas tri-vidhah smṛtaḥ* to mean *brahma* do not have to take birth again after giving up their present body. Rather, it is assured that they attain Me." Here Bhagavān gives a superior meaning to the phrase "giving up the body". "Such a person does not take another birth after giving up the body. Rather, he attains Me even without giving it up."

Śrīpāda Rāmānujācārya writes paraphrasing Kṛṣṇa, "All sins that impede one on the path to attain My full shelter are completely destroyed by true knowledge of My transcendental birth and activities. Only those dear devotees who have taken shelter of Me, attain Me even in this very life."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Those who, by the grace of *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas, realise that Śrī Bhagavān accepts a transcendental birth and performs transcendental activities through the medium of His *acintya-śakti* attain eternal service to Him in this very life by the mercy of His *hlādhiṇī-śakti*. On the contrary, those who consider the birth and activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be mundane are overpowered by ignorance and wander in the cycle of birth and death, afflicted by the three-fold miseries.

Lord Brahmā has also said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.7.29): *tat karma divyam iva*, “The activities of Śrī Bhagavān are indeed suprahuman.” Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura has clarified this point in his *Bhāgavatam* commentary on this *śloka*. “In reality, all of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s activities are transcendental.” Furthermore, it is stated:

na vidyate yasya ca janma karma vā
na nāma-rūpe guṇa-doṣa eva vā
tathāpi lokāpyaya-sambhavāya yaḥ
sva-māyayā tāny anukālam ṛcchati
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (8.3.8)

For the Lord there is no *janma*, *karma*, *nāma*, *rūpa*, *guṇa*, *doṣa* (fault), etc., yet He always accepts these attributes by His potency for the creation and destruction of the material world.

The explanation of the above *śloka* by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī is significant and can be referred to in his *Bhāgavat-sandarbha* and *Krama-sandarbha*.

The Śrutis have described Bhagavān as *niṣphala* (ineffective), *niṣkriya* (inactive), *nirañjana* (faultless), *nirākāra* (formless), *asabdam* (indescribable), *avyaya* (imperishable), and so forth. This is only because He is beyond material qualities. Thus, in specific Śrutis such as *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (3.14.4), He is called *sarva-karmāḥ*, the performer of all activities,

sarva-kāmaḥ, the possessor of all types of desires, *sarva-gandhaḥ*, the possessor of all fragrances, *sarva-rasaḥ*, the possessor of all mellows, and so on. This is corroborated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.4.33:

yo 'nugrahārthatāṁ bhajatāṁ pāda-mūlam
anāma-rūpo bhagavān anantah
nāmāni rūpāṇi ca janma-karmabhir
bheje sa mahyāṁ paramāḥ prasidatu

To bestow mercy upon those who worship His lotus feet, Bhagavān—although free from material names, forms and other attributes—accepts various transcendental forms and names through His different *avatāras* and activities. May that unlimited Bhagavān, whose opulence is inconceivable, be pleased with me.

Those who are *bhaktas* achieve Bhagavān even while living within this body. Kṛṣṇa says: *yānti mām eva nirguṇāḥ*. “Those who are free from the modes attain Me” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.22). While commenting on this *śloka*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes that the word *laya* (dissolution) is not mentioned here. This clarifies Kṛṣṇa’s point: “Upon becoming *nirguṇa*, My *bhaktas* attain Me even in their present body.”

ŚLOKA 10

**वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।
बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्वावमागताः ॥१०॥**

*vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhā / man-mayā mām upāśritāḥ
bahavo jñāna-tapasā / pūtā mad-bhāvam āgatāḥ*

vīta—being freed; *rāga*—from attachment; *bhaya*—fear; *krodhāḥ*—and anger; (*being*) *mat-mayāḥ*—absorbed in Me; (and) *upāśritāḥ*—surrendered; *mām*—to Me; *bahavaḥ*—many persons; *jñāna-tapasā*—qualities in the form of knowledge; (became)

pūtāḥ—purified; (and) *āgatāḥ*—came; (to have) *mad-bhāvam*—love for Me.

Freed from attachment, fear and anger, with their concentration fixed on Me, being completely surrendered, and purified by austerity in the form of knowledge, many persons have attained *prema-bhakti* for Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān says, “O Arjuna, not only do those having full knowledge of My birth and activities, who are now present during My current *avatāra* attain Me, but even in ancient times those endowed with this transcendental knowledge of My birth and activities of My previous *avatāras* also attained Me.” To explain this, the present *śloka*, beginning with the word *vita-rāga*, is being spoken. *Jñāna-tapasā* means purified by austerity in the form of knowledge. In the opinion of Śrī Rāmānujācārya, Kṛṣṇa is saying, “This knowledge is realisation of the absolute knowledge of My birth and activities. People attain Me when they have been purified by realizing My birth and activities in terms of the characteristics described earlier.” In other words, “While trying with determination to realise the eternal nature of My birth and activities, they attain My *prema-bhakti*. However, they are first purified by the fire of transcendental knowledge and the austerity of tolerating the burning poison of the serpents of various types of wrong opinions, misguided logic and fallacious arguments.”

In Śrī Rāmānujācārya’s commentary he cites the Śruti statement: *tasya dhīrāḥ pari�ānanti yonim*. “One who is *dhīra* (intelligent) completely knows the nature of Śrī Bhagavān’s birth.”

Vita-rāga refers to those who have given up attachment to persons who engage in mundane talk and who advocate bo-

gus opinions. “My *bhaktas* do not become angry with them nor do they fear them. If one asks why, the answer is that they are intensely absorbed in deliberating and meditating on My birth and activities, and hearing and chanting about them.” *Mad-bhāvam* means ‘*prema* for Me’.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “There are three reasons why foolish people are not inclined to deliberate on the transcendental and supremely pure nature of My birth, activities and form. They are: (1) attachment to worldly objects, (2) fear and (3) anger. Those whose intelligence is tightly bound by mundane thoughts are so deeply absorbed in and attached to materialism, that they do not accept or even consider the existence of an eternal entity known as *cit-tattva*. According to such persons, *svabhāva* (nature itself) is the Absolute Truth. Some of them maintain that inert matter is the eternal cause and the source of *cit-tattva*. The *jaḍa-vādīs* (empiricists), the *svabhāva-vādīs* (nature theorists), and the *caitanya-hīna-vidhi-vādīs*, who advocate a system of ethics which is based on the conception that the Absolute is unconscious, have no understanding of consciousness. These three classes of philosophers are all impelled by an attachment to materialism and contend that inert matter is the all-in-all (*jaḍa-vādīs*), that nature is a law unto itself (*svabhāva-vādīs*) and that one can deny the principle of consciousness (*caitanya-hīna-vidhi-vādīs*). They gradually become bereft of any transcendental attachment to the Supreme Absolute Reality.

“Although some thinkers do accept *cit-tattva* (spiritual principles) as eternal, because they reject the principles of transcendental knowledge and perpetually take shelter of mundane logic and reasoning, they can actually have no

realisation of *cit-tattva*. Whatever attributes and activities they see in inert matter they designate as *asat* (unreal) and very carefully abandon them. Thus, in the name of identifying that which is uncontaminated by inert matter, they imagine an Absolute Reality (*brahma*) which is beyond definition. However, that is nothing more than an indirect manifestation of My *māyā*; it is not My eternal form. Later they give up meditating on My *svarūpa* and worshipping My deity form, fearing that by this meditation and way of thinking they may come under the influence of material conceptions. Because of this fear, they lose the opportunity to realise the *svarūpa* of the Absolute Truth (*parama-tattva*) and are deprived of My *prema*. There are others who, being unable to discern any substance beyond matter, become possessed by anger. Impelled by such anger they maintain that the Absolute Reality is just *nirvāṇa*, a void, nothingness and the complete annihilation of all existence. The doctrine of the Buddhists and Jains has appeared from this principle of *nirvāṇa*.

“Many wise men, however, do become free from attachment, fear and anger and see nothing but Myself everywhere. Genuinely surrendered to Me, they are purified by the fire of transcendental knowledge, and by the penance of tolerating the burning poison of false reasoning. Thus they have attained pure, sublime love for Me.”

ŚLOKA 11

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तास्तथैव भजाम्यहम्।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्त्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥११॥

*ye yathā mām prapadyante / tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham
mama vartmānuvarttante / manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśāḥ*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *yathā*—as; *ye*—they; *prapadyante*—as

they serve; (to) *mām*—Me; *tathā*—so; *eva*—certainly; *aham bhajāmi*—I love and serve; (with) *tān*—them; *manuṣyāḥ*—men; *anuvarttante*—follow; *mama vartma*—My path; *sarvaśāḥ*—in all respects.

O Pārtha! In whichever way a person renders service to Me I serve him in that very same way. Everyone follows My path in all respects.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

One may ask the following question: “Only Your *aikāntika-bhaktas* understand Your birth and activities to be eternal. Others, who have an inclination toward *jñāna* and other processes, take shelter of You to perfect their particular process, but they do not accept the eternality of Your birth and activities. What will happen to them?” In response, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *ye yathā*. “Those who take shelter of Me perform *bhajana*, and I reciprocate by granting them the result of that *bhajana*. I am the supreme master, and My birth and activities (pastimes) are eternal. To those with this understanding, who also perform My *bhajana* by rendering service to My pastimes with the specific intention of giving pleasure to Me, I as Īśvara, being independent to act or not act as I choose, also make their birth and activities eternal. I make them My *parikaras* (associates) and in due course of time I become manifest and unmanifest in this material world along with them. In this way, I bestow My mercy upon them at every moment by giving them *prema* as the fruit of their *bhajana* (*sevā*). There are others, such as the *jñānīs*, who take shelter of Me, considering My birth and activities to be temporary and My deity form to be a product of the external energy. In turn, I repeatedly throw them into the cycle of birth and activities which are subject to destruction. There, in the snare of *māyā*, I give them misery in the form of birth and death. However, those

jñānīs who consider My birth and activities to be eternal and My deity to be *sac-cid-ānanda* take shelter of Me to perfect their knowledge. For such *mumukṣus*, who desire *mukti* through the dissolution of their gross and subtle bodies, I destroy their implication in the cycle of birth and death which is born of ignorance, and grant them *brahmānanda* (the bliss of liberation) as the fruit of their *bhajana*. Thus, not only My *bhaktas* take shelter of Me, but *jñānīs*, *karmīs*, *yogīs*, *tyāgīs*, worshippers of the *devatās* and all others follow My path. Since I am *sarva-svarūpa*, the form of omnipotence, all paths including those of *jñāna* and *karma* are My paths.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

*tāṁs tāṁ kāmāṁ harir dadyād yān yān kāmayate janah
ārādhito yathaivaiśa tathā pūṁsāṁ phalodayah*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. (4.13.34)

It is understood from this *śloka* that according to the intention with which people worship or take shelter of Bhagavān Śrī Hari, He rewards them in accordance with their desires. The *śuddha-bhaktas* worship Him to attain eternal service to His *sac-cid-ānanda* deity. Making such *prema-bhaktas* His *nitya-parikaras*, Bhagavān Śrī Hari fulfills their desire to attain His loving service (*prema-mayī sevā*). In accordance with the desire of the *nirviśeṣa-vādī jñānīs*, Bhagavān grants them *mukti* in the form of *nirvāṇa* in the featureless *nirviśeṣa-brahma*, which is the unvariegated manifestation of His personality. Bhagavān appears to *sakāma-karmīs* as the bestower of the fruits of their *karma*. He appears to the *yogīs* as Īśvara, giving them *vibhūti* (mystic powers) or *kaivalya* (liberation). However, of all the various achievements, attaining the service of Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Goloka Vraja is the ultimate.

It should be clearly understood from the present *śloka* of

Bhagavad-gītā that the results of different types of *bhajana* depend on the desires of the practitioners. The results of various types of worship are not the same. Some explain the words *manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśāḥ* to mean that everyone is following the path of service to Bhagavān and, whatever action they may perform, they will all attain the same result. This conception is completely incorrect. The idea that the miscreants, the *jñānis*, the *bhaktas* and the *prema-bhaktas* ultimately achieve the exact same destination has been refuted in *śāstras* such as *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*. This is stated later in the *Gītā* (9.25):

*yānti deva-vratā devān / pitṛn yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā / yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām*

Those who worship the *devas* go to the planets of the *devas*, those who worship the forefathers go to their planet, those who worship the spirits go to the planet of the spirits and those who worship Me attain Me.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as follows, “When people accept My shelter by worshipping Me, I reciprocate with whatever intention or faith they have in relation to Me. Everyone can certainly attain Me, because I am the ultimate objective of all paths. Those who are *śuddha-bhaktas* attain *paramānanda* (transcendental bliss) by eternally rendering confidential eternal to My *sac-cid-ānanda* deity in the Supreme Abode. To the worshippers of My featureless aspect (*nirviṣeṣa-vādīs*), I award *nirvāṇa-mukti*, total absorption in the *nirviṣeṣa-brahma*, by way of self-annihilation. Since they do not accept the eternity of My *sac-cid-ānanda* deity, they consequently lose their eternal, blissful *svarūpa*.

“According to their degree of conviction, I cast some of them into the cycle of birth and death. I appear as *śūnya* (void) to the *śūnya-vādīs*, merging their existence with the void. I

cover the *ātmā*, consciousness (*ācchādita-cetana*), of the empiricists as well as the nature theists who identify themselves as being born of nature, by making their consciousness almost inert. I am only attainable to them in the form of inert nature. I appear as *Īśvara* to the *yogīs*, rewarding them with *vibhūtis* (mystic powers) or *kaivalya* (impersonal liberation). In this way, as *sarva-svarūpa*, the intrinsic form of everything, I am the object of achievement for all types of beliefs. Among them all, only attainment of My transcendental service should be considered supreme. All human beings follow one of My various paths.”

ŚLOKA 12

**काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणा॑ सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।
क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥१२॥**

*kāṅkṣantah karmaṇām siddhim / yajanta iha devatāḥ
kṣipram hi mānuṣe loke / siddhir bhavati karmajā*

kāṅkṣantah—those desiring; *siddhim*—perfection; *karmaṇām*—in fruitive acts; *iha*—in this world; *yajante*—worship; *devatāḥ*—the *devas*; *hi*—certainly; *loke mānuṣe*—in this world of men; *karmajā*—fruitive work; *bhavati*—becomes; *kṣipram*—speedily; *siddhīḥ*—fruitful.

Those who desire the fruits of their activities in this world worship the *devatās*. Thus the results of their fruitive work are quickly achieved.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Among all such persons with whom I reciprocate, those desiring material success give up the path of My *bhakti*, which is non-different from Me, and follow the path of *karma*, which quickly bears fruit.” To explain this point, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word

kāṅkṣantah. The word *karma-jā* means born of *karma* and refers to perfections such as the attainment of Svarga.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Karma is of three types: *nitya*, routine; *naimittika*, occasional and *kāmya*, with fruitive desire. Actions prescribed in the Vedas, such as *sandhya*, reciting prayers at the three junctions of the day, are *nitya-karma*, daily religious duties. Activities such as *pitṛ-śrāddha*, offering oblations to the forefathers, are known as *naimittika-karma* or occasional duties and those actions performed with a fruitive desire are called *kāmya-karma* or *sakāma*. *Kāmya-karma* is superior to both *akarma*, abstaining from prescribed duties and *vikarma*, prohibited, sinful action.

kāmais tais tair hṛta-jñānāḥ / prapadyante 'nya-devatāḥ
Gītā (7.20)

People who desire the fruits of their actions give up the worship of Bhagavān Śrī Vāsudeva and worship the different *devatās*.

labhate ca tataḥ kāmān / mayaiva vihitān hi tān
Gītā (7.22)

By the arrangements of Bhagavān, they receive their desired results from those *devatās*.

Those who, by the association of *śuddha-bhaktas*, realise the insignificance of *karma* and its fruits, adopt the path of *nirguna-bhakti*. Very quickly, they become successful and attain *bhagavat-sevā*. According to *śāstra* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.14.21), this is because Śrī Bhagavān is achieved only by *bhakti*: *bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyāḥ*. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.14.20) also says: *na sādhayati māṁ yogo*. “Bhagavān is not achieved by such processes as *yoga* or *tapasyā*.”

ŚLOKA 13

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।
तस्य कर्त्तरमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्त्तरमव्ययम् ॥१३॥

cātūr-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam / guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśah
tasya karttāram api mām / viddhi akarttāram avyayam

cātūr-varṇyam—the system of the four social orders; *sṛṣṭam*—was created; *maya*—by Me; *vibhāgaśah*—according to divisions; *guṇa*—of quality; (and) *karma*—work; *api*—although; (I am) *karttāram*—the creator; *tasya*—of this (system); *viddhi*—you should know; *mām*—Me; *avyayam*—(to be) the unchanging; *akarttāram*—non-doer.

The fourfold system of *varṇas* (*brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* and *sūdra*) was created by Me according to divisions of quality (*guṇa*) and work (*karma*). Although I am the creator of this system, you should know that I am immutable and the non-doer (*akarttā*), and that I am not the direct instigator.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

One may ask, “The paths of *bhakti* and *jñāna* give *mukti* as their fruit, yet the path of *karma* gives bondage. You, Parameśvara, have introduced all these paths, so how is it that this biased feature exists in You?” In response, Śrī Bhagavān says, “No, no, it is not like this.” To justify this, He has spoken this *śloka* beginning with the word *cātūr-varṇyam*, which indicates the four *varṇas*.

The qualities of four *varṇas* are as follows: *brāhmaṇas* possess a predominance of *sattva-guṇa*, and their activity (*karma*) is to control the mind and senses. *Kṣatriyas* are predominated by *sattva-guṇa* mixed with *rajas*, and their *karma* is to be chivalrous and to engage in warfare. *Vaiśyas* are predominated by *rajo-guṇa* mixed with *tamas*, and their *karma* is farming

and protecting cows, etc. Śūdras are predominated by *tamo-guṇa*, and their *karma* is to perform menial service.

“I have created the four *varṇas*, *guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśah*, according to divisions based on *guṇa* (quality) and *karma* (work) which is supported by *karma-mārga* (the path of fruitive work). Although I am the doer and the creator of this system, you should know that I am not the doer or the creator, for I am not directly concerned with this system. Material nature (*prakṛti*) is My potency, but I am transcendental to the modes of material nature. Hence, although I am the creator, I am also not the creator, because I am free from the false ego of being the doer. It is My *prakṛti* which, as the material cause, is the direct agent concerned with establishing this system. I am therefore immutable. In other words, I remain unchanged, unbound and unconcerned with the introduction of the *varṇa* system.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrī Bhagavān alone is the creator and direct initiator (*karttā*) of the whole universe. According to this *siddhānta*, He alone is the creator(*karttā*) of *varṇa* and the fourfold system of *varṇa-dharma*. By His constitutional nature, the *jīva* is *nitya-kṛṣṇa-dāsa*. Bhagavān has bestowed upon him an invaluable treasure in the form of free will. When the *jīva* misuses his independence by deciding not to serve Kṛṣṇa, Bhagavān’s *māyā* immediately covers his *svarūpa* with gross and subtle bodies, and throws him into the cycle of *samsāra*. To deliver such *jīvas*, Śrī Bhagavān, being causelessly merciful, creates the path of *karma-mārga* (*varṇāśrama-dharma*) through the agency of His *māyā-śakti*. At the same time, He is eternally engaged in enjoying with His *cit-śakti*, and so remains *avyaya* (unchangeable) and *akarttā* (the non-doer).

For further details about the four *varṇas*, one should read *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.41-4) and *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* (7.11.21-4), (11.17.16-19).

ŚLOKA 14

न मां कर्माणि लिप्यन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।
इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिन्नं स बध्यते ॥१४॥

*na mām karmāṇi limpanti / na me karma-phale spṛhā
iti mām yo 'bhijānāti / karmabhir na sa badhyate*

karmāṇi—actions; *na limpanti*—do not bind; *mām*—Me; *me*—for Me; (*there is*) *na*—no; *spṛhā*—hankering; *karma-phale*—for the results of action; *sah*—he; *yāḥ*—who; *abhijānāti*—thoroughly understands; *mām*—Me; *iti*—in this way; *na badhyate*—is not bound; *karmabhiḥ*—by actions.

Karma can never bind Me, because I have no desire for its fruits. Those who know this truth about Me are also never bound by their activities.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Even if the arguments from the previous *śloka* are accepted, Arjuna may still say to Bhagavān, “But now You have appeared in a *kṣatriya* dynasty and every day You perform the activities of a *kṣatriya*, so how can I accept You as *akarttā*, the non-doer?” In answer to this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *na mām*. “This *karma* does not bind Me as it does the *jīvas*. Although the *jīva* desires the fruits of his *karma* in the form of residence in Svarga and so on, I have no such desire. As Parameśvara, I am complete in My own bliss; yet simply to set an example, I perform work. Those who do not know Me as such become bound by *karma*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Bhagavān is *pūrṇa-tattva* (the complete Absolute Reality) composed of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. The *jīva* is an atomic, conscious reality (*anu-cit*). Bhagavān is replete with six types of opulence, but the *jīva* who is averse to the *sevā* of

Bhagavān is bereft of opulence. Bhagavān is the master of *māyā*, while the *jīva* is subject to *māyā*'s control. These are the differences between the two. The *jīva* can never, under any circumstance, become *brahma* or Bhagavān. However, when the *jīva* performs *bhagavad-bhakti*, knowing that Śrī Bhagavān is all-powerful, independent, imperishable and desireless, he becomes freed from the bondage of *karma*, and attains the service of Bhagavān in his *svarūpa*. This is the *jīva*'s eternal position (*nitya-dharma*).

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "The path of *karma* which is created due to *adṛṣṭa* (the *jīva*'s previous abuse of free will) does not affect Me. Nor do I desire to enjoy the petty fruits of *karma* because I, Bhagavān, am full in six opulences. Those who keep in mind My absolute free nature by understanding My *avyaya-tattva* (imperishable nature) and by deliberating on the path of *karma* (*varṇāśrama* system), are, like Me, never bound by *karma*. By performing *śuddha-bhakti*, they attain only Me."

ŚLOKA 15

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।
कुरु कर्मेव तस्मात् त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥१५॥

evam jñātvā kṛtam karma / pūrvair api mumukṣubhiḥ
kuru karmaiva tasmāt tvam / pūrvaiḥ pūrvataram kṛtam

evam—thus; *jñātvā*—knowing; *api*—even; *pūrvaiḥ*—the ancients; *mumukṣubhiḥ*—who desired liberation; *kṛtam*—performed; *karma*—work; *eva*—certainly; *tasmāt*—therefore; *tvam*—you; *kuru*—must perform; *karma*—the action; *kṛtam*—performed; *pūrvataram*—previously; *pūrvaiḥ*—by those ancients.

Even the *mumukṣus* (seekers of liberation) in ancient times, who understood My *tattva* in this way, performed their prescribed duties simply to set the standard for

common men. Therefore, you should also perform your *karma*, following the example of these predecessor authorities.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Previous authorities such as Janaka, knowing Me in this way, have also performed *karma* to set an ideal for humanity.”

ŚLOKA 16

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।
तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ञात्वा मोक्षसेऽशुभात् ॥१६॥

*kim karma kim akarmeti / kavayo 'py atra mohitāḥ
tat te karma pravakṣyāmi / yaj jñātvā mokṣyase 'śubhāt*

api—even; *kavayah*—the wise; *mohitāḥ*—are confused; *atra*—on this point; *iti*—that is to say; *kim*—what?; (is) *karma*—action; (is) *kim*—what?; *akarma*—inaction; *pravakṣyāmi*—I shall explain; *tat*—that; *karma*—action; *te*—to you; *jñātvā*—having understood; *yat*—which; *mokṣyase*—you shall be freed; *aśubhāt*—from inauspiciousness.

Even men of discrimination become bewildered in their efforts to determine what is *karma* and what is *akarma*. I shall therefore explain *karma-tattva* to you, knowing which you will become liberated from the bondage of *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Even the wise should not perform *karma* simply by imitating the previous *ācāryas*. Rather, they should act only when they have understood the specific nature of *karma* (action). For this reason, the difficult topic of *karma-tattva* is being explained.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

In Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary, the word *gatānugatika-nyāya* means working by imitating the actions of others without trying to deeply understand the subject matter concerning the purpose of the action.

ŚLOKA 17

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यञ्च विकर्मणः ।
अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥१७॥

*karmaṇo hy api boddhavyam / boddhavyañ ca vikarmaṇah
akarmaṇaś ca boddhavyam / gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ*

hi—certainly; (the principle) *karmaṇah*—of action; *boddhavyam*—should be understood; *api*—also; (the principle) *vikarmaṇah*—of prohibited action; *boddhavyam*—should be understood; (the principle) *akarmaṇah*—of inaction; *ca*—and; *boddhavyam*—should be understood; *ca*—and; *gatiḥ*—the principle; *karmaṇah*—of action; (is) *gahanā*—profound.

Karma, *vikarma* and *akarma* should be distinctly understood, for the principle of *karma* is profound.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Vikarma, forbidden action, leads to a miserable destination. This is the principle. *Akarma* means not to perform one's prescribed action (*karma*). Why is it auspicious for *sannyāsīs* to refrain from *karma*? In other words, how will they attain the highest welfare without performing action? The *tattva* of *karma* is extremely deep and difficult to understand. The word *karma* indicates all three aspects: *karma*, *akarma* and *vikarma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

It is difficult to understand the *tattva* of *karma*. Only the *karma* prescribed in *śāstra* is the cause of *mokṣa*. *Vikarma*,

forbidden action which is contrary to prescribed *karma*, leads the *jīvas* to a miserable destination. Not performing the *karma* prescribed in *sāstra* is called *akarma* (inaction). There are three levels of *akarma*:

1. The ignorant do not perform the *karma* which is prescribed in the *Vedas*, due to laziness.
2. Those who know the result of *karma* to be perishable and miserable become resentful. Being disgusted with *karma*, they act for *mokṣa*.
3. After hearing *hari-kathā*, some persons abandon prescribed *karma* and cultivate *bhakti*.

tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta / na nirvidyeta yāvata
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā / śraddhā yāvan na jāyate
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.9)

In this current *śloka* of *Gitā*, the word *karmaṇo* in the phrase *gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ* implies all three aspects: *karma*, *akarma* and *vikarma*.

ŚLOKA 18

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।
स बुद्धिमान् मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्वा कर्मकृत् ॥१८॥

karmaṇy akarma yaḥ paśyed / akarmaṇi ca karma yaḥ
sa buddhimān manusyeṣu / sa yuktaḥ kṛtsna-karma-kṛt

sah—that; *buddhimān*—intelligent person; *manuṣyeṣu*—among mankind; *yaḥ*—who; *paśyet*—can see; *akarma*—inaction; *karmaṇy*—within action; *ca*—and; *yaḥ*—who (sees); *karma*—action; *akarmaṇi*—within inaction; (is) *yuktah*—transcendentally situated; (although) *kṛt*—the performer; *kṛtsna-karma*—of all activities.

One who sees action in non-action and non-action in action is truly wise among men and transcenden-

tally situated, even though he performs all sorts of actions.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Of the three types of *karma*, the *tattva* of *karma* and *akarma* is explained in this *śloka* beginning with the word *karmaṇi*. Personalities such as Janaka Mahārāja, who were pure in heart, did not take *sannyāsa* although they were endowed with *jñāna*. Instead, they performed *akarma* by following *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Those who can see that such actions are not *karma* are themselves not bound by *karma*. A *karma-sannyāsī* whose heart is impure, who lacks *tattva-jñāna*, and who possesses mere intellectual knowledge of *śāstra*, can only deliver exalted speeches. But, those who can see *karma* in the *akarma* of such *sannyāsīs*, and who realise that bondage to *karma* leads only to a miserable destination, are actually wise.

The pure-hearted person mentioned above performs all types of *karma* but does not accept *karma-sannyāsa*. On the other hand, there are so-called *karma-sannyāsīs* who consider themselves to be knowledgeable, but who are actually proud and garrulous. They do not seek higher association or follow instructions, and they only praise themselves. Those impure-hearted persons suffer miserably.

Śrī Bhagavān has also said:

yas tv asamyata-ṣaḍ-vargaḥ / pracaṇḍendriya-sārathiḥ
jñāna-vairāgya-rahitas / tri-danḍam upajīvati
surān ātmānam ātma-sthaṇ / nihnuṭe māṁ ca dharma-hā
avipakva-kaṣāyo 'smād / amuṣmāc ca vihiyate
Śrimad Bhāgavatam (11.18.40-1)

Sometimes, a person who is bereft of *jñāna* and *vairāgya* makes a show of accepting *tridaṇḍa*, the symbol of *sannyāsa*, to maintain his life. This is condemned if his intelligence, which should direct the senses, is instead controlled by the fiercely strong senses and by the six invincible enemies (lust, anger, greed, illusion, pride

and envy). Such a person is the killer of his own soul. Completely immersed in endless material desires, he denies the worshipable *devas*, his own self and even Me, who am situated within his heart. Thus he is ruined both in this world and in the next.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

All *karma* performed by a *niṣkāma-karma-yogī* is *akarma* (inaction) in the form of *karma-sannyāsa*. Renunciation of the fruits of action (*karma-tyāga*) constitutes his performance of *niṣkāma-karma*. Although *niṣkāma-karma-yogīs* perform all types of actions, they are not considered to be *karmīs* (fruitive workers). For them *karma* and *akarma* are the same. On the other hand, so-called *jñānīs* who have artificially renounced their prescribed duties (*karma-sannyāsa*), but whose conduct is poor (*durācāri*) due to their impure hearts, who are proud, and who praise themselves, suffer miserable consequences.

ŚLOKA 19

**यस्य सर्वे समारम्भः कामसङ्कल्पवर्जिताः ।
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्मणं तमाहः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥१९॥**

yasya sarve samārambhāḥ / kāma-saṅkalpa-varjitāḥ
jñānāgnī-dagdha-karmāṇam / tam āhuḥ paṇḍitam budhāḥ

(he) yasya—whose; sarve—every; samārambhāḥ—endeavour; (is) varjitāḥ—devoid; kāma-saṅkalpa—of selfish desire; (his) karmāṇam—action; dagdha—is burned up; jñāna-agni—by the fire of knowledge; budhāḥ—the wise; āhuḥ—call; tam—him; paṇḍitam—a learned person.

He whose every action is free from hankering for pleasure, having burnt all fruitive desires in the fire of pure knowledge, is called a *paṇḍita* by the wise.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The subject of *karma* is now being explained in detail in five *ślokas* (*Gītā* 4.19-24), the first beginning with the word *yasya*. *Kāma-saṅkalpa-varjitāḥ* means devoid of the desire for the fruits of action, and *samārambhāḥ* refers to all actions which are properly instigated. *Jñānāgni-dagdha-karmāṇam* indicates those in whom the reactions to previous *karma* or *vikarma*, have all been burnt by the fire of *jñāna*. The fate of those who perform *vikarma*, as described in *Gītā* 4.17, should be understood in this way. Just as for a wise person, who was described in the previous *śloka*, it is proper to see his *karma* as *akarma*, similarly it is also proper to see his *vikarma* as *akarma*. This is in *saṅgati* (harmony) with the previous *śloka* and will be explained in later *ślokas* (*Gītā* 4.36-7).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Those who perform prescribed duties, and at the same time become free from fruitive desires, burn up all the results of their prescribed *karma*, as well as their *vikarma* in *jñānāgni*, the fire of transcendental knowledge, which results from their performance of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Such *mahātmās* are called *jñānāgni-dagdha-karmā*, those who have burnt all their *karma* in the fire of transcendental knowledge.

ŚLOKA 20

**त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।
कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः ॥ २० ॥**

tyaktvā karma-phalāsaṅgam / nitya-tṛptō nirāśrayah
karmany abhipravṛtto ‘pi / naiva kiñcit karoti saḥ

tyaktvā—having given up; *asaṅgam*—attachment; *karma-phala*—to the fruits of action; *nitya-tṛptaḥ*—he is always blissful; *nirāśrayah*—and without dependence; *eva*—certainly; *sah na karoti*—he does not do; *kiñcit*—anything; *api*—although;

abhipravṛttah—engaged; *karmaṇi*—in work.

One who has renounced attachment to the fruits of *karma*, who is always blissful within, and who is not dependent on anyone for his maintenance does not act, though fully engaged in all types of *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Nitya-trptaḥ means that internally such a person remains blissfully content. *Nirāśrayaḥ* means not depending on anyone for one's maintenance (*yoga-kṣema*).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The word *yoga*, cited in the Sārārtha-Varşinī, means to attain or to acquire that which one lacks. The word *kṣema* means to protect what one possesses.

ŚLOKA 21

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।
शारीरं केवलं कर्म कृवन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥२१॥

*nirāśir yata-cittātmā / tyakta-sarva-parigrahaḥ
śārīram kevalam karma / kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣam*

ātmā—the soul; *citta*—whose mind; *yata*—is controlled; *nirāśih*—who does not hanker; *tyakta*—who has abandoned; *sarva-parigrahaḥ*—all ingredients for sense pleasure; *karma*—his work; (is) *kevalam*—solely; *śārīram*—for bodily maintenance; *kurvan*—so doing; (he) *na āpnoti*—does not acquire; *kilbiṣam*—sinful reaction.

One who can control his mind and senses, who is devoid of fruitive desires, who has given up all variety of sense pleasure, and who performs *karma* only for bodily maintenance, does not become affected by sinful reactions resulting from his *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here the word *ātmā* refers to the gross body. *Śārīram* refers to performing actions such as accepting donations from dishonest persons to maintain the body (*asat-pratigraha*). Such people do not incur sin even if they act like this. This further describes the phrase of *Gītā* (4.17), *vikarmaṇah boddhavyam*. “One should understand the *tattva* of *vikarma*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Nirāśih means those who are devoid of fruitive desires. Although such people may accept charity from dishonest persons to maintain the body, still they do not incur sin; nor do they incur piety by accepting charity through the proper means. This is because they control the mind and gross body, and are free from any effort to accumulate objects meant for sense enjoyment.

ŚLOKA 22

यदृच्छालाभसन्तुष्टो द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः ।
समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वापि न निबध्यते ॥२२॥

*yadṛcchā-lābha-santuṣṭo / dvandvātīto vimatsaraḥ
samah siddhāv asiddhau ca / kṛtvāpi na nibadhyate*

(he is) *santuṣṭah*—satisfied; *lābha*—with gain; *yad-rcchā*—which comes (of its own accord); (and) *atītaḥ*—has left behind; *dvandva*—tolerating duality such as heat and cold; (he is) *vimatsarah*—free from envy; *samah*—equipoised; *siddhau*—in success; *ca*—and; *asiddhau*—failure; *api*—although; *kṛtvā*—acting; *na nibadhyate*—he is not bound.

He who is satisfied with objects that come of their own accord, and who tolerates dualities such as heat and cold or happiness and distress, is free from envy and remains equipoised in success and failure. Although

he performs *karma*, he does not become bound.

ŚLOKA 23

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।
यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥२३॥

*gata-saṅgasya muktasya / jñānāvasthita-cetasaḥ
yajñāyācarataḥ karma / samagram pravilīyate*

(he who) *gata-saṅgasya*—has given up attachment (for external things); *muktasya*—is liberated; *cetasaḥ*—whose consciousness; (is) *avasthita*—situated; *jñāna*—in knowledge; *ācarataḥ*—by performing action; *yajñāya*—for the sake of Viṣṇu; *karma pravilīyate*—his fruitive action vanishes; *samagram*—completely.

One who is devoid of material attachments, and whose mind is situated in true knowledge, is liberated. All the fruitive action of such a person, who performs his every action for the worship of Parameśvara, is completely dissolved. Thus he attains the state of *akarma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The characteristics of *yajña* will be explained later. Karma performed for the sake of *yajña* is dissolved, and this results in a state of *akarma* (inaction).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Karma (work) performed for the pleasure of Śrī Bhagavān (*yajñārtha*) never becomes a cause of bondage to the material world. Such action for the pleasure of Bhagavān is described here as *akarma-bhāva*, the state of inaction.

Mere performance of dharmika activities (*karma* as prescribed in the Vedas) does not in itself lead to the higher

planets, nor do sinful activities in the form of *vikarma* (actions forbidden in the Vedas) lead to the lower planets. Knowers of *karma* who accept the principle of *pūrvamīmāṃsa*, claim that actions produce an unseen subtle potency called *apūrva*, which causes the *karma* to give its results life after life. Their conception that this fruit can be later shared by others is meant to establish the eternality of *karma*. This consideration, however, does not apply to a *niṣkāma-karma-yogī*.

SLOKA 24

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्मविर्भाग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्म कर्म समाधिना ॥२४॥

*brahmārpaṇam brahma havir / brahmāgnau brahmaṇā hutam
brahmaiva tena gantavyam / brahma-karma-samādhinā*

brahma—the spiritual reality; *eva gantavyam*—is certainly achieved; *tena brahmaṇā*—by that *brahmaṇa*; *samādhinā*—who is absorbed; *brahma-karma*—spiritual action; *arpaṇam*—his sacrificial spoons and other paraphernalia; *brahma*—are spiritualised; *havih*—his ghee and other ingredients for offering; *brahma*—are spiritualised; (and) *hutam*—his offering of foods; *āgnau*—into the fire; *brahma*—are spiritualised.

Brahma can be attained by one who performs *yajña* in which the sacrificial instruments, the ghee, the fire, the offerings and the priest (agent) are all *brahma*. Such a person is qualified to attain *brahma* because he is fully absorbed in *karma* which is of the same nature as *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The previous *śloka* states that one should perform *karma* for *yajña*. What is the nature of *yajña*? In anticipation of this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the

word *brahmārpaṇam*. *Arpanam* refers to the instrument with which the offering is made. The ladle used in the sacrifice and other such instruments are *brahma*. *Haviḥ* (the ghee, etc.) which is offered is also *brahma*. *Brahmāgnau* means the resting place of the recipient of the offering or fire, is *brahma*. The *brāhmaṇa* who performs the *yajña* is also *brahma*. Thus, *brahma* is the only desirable object for a wise man. There is no other result. If one asks why, the answer is that activity, which is identical to, or in oneness with *brahma*, leads to *samādhi*, exclusive concentration of the mind. Thus, no other fruit is obtained.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

In sacrificial acts, the specific instrument used to offer ghee in the fire is called *sruva*. The ingredients offered to the *devas* in the *yajña* are called *haviḥ*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Now, hear how work in the form of *yajña* gives rise to knowledge. I will explain various types of *yajña* later. Now, I will explain the fundamental principle behind them. Material actions are compulsory for the *jīva* bound to material consciousness. In such mundane activities, the faithful discharge of prescribed duties in which one can deliberate on *cit-tattva* (the conscious reality) is called *yajña*. When conscious reality manifests in matter, it is called *brahma*. That *brahma* is merely My bodily effulgence. *Cit-tattva* is quite distinct from the whole material universe. *Yajña* is perfect when its five constituents, namely *arpaṇam* (the instrument for offering), *haviḥ* (the ingredients), *agni* (the fire), *hotā* (the doer) and *phala* (the fruit), are the resting place of *brahma*, that is, when they are meant for the revelation of *brahma*. A person’s activity is known as *brahma-yajña* when he seeks revelation of *brahma* in his *karma* with concentrated meditation. The instruments of offering, the ingredients, the fire, the doer (that is, his own

existence) and the fruits are all *brahma*. Thus their ultimate destination is also *brahma*."

ŚLOKA 25

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते ।
ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति ॥२५॥

*daivam evāpare yajñam / yoginah paryupāsate
brahmāgnāv apare yajñam / yajñenaivopajuhvati*

eva—indeed; *apare*—other; *yoginah*—*karma-yogīs*; *paryupāsate*—worship; *daivam*—the *devas*; (through) *yajñam*—sacrifice; *eva*—indeed; *apare*—others (*jñāna-yogīs*); *upajuhvati*—offer; *yajñam*—sacrifice; *yajñena*—through sacrifice; *brahmāgnau*—in the fire of the Absolute Truth.

Some *karma-yogīs* perfectly perform *deva-yajña* in the form of worship of the *devātas*, while *jñāna-yogīs* offer all their activities as oblations in the *yajña* of *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is saying, "There are various types of *yajña* according to the varieties of desired goals. Now hear of them all." Śrī Bhagavān speaks eight ślokas beginning with the present one, *daivam eva*, to explain these different types of *yajña*. *Yajña* in which the worship of *devas* such as Indra and Varuna is performed is called *daivam*. The performers of such *yajña* do not consider *devas* like Indra and others to be *brahma*. This is being explained here. According to the *sūtra: sāsyā-devatetyaṇa*, the *devas* are the only worshipable deities for those performers of the *deva-yajña*; *brahma* is not mentioned here. In this śloka, *yoginah* means *karma-yogīs*, while *apare* implies *jñāna-yogīs*. *Brahmāgnau* means that *brahma* or *Paramātmā* is the sacrificial fire. In that sacrificial fire or *tat-padārtha* (the Absolute Truth) the *yajñam* (*haviḥ*, oblation) in the form of

tvam-padārtha (the *jīva*) is the *yajñena*, which is offered by chanting the *prāṇava-mantra*, *om̄*. This very *jñāna-yajña* will be glorified later. Here, the words *yajñam* and *yajñena* have been used for the object which is offered (such as ghee) and the instrument of the offering (the ladle) respectively. In other words, it is understood that the *śuddha-jīva* and *prāṇava* are indicated by a superior understanding of *yajña* and *yajñena*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura expresses Kṛṣṇa's mood as follows, "Those who take the vow to perform *yajña* are called *yogīs*. There are various types of *yajña* according to the different aptitudes of the *yogīs*. In fact, there are as many varieties of *yajñas* as there are types of *yogī*. All *yajñas* can be divided into two general divisions based on *vijñāna*, scientific understanding: 1) *karma-yajña*, consisting of sacrificial offerings and 2) *jñāna-yajña*, sacrifice in the form of deliberation on *cit-tattva*. This will be explained further on. Now, please hear as I explain some varieties of *yajñas*. The *karma-yogīs* perform their worship through *deva-yajña*, the worship of My authorised representatives such as Indra and Varuṇa who, by My external potency, are gifted with specific powers. By such worship, these *karma-yogīs* gradually attain the stage of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. The *yajña* of the *jñāna-yogīs* consists of offering themselves (*tvam-padārtha*) as the ghee in the fire of *brahma* (*tat-padārtha*) by reciting the *prāṇava-mantra*, *om̄*, or having taken shelter of the *mahā-vākyā* (great axium), *tat-tvam asi* (you are His servant). The superiority of this *jñāna-yajña* will be explained later on."

ŚLOKA 26

शोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुहति ।
शब्दादीन् विषयानन्य इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुहति ॥२६॥

śrotrādīnīndriyāṇy anye / saṁyamāgniṣu juhvati
śabdādīn viṣayān anya / indriyāgniṣu juhvati

anye—others; *juhvati*—offer; *īndriyāni*—the senses; *śrotra-*
ādūni—beginning with the ear; *agniṣu*—into the fire; *saṁ-*
yama—of the controlled mind; *anye*—others; *juhvati*—offer;
viṣayān—the sense objects; *śabda-ādīn*—beginning with sound;
indriya-agniṣu—into the fire of the senses.

The *naiṣṭhika-brahmacārīs* offer their hearing and other senses into the fire of the controlled mind, while the *grhaṣṭhas* offer sense objects, such as sound, into the fire of the senses.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

The resolute *brahmacārīs* offer *īndriyāṇi*, the hearing and other sense processes, into the fire of the controlled mind. In this way, they completely dissolve the senses into the pure mind. The irresolute *brahmacārīs* (*grhaṣṭhas*) offer the objects of the senses, such as sound, into the fire of the senses.

ŚLOKA 27

सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे ।
आत्मसंयमयोगान्नौ जुहति ज्ञानदीपिते ॥२७॥
sarvāṇīndriya-karmāṇi / prāṇa-karmāṇi cāpare
ātma-saṁyama-yogāgnau / juhvati jñāna-dīpite

ca—and; *apare*—others (*yogīs*); *juhvati*—offer; *karmāṇi*—the functions; *sarvāṇi*—of all; *īndriya*—the senses; (and) *prāṇa-karmāṇi*—the functions of breath; *yoga-ag्नau*—in the fire of connection; *ātma-saṁyama*—with the pure soul; *jñāna-dīpite*—which is illuminated by transcendental knowledge.

Other yogīs offer the activities of all their senses and life airs into the fire of the controlled self, which is illuminated by knowledge

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Apare means the knower of pure *tvaṁ-padārtha*, namely the pure self (the *jīva*). These yogīs offer all of their senses, the activities of the senses such as hearing and seeing, the ten types of life airs (*prāṇa*), and the actions of the life airs into the fire of the controlled self, or the fire of the purified existence of *tvaṁ-padārtha* (the *jīva*). In other words, they completely dissolve the mind, the intelligence, the senses and the ten life airs in the pure self. Their understanding is that the *pratyag-ātmā* (pure soul) is all that exists, and that the mind and so on do not have any real existence.

The ten types of life airs and their actions are as follows:

NAME	ACTION
<i>prāṇa</i>	out-going
<i>apāna</i>	in-coming
<i>samāna</i>	to adjust the equilibrium of all objects eaten or drunk
<i>udāna</i>	to take up
<i>vyāna</i>	to move everywhere
<i>nāga</i>	to belch
<i>kūrma</i>	to open the eyes
<i>kṛkara</i>	to cough
<i>devadatta</i>	to yawn
<i>dhanañjaya</i>	to remain in the body even after death.

SLOKA 28

द्रव्यज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथापरे ।
स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥२८॥

*dravya-yajñās tapo-yajñā / yoga-yajñās tathāpare
svādhyāya-jñāna-yajñāś ca / yatayah samśita-vratāḥ*

apare—others; *dravya-yajñāḥ*—sacrifice of possessions; *tapo-yajñāḥ*—sacrifice of austerities; *yoga-yajñāḥ*—sacrifice of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*; *tathā*—and; *svādhyāya-jñāna-yajñāḥ*—sacrifice of study of transcendental knowledge from the Vedas; *ca*—and; *yatayah*—these ascetics; *saṁśita-vratāḥ*—follow strict vows.

Some perform *dravya-yajña* by giving their possessions in charity, some perform *tapo-yajña* by performing austerities, and some perform *yoga-yajña* by practising the *yoga* of eightfold mysticism. Others perform *svadhyāya-yajña* by studying the Vedas and acquiring transcendental knowledge. All who make such endeavours follow strict vows.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Those who perform *yajña* by offering their material possessions in charity are called *dravya-yajñāḥ*. Those who perform *yajña* with austerity such as the *kṛcchra-candrāyaṇa vrata* are called *tapo-yajñāḥ*. Those who perform *yajña* by *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* are called *yoga-yajñāḥ*, and those whose *yajña* is only to study the Vedas in order to acquire knowledge are called *svādhyāya-jñāna-yajñāḥ*. All those who make such endeavours are described as *saṁśita-vratāḥ* (performers of strict vows).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ VRTTI

Here Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is describing various types of *yajña*. *Karma-yogīs* give food, cloth and so on in charity, which is their *dravya-yajña*. They perform welfare activities that are described in *smṛti-śāstra*, such as digging wells and ponds, establishing temples, giving food in charity and making parks and gardens. There are others who perform activities such as protecting their dependents and taking a vow of non-vio-

lence towards all *jīvas*. Their activity is called *datta-karma*, charitable acts. There are others who perform *yajña* for the purpose of pleasing the *devas*. Such activity is called *iṣṭa-yajña*. Some perform painfully austere *vratas* (vows), such as *candrāyaṇa*, which are explained in *Manu-saṃhitā*:

Kṛcchra-vrata:

*ekaikam grāsam aśnīyāt try-ahāni trīṇi pūrvava
try-ahañ copavased antyam atikṛcchram caran dvijaḥ*
Manu-saṃhitā 11.214

For the first three days a person eats one mouthful of food during the day. For the next three days he eats one mouthful daily in the evening, and for the following three days he takes one morsel of food a day without begging. For the last three days he fasts completely. This austere vow is called *kṛcchra-vrata*.

Candrāyaṇa-vrata:

*ekaikam hy asyet piṇḍam kṛṣṇe śukle ca varddhayet
upasṛṣṭamś tri-śavaṇam etac cāndrāyaṇam smṛtam*
Manu-saṃhitā 11.217

On the full moon day, a person should take only fifteen mouthfuls of food per day and take morning, midday and evening bath. From the first day of the lunar month onwards, he should reduce his food by one mouthful each day, and on the fourteenth day he should eat only one mouthful. He has to fast completely on the dark moon day. From the first day of the bright fortnight onwards, he increases his meal by one mouthful each day, eating fifteen mouthfuls on the full moon day. This is called *candrāyaṇa-vrata*.

There are others who perform *yajña* by devoting themselves to *yoga*. Their *yajña* is to perform *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* while residing in a pious place or holy place. Patañjali has said: *Yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodha*. “*Yoga* means to control the various activities of the mind.” The eight limbs of *yoga* are *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*,

pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna and *samādhi*, the performance of which is called *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*. Other *karma-yogīs* call the study of the *Vedas jñāna-yajña*, and they only perform this *yajña*.

ŚLOKA 29

अपाने जुहति प्राणं प्राणेऽपानं तथापरे ।
प्राणापानगती रुद्धवा प्राणायामपरायणः ।
अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान् प्राणेषु जुहति ॥२९॥

apāne juhvati prāṇam / prāṇe 'pānam tathāpare
prāṇāpāna-gatī ruddhvā / prāṇāyāma-parāyaṇāḥ
apare niyatāhārāḥ / prāṇān prāṇeṣu juhvati

apare—others; *juhvati*—offer; *prāṇam*—the out-going breath; *apāne*—into the in-coming; *tathā*—and; *apānam*—the in-coming breath; *prāṇe*—into the out-going; *ruddhvā*—blocking; *prāṇa-apāna-gatī*—the movement of these two airs; *prāṇāyāma-parāyaṇāḥ*—they become absorbed in a trance of breath-control; *apare*—others; *niyatāhārāḥ*—restraining eating; *juhvati*—offer; *prāṇān*—their out-going breaths; *prāṇeṣu*—into the out-going breaths themselves.

Others, who are devoted to *prāṇāyāma* (controlling the life force), offer *prāṇa* (the out-going breath) into *apāna* (the in-coming breath) and vice versa. By gradually stopping both *prāṇa* and *apāna*, they become fixed in *prāṇāyāma*. Others, while checking the eating process, offer their *prāṇa* into the fire of *prāṇa* (life) itself.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Some *yogīs*, who are devoted to the control of their life airs, sacrifice *prāṇa* into *apāna*. This means that at the time of *pūraka* (inhalation) they combine the *prāṇa* and *apāna*. Similarly, during the time of *recaka* (exhalation), they offer *apāna* into *prāṇa*, and at the time of *kumbhaka* (holding the

breath) they stop the movement of both *prāṇa* and *apāna* and become fixed in *prāṇāyāma*.

Others, who want to control the senses, sacrifice their senses into *prāṇa*, the life airs, by moderating their food intake. The senses are under the control of *prāṇa*. When the life air becomes weak, naturally the senses also become weak and unable to enjoy their sense objects. In this way, they offer the disabled senses into their life airs, living only on their life airs (*prāṇa*).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Aṣṭāṅga-yoga (the eightfold path of yoga) is being explained in more detail. Yogis sacrifice *prāṇa* into *apāna* through *pūraka* (inhalation). In other words, at the time of *pūraka*, they combine the *prāṇa* and *apāna*. Similarly, while exhaling (*recaka*), they offer *apāna* into *prāṇa* and at the time of *kumbhaka* (holding the breath), they stop the movements of both *prāṇa* and *apāna*.

The word *prāṇāyāma* has two components. *Prāṇa* means a special type of air and *āyāma* means expansion. Here, expansion means to control the *prāṇa* from the tip of the toenails to the hair on top of the head. In *Garuḍa Purāṇa* it is said: *prāṇāyāmo maruj-jayah*. “To control the *prāṇa* air is called *prāṇāyāma*.” Therefore, *prāṇāyāma* means expanding *prāṇa* for the purpose of controlling the activities of the senses.

Similarly, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.15.1) explains, “When a person controls his senses and his breathing process, and fully absorbs his mind in Me, all the *siddhis* naturally come under his control.” For more information on this subject, readers should study *Prema-Pradīpa* by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura.

The *smṛti-śāstra* describes *yajña* such as *dravya-yajña*, *tapo-yajña*, *yoga-yajña* and *svādhyāya-jñāna-yajña*, while the *tantra-śāstra* describes *hatha-yoga* and various other types of vows for controlling the senses. However, the best type of

yajña in this Kali-yuga, when people have short life spans and very little intelligence, is the natural and easily-perfected *saṅkīrtana-yajña*. Not only every human but every living entity has the right to perform *saṅkīrtana-yajña*:

*harer nāma, harer nāma, harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva, nāsty eva, nāsty eva, gatir anyathā
Brhad-Nāradīya Purāṇa*

This is also explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.32):

*kṛṣṇa-varṇam tvīśākṛṣṇam / sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair / yajanti hi su-medhasāḥ*

By performing the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, intelligent persons worship that Personality in whose mouth the two syllables ‘*Kṛ*’ and ‘*ṣṇa*’ are dancing, whose bodily colour is like brilliant gold, and who is surrounded by His associates, servitors, weapons and confidential companions.

ŚLOKA 30

**सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षयितकल्मषाः ।
यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥३०॥**

*sarve 'py ete yajña-vido / yajña-ksapita-kalmaśāḥ
yajña-śiṣṭāmṛta-bhujo / yānti brahma sanātanam*

api—also; *sarve*—all; *ete*—those; *yajña-vidah*—who are conver-sant with the principle of *yajña*; (*become*) *ksapita*—cleansed; *kalmaśāḥ*—of sins; (*through*) *yajña*—sacrifice; *amṛta-bhujaḥ*—they enjoy the immortal; *yajña-śiṣṭa*—remnants of *yajña*; (*and*) *yānti*—they attain; *sanātanam*—eternal; *brahma*—spirit.

All those who know the principle of *yajña* become free from sin by performing that *yajña*. Having tasted *amṛta*, the remnants of *yajña*, they eventually attain the eternal *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

All who know the principles of *yajña*, and who perform *yajñas* as described above, gradually advance in *jñāna*, by which they can attain *brahma*. Here, the secondary result of such *yajña* is explained; they also taste the nectarean remnants of *yajña*, such as mundane enjoyment, opulence and mystic perfections. Similarly, the primary fruit is described as *brahma* *yānti*, the attainment of *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The primary fruit of *yajña* is the attainment of *brahma*, and the secondary fruit is to achieve mundane or worldly enjoyment and mystic perfections, such as *aṇimā siddhi* (becoming atomic in size).

ŚLOKA 31

नायं लोकोऽस्त्वयज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम ॥३१॥

*nāyam loko 'sty ayajñasya / kuto 'nyah kuru-sattama
kuru-sattama—O best of the Kurus; ayajñasya—for one who does not perform *yajña*; (the benefits of) *ayam lokah*—this world; na asti—are not (available); *kutah*—what then?; *anyah*—of the other world.*

O best of the Kurus! A person who does not perform *yajña* cannot even attain this earthly planet with its meagre happiness. How then, can he attain the planets of the *devas* and others?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

By not performing *yajña*, fault (sin) is incurred. To explain this, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *nāyam*. If one cannot even attain the earth planet, which

provides very little happiness, how can one attain the higher planets such as those of the *devas*?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ VRITTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura expresses Kṛṣṇa's mood as follows, "Therefore, Arjuna, O best of the Kurus, one who does not perform *yajñā* cannot even attain this world, what to speak of the next. Therefore, *yajñā* is certainly an obligatory duty. From this you should understand that *smārtavarṇāśrama* (the caste-rules enjoined in the *smṛtis*), *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, Vedic sacrifices and so on are all part of *yajñā*. Even *brahma-jñāna* is a special type of *yajñā*. There is no *karma* (prescribed duty) in this world other than *yajñā*. Everything else is *vikarma*."

ŚLOKA 32

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।
कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानेवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥३२॥

evam bahu-vidhā yajñā / vitatā brahmaṇo mukhe
karma-jān viddhi tān sarvān / evam jñātvā vimokṣyase

evam—thus; *bahu-vidhāḥ*—many kinds; *yajñāḥ*—of sacrifices; *vitatāḥ*—are diffused; *mukhe*—from the mouth; *brahmaṇāḥ*—of the Vedas; *viddhi*—you should know; *tān*—them; *sarvān*—all; (to be) *karma-jān*—born from action; *evam*—thus; *jñātvā*—knowing; *vimokṣyase*—you shall be liberated.

The various types of *yajñā* are elaborately explained in the *Vedas*. Knowing all of them to be born of *karma* you will attain *mokṣa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Brahmaṇāḥ means of the *Vedas* and *mukhena* means from the mouth. *Vedena* means 'clearly spoken from My own

mouth'. *Karma-jān* means 'born of the action of speech, mind and body'.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *yajñas* described in the *Vedas* are performed by the activities of the body, mind and speech; therefore, they have no relationship with the *ātma-svarūpa* (true nature of the self). The soul (*ātmā*) remains indifferent and detached from all of these processes. Attainment of this *jñāna* frees one from bondage to this material world.

ŚLOKA 33

श्रेयान् द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप ।
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थं ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥३३॥

śreyān dravyamayād yajñāj / jñāna-yajñah parantapa
sarvam karma-akhilam pārtha / jñāne parisamāpyate

parantapa—O chastiser of the foe; *śreyān*—better; *yajñat*—than the sacrifice; *dravyamayāt*—of material possessions; (is) *jñāna-yajñah*—the sacrifice of knowledge; *pārtha*—O Pārtha; *sarvam*—all; *karma-akhilam*—complete action; *parisamāpyate*—culminates; *jñāne*—in transcendental knowledge.

O Parantapa, *jñāna-yajña* is superior to *dravya-maya-yajña* (the renunciation of material possessions) because, O Pārtha, the performance of all prescribed actions culminates in transcendental knowledge.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Jñāna-yajña (as described in *Gītā* 4.25, *brahmāgnāu*), is superior to *karma-yajña* or *dravya-maya-yajña* which consists of renouncing material possessions as described in *Gītā* 4.24: *brahmārpāṇam brahma havir*. One may ask why. The answer is that the culmination of all actions bears fruit upon

attaining *jñāna*. In other words, *karma* ceases to exist after one attains *jñāna*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-Vṛtti

In his commentary on this *śloka*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Śrī Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Although all these *yajñas* gradually lead to *jñāna*, *sānti* and finally to *bhakti* unto Me, which is extremely auspicious for the *jīva*, still there is something to be considered in this regard. From the above group of *yajñas*, a person may sometimes perform either *dravya-maya-yajña* or *karma-yajña* (ceremonial rites). At other times, depending on his *niṣṭhā*, he may perform *jñāna-maya-yajña* (a sacrifice performed in knowledge). *Jñāna-maya-yajña* is far superior to *dravya-maya-yajña*, because, O Pārtha, all *karma* culminates in *jñāna*. When the performance of any *yajña* does not involve deliberation on the transcendental, then the whole activity is simply ritualistic (*dravya-maya*). However, when the goal is spiritual progress, the *karma-yajñas* lose their fruitive materialism and become transcendental. The *dravya-maya* stage of *yajña*, which consists only of material rituals, is called *karma-kāṇḍa*. One must remain very conscious of this distinction while performing *yajña*.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has also said, “Only those who perform *bhajana* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa by *saṅkīrtana-yajña* make their lives successful, and they are most intelligent. All others are foolish slayers of the self.” *Kṛṣṇa-nāma-yajña* is supreme among all types of *yajña*. Performance of millions of *aśvamedha-yajñas* cannot be equated with once chanting the name of Kṛṣṇa. Those who make such comparisons are *pāṣandī*, religious impostors, and Yamarāja punishes them in various ways. This is emphasised in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi līlā 3.77-79).

Moreover, one’s bondage to the material world is easily untied by chanting the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*, and by chant-

ing *kṛṣṇa-nāma* one attains Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *prema-mayī sevā*. Thus, in the age of Kali, all *yajñas* except the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's name, are useless, because they do not fall into the category of *svarūpa-dharma*, the eternal occupation of the soul. This is further clarified in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi-līlā 7.73-74).

ŚLOKA 34

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥३४॥

*tad viddhi pranipātena / paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānam / jñāninās tattva-darśināḥ*

viddhi—you must understand; *tat*—this knowledge; *pranipātena*—by offering prostrated obeisances to the guru who gives instructions about *jñāna*; *paripraśnena*—by relevant inquiries on every aspect; *sevayā*—by rendering devotional service; *jñānināḥ*—those in knowledge; *tattva-darśināḥ*—who have seen the Absolute Truth; *upadekṣyanti*—will reveal; *jñānam*—that knowledge; *te*—unto you.

Acquire this *jñāna* by offering prostrated obeisances to a *guru* who imparts transcendental knowledge, by asking relevant questions from him and by rendering service to him. The *tattva darsī*, who are expert in the imports of *sāstra*, and the *jñānīs*, who have realised the Absolute Reality, will enlighten you with that *jñāna*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

How can this knowledge be attained? Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with *tad-viddhi* to give this information. After offering *danḍavat-pranāmas* unto a *guru* who gives instructions in transcendental knowledge, one should inquire as follows: “Āho Bhagavān! (Gurudeva is addressed as Bhagavān here because he is āśraya Bhagavān, the supreme

receptacle of love for Bhagavān, and because the *sad-guru* has qualities of Bhagavān), Why am I in this material condition? How can I become free from it?" One must satisfy him by *sevā* and by *paricaryā*, attending to his personal needs. It is also said in the śruti:

tad-vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet
samit-pāṇih śrotriyam brahma-niṣṭham
Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 1.2.12

To acquire *jñāna* of Śrī Bhagavān, one should approach a *guru* who knows the real import of the Vedas by carrying *samidh* (the fuel wood of sublime faith) as an offering to him.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Here, Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes *bhagavat-tattva-jñāna* as extremely rare and difficult to understand. It can only be understood by the mercy of a *mahā-puruṣa* who is a *tattva-jñānī*, one who knows the Truth, and more specifically a *tattva-darśī*, one who has realised the Truth. Sincere sādhakas should inquire from such a *mahā-puruṣa* about this *tattva* and please him by offering prostrated obeisances, by asking relevant questions and by rendering service to him.

Pranipātena means to affectionately offer *pranāmas* with either eight or five limbs of the body. *Pranāma* or *namaskāra* means to give up one's false ego and bow down. Here *sevā* means to render favourable service for the pleasure of the *guru*. This śloka describes two symptoms of a *guru* who bestows transcendental knowledge; he is both a *jñānī* and a *tattva-darśī*. One who has studied *śāstra* and understood the knowledge in it is called a *jñānī*, while a *tattva-darśī* is a *mahā-puruṣa* who has direct realisation of *tattva*.

Persons possessing incomplete knowledge do not have direct realisation of *tattva* and *tat-padārtha*. The instructions of such unrealised persons are not fruitful. Only the instruc-

tions of a *mahā-puruṣa* are fruitful. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.3.21) also says: *tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ*. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments on this śloka as follows: “To know supreme auspiciousness and eternal well-being, *sādhakas* should accept the shelter of a *guru* who is expert in *śabda-brahma* (the imports of Vedic *śāstra*), who has realised *parabrahma*, and who has no material attachments. If he is not expert in or knowledgeable of *śabda-brahma*, he will not be able to dispel the doubts of his disciples and they will lose faith in him. If a *guru* has no direct realisation of *parabrahma*, his mercy does not fructify to the fullest extent, nor yield the highest result. Here the word *upasamāśraya* (11.3.21) refers to the *guru* who is endowed with realisation of *parabrahma*. This means that he does not fall under the sway of lust, anger, greed, etc. because he has no material attachments.”

This is further clarified in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.11.18):

*śabda-brahmaṇi niṣṭāto / na niṣṭāyāt pare yadi
śramas tasya śrama-phalo / hy adhenum iva rakṣataḥ*

Taking shelter of a *guru* who is expert in knowledge of *śabda-brahma*, but is bereft of *parabrahma* realisation, is like protecting a barren cow. It is useless labour and one does not achieve any transcendental result.

Bhagavad-gītā states that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Transcendental Reality. There are those who say that the word *tat* in this śloka refers to the *jīvātmā*, but such understanding is completely incorrect because it contradicts the next śloka. In *Vedānta-darśana* it is also said: *anyārthaś ca parāmarśah* (*Brahma-sūtra* 1.3.20). The word *tat* refers to *paramātmata-tattva-jñāna*.

ŚLOKA 35

यज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहेवं यास्यसि पाण्डव ।
येन भूतान्यशेषाणि द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ॥३५॥

yaj jñātvā na punar moham / evam yāsyasi pāṇḍava
yena bhūtāny aśeṣāṇi / drakṣyasya ātmany atho mayi

pāṇḍava—O son of Pāṇḍu; *jñātvā*—after understanding (that knowledge); *yat*—which (was taught by the *tattva-darśīs*); *na evam yāsyasi*—consequently you shall never enter; *punah*—again; *moham*—into illusion; *yena*—by which (knowledge); *drakṣyasya*—you shall perceive; *aśeṣāṇi*—all; *bhūtāni*—beings; *ātmāni*—within Paramātmā; *atho*—that is to say; *mayi*—in Me.

O Pāṇḍava, after acquiring such *jñāna* you will never again be deluded. By that knowledge you will see all living beings as *jīvātmās*, and you will see them in Me, Paramātmā.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In the next three and a half ślokas beginning here with the words *yaj jñātvā*, Śrī Bhagavān explains the fruit of *jñāna*. “After you have attained *jñāna*, by which one knows the ātmā to be different from the body, your mind will not become deluded again. By attaining *svābhāvika nitya-siddha-ātmajñāna* (natural and eternally perfect knowledge of the self) delusion is removed and you will see all living beings: humans, animals, birds, etc. as *jīvātmās* appearing separately due to their external covering or designations (*upādhīs*). In addition, you will see all of them in Me, *parama-kāraṇa* (the ultimate cause), situated as My effect (the *jīva-sakti*).”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura expresses Kṛṣṇa’s mood. “Now, due to delusion, you are trying to give up your *sva-dharma*

(prescribed duty) which is to participate in battle, but after attaining *tattva-jñāna* as instructed by your *guru*, you will no longer fall prey to delusion. By that *tattva-jñāna* you will be able to understand that all entities: human beings, animals, birds, etc., are situated in the same *jīva-tattva*. The various levels of gross existence have occurred due to their external bodily designations. All *jīvas* are situated in Me, *bhagavat-svarūpa*, who am the *parama-kāraṇa* (ultimate cause), as the effect of My *śakti*."

ŚLOKA 36

**अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः ।
सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं सन्तरिष्यसि ॥३६॥**

*api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ / sarvebhyaḥ pāpa-kṛttamah
sarvam jñāna-plavenaiva / vṛjinam santariṣyasi*

api—even; *cet*—if; *asi*—you are; *pāpa-kṛttamah*—the most sinful; *sarvebhyaḥ*—of all; *pāpebhyaḥ*—sinners; *eva*—certainly; *santariṣyasi*—you will cross over completely; *sarvam*—all; *vṛjinam*—sin; *jñāna-plavena*—by the boat of transcendental knowledge.

Even if you are the most sinful of sinners, you will be able to completely cross over the ocean of all sins by taking shelter of this boat of transcendental *jñāna*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now by speaking this *śloka* beginning with *api ced*, Śrī Bhagavān describes the glories of *jñāna*. The word *pāpebhyaḥ* indicates, "Even if you are the worst of sinners, this *tattva-jñāna* will liberate you from all past sins." Here, a question arises. "How is it possible that the mind will become purified when so many sins exist in it? And if the mind is not pure, how will *jñāna* manifest? There is no possibility that a person in whom *jñāna* has appeared will misbehave or commit

any sin."

Here, Śrīpāda Madhusūdana Sarasvatī explains, "The words *api ced* are spoken to indicate the possibility of the impossible, by going against the rule. Although this meaning is not possible, it has been spoken of as a promise, in order to explain the fruit (glory) of *jñāna*. In other words, the impossible has also been mentioned as a possibility."

ŚLOKA 37

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥३७॥

*yathaidhāṁsi samiddho 'gnir / bhasmasāt kurute 'rjuna
jñānāgnih sarva-karmāṇi / bhasmasāt kurute tathā*

arjuna—O Arjuna; *yathā*—as; *samiddhaḥ*—a blazing; *agni*—fire; *kurute*—turns; *edhāṁsi*—firewood; *bhasmasāt*—to ashes; *tathā*—similarly; *jñāna-agnih*—the fire of transcendental knowledge; *kurute*—turns; *sarva-karmāṇi*—all reactions of fruitive work; *bhasmasāt*—to ashes.

O Arjuna, just as a blazing fire burns firewood to ashes, in the same way, the fire of transcendental knowledge burns all *karmika* reactions to ashes.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

When *jñāna* manifests in a pure mind, it burns up all *karma* (reactions) except for *prārabdha-karma*. This is explained with an example in this śloka beginning with the word *yathā*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Jñāna destroys the reactions of all sorts of *karma* such as *nitya*, *naimittika*, *kāmya*, *vikarma* and accumulated *aprārabdha*, but not *prārabdha-karma*. This has been verified in *Vedānta-darśana*:

*tad-adhigama uttara-pūrvārghayor
asleṣa-vināśau tad-vyāpadeśat*
Brahma-sūtra 4.1.13

Even a *jñāni* has to face the results of his *prārabdha-karma*. According to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, however, a person who has taken shelter of the holy name, be it even *nāmābhāsa* (a semblance of pure chanting), not only destroys the results of all his *karma*, such as accumulated *aprārabdha* and *kūṭa*, but also the fruits of *prārabdha-karma*. What, then, is to be said about the chanting of *śuddha-nāma*? Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written in Śrī *Nāmāṣṭaka* (*śloka 4*):

*yad-brahma-sākṣāt-kṛti-niṣṭhayāpi
vināśam āyāti vinā na bhogaiḥ*

O Nāma Prabhu! Your appearance on the tongue of Your *bhaktas* burns up the results of *prārabdha-karma*, which is otherwise unavoidable, even after realizing *brahma* by unbroken meditation. This is declared adamantly and repeatedly in the *Vedas*.

ŚLOKA 38

**न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।
तत्स्वयं योगसांसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥३८॥**

*na hi jñānenā sadṛśam / pavitram iha vidyate
tat svayam yoga-saṁsiddhaḥ / kālenātmani vindati*

iha—in this world; *hi na vidyate*—there certainly does not exist; (any such) *pavitram*—purifying thing; *jñānenā-sadṛśam*—as compared to transcendental knowledge; *yoga-saṁsiddhaḥ*—one who has attained complete perfection of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; *vindati*—finds; *tat*—that (*jñāna*); *svayam*—spontaneously manifest; *ātmani*—within his heart; *kālena*—in course of time.

In this world, there is nothing more purifying than transcendental knowledge. A person who has attained complete perfection in *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, receives

such *jñāna* naturally within his heart, in due course of time.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here, it is said that *tapasyā*, *yoga* and other processes are not as purifying as *jñāna*. Not everyone can attain this transcendental *jñāna*. It is achieved, not immediately or in the immature stage, but after attaining complete perfection in *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* over a prolonged period of time. This *jñāna* reveals itself within one's self (*ātmā*). One does not receive this transcendental knowledge merely by accepting *sannyāsa*.

ŚLOKA 39

श्रद्धावान् लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥३९॥

śraddhāvān labhate *jñānam* / *tat-parah* *samyatendriyah*
jñānam labdhvā *parām* *sāntim* / *acireṇādhigacchati*

śraddhāvān—a faithful person; *samyata-indriyah*—who has controlled senses; (and) *tat-parah*—is devoted to that (*yoga* practice); *labhate*—obtains; *jñānam*—transcendental knowledge; *labdhvā*—after obtaining; *jñānam*—transcendental knowledge; *adhigacchati*—he attains; *parām*—the supreme; *sāntim*—peace; *acireṇa*—without delay.

A person who is faithful, who has conquered his senses and who is devoted to the practice of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* attains transcendental knowledge. After attaining transcendental knowledge, he quickly attains the supreme peace: relief from bondage to the material world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“How and when does one attain this *jñāna*?” Śrī Bhagavān answers this question by saying, “That *jñāna* is attained when one becomes faithful, that is, when his mind becomes

purified by the performance of *niṣkāma-karma* and when he is endowed with proper intelligence, having an inclination towards the instructions of *śāstra*. *Tat-parah* means that, when one undergoes the practice of *niṣkāma-karma* with staunch *niṣṭhā*, he simultaneously gains control over his senses and achieves supreme peace. In other words, he becomes free from bondage to the material world.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

The word *acireṇa* in the original *śloka* means without any delay, or immediately. For example, when a lamp is lit in a room which has been in darkness for a long time, the darkness is immediately dispelled without any separate endeavour. Similarly, as *tattva-jñāna* arises, it simultaneously dispels ignorance.

ŚLOKA 40

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।
नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥४०॥

*ajñāś cāśraddadhānaś ca / samśayātmā vinaśyati
nāyam loko 'sti na paro / na sukham samśayātmanah*
(he who is) *ajñah*—a fool; *ca*—and; *āśraddadhānah*—faithless; *ca*—and; *saṁśaya-ātmā*—a doubting soul; *vinaśyati*—is ruined; *saṁśaya-ātmanah*—for a doubting soul; *asti*—there is; *na*—not; *sukham*—happiness; *ayam lokah*—in this world; *na*—nor; *parah*—in the next.

Those who are ignorant, faithless and of a doubting nature are ruined. For the doubting person, there is happiness neither in this world nor in the next.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

After explaining the *adhikāra* of a person qualified to attain *jñāna*, Śrī Bhagavān describes one who is not fit to at-

tain such knowledge. *Ajñah* means foolish like an animal. *Aśraddadhānah* refers to one who has knowledge of *śāstra*, but does not have faith in any *siddhānta* because he cannot reconcile the contradictions between the various philosophers. *Samśaya-ātmā* means one who, despite having faith, still doubts whether his efforts will become successful. Of these three, the line beginning with *nāyam* specifically condemns one who is *saṁśaya-ātmā* (doubtful).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

After explaining the types of people who are qualified to attain *jñāna* and its subsequent result, Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes the ignorant who are not qualified, and the degraded result of such disqualification. A man who is ignorant, who lacks faith and who is doubtful, perishes.

According to Śrīla Śridhara Svāmī, *ajñah* here means ignorant of the topics instructed by Śrī Guru. According to Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, it means that like an animal, one does not have *śāstra-jñāna*.

Those who do not have faith in the words of *śāstra*, *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas are called *aśraddhālu*, faithless. One who always doubts the instructions of Hari, Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas is called *saṁśaya-ātmā*, a man of doubt. Such doubtful persons are more fallen than the ignorant and faithless, and they cannot attain happiness and peace anywhere, either in this world or in the next.

ŚLOKA 41

योगसन्यस्तकर्मणं ज्ञानसञ्चित्रसंशयम् ।
आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ॥४१॥

*yoga-sannyasta-karmāṇam / jñāna-sañchinna-saṁśayam
ātma vantaṁ na karmāṇi / nibadhnanti dhanañjaya*

dhanañjaya—O winner of wealth; *sannyasta-karmāṇam*—one

who has renounced *karma*; *yoga*—through *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; *samśayam*—and one whose doubts; *sañchinna*—are slashed; *jñāna*—by transcendental knowledge; (and) *ātma-vantam*—who has realised his *ātma-svarūpa*; *karmāṇi*—karmika reactions; *na nibadhnanti*—do not bind.

O Dhanañjaya, conqueror of riches! A person who has renounced *karma* through the process of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, who has dispelled all his doubts by *jñāna* and who has realised his *ātma-svarūpa*, is not bound by *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *yoga-sannyasta* to explain the kind of person who can attain *niṣkarma*. Those who have realised the soul are *ātmavān* or *pratyak-ātmā*, are not bound by *karma*. A person achieves this stage by performing *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, giving up *karma* through the process of *sannyāsa* (renunciation) and then removing his doubts by the cultivation of *jñāna*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In these last two ślokas, Śrī Kṛṣṇa brings this subject to a conclusion. According to the instructions of Bhagavān, one takes shelter of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* by offering all his actions unto His lotus feet. When the *citta* (heart) is purified by this process, it is illuminated by knowledge, and this cuts asunder all doubts. At that time, such people are completely freed from the bondage of *karma*.

The word *pratyak-ātmā* mentioned in the commentary indicates the *jīvātmā* who has given up the sense of enjoyment and who has attained a devotional attitude towards Bhagavān. Otherwise, a *jīvātmā* who is averse to Bhagavān, and who is absorbed in sense gratification, is called *parāk-ātmā*.

ŚLOKA 42

तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतं हृत्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।
छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥४२॥

*tasmād ajñāna-saṁbhūtam / hṛt-stham jñānāsinātmanah
chittvainam saṁśayam yogam / ātiṣṭhottiṣṭha bhārata*

tasmād—therefore; *bhārata*—O descendant of Bhārata; *jñāna-asinā*—with the weapon of knowledge; *chittvā*—slashing; *saṁśayam*—the doubt; *ātmanah hṛt-stham*—situated in your heart; *ajñāna-saṁbhūtam*—born of ignorance; *ātiṣṭha*—take shelter; *enam yogam*—of this yoga; (and) *uttiṣṭha*—arise.

Therefore, O Bhārata, with the sword of *jñāna* slash this doubt in your heart which is born of ignorance; take shelter of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, and prepare for battle.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān concludes this chapter with this śloka beginning with *tasmād ajñāna*. *Hṛt-stha* refers to cutting the doubt in the heart (*chittvā*), *yoga* means taking shelter of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* and *ātiṣṭha* means ‘be ready for the battle’. Of all the processes recommended for attaining *mukti*, *jñāna* is glorified here; and *niṣkāma-karma* is the only means to attain *jñāna*. This is the essence of this chapter.

*Thus ends the Bhāvānuvāda of the Sārārtha-varśinī Tikā,
by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura, on the Fourth Chapter
of Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, which gives pleasure to the bhaktas
and is accepted by all saintly persons.*

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “This chapter gives instructions on two divisions of *sanātana-yoga* (the eternal *yoga*

system). The first is the *jāda-dravyamaya* division, which consists of mundane rituals, or the sacrifice of material possessions. The second is the *ātma-yathātmā-rūpa-cimaya* division, or knowledge of the self and of Bhagavān. When the *jāda-dravyamaya* division is performed separately, it simply becomes *karma*. Those who are bound in this division are known as *karma-jāda*, deeply engrossed in mundane enjoyment. However, those who perform *jāda-karma* (mundane rituals) with the sole purpose of attaining spiritual advancement are *yukta* or properly situated. When we specifically deliberate on the true nature of spiritual activities, we understand that there are two aspects. One is knowledge of *jīva-tattva* and the other is knowledge of *bhagavat-tattva*. Only those who experience and realise *bhagavat-tattva* attain the essence of *ātma-yathātmā* (knowledge of the real nature of the *ātmā*) which is to be Śrī Kṛṣṇa's servant. This experience is perfected by realisation of the transcendental birth and activities of Bhagavān and of the *jīva*'s eternal association with Him. This subject is described in the beginning of this chapter. Bhagavān Himself is the first instructor of this *nitya-dharma*. Because the *jīva* has become bound to inert matter by the defect of his own intelligence, Bhagavān descends by the prowess of His *cit-śakti* and, by giving instruction on His *tattva*, He makes the *jīva* eligible to participate in His *līlā*.

"Those who say that the body, birth and activities of Bhagavān are products of *māyā* are extremely foolish. People attain Me according to the degree of purity (knowledge of My *tattva*) with which they worship Me." All the activities of the *karma-yogīs* are termed *yajña*. The various types of *yajña* in the world, such as *daiva-yajña*, *brahmacarya-yajña*, *grhamedha-yajña*, *samyama-yajña*, *aṣṭāṅga-yoga-yajña*, *tapo-yajña*, *dravya-yajña*, *svādhyāya-yajña* and *varṇāśrama-yajña*, all constitute *karma*.

"The only useful factor which is to be sought after in all these *yajñas* is the conscious part, *ātma-yathātmā*, or knowledge of the real nature of the *ātmā*. Doubt is the greatest enemy of this *tattva-jñāna*. A person who is endowed with *śraddhā*,

CHAPTER FIVE



Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga

Yoga Through the
Renunciation of Action

ŚLOKA 1

अर्जुन उवाच—
संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शांससि ।
यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्म ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम् ॥१॥

*arjuna uvāca
sannyāsam karmaṇām kṛṣṇa / punar yogañ ca śāṁsasi
yac chreya etayor ekam / tan me brūhi su-niścitam*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *kṛṣṇa*—O Kṛṣṇa; *śāṁsasi*—You are first praising; *sannyāsam*—renunciation; *karmaṇām*—of actions; *ca*—and; *punah*—thereafter; *yogam*—karma-yoga; *brūhi*—please tell; *me*—me; *su-niścitam*—very clearly; *tat ekam*—that one (path); *etayoh*—of these two; *yat*—which; (is) *śreyah*—auspicious (for me).

Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa, after first praising *karma-sannyāsa* (the renunciation of action), You are again describing *niśkāma-karma-yoga* (action offered to Bhagavān without

attachment to its fruit). Therefore, please tell me definitely, which of these two is auspicious for me?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Karma has been described as being superior to *jñāna* to encourage ignorant people to perform *karma* properly, and thus ultimately to achieve unswerving perfection in *jñāna*. This Fifth Chapter explains knowledge of the Absolute Truth (*tat-padārtha*) and the characteristics of those who have an even-tempered nature. After hearing the last two *ślokas* of the previous chapter, Arjuna is now doubtful. He thinks that Kṛṣṇa has contradicted Himself, and in this *śloka* beginning with the words *sannyāsaṁ karmaṇām*, he poses a question: “In the *śloka*, *yoga-sannyasta* (Gītā 4.41), You have spoken about *karma-sannyāsa* which appears when *jñāna* is produced by the performance of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Again in the *śloka*, *tasmat ajñana* (Gītā 4.42), You have spoken about *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. But *karma-sannyāsa* (renunciation of action) and *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* (the *yoga* of selfless action) have opposite natures, like moving and non-moving entities. It is not possible to perform them simultaneously. Should a *jñānī* perform *karma-sannyāsa*, or *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*? I have not understood Your intention on this subject and am asking You to please tell me for certain which of these two is auspicious for me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the Second Chapter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructed Arjuna how to perform *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* in order to attain *jñāna*, which dispels ignorance. In the Third Chapter, He explained that when one has attained *ātma-jñāna* (knowledge of the self), there is no need to engage in *karma* (prescribed duties), because *karma-yoga* is included in *jñāna-yoga*. It is a sign of ignorance to consider *jñāna* and *karma* to be separate. After

concluding this, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said in the Fourth Chapter that to attain *jñāna-niṣṭhā* (steadiness in knowledge), which is the means to obtain *ātma-jñāna*, it is appropriate to first adopt *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Arjuna knows that these topics are very difficult to grasp, and he is inquiring from Kṛṣṇa as if he is in ignorance, so that common people may easily understand. Initially, Kṛṣṇa declared *karma-sannyāsa* or *jñāna-yoga* to be superior. Now, however, He is again giving instructions on *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Arjuna has said, “It is impossible for one person to follow both of these instructions at the same time, because they are contradictory, just as it is impossible to be both stationary and in motion, or for there to be light and darkness in the same place. Please tell me clearly which of these two will bring me auspiciousness?” This is Arjuna’s fifth question.

ŚLOKA 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच—
सन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावभौ ।
तयोस्तु कर्मसन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥२॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
sannyāsaḥ karma-yogaś ca / niḥśreyasa-karāv ubhau
tayos tu karma-sannyāsāt / karma-yogo viśiṣyate

śrī bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Lord said; sannyāsaḥ—renunciation of activities; ca—and; karma-yogaḥ—*niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; (are) ubhau—both; niḥśreyasa-karau—auspicious; tu—but; tayoḥ—of the two; karma-yogaḥ—*niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; viśiṣyate—is better; karma-sannyāsāt—than renunciation of work.

Śrī Bhagavān said: Both *karma-sannyāsa* and *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* are auspicious, but *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* is certainly superior to *karma-sannyāsa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Niṣkāma-karma-yoga is superior to *karma-sannyāsa*. Even if a *jñānī* performs *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* there is no defect. Actually, its performance further purifies his heart and he thereby becomes more established in *jñāna*. One may ask, “If a *karma-sannyāsī* is experiencing some disturbance in the heart due to worldly desires, is he forbidden to engage in action (*karma*) to pacify it?” Śrī Bhagavān answers that such a disturbance in the heart (*citta*) of a *karma-sannyāsī* is an obstacle to the cultivation of *jñāna*. If he accepts sense objects having once given them up, he becomes a *vāntāśī*, one who eats his own vomit.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In answer to Arjuna’s question, Śrī Bhagavān is saying that both *jñāna-yoga* (*karma-sannyāsa*) and *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* are auspicious. However, *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* is superior to *karma-sannyāsa* or *jñāna-yoga*, because in *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* there is less possibility of fall-down. If a *karma-sannyāsī* (a person who has abandoned action) develops a desire for sense gratification and falls down, he is called a *vāntāśī*. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.15.36) also confirms this:

yah pravrajya gṛhāt pūrvam / tri-vargāvapanāt punah
yadi seveta tān bhikṣuh / sa vai vāntāśy apatraṇah

If a person renounces the *sannyāsa-āśrama*, which is the perfection of *tri-varga* (religion, economic development and sense gratification), and again enters household life, he is called a *vāntāśī*, a shameless person who eats his own vomit.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam further says that one may criticise an ill-behaved *jñānī*, but should not condemn an *ananya-bhakta* in the same way, even if his conduct is extremely poor. This is also confirmed in Gītā (9.30): *api cet sudurācāraḥ*.

It should be clearly understood that *karma-kāñḍa* is not the same as *karma-yoga*. Actions prescribed in *śāstra* are called *karma*. When a *jīva* engages in action considering himself as both the doer and the enjoyer of the fruits of action, his activities are called *karma-kāñḍa*. In this case, even the pious activities prescribed in the *Vedas* bind one to the material world. *Karma-kāñḍa* does not lead one to *yoga* (union) with Śrī Bhagavān, and thus it is condemned in all *śāstra*. Only by *bhagavad-arpita niṣkāma-karma*, selfless actions which are offered to Bhagavān, can *yoga* with Him be established. This is called *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. It can be referred to as a semblance or beginning of *bhagavad-dharma*. It can also be called the gateway to *bhakti*. In other words, an indirect union with Bhagavān, is established by *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Therefore in *Gitā* (2.48) it is said: *yoga-sthā kuru karmāṇi*. “Being equally disposed to success and failure, carry out your prescribed duties according to your nature.”

ŚLOKA 3

**ज्ञेयः स नित्यसन्न्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न कान्क्षति ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥३॥**

*jñeyah sa nitya-sannyāsī / yo na dveṣṭi na kāṅkṣati
nirdvandvo hi mahā-bāho / sukham bandhāt pramucyate*
mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed; *sah*—he; *yah*—who; *na dveṣṭi*—neither hates; *na kāṅkṣati*—nor desires; *jñeyah*—is known as; *nitya-sannyāsī*—always situated in renunciation; *hi*—for; (being) *nirdvandvah*—free from duality; *sukham*—easily; (he) *pramucyate*—is liberated; *bandhāt*—from material bondage.

O Mahā-bāho, he who neither hates nor desires anything is always worthy to be known as a *sannyāsī*, because one who is free from the dualities of aversion and attachment easily becomes liberated from the bondage of this material world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

It is possible to achieve the liberation which is attained by *sannyāsa* without entering the *sannyāsa* order. For this purpose, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *jñeyah*. “O Mahā-bāho, you should understand that a pure-hearted *niṣkāma-karma-yogī* is always a *sannyāsī*.” The address ‘O Mahā-bāho’ implies that one who is able to conquer the realm of *mukti* is certainly a great hero (*mahā-vīra*).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

This *śloka* establishes why *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* is superior. Due to the purity of his heart, a *niṣkāma-karma-yogī* is called a fixed renunciate (*nitya-sannyāsī*). Although he has not accepted the dress of a *sannyāsī*, he remains blissfully absorbed in *bhagavat-sevā* by offering himself and all sense objects at Bhagavān’s lotus feet. Detached from sense enjoyment and without any desire for the fruits of his actions, he remains free from attachment and envy. Thus he is easily liberated from bondage to the material world.

ŚLOKA 4

सान्धूचयोगौ पृथग्बालाः प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः ।
एकमप्यास्थितः सम्यगुभयोर्विन्दते फलम् ॥४॥

*sāṅkhya-yogau pṛthag bālāḥ / pravadanti na paṇḍitāḥ
ekam apy āsthitaḥ samyag / ubhayor vindate phalam*

bālāḥ—the ignorant; *pravadanti*—declare; *sāṅkhya-yogau*—*karma-sannyāsa* and *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; (to be) *pṛthag*—different; *paṇḍitāḥ*—the learned; *na*—reject (this); *api*—even; (by) *āsthitaḥ*—being situated; *samyag*—properly; *ekam*—in one (of them); *vindate*—one obtains; *phalam*—the result; *ubhayoḥ*—of both.

Only the ignorant say that *sāṅkhya* (*karma-sannyāsa*) and *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* are different. The wise reject

such opinions. By following either path correctly, one attains the result of both in the form of *mokṣa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“O Arjuna, you have asked which of these two is superior, but this is not actually a question at all; the wise see no difference between them.” For this purpose Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this śloka beginning with *sāṅkhya*. Here, *sāṅkhya*, which means *jñāna-niṣṭhā* (being fixed on the level of *jñāna*), indicates one of its limbs, *sannyāsa*. Only children or fools say that *sannyāsa* is different from *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. The wise do not think like this. This has been described in the previous śloka: *jñeyah sa nitya-sannyāsī* (*Gītā* 5.3). Thus, by taking shelter of either, the result of both is attained.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

When the heart becomes purified by properly engaging in *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, *jñāna* appears, after which one eventually achieves liberation (*mokṣa*). This is also the fundamental purpose of *karma-sannyāsa*. Since the end result of both *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* and *karma-sannyāsa* is *mukti* they are non-different. By following one of them, the result of both is achieved. Although externally *pravṛtti* (the directions for enjoying the material world according to the regulative principles) appears to be different from *nivṛtti* (the directions for giving up the material world for higher spiritual understanding), the wise do not see a difference between them, since the result of both these processes is the same.

ŚLOKA 5

यत्साङ्क्षयैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।
एकं साच्च च योगञ्च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥५॥

*yat sāṅkhyaiḥ prāpyate sthānam / tad yogair api gamyate
ekam sāṅkhyam ca yogañ ca / yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati*

tat sthānam—that position; *yat*—which; *prāpyate*—is obtained; *sāṅkhyaiḥ*—by the principles of *sāṅkhya-yoga*; *api*—is also; *gamyate*—obtained; *yogaiḥ*—by *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; *sāṅkhyam ca yogam*—*sāṅkhya* and *yoga*; (*are*) *ekam*—one; *ca*—and; *sah yaḥ*—he who; *paśyati*—sees (thus); (*actually*) *paśyati*—sees.

The result attained by *sāṅkhya-yoga* is also attained by *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Those who are wise, and who correctly see that *sāṅkhya-yoga* and *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* give the same result, actually see.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The previous subject is being clarified in this *śloka* beginning with *yat*. *Sāṅkhya* means *sannyāsa*, and *yoga* means *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Here the words *sāṅkhyaiḥ* and *yogaiḥ* are plural to emphasise their importance. Those who see them with the eyes of wisdom as being the same, although the processes are different, see correctly.

ŚLOKA 6

सन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्तुमयोगतः ।
योगयुक्तो मुनिब्रह्म न चिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥६॥

*sannyāsas tu mahā-bāho / duḥkham āptum ayogataḥ
yoga-yukto munir brahma / na cireṇādhigacchati*

mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed; *tu*—however; (*practising*) *sannyāsaḥ*—renunciation; *ayogataḥ*—without *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; *āptum*—brings; *duḥkham*—distress; *tu*—however; *yoga-yuktah*—one who is engaged in *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; (*becomes*) *muniḥ*—a sage; (*and*) *na cirena*—without delay; *adhigacchati*—he attains; *brahma*—the stage of transcendence.

O Mahā-bāho, practising *karma-sannyāsa* without *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* brings distress, but one who performs *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* becomes a *jñānī* and very quickly attains *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The *jñāni*'s acceptance of *karma-sannyāsa* without complete purification of heart leads to misery. *Niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, however, brings happiness, that is, it helps to attain *brahma*. This feature was indicated earlier, and is further clarified in this *śloka* beginning with *sannyāsas tu*. When the heart is disturbed by worldly desires, *sannyāsa* becomes miserable. Only *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* brings peace to the disturbed heart. The word *ayogataḥ* means in the absence of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; thus the renunciation of one who is not qualified to take *sannyāsa* becomes a cause of misery. The author of *Vārtika-sūtra* therefore says:

*pramādino bahiścittah piśunāḥ kalahotsukāḥ
sannyāsino pi dṛṣyante daiva-sandūśitāśayāḥ*

It is seen that even *sannyāsīs* have agitated minds and are negligent and eager to quarrel if their hearts are impure, due to their long association with the illusory energy.

It is also said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.18.40), “*Tridaṇḍi-sannyāsīs* who are bereft of proper knowledge (*jñāna*) and renunciation (*vairāgya*) and who have not controlled their five senses and the mind, lose both worlds.”

Hence a *niṣkāma-karma-yogī*, after becoming a *jñānī*, quickly achieves *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

It is better to engage in *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* than to take *sannyāsa* before the heart is pure.

ŚLOKA 7

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥७॥

*yoga-yukto viśuddhātmā / vijitātmā jitendriyah
sarva-bhūtātmā-bhūtātmā / kurvann api na lipyate*

yoga-yuktaḥ—one who performs *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; *viśuddha-ātmā*—who has purified intelligence; *vijita-ātmā*—a controlled mind; *jita-indriyah*—controlled senses; *ātmā-bhūta-ātmā*—and is the object of affection; *sarva-bhūta*—for all living beings; *na lipyate*—is unaffected; *api*—although; *kurvan*—acting.

One who performs *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* with pure intelligence and a pure heart, and who has controlled his senses, is the object of affection for all *jīvas*. He does not become tainted by action, even when he performs it.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here in this *śloka* beginning with the words *yoga-yuktaḥ*, Śrī Bhagavān is informing Arjuna that, even after engaging in *karma*, a *jñānī* remains unaffected. *Yoga-yukta-jñānīs* are of three types: (1) *viśuddhātmā*, of pure intelligence, (2) *vijitātmā*, of pure mind, and (3) *jitendriyah*, of controlled senses. They are mentioned in order of the superiority of their spiritual advancement. All *jīvas* are affectionate to that householder who is properly engaged in *niṣkāma-karma yoga* and who does not accept *karma-sannyāsa*. *Sarva-bhūtātmā* means he whom all living entities love like their own selves.

ŚLOKAS 8-9

नैव किञ्चित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित् ।
पश्यन् शृण्वन् स्पृशन् जिघ्रन्नशनन् गच्छन् स्वपन् ॥८॥
प्रलपन् विसृजन् गृह्णन् उभिषन् निमिषन्नपि ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन् ॥९॥

*naiva kiñcit karomīti / yukto manyeta tattva-vit
paśyan śṛṇvan sprśan jighrann / aśnan gacchan svapan śvasan*

*pralapan visṛjan gr̥hṇann / unmiṣan nimiṣann api
indriyāṇīndriyārtheṣu / varttanta iti dhārayan*

tattva-vit—a knower of the truth; *yuktah*—a *niṣkāma-karma-yogī*; *eva*—certainly; *paśyan*—while seeing; *śṛṇvan*—hearing; *spṛśan*—touching; *jighran*—smelling; *aśnan*—eating; *gacchan*—walking; *svapan*—sleeping; *śvasan*—breathing; *pralapan*—speaking; *visṛjan*—evacuating; *gr̥hṇan*—grasping; *unmiṣan*—opening; *nimiṣan*—and shutting (the eyes); *api*—also; *na manyeta*—should not consider; *iti*—that; *karomi*—I am doing; *kiñcit*—anything; *dhārayan*—considering; *iti*—that; *indriyāṇi*—the senses; *varttante*—are engaged; *indriya-artheṣu*—in their sense objects.

When a *niṣkāma-karma-yogī* becomes situated in *tattva-jñāna*, he concludes with his intelligence that even while he is seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing, speaking, evacuating, grasping and opening and closing his eyes, he actually does nothing; rather his senses are engaged with their respective sense objects.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this śloka beginning with *naiva*, Śrī Bhagavān gives instruction about actions in which one may become implicated in the functions of the senses, or afflicted by them. *Yuktah* refers to the *niṣkāma-karma-yogīs* who conclude that when one uses the sense of sight and the other senses, it is nothing more than the senses engaging with their objects.

ŚLOKA 10

**ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाभसा ॥१०॥**

*brahmaṇy ādhāya karmāṇi / saṅgam tyaktvā karoti yaḥ
lipyate na sa pāpena / padma-patram ivāmbhasā*

ādhāya—having offered; *karmāṇi*—his activities; *brahmaṇi*—to the Supreme Lord; *tyaktvā*—giving up; *saṅgam*—attachment; *sah yah*—he who; *karoti*—acts (thus); *na lipyate*—is not affected; *pāpena*—by sin; *iva*—as; *padma-patram*—the lotus leaf; *ambhasā*—by water.

One who has renounced attachment to *karma*, and offers all the fruits of his action to Me, Parameśvara, does not become affected by sin, just as a lotus leaf remains untouched by water.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“One who gives up attachment to the fruits of *karma* does not become bound by any action if he dedicates his work to Me, Parameśvara, even while he still has a false ego.” Here the word *pāpa* (sin) is used to indicate that such a person does not become implicated in any sinful action.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The pure soul has no connection with material activities. *Niṣkāma-karma-yogīs* become *tattva-vit*, endowed with transcendental knowledge, a gradual purification of heart. They then realise the nature of the self (*ātma-tattva*) and understand that even when they perform bodily activities, they are not the doers. They think that according to their *pūrvasamāskāra* (previous impressions) all activities of the material body are automatically performed by the inspiration of Iśvara. Due to the existence of the material body there may be a feeling that they themselves are the performers of action, yet when they give up the body after attaining perfection (*siddhi*), there remains absolutely no feeling that they are the doers of action. Any action performed by such *mahātmās* does not bind them to the material world.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has also said, “When the *sādhaka-bhakta* gives up the false ego of being the doer, he

performs all bodily-related activities naturally, out of previous habit.”

ŚLOKA 11

**कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि।
योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये ॥११॥**

*kāyena manasā buddhyā / kevalair indriyair api
yoginah karma kurvanti / saṅgam tyaktvātma-śuddhaye*

ātma-śuddhaye—for the purification of the mind; *yoginah*—a *niṣkāma-karma-yogi*; *tyaktvā*—giving up; *saṅgam*—attachment; *kurvanti*—performs; *karma*—action; *kāyena*—with the body; *manasā*—with the mind; *buddhyā*—and with the intelligence; *api*—even; *kevalaiḥ*—with only; *indriyaiḥ*—the senses.

To purify the mind, a *niṣkāma-karma-yogī* gives up all attachment and performs action with his body, mind and intelligence. Sometimes he performs action only with his senses, not even engaging his mind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Niṣkāma-karma-yogīs also perform action only with their senses. For example, when one chants *mantras* such as *indrāya svāhā* while making an offering in the fire *yajña*, the mind may be elsewhere, yet the activity goes on. Ātma-śuddhaye means that *yogīs* perform action only to attain purity of mind.

ŚLOKA 12

**युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।
अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥१२॥**

*yuktaḥ karma-phalaṁ tyaktvā / śāntim āpnoti naiṣṭhikīm
ayuktaḥ kāma-kāreṇa / phale sakto nibadhyate*

tyaktvā—giving up; *karma-phalam*—the fruit of work; *yuktaḥ*—one linked up in *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; *āpnoti*—obtains; *naiṣṭhikīm*—perpetual; *sāntim*—peace; *ayuktaḥ*—one who is not so linked; *saktaḥ*—being attached; *phale*—to the fruit of work; *kāma-kāreṇa*—because of the impetus of lust; *nibadhyate*—becomes entangled.

Having given up attachment to the fruits of his actions, the *niṣkāma-karma-yogī* attains eternal peace (*mokṣa*). The *sakāma-karmī*, however, who is attached to the fruits of his activities and is impelled by material desires, becomes entangled.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In the performance of *karma*, detachment and attachment are the causes of liberation and bondage, this śloka beginning with the word *yuktaḥ* is spoken to clarify this. A *yukta-yogī* or *niṣkāma-karma-yogī* gradually attains *śānti*, or *mokṣa*. *Ayuktaḥ* refers to *sakāma-karmīs*, who due to material desires, are attached to the results of their actions, and are thus bound to the material world.

ŚLOKA 13

सर्वकर्माणि मनसा सन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।
नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन् ॥१३॥

*sarva-karmāṇi manasā / sannyasyāste sukham vaśī
nava-dvāre pure dehī / naiva kurvan na kārayan*

vaśī—the self-controlled; *dehī*—embodied soul; *sannyasya*—having renounced; *manasā*—through his mind; *sarva-karmāṇi*—all activities; *eva*—certainly; *āste*—remains; *sukham*—happily; *pure*—in the city; *nava-dvāre*—of nine gates; *na kurvan*—neither doing anything; *na kārayan*—nor causing any action.

The self-controlled *jīva* (*niṣkāma-karma-yogī*), having renounced attachment to the fruits of all *karma*

within his mind, dwells peacefully in the city of nine gates,
neither performing action himself nor causing anyone to act.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

According to the previous statement, *jñeyah sa nitya-sannyāsī* (*Gītā* 5.3), a person who performs action without attachment is in fact the real *sannyāsī*. To explain this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *sarva-karmāṇi*. Although performing external activities related to the body, a self-controlled man, completely renouncing all actions through his mind, remains happily situated. Where does such a person live? Kṛṣṇa replies, “In the city of nine gates.” In other words, in a body freed from the false ego. In this case, the word *dehī* refers to the *jīva* who has attained *jñāna*. Although he may perform *karma*, he knows that in reality he is not the cause of the happiness that results from his actions, and he therefore understands that actually he performs no work. Similarly, while engaging others in work he does not make them act, because he has no purpose to fulfil. In other words, he remains unconcerned by their actions.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.19.43) states: *grham̄ śarīram mānuṣyam*. “The human body is like a house.” This subject can be specifically studied in the narration concerning Purañjana. The house of the human body has nine gates: the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and one mouth are the seven gates in the head, and the lower gates are for evacuation and procreation. A *yogī* sees his own self, or his own *svarūpa*, as being different from this body of nine gates. Like a traveller, the *yogī* does not become attached to or possessive of his body, which is likened to a hotel. Instead, he performs exclusive *sevā* to Bhagavān, the master of all the senses.

ŚLOKA 14

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥१४॥

*na karttṛtvam na karmāṇi / lokasya sṛjati prabhuḥ
na karma-phala-samyogaṁ / svabhāvas tu pravarttate*

prabhuḥ—Parameśvara, the Supreme Lord; *na sṛjati*—does not create; *lokasya*—a person's; *karttṛtvam*—tendency to act; *na karmāṇi*—nor the actions; *na samyogam*—nor connection; *karma-phala*—with the fruits of action; *tu*—only; *svabhāvah*—their natural propensity; *pravarttate*—enacts.

Parameśvara has not created the tendency for individuals to act, or their *karma* (actions), or the resultant fruits. All this is enacted by their acquired nature, that is they are impelled by the ignorance that has covered them since time immemorial.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Someone may question Bhagavān's partiality. If it is true that the *jīva* has no tendency to act as the doer, then why, throughout the material world which Īśvara has created, is he seen as the doer and the enjoyer of the fruits thereof? It appears that Īśvara created these tendencies, which are forced upon the *jīva*. If this is so, then it means that He carries the defect of being partial and without mercy. In response He says, "No, no. *Na karttṛtvam*." He has used the word *na* three times to stress and emphatically refute this point. He has neither created the initiative, nor has he created the *karma* in the form of prescribed duties, nor the result of *karma*, which is sense enjoyment. It is only the conditioned nature of the *jīva*, in other words, his ignorance since time immemorial, which induces him to recognise the ego as being the prompter of action.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

“The *jīvas* are not initiators of their own actions.” One should not think from this statement that the *jīvas* engage in action only by the inspiration of Parameśvara. If this were the case, He would possess defects such as being biased and cruel. Besides, Bhagavān is not the agent who unites the *jīva* with the results of his *karma*. This union occurs only because of the *jīva*’s ignorance from time immemorial (*anādi-avidyā*). The divine material energy (*daivī-māyā-prakṛti*) in the form of ignorance activates the acquired nature of the *jīva*. Only those *jīvas* who possess such a conditioned nature, which is born of ignorance, are engaged in action by Parameśvara. He Himself does not create the initiative within the *jīvas* to act or not to act.

Vaiṣamya-nairghṛṇye doṣair na sāpekṣatvāt tathā hi darśayati (*Brahma-sūtra* 2.1.34). According to this *sūtra*, Parameśvara is completely free from such defects as being biased or cruel.

It is mentioned in the *Vedas*, that just as *brahma* is *anādi* (without beginning), so the *karmika* impressions of the *jīvas* are also beginningless. The *jīvas*’ actions create impressions, and Parameśvara simply engages them in their successive activities according to these impressions. Thus it is illogical to say that Parameśvara has the defect of partiality (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2.1).

It is also said in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, “It is only according to the impressions of past *karma* that Śrī Viṣṇu engages the *jīva* in mundane activities. Since the *jīva*’s impressions are beginningless, Parameśvara is not guilty of any defect.”

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa explains in his *Govinda-bhāṣya*, “Someone may conclude that since Parameśvara engages a *jīva* in action according to the past impressions of his *karma*, we have to accept that Parameśvara is also not independent, but is under the influence of *karma*. The response

is, ‘No, this is not correct, since in reality even the existence of *karma* is under His control.’ Parameśvara engages the *jīva* in *karma* according to the nature he has acquired since time immemorial. Although Īśvara can change this nature, He never does. Thus, in all circumstances, He is free from partiality.”

ŚLOKA 15

नादत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥१५॥

*nādatte kasyacit pāpam / na caiva sukṛtam vibhuḥ
ajñānenāvṛtam jñānam / tena muhyanti jantavah*

vibhuḥ—the great (Parameśvara); *eva*—certainly; *na ādatte*—accepts; *na*—neither; *pāpam*—the sinful reaction; *kasyacit*—of anyone; *na*—nor; *sukṛtam*—the pious reaction; *ajñānena*—ignorance; *tena*—however; *avṛtam*—covers; (inherent) *jñānam*—transcendental knowledge; *jantavah*—of the living beings; (*who*) *muhyanti*—are bewildered.

Parameśvara does not accept anyone’s sinful reaction or their pious reaction. The ignorance, however, which covers the inherent true knowledge of the *jīvas*, bewilders them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Īśvara does not prompt or inaugurate the *jīvas’* good or bad actions, for the same reason that He Himself does not incur sin or piety. For this purpose, He speaks this *śloka* beginning with *nādatte*. It is only His *avidyā-śakti* that covers the fine knowledge of the *jīva*. To explain this He says *ajñānena*, meaning that the inborn or natural knowledge of the *jīva* becomes covered by ignorance, and it is due to this that he becomes deluded.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŠIKĀ-VRTTI

Bhagavān is *vibhuḥ*, all-pervading and boundless. He is full in realisation, bliss and unlimited energy. He is always absorbed in His own nature, the ocean of *ānanda*. As He is indifferent to everything, He does not prompt good or bad deeds. Śrī Bhagavān is *ātmārāma* (self-satisfied) and *āptakāma* (He whose every desire is fulfilled). It is His *avidyā-sakti* which covers the natural and inborn knowledge of the *jīva*, and by it the *jīva* in the conditioned state identifies himself with the body. The *jīva* develops the ego of being the doer of his actions only because he falsely identifies the body as the self.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.16.11) states:

*nādatta ātmā hi guṇam / na doṣam na kriyā-phalam
udāśinavad āśinah / parāvara-dṛg iśvarah*

The *jīvātmā* of Citraketu Mahārāja's dead son gave this instruction to Citraketu Mahārāja, who was suffering from lamentation. "The Paramātmā, Iśvara, does not accept happiness or distress, or the results of actions such as the attainment of a kingdom. He witnesses the cause and effect of one's actions and, because he is not under the control of the material body and events, he remains indifferent."

ŚLOKA 16

**ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।
तेषामादित्यवज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥१६॥**

*jñānenena tu tad ajñānam / yeṣām nāśitam ātmanah
teṣām ādityavaj jñānam / prakāśayati tat pāram*
tu—but; teṣām—for those; yeṣām—whose; tat ajñānam—ignorance; nāśitam—is destroyed; jñānenena—by knowledge; ātmanah—of the soul; jñānam—that knowledge; prakāśayati—

reveals; *tat*—that; *param*—Bhagavān; *ādityavat*—shining like the sun.

But for those whose ignorance has been destroyed by knowledge of the Supreme Absolute, that knowledge, like the shining sun, reveals the *aprakṛta-paramatattva*, Śrī Bhagavān.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Just as Śrī Bhagavān's *avidyā-śakti* covers the *jīva*'s knowledge, so His *vidyā-śakti* destroys ignorance and reveals his pure knowledge. By *jñāna* or *vidyā-śakti* (the potency of knowledge), *avidyā* is destroyed.

Just as the sun's rays dispel darkness and illuminate the earth, the sky and other objects, similarly *vidyā* destroys ignorance and illuminates that *parama-aprakṛta-jñāna* (knowledge of the transcendental Śrī Bhagavān). Thus, Parameśvara neither binds nor liberates anyone. Rather, it is only ignorance and knowledge which bind and liberate respectively, according to the qualities of material nature. The tendency to enjoy or to initiate action is the cause of bondage. Similarly, detachment, peace and so forth are liberating. These are qualities of *prakṛti*. Parameśvara is only partly responsible for the instigation of actions, because, due to His being Antaryāmī (the Supersoul), all the qualities of material nature become manifest. Hence, there is no possibility that the imperfections of partiality or cruelty exist in Him.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

According to his own material desires, the *jīva* acquires a body from material nature and engages in *karma*. Parameśvara does not determine the *jīva*'s sinful or pious actions. Both the piety of the advancing *sādhaka* and the sin which degrades him occur as a result of his previous *saṃskāras* (impressions). To punish the *jīva*, Śrī Bhagavān's *māyā-śakti*

covers his constitutional nature. The *jīva* then begins to identify the self with the body and subsequently considers himself to be the doer of all his actions. Parameśvara can in no way be blamed for this condition of the *jīva*.

Two of *māyā*-śakti's functions, *avidyā* and *vidyā*, are instrumental in the bondage and liberation of the *jīva* respectively. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.11.3) it is said:

*vidyāvidye mama tanū viddhy uddhava śarīriṇām
mokṣa-bandha-kari ādye māyayā me vinirmite*

O Uddhava, both *avidyā* and *vidyā* are functions of My *māyā*-śakti.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, here *vidyā* bestows *mokṣa* and *avidyā* is the cause of bondage. There are three functions of *māyā*: *pradhāna*, *avidyā* and *vidyā*. *Pradhāna* creates a designation for the *jīva* which is not real, although it appears to be so. *Avidyā* falsely super-imposes such designations to be real, and by *vidyā* such super-impositions are easily removed. Here it must be properly understood that the gross and subtle bodily designations of the *jīva*, which are created by *pradhāna* are not false, but the concept of 'I' and 'mine' in both of them is false. In the Vedas and *Upaniṣads* this is called *vivaritta*.

Within Parameśvara, the natural ego of being the doer is eternally present. *Prakṛti* is His inert śakti. Simply by His glance, the function of *prakṛti* is instigated. Consequently, *prakṛti* is the secondary cause of the creation of the material world. Parameśvara is indeed its instigator, but only in an indirect or partial manner.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "Knowledge is of two types: *prākṛta* (mundane) and *aprākṛta* (transcendental). *Prākṛta*, meaning knowledge related with inert matter, is called *avidyā* or the ignorance of the *jīva*. *Aprākṛta-jñāna* is called *vidyā*. When the material knowledge of the *jīva* has

been destroyed by spiritual knowledge, that same spiritual *jñāna* is revealed as the supreme spiritual *jñāna*, and enlightens him about the *aprākṛta-parama-tattva*, The supra-mundane truth.”

ŚLOKA 17

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तपरायणः ।
गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥१७॥

*tad-buddhayas tad-ātmānas / tan-niṣṭhās tat-parāyanāḥ
gacchānty apunar-āvṛttim / jñāna-nirdhūta-kalmaṣāḥ*

(those whose) *tat-buddhayāḥ*—intelligence is in Him; *tat-ātmānāḥ*—whose minds are within Him; *tat-niṣṭhāḥ*—who are fixed on Him; *tat-parāyanāḥ*—who are devoted to hearing and chanting; *kalmaṣāḥ*—whose ineptitudes; *nirdhūta*—have been cleansed away; *jñāna*—through transcendental knowledge; *apunar*—never again; *gacchānti*—attain; (take) *āvṛttim*—rebirth.

Those whose intelligence is fixed in Parameśvara, whose minds are absorbed only in meditation on Him, who are exclusively devoted to Him, who are engaged in hearing and chanting about Him, and whose *avidyā* has been completely destroyed by *vidyā*, attain *mokṣa*, from where there is no return.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Vidyā illuminates knowledge of the *jīvātma* only, not of Parameśvara. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.21) it is said: *bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyāḥ*. “I can only be attained by *bhakti*.”

To attain knowledge of Paramātma, the *jñānīs* must again specifically practise *bhakti-sādhana*. Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *tad-buddhayāḥ* to explain this. Here, the word *tat* (*tad*) refers to the same all-pervading Parameśvara described earlier. *Tad-buddhayāḥ* means that those whose intelligence is fixed in that Parameśvara meditate on Him

only. *Tad-ātmā* means those who are solely absorbed in Him. *Jñānaṁ ca mayi sannyaset*. “Even a *jñānī* should surrender his *jñāna* to Me” (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 11.19.1).

According to this statement, even if he has knowledge that the self is separate from the body, he is not called *tat-niṣṭhāḥ* unless he has given up his *niṣṭhā* (fixed steadiness) in *sāttvika bhāva* and has developed exclusive *niṣṭhā* in *bhagavad-bhakti*. *Tat-parāyaṇāḥ* means those who are devoted to hearing and chanting about Him.

It is said later in *Gītā* (18.55):

*bhaktyā mām abhijānāti yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ
tato mām tattvato jñātvā viśate tad-anantaram*

It is only by *bhakti* that one can know Me as I am and thus attain Me. Therefore, those whose ignorance has been completely destroyed by knowledge attain knowledge of Paramātmā.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Sattvāt sañjāyāte jñānam (*Gītā* 14.17): “*Jñāna* is *sattvika*.” Paramātmā, however, is beyond the three modes, and is also their controller, *guṇādhīśa*. That is why, although knowledge in the form of *sāttvika-jñāna* can destroy ignorance (*ajñāna*), it cannot cause knowledge of Paramātmā to appear. *Gītā* (18.55) states: *bhaktyā mām abhijānāti*. “Only *bhakti* can manifest knowledge of Śrī Bhagavān’s *tattva*.” In this context one should carefully consider Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura’s commentary on this *śloka* (18.55).

ŚLOKA 18

**विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥१८॥**

*vidyā-vinaya-sampanne / brāhmaṇe gavi hastini
śuni caiva śvapāke ca / paṇḍitāḥ sama-darsināḥ*

paññitāḥ—the learned; *sama-darśināḥ*—look equally; (upon) *brāhmaṇe*—a *brāhmaṇa*; *vidyā-vinaya-sampanne*—equipped with knowledge and gentle qualities; *gavi*—a cow; *hastini*—an elephant; *ca*—and; *śuni*—a dog; *ca*—and; *eva*—indeed; *śvapāke*—a dog-eater.

The wise look with equal vision upon a gentle and learned *brāhmaṇa*, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a *cāṇḍāla*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The wise who are extremely devoted to Parameśvara, as mentioned in the previous *śloka*, transcend the material modes (*guṇatīta*) and become disinterested in accepting the *guṇas* which exist in every entity to varying degrees. Thus they become equipoised. To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *vidyā-vinaya*. A cow and a *brāhmaṇa* are said to be in *sattva-guṇa*, thus they are superior to the elephant which is in *rajo-guṇa*, and to the dog and the dog-eater (*cāṇḍāla*) which are in *tamo-guṇa*. But the *panditas* who have transcended the modes do not notice such differences. Rather, they see *brahma* which is beyond the modes everywhere. They are known as *sama-darśī*, those with equal vision.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The vision of the wise *jñāni* is being explained in the above *śloka*. Here the word *sama-darśīḥ* means to see that Bhagavān's *taṭastha-śakti* manifests as the *jīvātmā* with a specific *svarūpa* in every material body. Only such seers of the self (*ātma-darśī*) are known as *sama-darśī*. Bhagavān has clarified this further in *Gītā* (6.32) and it is described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.29.14):

*brāhmaṇe pukkase stene / brahmaṇye 'rke sphulingake
akrūre krūrake caiva / sama-dṛk paññito mataḥ*

In My opinion, one who sees with equal vision a *brāhmaṇa* and a *caṇḍāla*, a thief and a devotee of *brahma*, the sunrays and the sparks of a fire, a cruel person and a kind person, is wise.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains *sama-dṛk* as realizing the eternal existence of Me, *parabrahma*, in every living entity. One who has such a vision is called *sama-darśī*.

ŚLOKA 19

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।
निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः ॥१९॥

*ihaiva tair jitah sargo / yeṣām sāmye sthitam manah
nirdoṣam hi samam brahma / tasmād brahmaṇi te sthitāḥ*

taiḥ—those; *yeṣām*—whose; *manah*—minds; *sthitam*—are situated; *sāmye*—in equanimity; *sargah*—the creation; *jitah*—is conquered; *ha eva*—in this very world; *brahma*—*brahma*; (is) *nirdoṣam*—flawless; *samam*—and equipoised; *tasmāt*—therefore; *te*—they; *hi*—certainly; *sthitāḥ*—are situated; *brahmaṇi*—in *brahma*.

Those whose minds are fixed in equanimity conquer the whole universe in this very life. They possess the flawless qualities of *brahma*, and are therefore situated in *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here, Śrī Bhagavān glorifies equal vision. That which has been created in this world is called *sargah*. *Jitah* means to overpower this material existence or to be liberated from its bondage.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Ihaiva means indeed while living in this world. In other words, it is in the stage of *sādhana* that one becomes free from bondage to this material world.

ŚLOKA 20

न प्रहर्षेत्प्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्प्राप्य चाप्रियम् ।
स्थिरबुद्धिरसमूढो ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मणि स्थितः ॥२०॥

*na prahṛṣyet priyam prāpya / nodvijet prāpya cāpriyam
sthira-buddhir asaṁmūḍho / brahma-vid brahmaṇi sthitah*

brahma-vit—a knower of spirit; (who is) *sthitah*—situated; *brahmaṇi*—in spirit; (is) *sthira-buddhiḥ*—of steady intelligence; *asaṁmūḍhaḥ*—and undeluded; *na prahṛṣyet*—he is not elated; *prāpya*—on receiving; *priyam*—something pleasant; *ca*—and; *na udvijet*—he is not disturbed; *prāpya*—on obtaining; *apriyam*—an unpleasant thing.

One who knows *brahma*, and who is firmly situated in *brahma*, has steady intelligence and is not deluded. He neither rejoices upon obtaining something pleasant, nor despairs upon receiving something unpleasant.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *na prahṛṣyet* to describe the equal vision of the wise in relation to pleasant and unpleasant mundane events. *Na prahṛṣyet* means that one is not elated, and *nodvijet* means that one is not dejected. The meaning is that one must practise like this in the stage of *sādhana*. With this intention the imperative case has been used. Because of the false ego, people become deluded by happiness and lamentation. Being free from such ego, the wise remain undeluded.

ŚLOKA 21

ब्रह्मस्पर्शव्यसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखम् ।
स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षयमशनुते ॥२१॥

*bāhya-sparśeṣv asaktātmā / vindaty ātmani yat sukham
sa brahma-yoga-yuktātmā / sukham akṣayam aśnute*

asakta-ātmā—a soul unattached; *bāhya-sparśeṣu*—to sense pleasures; *vindati*—finds; *yat*—whatever; *sukham*—happiness; *ātmani*—within the soul; *sah*—that; *yukta-ātmā*—soul united; *brahma-yoga*—with the Supreme Spirit through *yoga*; *aśnute*—attains; *akṣayam*—immortal; *sukham*—happiness.

He who is not attached to sense pleasure finds happiness within the self. Being united with *brahma* through *yoga*, he attains unending happiness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The minds of those who are united with *brahma* through *yoga* are not attached to sense pleasure because, by achieving Paramātmā, the bliss attained by a *jīvātmā* is unending. Only they can experience this. Why would a person who continuously tastes nectar be interested in eating mud?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

External sense objects, such as sound and touch, are experienced only with the help of the senses. They are not the characteristics of the *ātmā*. Those who remain detached from external sense objects dwell in the bliss derived from the experience of Paramātmā within themselves, and they do not even think of sense objects, what to speak of enjoying them. According to the *śloka*, *param dṛṣṭvā nivartate* (*Gitā* 2.59), since they remain absorbed in the superior *rasa*, the bliss of serving Bhagavān, they remain completely indifferent to the mundane enjoyment which comes from material sense objects.

ŚLOKA 22

ये हि संपर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।
आद्यन्तवत्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥२२॥

*ye hi saṁsparśajā bhogā / duḥkha-yonaya eva te
ādy-antavantaḥ kaunteya / na teṣu ramate budhah*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *bhogāḥ*—pleasures; *ye*—which; (are) *saṁsparśa-jāḥ*—born of sensual contact; *hi*—certainly; (are) *duḥkha-yonayah*—sources of misery; *te*—they; (have) *ādy-antavantah*—a beginning and an end; *eva*—certainly; *budhah*—an enlightened man; *na ramate*—does not delight; *teṣu*—in them.

O Kaunteya, pleasures born of contact with the senses are certainly the cause of misery. Since they have a beginning and an end, a wise man does not become attached to them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

A wise man does not become attached to sense enjoyment. For this reason, this *śloka* beginning with the words *ye hi* is spoken.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The happiness derived by the contact of the senses with sense objects is called *saṁsparśa-mokṣa*. Such happiness has a beginning and an end, for when the contact is broken, the happiness ceases. For this reason, the wise do not become attached to such sense enjoyment, which is transient and which only appears to be pleasant. It is only to maintain the body that they engage their senses in action with an attitude of detachment.

ŚLOKA 23

**शक्नोतीहैव यः सोऽुं प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।
कामक्रोधोद्ववं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥२३॥**

*śaknotīhaiva yaḥ soḍhum / prāk śarīra-vimokṣaṇāt
kāma-krodhodhvavam vegam / sa yuktaḥ sa sukhī naraḥ*

prāk—before; *vimokṣaṇāt*—giving up; *śarīra*—the body; *sah narah*—that man; *yah*—who; *iha eva*—in this very life; *śaknoti*—is able; *sodhum*—to tolerate; *vegam*—the urges; *udbhava*—born; *kāma-krodha*—of lust and anger; *yuktaḥ*—is a *yogī*; *sah*—he; *sukhī*—is happy.

Before giving up the body, he, who in this very life can tolerate the urges born of lust and anger, is a *yogī*, and is certainly happily situated.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Despite having fallen into the ocean of material existence, the persons described in this *śloka* are *yogīs* and are happy. To explain this Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *śaknoti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The intense desire or hankering to attain sense objects that are favourable for sense pleasure is referred to here as *kāma*, or *lobha*. The deepest meaning of the word *kāma*, which in this context indicates all types of desires, is the desire to gain pleasure by the mutual combination of man and woman. The mind's excessive repulsion (envy) towards that which is unfavourable to sense-enjoyment is called *krodha*. Those who can tolerate the urges of *kāma* and *krodha* until the time of death are known as *yogīs*, and they are happy.

ŚLOKA 24

योऽन्तःसुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तज्योतिरेव यः ।
स योगी ब्रह्मनिवाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥२४॥

*yo'ntaḥ-sukho'ntarārāmas / tathāntar-jyotir eva yah
sa yogī brahma-nirvāṇam / brahma-bhūto'dhigacchati*
(he) *yah*—who; (is) *antaḥ-sukhaḥ*—happy within; *antaḥ-ārāmaḥ*—who enjoys within; *tathā*—and; *yah*—who; (is) *antaḥ-*

jyotiḥ—illumined within; *eva*—certainly; *sah*—that; *yogī*—connected soul; (is) *brahma-bhūtaḥ*—situated in *brahma*; *adhi-gacchati*—he attains; *nirvāṇam*—emancipation from material existence; *brahma*—through realisation of *brahma*.

A *yogī* who is happy within the self, who takes pleasure within the self, and is illuminated within the self, is situated in *brahma* and attains the bliss of *brahma-nirvāṇam*, emancipation from material existence.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

For those who are untouched by the conditions of the material world, the experience of *brahma* itself is pleasurable. To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *yo ‘ntaḥ*. Those who achieve bliss within their inner self take pleasure only in the self, and thus their vision is focused within.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

How the strong urges of *kāma* and *krodha* can be easily and naturally pacified is being explained here by Śrī Bhagavān. By experiencing the self, such urges can be easily controlled. Yogīs who experience happiness in realisation of the self, who take pleasure within the self, and whose vision is always focused on the nature of the self, take shelter of *niṣkāma-karma* and attain the stage of *brahma-bhūta*, the nature of *brahma*. They eventually become established in their own (*jīva*) *svarūpa*. Such yogīs easily become indifferent to the mundane sensual activities of *kāma*, *krodha*, etc., and experience bliss within the self, known as *brahma-nirvāṇa*. In Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s commentary on Gītā 5.26, he says, “A *sannyāsī* who is free from *kāma* and *krodha*, who has control over the mind, and who knows *ātma-tattva*, very quickly attains full realisation of *brahma-nirvāṇa*.”

After deliberation on real and unreal objects, a *niṣkāma-karma-yogī* while living in the material world, situates himself in *brahma*, the reality which is beyond the modes of material nature. Such a state, which is free from material miseries, is called *brahma-nirvāṇa*.

ŚLOKA 25

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्पाः ।
छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥२५॥

*labhante brahma-nirvāṇam / ṛṣayah kṣīṇa-kalmaṣāḥ
chinna-dvaidhāḥ yata-ātmānāḥ / sarva-bhūta-hite-ratāḥ*

ṛṣayah—persons active within; *kalmaṣāḥ*—whose sinful qualities; *kṣīṇa*—are destroyed; *yata-ātmānāḥ*—who have controlled minds; *chinna-dvaidhāḥ*—whose dualistic view has been cut down; *ratāḥ*—who are attached; *sarva-bhūta-hite*—to the welfare of all living beings; *labhante*—achieve; *brahma-nirvāṇam*—emancipation from *samsāra* through realisation of *brahma*.

Those *r̄sis* who are free from sin and doubt, who have control over their minds, and who are engaged in the eternal welfare of all living entities, attain *brahma-nirvāṇa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Many persons attain perfection by practice (*sādhana-siddha*). To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *labhante*.

ŚLOKA 26

कामक्रोधविमुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् ।
अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वर्णं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥२६॥

*kāma-krodha-vimuktānām / yatiñām yata-cetasām
abhitō brahma-nirvāṇam / varttate viditātmanām*

yatīnām—for the *sannyāsīs*; *vimuktānām*—who are liberated; *kāma-krodha*—from lust and anger; *yata-cetasām*—who have control over their minds; *abhitah*—in every way; *viditātmanām*—and who are well-versed in *ātma-tattva*; *nirvāṇam*—the extinguishing of material life; *brahma*—through spiritual realisation; *varttate*—takes place.

For those *sannyāsīs* who are free from *kāma* and *krodha*, who have control over their minds, and who are well versed in *ātma-tattva*, every aspect of *brahma-nirvāṇa* is attained by them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“How long will it take for those who have knowledge of *tvaṁ-padārtha* (the self) but who are bereft of knowledge of Paramātmā, to attain the happiness of *brahma-nirvāṇa*?” Anticipating this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the words *kāma-krodha*. For one whose mind has become stable and whose subtle body has been destroyed, it does not take long to attain *brahma-nirvāṇa* in its full perfection.

ŚLOKAS 27-28

स्पर्शान्कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांशचक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवोः ।
प्राणापानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ ॥२७॥
यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिमुनिमोक्षपरायणः ।
विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥२८॥

*sparsān kṛtvā bahir bāhyāṁś / cakṣus caivāntare bhruvoḥ
prāṇāpānau samau kṛtvā / nāsābhyanṭara-cāriṇau
yatendriya-mano-buddhir / munir mokṣa-parāyaṇaḥ
vigatecchā-bhaya-krodhō / yaḥ sadā mukta eva saḥ*

vigata—who is free; *icchā-bhaya-krodhah*—from desire, fear and anger; *kṛtvā*—having put; *bahiḥ*—outside; *bāhyān*—external;

sparsān—sensual contacts; *ca*—and; *kṛtvā*—having focused; *cakṣuh*—the eyes; *antare*—in between; *bhruvoh*—the eyebrows; *kṛtvā*—having made; *prāṇa-apānau*—the out-going and in-going breaths; *nāsa-abhyantara-cāriṇau*—moving within the nostrils; *samau*—equal; (whose) *indriya*—senses; *manah*—mind; *buddhiḥ*—and intelligence; *yata*—are controlled; *yah*—who; *mokṣa-parāyaṇah*—is dedicated to attaining liberation; *sah munir*—that sage; (is) *eva*—certainly; *sadā*—always; *muktaḥ*—liberated.

He who is free from desire, fear and anger completely removes the external sense objects, such as sound and touch from his mind. He then fixes his vision between the eyebrows and suspends the upward and downward movement of the *prāṇa* and *apāna* air, which moves in both nostrils. In this way, he balances the life-airs, controls his senses, mind and intelligence, and dedicates himself to attaining *mokṣa*. Such a sage is certainly always liberated.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this way, by performing *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* offered to Īśvara, the *sādhaka* achieves a pure heart. It is then that knowledge of the self (*tvam-padārtha*) appears. To gain knowledge of *tat-padārtha* (*brahma*), one has to cultivate *bhakti*. Finally one experiences *brahma* (Śrī Bhagavān) by *guṇātīta-jñāna*, which is born from *bhakti*. For a person whose heart has been purified by *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, the performance of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* is superior to *jñāna-yoga*, which is the process to realise *brahma*. This is explained in the Sixth Chapter. Here Śrī Bhagavān is speaking these three *ślokas* beginning with the word *sparsān* as a *sūtra* of the Sixth Chapter. *Sparsān* refers to all external senses: eyes, ears, tongue, nose and skin. All of them enter the mind; so one should drive them out and restrain the mind from running towards them. One's

vision should be fixed between the eyebrows. If one completely closes the eyes there is the possibility that he will fall asleep, and if one keeps them completely open, there is the possibility that he will be distracted by the objects of the senses. Thus, to ensure that neither occurs, one should keep the eyes half open, and within the nostrils control the upward and downward movement of *prāṇa* and *apāna* in the form of the out-going and in-coming breath, thus balancing them. Those who control their senses in this way are to be considered liberated.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Arjuna, the heart becomes purified only by *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* offered to Me. After purifying the heart, one attains *jñāna*, which then gives rise to *jñāna-svarūpa-bhakti*, *bhakti* in the form of knowledge. This is the means to determine *tat-padārtha* (*brahma*). Finally, the experience of *brahma* comes from *bhakti* performed with *guṇatīta-jñāna*. I have explained this to you previously. Now I will explain *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* as the means to realise *brahma* for one whose heart has been purified. I am presenting statements just to give an idea of this. Please listen. The external forms of sound, touch, form, taste and smell are to be completely removed from the mind. While practising control of the mind in this way, fix the eyes between the eyebrows and look at the tip of the nose. By completely closing the eyes there is the possibility of falling asleep, and by completely keeping them open, there is the possibility of being distracted by external objects. One should therefore control the eyes by keeping them half-closed in such a way that one’s vision falls between the eyebrows on to the tip of the nose. Breathing through the nostrils, the out-going *prāṇa* and the in-coming *apāna* should be regulated so that the upward and downward movement is balanced. Thus,

seated with controlled senses, mind and intelligence, sages aiming at *mukti* give up desire, fear and anger and practise with the aim of realizing *brahma*. In this way they can attain complete deliverance from material bondage. Thus, as part of the *sādhana* of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, its limb *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* can also be practised.”

ŚLOKA 29

**भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।
सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥२९॥**

*bhoktāram yajña-tapasām / sarva-loka-maheśvaram
suḥṛdam sarva-bhūtānām / jñātvā mām śāntim ṛcchati*

jñātvā—understanding; *mām*—Me; (to be) *bhoktāram*—the enjoyer; (of all) *yajña-tapasām*—sacrifices and austerities; *maheśvaram*—the great master; *sarva-loka*—of all worlds; *suḥṛdam*—the friend; *sarva-bhūtānām*—of all living beings; *ṛcchati*—attains; *śāntim*—peace.

He who knows Me to be the enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Controller of all planets, and the well-wisher of all *jīvas*, attains *mokṣa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

Like the *jñānī*, such a *yogī* also attains *mokṣa* by knowledge of Paramātmā, which appears through *bhakti*. This is stated in this *śloka* beginning with the word *bhoktāram*. “I am the enjoyer of the *yajña* performed by the *karmī*, and I am the sustainer of *tapasyā* performed by the *jñānī*. I am the worshipable object of *karmīs*, *jñānīs* and *yogīs*, and I am Antaryāmī, and the only Supreme Controller (*maheśvara*) of all the planets. I am the well-wisher of all *jīvas*, because through My *bhaktas* I mercifully bestow instructions on

bhakti. For this reason, know Me to be the worshipable object of devotees also. Since I am *nirguṇa*, it is not possible to realise Me by *jñāna* in *sattva-guṇa*. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.21) I declared: *bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyah*. ‘I can be achieved only through *bhakti*.’ Only through *nirguṇa bhakti* can the yogīs realise My partial aspect, Paramātmā, as their worshipable object, and attain *śānti* or *mokṣa*.”

Jñānīs and *karma-yogīs* attain knowledge of both the *jīvātmā* and Paramātmā through *niṣkāma-karma*, and so attain *mukti*. This is the essence of this chapter.

*Thus ends the Bhāvānuvāda of the Sārārtha-Varṣinī Tīkā,
by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura, on the Fifth Chapter of
Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, which gives pleasure to the bhaktas
and is accepted by all saintly persons.*

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *niṣkāma-karma-yogīs* also attain *mokṣa* by knowledge of Paramātmā, which appears through *bhakti*. Śrī Bhagavān is the only enjoyer of articles offered with *bhakti* at the time of *yajña* and *tapasyā*. He, Antaryāmī, is indeed the worshipable object of the yogīs, the well-wisher of all *jīvas*, and He is *maheśvara*, the Supreme Controller of all planets.

*tam iśvarāṇāṁ paramāṁ maheśvarāṁ
tarāṁ devatānāṁ paramāṁ ca daivatām
patīm patīnāṁ paramāṁ parastād
vidāma devām bhuvaneśam īdyam*
Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.7

We know our worshipable Lord, who is the master of the worlds, to be the supreme amongst all controllers, the supreme Lord of lords, and the supreme protector of those who can award protection. He is transcendental to impersonal *brahma*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “After hearing the first four chapters, a doubt could arise. If one attains *mokṣa* as the result of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, then what place does *jñāna-yoga* have, and how does it manifest? The instructions in this chapter have been spoken to remove this doubt. *Jñāna-yoga* (*sāṅkhya-yoga*) and *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* are non-different from each other, for they share the same supreme goal, namely *bhakti*. In the initial stages of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, *karma* predominates over *jñāna*, and in the final stage (*jñāna-yoga*), *jñāna* predominates over *karma*. By constitutional nature the *jīva* is a pure, conscious entity. However, he becomes bound by inert matter because he desires to enjoy *māyā*, and as he identifies himself with matter, gradually his constitutional position becomes more covered. As long as this material body exists, material action is necessary. The only way for the *baddha-jīva* to attain liberation is through *cit-ceṣṭā*, or the endeavour to revive his constitutional state. To the same degree of intensity with which he makes efforts to revive his original conscious state during his journey within the material body, the predominance of *karma* becomes weak. *Brahma-nirvāṇa* (deliverance from mundane bondage and contact with the pleasure of *brahma*) appears automatically while performing *sādhana* to develop equal vision, detachment, control over mundane lust and anger and the eradication of all doubts, etc. While practising *karma-yoga* as well as maintaining the body, one can also perform *aṣṭāṅga-yoga-sādhana* which is comprised of the eight processes: *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *pratyāhāra*, *prāṇāyāma*, *dhyāna*, *dhāraṇā* and *samādhi*. The bliss of *bhagavad-bhakti* gradually manifests during the performance of such *sādhana*, if one attains the association of a *bhakta*. This is called *mukti-pūrvikā śānti*, everlasting peace accompanied by *mukti*.

Here, *mukti* means being situated in one's own *svarūpa*. At that time, the tendency to perform pure *bhajana* illuminates the glory of the constitutional nature of the *jīva*."

*Thus ends the Sārārtha-Varṣinī Prakāśikā-vṛtti,
by Śrī Śrimad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja,
on the Fifth Chapter of Śrimad Bhagavad-gītā.*

CHAPTER SIX



Dhyāna-Yoga

Yoga Through Meditation

ŚLOKA 1

श्रीभगवानुवाच—
अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।
स सन्न्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्चाक्रियः ॥१॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
anāśritaḥ karma-phalam / kāryam karma karoti yaḥ
sa sannyāsi ca yogī ca / na niragnir na cākriyah

śrī bhagavān uvāca—Śrī Bhagavān said; *yaḥ*—he who; *karoti*—performs; *karma*—work; *kāryam*—as prescribed; *anāśritaḥ*—unattached; *karma-phalam*—to the fruit of his action; *sah*—he; (is) *sannyāsi*—in the renounced order; *ca*—and; (is) *yogī*—a yogī; *ca*—and; *na*—not; *niragnih*—one who ceases activities such as the practice of fire *yajñas*; *ca*—and; *na*—not; *cākriyah*—one who performs no work.

Śrī Bhagavān said: Those who perform prescribed duties without desiring the results of their actions are actual *sannyāsīs* and *yogīs*. Those who cease performing *yajñas*, such as the *agni-hotra-yajña*, are not *sannyāsīs*, and those who merely abandon all bodily activities are not *yogīs*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The Sixth Chapter deals with the various types of *yoga* performed by *yogīs* whose minds are self-controlled. It also explains the means to control the flickering mind.

A person who is engaged in the practice of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* (the eightfold *yoga* system) should not suddenly give up *niṣkāma-karma* (selfless action), which purifies the heart. For this reason Śrī Bhagavān says, “Those who perform their prescribed duties knowing them to be obligatory, without desiring the results, and who have renounced the fruits of their actions, are actual *sannyāsīs*. Since their minds are free from desires for sense enjoyment, such persons are also called *yogīs*. *Niragni* means that a person is not called a *sannyāsī* simply because he has abandoned all *karma* (action) such as performance of the *agni-hotra-yajña*. *Akriyāḥ* means that a person is not called a *yogī* simply because he has given up all bodily activities, and sits motionless with half-closed eyes.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Aṣṭāṅga-yoga was described in a condensed form (*sūtra*) in three *ślokas* at the end of the Fifth Chapter. In the Sixth Chapter, the subject of these three *ślokas* is explained in detail.

The word *agni-hotra* mentioned in the commentary is a special type of Vedic *yajña* performed to satisfy the *agni-devatā*. According to this procedure, at the end of a marriage ceremony, the *brāhmaṇas* should perform a *yajña* by establishing the fire and chanting Vedic *mantras* prescribed for the spring season. At that time, one makes a determined vow to perform the *yajña* with some particular substance (such as ghee). After that, it should be performed with that substance only for the rest of one’s life. On the *amāvasya* (dark-moon) night, the person has to perform the *yajña* himself with barley water. On other days there is no discrepancy, even if there is some variation. When one has performed a hundred *yajñas*,

one must perform a *yajña* to the sun during the morning, and to the fire at twilight. It is imperative to commence *daśa purnamāsa-yajña* while meditating on the fire on the first full-moon day. Besides that, one has to perform three *yajñas* on the *purnima* and three on the *amāvasya*, and must perform these six *yajñas* for the rest of his life. The *śat-patha-brāhmaṇa* section of the Vedas explains in great detail the results obtained by performing this *yajña*.

ŚLOKA 2

यं सन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव ।
न ह्यसन्यस्तसङ्कल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥२॥

*yam sannyāsam iti prāhur yogam tam viddhi pāṇḍava
na hy asannyasta-saṅkalpo / yogī bhavati kaścana*

pāṇḍava—O son of Pāṇḍu; *viddhi*—know; *iti*—that; *hi tam*—very thing; *yam*—which; *prāhuḥ*—they (the wise) call; *yogam*—unmotivated *yoga* of work; (*is also*) *sannyāsam*—renunciation of work; *asannyasta-saṅkalpaḥ*—without renouncing desire; *na kaścana*—no one; *bhavati*—can become; *yogī*—a *yogī*.

O Arjuna, know that what the wise call *niskāma-karma-yoga* is non-different from *karma-sannyāsa*, because one who is unable to give up the desire for the fruits of action and sense enjoyment can never become a *yogī*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

To renounce the fruits of action is the factual meaning of the word *sannyāsa*, and to stabilise the mind so that it is not disturbed by sense objects is the meaning of the word *yoga*. Therefore, the meaning of both *sannyāsa* and *yoga* is one. Those who are *asannyasta-saṅkalpa*, who have neither given up the desire for the fruits of their action nor the desire for sense enjoyment, can never be called *yogīs*.

ŚLOKA 3

आरुरुक्षोमुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।
योगारुदस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥३॥

ārurukṣor-muner yogam / karma kāraṇam ucyate
yogārūdhasya tasyaiva / śamah kāraṇam ucyate

muneh—for the sage; *ārurukṣoh*—who is beginning; *yogam*—the process of *dhyāna-yoga*; *karma*—*niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; *ucyate*—is said; (to be) *kāraṇam*—the *sādhana*; *tasya yoga-ārūdhasya*—for that person who has attained to *dhyāna-yoga*; *eva*—certainly; *śamah*—renunciation; *ucyate*—is said; (to be) *kāraṇam*—the *sādhana*.

For a sage who is aspiring to become situated in unwavering *dhyāna-yoga*, *niṣkāma-karma* is said to be the *sādhana*, and when he ascends to that stage of *yoga* called *dhyāna-niṣṭha* (steadiness in meditation), renouncing actions which distract his mind from *dhyāna* is said to be the *sādhana*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

One may question whether or not an *aṣṭāṅga-yogī* of the quality mentioned in *Gītā* (6.1) must perform *niṣkāma-karma* for the rest of his life. That doubt is removed by this *śloka* beginning with the word *ārurukṣoh*, which establishes a limit for *niṣkāma-karma*. *Muni* means that, in order for aspirants to become situated in *yoga*, they must perform *niṣkāma-karma*, because it purifies the heart. Once they have attained steadiness in meditation, they must then stop performing any action which may distract them. Those who desire to attain *dhyāna yoga*, but whose minds are not yet completely purified, should perform *niṣkāma-karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “Yoga is compared to a unique ladder. The lowest rung is compared to the life of the *jīva* caught in degraded worldliness, in which his consciousness is absorbed in mundane matter. This *yoga* ladder consists of the steps from that level up to the stage where the *jīva* is in pure consciousness. The various rungs of the ladder have different names, but *yoga* is a common term for them all. This *yoga* has two divisions (for two types of *yogīs*): 1) For the *yoga-arurukṣu munis* who desire to practise *yoga* and who have just begun climbing the ladder, *niṣkāma-karma* is said to be the only means and, 2) for an *ārūḍha-yogī*, who has already ascended the ladder and achieved perfection in *yoga*, the only aim is the attainment of *śama* (cessation of desire for fruitive *karma*) or eternal bliss. These two gross divisions are called *karma* and *sānti*.” In other words, performance of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* and eternal bliss are their respective goals.

ŚLOKA 4

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुष्जते ।
सर्वसङ्कल्पसन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ॥४॥

*yadā hi nendriyārthesu / na karmasv anuṣajjate
sarva-saṅkalpa-sannyāsi / yogārūḍhas tadocaye*

yadā—when; *na anuṣajjate*—one is neither attached; *indriya-artheṣu*—to the objects of the senses; *na*—nor; *karmasu*—to actions; *tadā*—then; *ucyate*—it is said; *hi*—that certainly; *yoga-ārūḍhah*—he has attained to *yoga*; (*since he is*) *sannyāsī*—a renouncer; *sarva-saṅkalpa*—of all his desires.

A *tyāgī* who has become free from attachment to the sense objects and the performance of actions is called *yoga-ārūḍha* (adept in *yoga*), for he has given up all desires for the fruits of his actions.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Only those whose hearts have become completely pure are called *yoga-ārūḍha*. In this *śloka* beginning with the words *yadā hi*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the symptoms of such a person. *Indriya-artheṣu* means that they are neither attached to sense objects such as sound, nor to actions which are the means of attaining those sense objects.

ŚLOKA 5

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥५॥

*uddhared ātmanātmānam / nātmānam avasādayet
ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur / ātmaiva ripur ātmanah*

uddharet—one should deliver; *ātmanātmānam*—the soul; *ātmanā*—through the mind; *na avasādayet*—one should not degrade; *ātmanānam*—the soul; *ātmanā*—through the mind; *hi eva ātmā*—the very mind; (which is) *bandhuḥ*—the friend; *ātmanah*—of the soul; *eva*—indeed; *ātmā*—that mind; (is also) *ripuh*—the enemy; *ātmanah*—of the soul.

One must deliver the self by detaching his mind from the material world and not allow it to degrade him, because the mind can be the friend and also the enemy of the *jīvātma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The self (*ātmā*) falls into the ocean of the material world only because of his attachment to sense objects. With great

endeavour one must deliver the self. Ātmanā, the mind which is detached from sense objects, delivers ātmānam, the jīva. Na avsādayet means that the mind which is attached to sense objects should not cause the ātmā to fall into the material ocean. In this way the ātmā (mind) is the friend and also the enemy of the jīva.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARSIṄI PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

The mind which is free from any attachment is one's friend, and the mind which is full of attachment is one's enemy. It is said:

mana eva manusyāñām / kāraṇām bandha-mokṣayoh
bandhāya viṣayāsaṅgo / muktyair nirviṣayaṁ manah
Amṛta-bindu Upaniṣad 2

A man's mind is the sole cause of bondage and of mokṣa. A mind absorbed in sense objects causes bondage and when it is detached from them, it is the cause of mukti.

ŚLOKA 6

बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनैवात्मात्मना जितः ।
अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्त्ततात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥६॥

bandhur ātmātmanas tasya / yenātmaivātmanā jitah
anātmanas tu śatrutve / varttetātmaiva śatru-vat
ātmā—the mind; eva—certainly; (is) bandhuḥ—the friend; tasya
ātmah—of that soul; yena ātmānā—by which person; ātmā—
the mind; jitah—has been disciplined; tu—but; anātmanah—
for a person without spiritual knowledge; ātma—the mind;
vartteta—engages; śatrutve—in harmful activity; eva—just;
śatruvat—like an enemy.

For one who has conquered his mind, the mind is his friend, but for the jīvātmā who has no control over his mind, it works against him just like an enemy.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Whose friend and whose enemy is the mind? To answer this, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this śloka beginning with the word *bandhuḥ*. For the *ātmā*, that is, the *jīva* who has conquered his mind, the mind is his friend. But for one who is *anātmā*, whose mind is uncontrolled, it acts harmfully like an enemy.

ŚLOKA 7

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।
शीतोष्णासुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥७॥

*jitātmanah prasāntasya / paramātmā samāhitah
śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkheṣu / tathā mānāpamānayoh*

jita-ātmanah—for the person whose mind is controlled; *prasāntasya*—and who is peaceful; *sukha-duḥkheṣu*—amidst happiness and distress; *śīta-uṣṇa*—cold and heat; *tathā*—as well as; *māna-apamānayoh*—honour and dishonour; *ātmā*—soul; *parama samāhitah*—has attained eternal trance.

One whose mind is controlled is free from the dualities of heat and cold, happiness and misery, honour and dishonour, attachment and envy. The soul of such a *yogī* is deeply absorbed in *samādhi*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now, in these next three ślokas the characteristics of one who is *yoga-ārūḍha* are being described. A person who is *jita-ātmanah* (one who has conquered his mind) and *prasānta* (free from attachment, envy and so forth) is properly situated in *samādhi* and is not disturbed by heat or cold, honour or dishonour.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In the original *śloka*, the word *paramātmā* does not mean Parameśvara-Paramātmā, but it indicates the *ātmā*, or the *jīvātmā*. Here, the meaning of the word *parama* with the word *samāhitah* is that a person endowed with the above symptoms is deeply absorbed in *samādhi*. Both Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa have said that the word *parama* here indicates intensity.

ŚLOKA 8

**ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः।
युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाशमकाञ्चनः ॥८ ॥**
*jñāna-vijñāna-trpta-atmā / kūṭastho vijitendriyah
yukta ity ucyate yogī / sama-loṣṭāśma-kāñcanah*

ātmā—the soul; *trpta*—who is satisfied; *jñāna-vijñāna*—through transcendental knowledge and its realisation; *kūṭa-sthah*—whose consciousness is unaffected by material transformation; *vijita-indriyah*—who has conquered the senses; *sama*—and looks equally; *loṣṭa-aśma-kāñcanah*—on sand, stone and gold; *iti*—thus; *ucyate*—is said to be; *yogī*—a yogī; *yuktaḥ*—yoga-ārūḍha *purūṣa*.

A person whose mind is satisfied by *jñāna* and *vijñāna*, whose consciousness is unaffected by material transformation, who has conquered the senses, and who looks equally upon sand, stone and gold is *yoga-ārūḍha*, adept on the path of *yoga*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Those whose hearts have become free from hankering, and are satisfied due to having both *jñāna* (knowledge) and *vijñāna* (direct realisation of this knowledge) are *kūṭa-sthah*,

that is, they are always situated in the true nature of their selves and remain detached from all mundane objects. For them, a grain of sand, gold and so on are all the same.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Kūṭa-sthāḥ: kāla-vyāpī sa kūṭa-sthāḥ eka-rūpatayā tu yah.
“One who is devoid of sensual disturbance and eternally remains situated in his own *svarūpa* is called *kūṭa-sthāḥ*.”

ŚLOKA 9

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थाद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥९॥

*suhṛn-mitrāry-udāśīna / madhyastha-dveṣya-bandhuṣu
sādhuṣv api ca pāpeṣu / sama-buddhir viśiṣyate*

(one who sees with) *sama-buddhiḥ*—his impartial intelligence; *suhṛt*—towards well-wishers; *mitra*—friends; *ari*—enemies; *udāśīna*—neutral persons; *madhyastha*—arbitrators; *dveṣya*—the envious; *bandhuṣu*—relatives; *sādhuṣu*—saints; *api ca*—and also; *pāpeṣu*—sinful persons; *viśiṣyate*—is more advanced.

One who looks upon well-wishers, friends, enemies, neutral people, arbitrators, envious people, relatives, saintly persons and sinners with equal vision is even more exalted.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Suhṛd means one who is a well-wisher by nature. *Mitra* means one who performs welfare work out of affection. *Ari* refers to one who is violent or a killer. *Udāśīna* means one who is indifferent to quarrelling parties. *Madhya-stha* means one who is an arbitrator for opposing parties. *Dveṣya* means one who is envious and acts harmfully.

Bandhu means a relative, *sādhū* means a saintly (*dharma*-*kī*) person and *pāpī* means a sinful (*adharma*-*kī*) person.

One who regards all of these types of people with an equal mind, seeing them all alike, is considered to be a most distinguished and excellent person. Such a person is superior to those who look upon a grain of sand, stone and gold equally.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In the previous *śloka*, a person who has equal vision towards a grain of sand, stone, gold and so forth, was called a *yogī*. But among persons who are *yoga-ārūḍha* (ascending the path of *yoga*), those who see with equal vision a well-wisher, a friend, an enemy, a neutral person, an arbitrator, an envious person, a relative, a saint and a sinner are even more highly situated than those who see inert matter equally.

ŚLOKA 10

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।
एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥१०॥

*yogī yuñjīta satatam / ātmānam rahasi sthitah
ekākī yata-cittātma / nirāśir aparigrahaḥ*

ekākī—living alone; *sthitah*—situated; *rahasi*—in a solitary place; (he should be) *nirāśih*—free from desire; *aparigrahaḥ*—not accepting sense objects; *yata-citta-ātmā*—controlling his mind and body; *yogī*—a *yogī*; *satatam*—always; *yuñjīta ātmānam*—should absorb his mind in *samādhi*.

While residing alone in a solitary place, controlling his *citta* (thoughts) and body, devoid of desires and not accepting sense objects, a *yogī* should absorb his mind in *samādhi*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now, from this *śloka* beginning with *yogī yuñjita* up to the *śloka* ending with *sa yogī paramo mataḥ* (*Gītā* 6.32), Śrī Bhagavān explains the process of *dhyāna-yoga* along with its limbs. A *yogī* should be *yoga-ārūḍha-ātmā* (fix his mind in trance).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

After explaining the symptoms of one who is a *yoga-ārūḍha* (adept in *yoga*), Bhagavān gives instruction on *yoga-sādhana*. A *yoga-sādhaka* should withdraw his mind from the objects of sense enjoyment and practise *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* offered to Bhagavān. In this way, he should try to fix his mind in *samādhi*, meditating deeply on Śrī Bhagavān. He should perform his *sādhana* without any material desires, and with staunch renunciation, reside in a solitary place, control his mind, and refrain from all activities which are unfavourable to *yoga*.

ŚLOKAS 11-12

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।
नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चेलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् ॥११॥
तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।
उपविश्यासने युज्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥१२॥

śucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya / sthiram āsanam ātmanah
nāty-ucchritam nāti-nīcam / cailājina-kuśottaram
tatraikāgram manah kṛtvā / yata-cittendriya-kriyah
upaviṣyāsane yuñjyād / yogam ātma-viśuddhaye

śucau deśe—in a clean place; *pratiṣṭhāpya*—establishing; *ātmanah*—his; *sthiram*—steadfast; *āsanam*—seat; (placing) *uttaram*—in sequence; *kuśa*—a mat of *kuśa* grass; *ajina*—a deer-skin; *caila*—and a cloth; *na ati-ucchritam*—neither too high; *na*

ati-nīcam—nor too low; *upaviśya*—sitting; *tatra*—there; *āsane*—on the seat; *kṛtvā*—having fixed; *manah*—his mind; *eka-agram*—one-pointedly; *yata*—controlling; *kriyāḥ*—the activities; *citta*—of his mind; *indriya*—and senses; *yuñjyāt yogam*—he should practise *yoga*; *ātma-viśuddhaye*—for the purification of his mind.

In a sanctified place, one should make an *āsana* by placing *kuṣa* grass, deerskin and then cloth on the ground. It should be neither too high nor too low. Sitting on that *āsana*, one should practise *yoga* to purify the mind with one-pointed concentration, and control all of his thoughts and activities.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Pratiṣṭhāpya means ‘after establishing’. *Cailājīna-kuśottaram* indicates that one should put deerskin on a mat made from *kuṣa* and on top of that a seat made of cloth. A *yogi* should continue his practice to purify the *ātmā* (mind). In other words, after becoming free from the distraction of trying to become qualified to realise *brahma*, one’s intelligence should remain one-pointed. It is said in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.3.12): *dṛśyate tv agryayā buddhyā*. “One can see *brahma* with one-pointed intelligence.”

ŚLOKAS 13-14

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्न व्रचलं स्थिरः ।
संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥१३॥
प्रशान्ततामा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः ।
मनः संयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत् मत्परः ॥१४॥

samam kāya-śiro-grīvam / dhārayann acalam sthirah
saṁprekṣya nāsikāgram svarṇ / diśas cānavalokayan
praśāntatāmā vigata-bhīr / brahmacāri-vrate sthitah
manah saṁyamya mac-citto / yukta āsīta mat-parah

dhārayan—holding; *kāya*—his body; *śirah*—head; *grīvam*—and neck; *samam*—equipoised; *acalam*—unmoving; *sthirah*—steadfast; *ca*—and; *samprekṣya*—gazing; *svam nāsika-agram*—at the tip of his nose; *anavalokayan*—not glancing; *diśah*—to the (other) directions; *praśānta-ātmā*—filled with peace; *vigata-bhīḥ*—free from fear; *sthitah*—fixed; *brahmācāri-vrate*—in a vow of celibacy; *saṁyamya*—controlling; *manah*—the mind; *yuktaḥ*—engaged in; *mat-cittah*—thinking of Me; *āsita*—should sit; *mat-parah*—engrossed in Me.

Keeping one's body, neck and head erect and steady, one should fix one's vision solely on the tip of the nose. Thus, following strict celibacy, becoming fearless, peaceful and controlling the mind, one should practise *yoga* by meditating on Me with one-pointed attention, remaining always devoted to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The middle part of the body is called *kāya*, the torso. *Samam* means not crooked, or in other words, straight, and *acalam* means not moving, steady. “Keeping the torso straight and steady and restraining the mind from sense objects, one should become dedicated to My *bhakti* while meditating on My beautiful four-handed Viṣṇu form.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

If the sitting posture is firm and comfortable, it helps in one's spiritual practice. There are sixty-four types of postures such as *svastika*, *mayūra*, *garuḍa* and *padma*. Patañjali has also said: *sthira-sukham āsanam*. “The *āsana* should be firm and comfortable.” In *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (2.8) the process of *āsana* has been explained: “Keeping the torso, head and neck in a straight line and controlling all the senses, one

should practise *yoga* by absorbing one's mind in meditating on *brahma* situated in the heart. Such learned *sādhakas* cross over the terrible ocean of *kāma* and *krodha* in the material world by the boat of *brahma*."

If one doubts the need to adopt an *āsana* (posture) for the gross body while remembering Bhagavān within the mind, *Vedānta-sūtra* (4.1.7) says: *āśinah sambhavāt*. "One should remember Śrī Hari while sitting in a firm *āsana*." Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa explains in his *Govinda-bhāṣya*, "It is not possible to concentrate the *citta* (thoughts) without an *āsana*. While walking, moving, standing and sleeping, the thoughts remain distracted. In such circumstances it is not possible to make the *citta* one-pointed."

This is also cited in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from: *śucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya* (3.28.8) up to *hetutvam apy asati* (3.28.36), and also (11.14.32) *sama āsana āśinah*. These ślokas are of great value in helping to understand this topic in more detail.

In the *yoga-sāstra* also it is said: *antar-lakṣyo' bahir dṛṣṭih sthira-cittah susaṅgataḥ*. "One's outer perception should be directed within, and one's mind should be stable due to auspicious association."

ŚLOKA 15

युज्ज्व्रेवं सदात्मानं योगी नियतमानसः ।
शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥१५॥

*yuñjann evam sadātmānam / yogī niyata mānasah
śāntim nirvāṇa-paramām / mat-saṁsthām adhigacchati*

evam—thus; *sadā*—always; *yuñjan*—engaging; *ātmānam*—the mind; *yogī*—the yogī; *niyata-mānasah*—of controlled mind; *adhigacchati*—attains; *śāntim*—peace; (in) *mat-saṁsthām*—My form of *nirviṣeṣa-brahma*; *nirvāṇa-paramām*—complete cessation of material existence.

Thus, constantly keeping the mind absorbed in Me through *yoga* by following this process, a *yogī* whose mind is controlled, can become situated in My *svarūpa* (*nirviśeṣa-brahma*) and attain *śānti* in the form of complete emancipation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“*Yogīs* whose minds are beyond thoughts of sense objects and are self-controlled, absorb their minds in Me through the practice of *dhyāna-yoga* and attain *nirvāṇa* (emancipation). Thus becoming firmly situated in My *nirviśeṣa-brahma svarūpa*, they attain *śānti*, complete emancipation from bondage to the material world.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the result of practicing *dhyāna-yoga*. *Tam eva viditvāti-mṛtyum eti*. “By the practice of *yoga*, having attained knowledge of Bhagavān (in His impersonal feature), he crosses beyond the cycle of birth and death in the form of material existence,” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 3.8). In this way, the *yogī* attains *nirviśeṣa-brahma* (featureless *brahma*).

ŚLOKA 16

नात्यशनतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनशनतः ।
न चातिस्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥१६॥

nātyaśnatas tu yogo'sti / na caikāntam-anaśnataḥ
na cāti-svapna-śilasya / jāgrato naiva cārjuna

arjuna—O Arjuna; *ca*—and; *tu*—however; *yogah*—union with the Paramātmā; *asti*—is; *eva*—certainly; *na*—not (attained); *ati-ashnataḥ*—by one who eats excessively; *ca*—and; *na*—not; *eka-antam anaśnataḥ*—by one who does not eat sufficiently; *ca*—and; *na*—not; *ati-svapna-śilasya*—by one who sleeps excessively; *na*—nor; *jāgrataḥ*—by one who does not sleep enough.

O Arjuna, *yoga* cannot be perfected by a person who eats too much or too little, or by one who sleeps too much or too little.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In two ślokas, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the symptoms of a person who has become steadfast in the practice of *yoga*. Aty-aśnataḥ means one who eats too much. It is said in *yoga-śāstra*: *pūryed aśanenārddham tṛtīyam udakena tu vāyoḥ sañcaraṇārtham tu caturtham avaśeṣayet*. “One should half-fill the belly with food, one-fourth with water, and should leave one-fourth empty for the movement of air.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

To attain perfection in *sādhana*, a *yogī* should not practise *yoga* when he is hungry or tired, or when his mind is disturbed. One should not practise *yoga* when he is too cold, too hot or in a hurry, because in doing so he will not attain perfection. While chanting *hari-nāma*, following the various *aṅgas* (limbs) of *bhakti*, and specifically while remembering Kṛṣṇa’s *līlā*, one should carefully observe the above principles. In order to keep the *citta* concentrated, the *sādhaka* should spend some time chanting *hari-nāma* in a solitary place with one-pointed attention. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has given such instructions in his book *Hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi*.

ŚLOKA 17

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥१७॥

*yuktāhāra-vihārasya / yukta-ceṣṭasya karmasu
yukta-svapnāvabodhasya / yogo bhavati duḥkha-hā*

vihārasya—for one whose recreation; *āhāra*—and eating; *yukta*—are balanced; *ceṣṭasya*—whose movements; *karmasu*—in (all) activities; *yukta*—are balanced; *avabodhasya*—whose waking; *svapna*—and sleeping; *yukta*—are balanced; *yogah*—the process of linking with the Supreme Lord; *bhavati*—becomes; *duḥkha-hā*—a slayer of material miseries.

For one who is moderate in eating and recreation, balanced in work and regulated in sleeping and wakefulness, his practice of *yoga* destroys all material miseries.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

A person's worldly and transcendental activities will lead to success if he is regulated in eating (*āhāra*) and recreation (*vihāra*).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

If a person is not moderate in eating and recreation, he faces various miseries that become an obstacle in his *sādhana*. Similarly, if the mind is flickering and agitated because of various anxieties, it is also not possible for him to attain perfection in his *sādhana*. Therefore, in a balanced manner, the *sādhaka* should eat food which is easily digestible and nourishing. It is imperative for the *bhakti-sādhaka* to follow the instructions given by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in his book, *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, wherein it is said that only a person who controls the urges of the mind, anger, tongue and genitals can perform *sādhana* properly. Additionally, one should always keep a distance from the six unfavourable activities: over-eating, over-endeavouring, talking unnecessarily, having undue attachment to or disregard for rules and regulations, taking bad association and maintaining a strong desire to follow false philosophy.

In this *śloka*, the words *yukta-svapnāvabodhasya* mean regulated sleep and regulated wakefulness.

ŚLOKA 18

**यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।
निष्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥१८॥**

*yadā viniyatam cittam / ātmany evāvatiṣṭhate
niṣpr̥hah sarva-kāmebhyo / yukta ity ucyate tadā*

yadā—when; *cittam*—the mind; *viniyatam*—is fully controlled; *avatiṣṭhate*—and stays; *ātmani*—in the soul; *tadā*—then; *ucyate*—he is said; (to be) *yuktah iti*—connected in *yoga*; *eva*—certainly; *niṣpr̥hah*—free from cravings; *sarva-kāmebhyaḥ*—for all sense enjoyment.

When the mind becomes completely controlled and firmly fixed in the self alone, at that time one is said to be *yukta* (perfected in *yoga*), and is free from the craving for all sense enjoyment.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“When is one’s *yoga* complete?” In reply to this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks this *śloka* beginning with *yadā*. “One has become a *niṣpanna-yogi* (has attained perfection in *yoga*) when he can situate the controlled *citta* (mind) unwaveringly in the *ātmā* (self).”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *yogi* is said to have attained perfection in *yoga* when, during his *yoga* practice, his *citta* becomes steady, free from desires for sense enjoyment, and situated within his self alone.

ŚLOKA 19

**यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता ।
योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः ॥१९॥**

*yathā dīpo nivāta-stho / neṅgate sopamā smṛtā
yogino yata-cittasya / yuñjato yogam ātmanah*

yathā—as; dīpaḥ—a lamp; nivāta-sthāḥ—situated in a windless place; na iṅgate—does not flicker; saḥ—that; upamā—analogy; smṛtā—is taught (by the wise); yoginah—of a yogī; yata-cittasya—whose mind is controlled; yuñjataḥ yogam—while practicing connection; ātmah—with the ātmā.

Just as a lamp in a windless place does not flicker, so a *yogī* whose *citta* is controlled remains steady in his concentration on self-realisation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

A lamp does not flicker in a place where there is no breeze, therefore the *citta* (mind) of a *yoga-yukta-yogī* is compared to a lamp.

ŚLOKAS 20-25

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।
 यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥२०॥
 सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीच्छ्रियम् ।
 वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥२१॥
 यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः ।
 यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ॥२२॥
 तं विद्यादुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।
 स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥२३॥
 सङ्कल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषतः ।
 मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्ततः ॥२४॥
 शनैः शनैरुपरमेद् बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।
 आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयत् ॥२५॥

yatroparamate cittam / niruddham yoga-sevayā
 yatra caivātmanātmanam / paśyann ātmani tuṣyati

sukham ātyantikam yat tad / buddhi-grāhyam atīndriyam
 vetti yatra na caivāyam / sthitāś calati tattvataḥ
 yam labdhvā cāparam lābhām / manyate nādhikam tataḥ
 yasmin sthito na duḥkhena / gurुṇāpi vicālyate
 tam vidyād duḥkha-saṁyoga / viyogam yoga-saṁjñitam
 sa niścayena yoktavyo / yogo'nirviṇṇa-cetasā
 saṅkalpa-prabhavān kāmāṁs / tyaktvā sarvān aśeṣataḥ
 manasaivendriya-grāmām / viniyamya samantataḥ
 śanaiḥ śanair uparamed / buddhyā dhṛti-gṛhitayā
 ātma-saṁsthām manah kṛtvā / na kiñcid api cintayet

eva—certainly; *yatra*—when; *cittam*—the mind; *niruddham*—being controlled; *uparamate*—becomes peaceful; *yoga-sevayā*—through the practice of *yoga*; *ca*—and; *yatra*—when; *paśyan*—perceiving; *ātmānam*—the soul; *ātmanā*—through the mind; *tuṣyati*—one becomes satisfied; *ātmani*—in the soul; *eva*—certainly; *yatra*—situation in which; *vetti*—one understands; *tat*—that; *atyantikam*—limitless; *sukham*—happiness; *yat*—which; (is) *buddhi-grāhyam*—perceived through the intelligence; *ca*—and; *ati-indriyam*—transcendental to the senses; *sthitaḥ*—being so situated; *ayam*—this (*yogi*); *na*—never; *calati*—moves away; *tattvataḥ*—from that truth; *ca*—and; *labdhvā*—having obtained; *yam*—which; *manyate*—he considers; *na aparam*—no other; *lābhām*—gain; (is) *adhikam*—greater; *tataḥ*—than that; *sthitaḥ*—being situated; *yasmin*—in which; *na vicālyate*—he is not deviated; *api*—even; *guruṇā*—by the greatest; *duḥkhena*—suffering; *vidyāt*—one should understand; *tam*—that; *yoga-saṁjñitam*—realisation of *yoga*; *viyogam*—which dissociates one; *duḥkha-saṁyoga*—from association with suffering; *sah*—that; *yogaḥ*—yoga; *yoktavyaḥ*—should be practised; *niścayena*—with determination; *anirviṇṇa-cetasā*—and undeviating consciousness; *eva*—certainly; *tyaktvā*—having abandoned; *aśeṣataḥ*—completely; *sarvān*—all; *kāmān*—desires; *saṅkalpa-prabhavān*—born of desire; (and) *viniyamya*—regulating;

indriya-grāmam—the group of senses; *samantataḥ*—on all sides; *manasā*—through the mind; *śanaiḥ śanaiḥ*—very gradually; *uparamet*—one should detach; *manah*—the mind; *buddhyā*—through intelligence; *dhṛti-gṛhitayā*—achieved through conviction; *ca*—and; *kṛtvā*—having fixed (the mind); *ātma-saṁsthām*—in transcendence; *cintayet*—one should think; *na kiñcit*—of nothing else; *api*—at all.

In that state of *yoga* called *saṁādhi*, the *yogī*'s mind is controlled by the practice of *yoga*. He becomes detached from the sense objects, and is satisfied within by realising the self through that purified *citta* (mind). In that state, the *yogī* experiences eternal bliss through his transcendental intelligence, which is beyond the realm of the senses. Being thus established, he never deviates from his *ātma-svarūpa* (intrinsic nature) and upon attaining *ātma-sukha* (the bliss of the self), he considers there to be no greater acquisition. When he is situated on that platform, he does not become perturbed even by the greatest of miseries. Know that state to be devoid of any contact with the duality of mundane happiness and misery. This *yoga* should be performed with full patience of mind, having completely given up all whimsical desires and, with the mind controlling the senses from all directions, one should follow the instructions of *sāstra* and *sādhu* with determination. One should make his intelligence resolute and determined, and should gradually become detached by establishing the mind in the self and by not thinking of anything else.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *yoga* in the *śloka*, *nāty-aśnatas 'tu yoga 'sti* (*Gītā* 6.16) and in other *ślokas* means *saṁādhi*. This *saṁādhi* is of two types, namely *saṁprajñāta*, in which one

is conscious of the difference between knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower, and *asamprajñāta*, in which no such difference is perceived. *Samprajñāta* has various divisions such as *sa-vitarka* (argument) and *sa-vicāra* (philosophical research). What is spontaneous or *asamprajñāta-samādhi-yoga*? To answer this, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking three and a half ślokas beginning here with the word *yatroparamate*.

When one attains *samādhi*, the *citta* becomes fully detached from sense objects and has no contact with them, because one has achieved self-restraint (*niruddha*). This is confirmed in Patañjali's *Yoga-sūtra*: *yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodhah*. "When the *citta-vṛtti* (attention) is fully restrained from sense enjoyment and absorbed in the blissful realisation of the self and Paramātmā, it is called *yoga*"

The qualified yogī realises Paramātmā by his purified mind and remains satisfied with that alone. This is his blissful state, *samādhi*. This *samādhi* is attained by an intellect which has become qualified to experience the self and Paramātmā. This is because it is *atīndriya* (beyond the senses), and beyond the happiness attained by contact of the senses with the sense objects. Wherever this yogī lives, he does not deviate from his *ātma-svarūpa* and thus, after attaining this blissful state, he considers the pursuit of any other type of acquisition as insignificant. Even if there is contact with misery, he does not experience it. This is *yoga-samjñitam*, or simply *yoga*, and only this can be called *samādhi*. A yogī should not lament, "I have not attained perfection after so much time, so what is the purpose in undergoing all this pain?" Rather, within his mind, he should maintain firm patience. "Whether perfection comes in this life or in the next, I will continue to endeavour. Why should I become impatient?"

In this regard, Śrī Gaudapāda, Śaṅkarācārya's *paramagurudeva*, has given the example of vowing to dry up the ocean by taking out a drop of water at a time with the tip of a piece of *kuṣa* grass. Similarly, by untiring, determined endeavour, a person can control the mind.

In this regard there is a story. Once a bird laid her eggs on the shore of an ocean, but the waves carried the eggs away. The bird resolved to dry up the ocean, and began to take water out, drop by drop, in her beak. Other birds came to convince her that her endeavour was futile, but she did not stop her work. By chance, Śrī Nāradajī came to that place, and he also tried to convince the bird to stop, but the bird took a vow in his presence: "I will not rest until I dry up the ocean, whether it is in this life or in the next." Merciful Nārada then sent Garuḍa to help her. When Garuḍa heard that the ocean had carried away the eggs of someone in his own caste, he began to dry up the ocean by fanning it with his wings. The ocean became terrified, and immediately gave the eggs back to the bird.

Thus it is certain that when a person begins the process of *yoga*, *jñāna* or *bhakti* with faith in such statements of *śāstra*, Śrī Bhagavān will definitely bless such enthusiastic endeavour.

In the two *ślokas* beginning with the word *saṅkalpa*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the initial and ultimate activities of a person engaged in such *yoga*. Abandoning all material desires (*Gītā* 6.24) is the initial act and not worrying about anything else, as spoken in *Gītā* (6.25), is the final act.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Words cannot describe the happiness that manifests in the yogī's pure heart when he attains perfection in *yoga*, and his heart becomes cleansed by *saṁādhi*. It can only be realised with one's purified mind.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura says, “In this way, by the practice of *yoga*, the mind gradually becomes detached from sense enjoyment and free from the control of all mundane objects. At that time, the stage of *samādhi* appears. In that state, the mind becomes qualified to realise and experience Paramātmā, thus realising the happiness born from that union. Patañjali Muni’s philosophical literature is the only bona fide literature on *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*. Because commentators do not understand its factual meaning, they say that, according to the *vedānta-vādīs* (propounders of *Vedānta*), the attainment of bliss and the conscious state of the self is called *mokṣa*. This is unreasonable because, if bliss is accepted in the *kaivalya* (liberated) stage of impersonal monism, then the duality of the experience and the one who has the experience will exist. Thus it will not be *kaivalya* (oneness). But these commentators do not understand what Patañjali Muni means, because in his last *sūtra* he has said:

*puruṣārtha-śūnyānāṁ guṇānāṁ pratiprasavah
kaivalyāṁ svarūpa-pratiṣṭhā vā citi-śaktir iti*
Yoga-sūtra 3.34

The function of the real self (*cit-dharma*) awakens when one is free from the four goals of human life (*dharma, artha, kāma* and *mokṣa*), and when the *guṇas* do not cause any worldly disturbance. This state is called *kaivalya* (oneness). In this state one becomes situated in one’s own *svarūpa*. It is then called *citi-śakti*.

“If we deeply deliberate on this it becomes clear that Patañjali Muni does not accept that the functions of the self are annihilated in its ultimate state; rather, he accepts that at that stage no transformation or perversion of its function takes place. *Citi-śakti* means *cit-dharma*. When there are no perverse transformations in the proper functioning of the self, then *svarūpa-dharma*, the true nature of the self, awakens. When that state of the self is in contact with the material energy, it is called

ātma-guṇa-vikāra (the transformation of the constitutional functions of one's self). If perverse transformations are removed, then *ānanda*, which is an intrinsic characteristic of the *ātmā*, will awaken. This is the opinion of Patañjali.

"Ānanda awakens when one is free from any perversion by the *guṇas* and is of a blissful nature. It is the supreme end of *yoga*. Later, it will be explained that this and nothing else is called *bhakti*.

"*Samādhi* is of two types: *samprajñāta* and *asamprajñāta*. *Samprajñāta-samādhi* has many divisions such as *sa-vitarka* (argument) and *sa-vicarana* (philosophical research). But *asamprajñāta-samādhi* is only of one type. In the state of *asamprajñata-samādhi*, one attains eternal bliss, which is devoid of any contact of the senses with their sense objects through the intelligence which has become qualified to experience the true self or has become one with the self. In that pure state of realising eternal bliss within the self, the mind of the *yogī* does not deviate from the Absolute Reality. Without attaining this state, the *jīva* can never achieve eternal auspiciousness merely by the practice of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*. This is because, if the *yogī* is deprived of this blissful state, then the secondary results of this practice in the form of mystic powers and so on attract his mind, and will deviate him from the topmost objective which is *samādhi-sukha* (bliss in trance). Due to such obstacles, there is the danger of many inauspicious mishaps in the practice of this *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* such as degradation and deviation. In *bhakti-yoga*, however, there is no such danger. This will be explained later on.

"The *yogī* does not consider any other bliss to be superior to the bliss achieved in *samādhi*. In other words, while maintaining his life, he experiences temporary happiness through contact of the senses with their sense objects, but he considers this to be completely insignificant. Even at the time of death, while tolerating the extreme pain of an accident or bodily miseries, he enjoys the bliss of *samādhi*, which is the

only object of his search. Being unmoved by all these pains, he still does not give up his supremely blissful state. He understands that these miseries will not stay for long and will disappear soon enough. If there is a delay or any obstacle in achieving the result of *yoga*, he does not become so frustrated that he gives up his practice. With great endeavour he continues his *yoga* practice until he attains the result.

"The first duty on the path of *yoga* is to follow *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma* and so on and to completely abandon desires which are born from the attraction to attaining mystic *siddhis*. In addition, with the help of the purified mind, the *yogī* should control his senses. He should gradually learn renunciation with intelligence acquired from following the limb of *dhāraṇā* (concentrating the mind). This renunciation is called *pratyāhāra* (withdrawal of the senses from the sense objects). He should achieve *ātma-samādhi* by completely controlling his mind through the processes of *dhyāna*, *dhāraṇā* and *pratyāhāra*. In the final state, he should not think any mundane thoughts, and should not become attached to the maintenance of his body while thinking about it. This is the ultimate duty of the *yogī*."

ŚLOKA 26

यतो यतो निश्चलति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥२६॥

yato yato niścalati / manaś cañcalam asthiram
tatas tato niyamyaitad / ātmany eva vaśam nayet

yataḥ yataḥ—to whichever (sense); *cañcalam*—the restless; *asthiram*—unsteady; *manah*—mind; *niścalati*—wanders; *eva*—certainly; *tataḥ tataḥ*—from that; *niyamya*—regulating; *nayet*—one should lead; *etat*—this; *vaśam*—controlled (mind); *ātmani*—within the soul.

No matter how the restless and unsteady mind wanders to the various sense objects, it should be restrained and fixed within the self alone.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

If, due to poor *samskāra*, the mind of the *yogī* becomes unsteady by contact with *rāja-guṇa*, then he should again practise *yoga*. Śrī Bhagavān is explaining this by speaking this *sloka* beginning with the words *yato yataḥ*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

When the mind of the *sādhaka* becomes restless and wanders to the sense objects, he should immediately restrain it from those sense objects to which it has wandered and fix it in the self alone.

ŚLOKA 27

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्पषम् ॥२७॥

*praśānta-manasam hy enam / yoginam sukham uttamam
upaiti śānta-rajasam / brahma-bhūtam akalmaṣam*

enam yoginam—that yogī; hi—certainly; (has) praśānta-manasam—great peace of mind; brahma-bhūtam—realisation of brahma; śānta-rajasam—his passions are pacified; akalmaṣam—he is freed from reactions to past sins; (and) upaiti—he achieves; uttamam—supreme; sukham—bliss.

Such a peaceful *yogī*, who sees everything in connection with *brahma*, and who is free from *rāja-guṇa* and the reactions of past sins, attains supreme bliss in the form of self-realisation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

After overcoming all the impediments by practise, a yogī attains the bliss of *samādhi* as previously described.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀSIKĀ-VR̄TTI

The bliss of *samādhi* itself appears to the yogī.

ŚLOKA 28

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्पः ।
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥२८॥

*yuñjan evam sadātmānam / yogī vigata-kalmaṣah
sukhen brahma-saṁsparśam / atyantam sukham aśnute*

vigata-kalmaṣah—being freed from sins; *yogī*—the transcendentalist; *sadā*—always; *yuñjan*—regulating; *ātmānam*—the mind; *evam*—thus; *sukhena*—easily; *aśnute*—attains; *atyantam*—supreme; *sukham*—bliss; (which is) *brahma-saṁsparśam*—full realisation of *brahma*.

In this way, by continuous practice, a sinless yogī makes the self steady in *yoga* and easily attains supreme bliss in the form of *brahma* realisation, becoming liberated from material life.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

At that time, such yogīs become perfect. The words *sukham aśnute* mean that they become liberated in this life (*jīvan-mukta*).

ŚLOKA 29

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
इक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥२९॥

*sarva-bhūta-stham ātmānam / sarva-bhūtāni cātmani
īkṣate yoga-yuktātmā / sarvatra sama-darśanah*

yoga-yukta-ātmā—a person connected in *yoga*; (with) *sama-darśanah*—equal vision; *īkṣate*—sees; *sarvatra*—everywhere; *ātmānam*—Supersoul; *sthām*—situated; *sva-bhūta*—in all living beings; *ca*—and; *sva-bhūtāni*—all living beings; *ātmani*—in the Supersoul.

A person who is linked in *yoga* realises *brahma* everywhere. He observes Him as Paramātmā who is situated in all living entities, and observes all living entities in Him.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this *śloka* beginning with the words *sva-bhūta-stham ātmānam*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the characteristics of a person who has realised *brahma*, and who has become liberated in this life. He directly experiences the presence of Paramātmā in all *jīvas*, understanding that He is the substratum of all *jīvas*. The words *yoga-yuktātmā* refer to a person who realises the Supreme Lord in all beings, both moving and non-moving, due to his mind being absorbed in *brahma*. In other words, he experiences *brahma* everywhere.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “Arjuna is asking, ‘What type of bliss comes from contact with *brahma*?’ Śrī Bhagavān anticipates this question, and explains briefly that the *yogī* who has attained *samādhi* behaves in two ways: 1) according to his *bhāva* (vision) and 2) according to his *kriya* (activity). His *bhāva* is such that he sees Paramātmā in all *jīvas* and all *jīvas* in Paramātmā. His activities reflect such equal vision everywhere. In the next two *ślokas*, this *bhāva* is explained and in the *śloka* after that, *kriya* is explained.”

ŚLOKA 30

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वज्ञं मयि पश्यति ।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥३०॥

*yo mām paśyati sarvatra / sarvañ ca mayi paśyati
tasyāham na prāṇaśyāmi / sa ca me na prāṇaśyati*

(he) *yah*—who; *paśyati*—sees; *mām*—Me; *sarvatra*—everywhere; *ca*—and; *paśyati*—sees; *sarvam*—everything; *mayi*—in Me; *tasyāham*—for him; *aham*—I; *na prāṇaśyāmi*—am never lost (invisible); *ca*—and; *sah*—he; *na prāṇaśyati*—he is never lost; *me*—to Me.

For one who sees Me in all beings and sees all beings in Me, I am never lost, nor is he ever lost to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this śloka beginning with the words *yo mām*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the result of the yogī's direct experience. "For him, I, *brahma*, am never lost, because for such a yogī, direct experience of Me becomes eternal. The yogī who worships Me never falls down."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Bhagavān is never out of sight for *sādhakas* who have direct experience of Him, and such *sādhakas* are also never out of His vision. Due to their constant mutual contact, the worshipper never falls.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "I indeed belong to those who see Me everywhere and who see all entities in Me. When My *bhakta* surpasses the stage of *śānta-rati* (neutral attachment), a special type of loving relationship arises between us, in which both of us feel, 'I am his and he is mine.' After this relationship has developed, I

never bestow upon him complete destruction by giving him dry impersonal *mokṣa*. He can no longer be lost because he has become My servant and has attained the eternal function of his self."

ŚLOKA 31

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।
सर्वथा वर्त्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥३१॥

*sarva-bhūta-sthitam yo mām / bhajaty ekatvam āsthitaḥ
sarvathā varttamāno'pi / sa yogī mayi varttate*

sah—that; *yogī*—transcendentalist; *yah*—who; *bhajati*—worships; *mām*—Me; *sarva-bhūta-sthitam*—as I am situated in all beings; *āsthitaḥ*—ascending; *ekatvam*—the stage of one-pointed intelligence; *varttate*—exists; *mayi*—in Me; *api*—although; *varttamānah*—existing; *sarvathā*—in all circumstances.

The *yogī* who worships Me, the all-pervading Supersoul, with one-pointed intelligence in both the *sādhana* and *siddha* stage, considering Me to be the Supreme Absolute Reality without a second, dwells only in Me in all circumstances.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Even before he has directly realised Me, who am the all-pervasive Paramātmā, the *yogī* who worships Me with the attitude explained in the previous śloka is not compelled to follow all the rules and regulations of *sādhana*. Paramātmā is the cause of everything and the Supreme Absolute Reality without a second. He who takes shelter of this realisation and engages in My *bhajana* by *śravaṇam*, *smaraṇam* and so on is certainly situated in Me in all respects and under all conditions. He is not in the material world, whether he performs action as prescribed in *śāstra* or not.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The various living entities have different types of bodies which are classified as moving and non-moving. The *jīvas* within these bodies are also different. Consequently, there are unlimited *jīvas*. In *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (5.9) it is said:

*bālāgra-śata-bhāgasya / śatadhā kalpitasya ca
bhāgo jīvah sa vijñeyah / sa cānantyāya kalpate*

Although the *jīva* is situated in the inert body, he is a subtle and non-material reality. One may divide the tip of a hair into one hundred parts and further divide one of those parts into another hundred, but the *jīva* is even smaller and more subtle than that.

The *jīva*, being extremely subtle, is an anti-material entity, and is capable of acquiring the nature of *ānantya*. *Anta* means death, and freedom from death is called *ānantya* or *mokṣa*. *Paramātmā*, although one, dwells within the hearts of the unlimited *jīvas* as *Antaryāmī* and as a witness. This is also stated in the *smṛti-sāstra*:

*eka eva paro viṣṇuh / sarva-vyāpī na samśayaḥ
aiśvaryād rūpam ekaṁ ca / sūrya-vat bahudheyate*

The all-pervading Śrī Viṣṇu is one, and by the influence of His *aiśvarya* He appears in various forms, just as the one sun appears in many places at the same time.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “Meditation on the four-handed form of Śrī Viṣṇu (Īśvara) is recommended to the yogī during the *sādhana* stage, culminating in the realisation of My *sac-cid-ānanda* form of Śyāmasundara in *nirvikalpa-samādhi* (a state of trance). In this state, one’s intellect becomes free from the dualities of time in regard to *parama-tattva*. In other words, one becomes free from the misconception that He is different in the *sādhana-avasthā* (practice stage) and *siddha-*

avasthā (perfected stage). ‘The yogīs who worship Me, who am all-pervading, perform *bhakti* unto Me by *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam*. Even in their working stage (*karma-avasthā*), their period of deliberation (*jñāna-avasthā*) and their meditation (*samādhi*), in all circumstances they always dwell in Me.’ This means they attain *kṛṣṇa-sāmīḍya-mokṣa*, liberation characterised by the symptom of always being situated near Kṛṣṇa. In Śrī Nārada-pañcarātra, which gives instructions on *yoga*, it is said:

*dik-kālādy-anavacchinne / kṛṣṇe ceto vidhāya ca
tan-mayo bhavati kṣipram / jīvo brahmaṇi yojayet*

When the *jīva* fixes his mind on the form of *parabrahma* Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is beyond the bounds of material time and space, and becomes absorbed in Him, he experiences the ecstatic bliss of transcendental association with Him.

Thus, *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* is certainly the supreme state of *yoga-samādhi*.”

ŚLOKA 32

**आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽजुन् ।
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥३२॥**

*ātmauपम्येन sarvatra / samam paśyati yo’rjuna
sukham vā yadi vā duḥkham / sa yogī paramo mataḥ*

arjuna—O Arjuna; *sah*—that; *yogī*—transcendentalist; *yah*—who; *paśyati*—sees; *sarvatra*—all other beings; *samam*—equally; *ātma-upamyaena*—with himself; *yadi vā*—whether; *sukham*—in happiness; *vā*—or; *duḥkham*—in distress; *mataḥ*—is considered; (*to be*) *paramah*—the best.

O Arjuna, he who, through self-realisation, sees all *jīvas* as equal to himself, and who considers their pleasure and pain to be his own, is the best *yogī*. That is My opinion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

It has been said that in *sādhana-avasthā*, yogīs are equally disposed towards all beings. Here, this śloka beginning with *ātmaupamyaṇa* specifically describes the primary characteristic of their equanimity. Those equipoised yogīs appreciate that just as they themselves like happiness and dislike pain, others similarly experience happiness and pain. They therefore have equal vision everywhere and are the ever well-wishers of everyone. “Such yogīs are the topmost. This is My opinion.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Even during *sādhana-avasthā*, yogīs are endowed with equanimity. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “I am explaining how a yogī behaves. Only he who has equal vision towards everyone is considered to be the topmost yogī. The word *sama-dṛṣṭi* (equal vision) means that in his dealings with others the yogī sees all *jīvas* to be like himself, and considers the happiness and pain of other *jīvas* as his own. Therefore, he is always the well-wisher of all *jīvas*, and acts accordingly for their eternal benefit. This is called *sama-darśana*.”

ŚLOKA 33

अर्जुन उवाच—
योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन ।
एतस्याहं न पश्यामि चञ्चलत्वात्स्थितिं स्थिराम् ॥३३॥

arjuna uvāca
yo 'yam yogas tvayā proktah / sāmyena madhusūdana
etasyāham na paśyāmi / cañcalatvāt sthitim sthirām

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *madhusūdana*—O Madhusūdana; *ayam yogah*—this process of yoga; *yah*—which; *proktah*—was spoken; *tvayā*—by You; (is) *sāmyena*—based on equanimity; (however) *aham*—I; *na paśyāmi*—am unable to understand; *sthirām*—the stable; *sthitim*—situation; *etasya*—of that process; *cañcalatvāt*—on account of (the mind's) restlessness.

Arjuna said: O Madhusūdana, the *yoga* described by You that is based on equanimity towards everyone, everywhere, seems to be impermanent, due to the restless nature of my mind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Thinking that the equipoised symptoms described by Śrī Bhagavān are difficult to attain, Arjuna speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *yo ‘yam*. “This *yoga* depends on being equipoised in all situations, and I do not see how one can achieve success in it, because its practice cannot be maintained at all times. Because of the flickering nature of the mind, such practice can last only for two or three days. Additionally, You have explained equanimity by saying that one should see the happiness and misery of all people of the world as one’s own. This vision may be possible toward those who are one’s relatives or those who are neutral, but such an attitude is impossible to maintain towards one’s enemies or those who are envious and critical. I cannot see how the happiness and pain of myself, Yudhiṣṭhira and Duryodhana are in reality equal. Although by proper deliberation, one can have equal vision of the *jīvātmā*, *Paramātmā*, the life air and senses of the self, one’s enemies and all embodied *jīvas*, this vision is difficult to maintain for more than two or three days because the very powerful and flickering mind cannot be restrained merely by discrimination. Rather, it is seen that the mind that is attached to sense enjoyment will ultimately overpower one’s discrimination.”

ŚLOKA 34

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्वृद्धम् ।
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥३४॥

cañcalam hi manah kṛṣṇa / pramāthi balavad dṛḍham
tasyāham nigrahaṁ manye / vāyor iva suduṣkaram

kṛṣṇa—O Kṛṣṇa; *hi*—certainly; *manah*—the mind; (*is*) *cañcalam*—naturally restless; *pramāthi*—agitating the intelligence, body and senses; *balavat*—powerful; (and) *dṛḍham*—violent; *aham*—I; *manye*—think; *nigrahaṁ*—subjugation; *tasya*—of it; (*is*) *suduṣkaram*—very hard to do; *iva*—like; *vāyoh*—of the wind.

O Kṛṣṇa, the mind is by nature restless, powerful, obstinate and capable of completely overpowering the intelligence, body and senses. It seems as difficult to control as the wind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.3.3) it is said: *ātmānam rathinam viddhi śarīram ratham eva ca*. “Know the *ātmā* to be the passenger and the body to be the chariot.”

It is said in the *śruti*s that learned *pāṇḍitas* compare the body to a chariot, the senses to furious horses, the mind to the controller of the senses (the reins), the sense objects (sound, form, taste, touch and smell) to the pathways, and the intelligence to the driver. It is understood from this statement that the intelligence controls the mind, but Arjuna challenges this, saying that the powerful mind can even overpower the intelligence. One may question how that can be. He then replies, “Just as a powerful disease may not be affected by the medicine that has the potency to cure it, similarly the mind, which is very powerful by nature, does not always accept intelligence endowed with discrimination.” Moreover, he says that the mind is very obstinate. Just as one

cannot possibly pierce iron with a small needle, similarly it is not possible for even subtle intelligence to pierce the mind. The mind is like the wind, and just as it is difficult to control the mighty wind blowing in the sky, it is extremely difficult to control the mind by the process of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, through breath restraint.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

A story from the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* illustrates how the process of serving Bhagavān can simply and naturally control the most powerful and flickering mind.

Once there was a wealthy *brāhmaṇa* who lived with his son and family members in the land of Avanti. Although he was rich, he was extremely miserly, and would not spend even a penny for the pleasure of his family or community; rather, he was always engaged in accumulating wealth. When his children grew up, they became very perturbed by his behaviour, and his neighbours, family members and others in the community also became opposed to him. Even the royal servants opposed him because he did not pay his taxes. Unfortunately, in this unfavourable situation, his house burnt down, and his family and community members rejected him.

However, due to some good *samskāra* and the influence of *sādhu-sanga*, he accepted the dress of a *tridandī-sannyāsī*. On the instruction of his *sad-guru* he engaged in *bhakti*, and adopted equal vision towards friends and enemies, happiness and misery, good and bad, and towards himself and others. He remained satisfied even when the people of his own village mistreated him as he was begging. They would call him an atheist and a cheater and they would throw stool and urine into his begging bowl instead of food or grains. Yet with an undisturbed *citta* (mind), always meditating on Bhagavān, he finally attained eternal *sevā* to Bhagavān Mukunda.

ŚLOKA 35

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥३५॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
asamśayam mahā-bāho / mano durnigraham calam
abhyāsenā tu kaunteya / vairāgyeṇa ca gṛhyate

śrī bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Lord said; *mahā-bāho*—O mighty-armed Arjuna; *asamśayam*—without doubt; *manoh*—the mind; *durnigraham*—is hard to subjugate; (and) *calam*—unsteady; *tu*—but; *abhyāsenā*—by practice; *ca*—and; *vairāgyeṇa*—by renunciation; *gṛhyate*—it can be controlled; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O Mahā-bāho, undoubtedly the mind is restless and hard to control. Yet, by *abhyāsa* (constant practice) and *vairāgya* (true renunciation), it can be controlled, O Kaunteya.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān accepts Arjuna's statement, and allays his doubt by speaking this śloka beginning with the word *asamśayam*. "What you have said is true. Still, even a chronic disease can certainly be cured if one regularly takes medicine according to the prescription of an expert physician, although it may take some time. In the same way, the uncontrollable mind can be subdued by *abhyāsa*, the regular practice of *yoga* in accordance with the instructions of a *sad-guru*, by constant cultivation of *dhyāna-yoga* (meditation on Parameśvara) and *vairāgya* (true renunciation)."

This is also stated in *Pātañjala-sūtra* 12: *abhyāsa-vairāgyā bhyām tan nirodhah*. "By constant practice and true renunciation the tendencies of the *citta* can be controlled."

“O Mahā-bāho (Arjuna), you have not only defeated many great heroes in battle, you have also pleased Lord Śiva, who carries the trident. But what is the use of all this? O crest-jewel of all great heroes, your name, Mahā-bāho, will only be appropriate if you can conquer the mind with the weapon of *yoga*. O Kaunteya, don’t fear in this regard. You are the son of My father’s sister, therefore, it is My duty to help you.”

ŚLOKA 36

असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः ।
वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायतः ॥३६॥

*asamīyatātmanā yogo / duṣprāpa iti me matih
vaśyātmanā tu yatata / śakyo'vāptum upāyataḥ*

(it) *duṣprāpah*—is difficult to achieve; *asamīyata-ātmanā*—by one whose mind is uncontrolled; *yogaḥ*—connection with the Supreme Lord; *tu*—however; *vaśya-ātmanā*—by one whose mind is disciplined; *yatata*—and who strives; *avāptum*—to obtain (it); *upāyataḥ*—by the (above-mentioned) means; (it is) *śakyaḥ*—achievable; *iti*—that; (is) *me*—My; *matih*—opinion.

It is very difficult for one whose mind is not controlled to achieve self-realisation through this *yoga* system. However, one who has brought his mind under control, and who strives by the proper means of *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya*, can attain perfection in *yoga*. This is My opinion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now Śrī Bhagavān is giving instruction on the subject of *yoga*. One who has not controlled his mind by *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya* does not become perfect in *yoga*. However, if one regulates his mind by *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya*, and constantly

engages in *sādhana* over a prolonged period of time, he can attain *yoga* or *saṁādhi*, which is characterised by the symptom of a controlled mind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “One who does not endeavour to control his mind by *vairāgya* and *abhyāsa* can never perfect the previously mentioned system of *yoga*. However, he who endeavours to control the mind by adopting the proper means can definitely attain perfection in *yoga*. When I say, ‘by the proper means’, I imply that he who tries to concentrate his *citta* by performing *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* offered to Bhagavān and who engages in the *abhyāsa* of meditation on Me, as a limb of this *yoga* system, simultaneously accepting with *vairāgya* sense objects for his maintenance, gradually attains perfection in *yoga*.”

ŚLOKA 37

अर्जुन उवाच—
अयतिः श्रद्धयोपेतो योगाच्चलितमानसः ।
अप्राप्य योगसंसिद्धिं कां गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति ॥३७॥

arjuna uvāca
ayatiḥ śraddhayopeto / yogāc calita-mānasah
aprāpya yoga-saṁsiddhim / kām gatim kṛṣṇa gacchati

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *kṛṣṇa*—O Kṛṣṇa; *kām*—to which?; *gatim*—destination; *gacchati*—does he go; *a-yatiḥ*—he who is not an ascetic; (*yet*) *upetah*—endowed; *śraddhayā*—with faith; *calita-mānasah*—whose mind becomes deviated; *yogāt*—from the practice of *yoga*; *aprāpya*—without attaining; *yoga-saṁsiddhim*—complete perfection in *yoga*.

Arjuna asked: O Kṛṣṇa, what is the destination of one who begins the process of *yoga* with faith but later, due to an uncontrolled mind, falls back into worldliness and fails to attain perfection in *yoga*?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna raises the question, “You said that only those who endeavour with *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya* attain perfection in *yoga*, but what is the destination of one who falters in this endeavour?”

He who is faithful because of theistic intelligence in *yoga-śāstra* engages in the practice of *yoga* without hypocrisy. However, due to a lack of proper practice and detachment, his mind may deviate from *yoga* and become absorbed in sense objects. Although he does not fully perfect his *yoga*, he does make some progress. Therefore, what is the destination of such a *yogī* who has gone beyond the stage of *yoga-ārurukṣu* (desiring *yoga*) and has situated himself on the first step of *yoga*?

ŚLOKA 38

**कच्चनोभयविभ्रष्टश्छन्नाभ्रमिव नश्यति ।
अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमूढो ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥३८॥**

*kaccin nobhaya-vibhraṣṭaś / chinnābhram iva naśyati
apratiṣṭho mahā-bāho / vimūḍho brahmaṇah pathi*

mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa; (*being*) *ubhaya-vibhraṣṭaḥ*—unsuccessful in both (*karma* and *yoga*); *vimūḍhaḥ*—baffled; *pathi*—on the path; *brahmaṇaḥ*—of spiritual realisation; *kaccit*—whether?; *naśyati*—he perishes; *iva*—like; *chinna-abhrām*—a riven cloud; *apratiṣṭhaḥ*—without a footing.

O Mahā-bāho Kṛṣṇa, if one falls from both the processes of *karma* and *yoga* and becomes deviated from the path of attaining *brahma*, does he not perish like a riven cloud, with no shelter anywhere?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna is raising a question. “What happens to a person who has deviated from the paths of *karma* and *yoga*? In other words, what happens to a person who has given up the path of *karma* and has also not attained perfection in the path of *yoga*? Does that yogī not face the same fate as a riven cloud that has separated from a cloud mass and dissolves into thin air, because it does not join other clouds? When he begins the path of *yoga*, he has the desire to give up sense enjoyment, but at the same time, because his *vairāgya* is not complete, the desire to enjoy the senses still remains within him. This is a very difficult situation. Since he has abandoned the path of *karma* (a means to attain Svarga), his next world, Svarga, is also lost, and by not attaining perfection in *yoga*, which is the means for *mokṣa*, he also fails to achieve *mokṣa*. From this it appears that he is lost in both worlds. That is why I am asking You whether a person who has deviated from the *sādhana* of attaining *brahma* becomes bereft of all shelter. Is he lost or not?”

ŚLOKA 39

एतन्मे संशयं कृष्ण छेत्तुमहस्यशेषतः ।
त्वदन्यः संशयस्यास्य छेत्ता न ह्युपपद्यते ॥३९॥

*etan me saṁśayam kṛṣṇa / chettum arhasy aśeṣataḥ
tvad-anyah saṁśayasyasya / chettā na hy upapadyate*

kṛṣṇa—O Kṛṣṇa; *etat*—this; (*is*) *me saṁśayam*—my doubt; *arhasi*—You should; *chettum*—dispel (it); *aśeṣataḥ*—completely; *tvat-anyah*—other than Yourself; *hi*—certainly;

chettā—a remover; *asya samśayasya*—of this doubt; *na upapadyate*—is not to be found.

O Kṛṣṇa, this is my doubt and I implore You to remove it completely. Other than You, no one else can possibly dispel this doubt.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this *śloka*, Arjuna says, “O Kṛṣṇa, You are the supreme controller of all controllers, the supreme cause of all causes, and You are omniscient. No *devatā* or *r̥ṣi* is omniscient (*sarva-jñā*) and all-powerful (*sarva-śaktimān*) like You. Therefore, other than You, there is nobody who is able to dispel my doubt.”

ŚLOKA 40

श्रीभगवानुवाच—
पार्थं नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।
न हि कल्याणकृत्क्षिददुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥४०॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
pārtha naivēha nāmutra / vināśas tasya vidyate
na hi kalyāṇa-kṛt kaścid / durgatim tāta gacchatī

śrī bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Person said; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *tāta*—dear one; *eva*—certainly; *tasya*—for that person; *vidyate*—there is; *na*—neither; *vināśah*—destruction; *ihā*—in this world; *na*—nor; *amutra*—in the next; *hi*—certainly; *kaścit*—someone; *kalyāṇa-kṛt*—who performs auspicious acts; *na gacchati*—does not go; *durgatim*—to an unfavourable destination.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O Pārtha, such an unsuccessful *yogī* is not lost either in this world or the next because, My dear friend, a person who is engaged in auspicious acts never attains an unfavourable destination.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this world as well as in the next world, such an unsuccessful *yogī* engages in *yoga* which leads to auspiciousness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

By addressing Arjuna as Pārtha in this *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān is instructing him in a very loving manner. Bhagavān considers Arjuna to be extremely dear to Him. By using the word *tāta*, which literally means son, He demonstrates His affection for Arjuna. A father expands himself in the form of his son, and therefore he is called *tat*. When the suffix *ana* is applied to the original word *tat*, it becomes *tāta*. Śrī Gurudeva also affectionately calls his disciple, who is like his son, *tāta*. Here, Śrī Bhagavān says that those who engage in *yoga* with faith never arrive at a degraded destination.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Pārtha, one who engages in the practice of *yoga* never meets destruction, either now or in the future. The performer of that *yoga* which leads to eternal good can never be subject to an evil fate. Basically, all of humanity is divided into two categories: righteous (regulated) and unrighteous (unregulated). The behaviour of unregulated people is always like that of animals, whether they are cultured or uncultured, dull or intelligent, weak or strong. There is no possibility of the world receiving any good from their activities.

“The righteous (regulated) can be divided into three categories: *karmī*, *jñāni* and *bhakta*. *Karmīs* are further divided into two divisions: *sakāma-karmī* and *niṣkāma-karmī*. The *sakāma-karmīs* hanker for petty kinds of happiness, or temporary pleasures. Although they attain Svarga and worldly progress, all their pleasure is temporary. Therefore, that which is called *kalyāṇa* (auspiciousness for the *jīvas*) is unknown to them. The state of *kalyāṇa* for the *jīvas* is to become free from the grip of worldliness and to attain

nityānanda, eternal bliss. Therefore any process which does not lead to this eternal bliss is futile. Only when the purpose of achieving this *nityānanda* is combined with *karmakāṇḍa* activities, can such *karma* be called *karma-yoga*. First, the *citta* is purified by such *karma-yoga*, then one attains *jñāna*. After that, one engages in *dhyāna-yoga* (meditation) and then finally, the zenith of all processes, the path of *bhakti-yoga* is attained.

“The injunction of accepting austerities by renouncing selfish pleasures in *sakāma-karma* is called *tapasyā* by a *karmī*. However many austerities he may perform, his goal is only sense pleasure and nothing else. The *asuras*, after achieving the results of their austerities, simply enjoy their senses. On the other hand, when that person’s *karma* surpasses the boundaries of sense enjoyment, then *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* appears, which aims at the eternal good of the *jīva*. A *dhyāna-yogī* or a *jñāna-yogī*, firmly situated on the path of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, often naturally performs actions for the eternal good of all beings.

“In every respect an *aṣṭāṅga-yogī* surpasses whatever results a *jīva* attains by *sakāma-karma*.”

ŚLOKA 41

प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकानुषित्वा शाश्वतीः समाः ।
शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥४१॥

*prāpya puṇya-kṛtām lokān / uśitvā śāśvatīḥ samāḥ
śucinām śrīmatām gehe / yoga-bhraṣṭo'bhijāyate*

yoga-bhraṣṭah—one deviated from the path of *yoga*; *prāpya*—attains; *lokān*—the planets; *puṇya-kṛtām*—of the pious; *uśitvā*—after dwelling; *śāśvatīḥ*—for very long; *samāḥ*—years; *abhijāyate*—he takes birth; *gehe*—in the house; *śucinām*—of the pure (*brāhmaṇas*); (and) *śrīmatām*—of the wealthy.

One who deviates from the path of *yoga* after practising for only a short time attains the planets of the pious and, after enjoying there for many years, takes birth in a righteous and wealthy family.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

What is the destination of persons who deviate from the path of *yoga*? In answer to this, Śrī Bhagavān says that they reside on the planets which are attained by the pious persons, who perform *yajñas* such as the *aśvamedha-yajña*. Since enjoyment and *mokṣa* are both the results of *yoga*, the *yogīs* who have not yet matured and have fallen because of a desire to enjoy only attain enjoyment. On the other hand, since it is impossible for matured *yogīs* to desire enjoyment, they certainly attain *mokṣa*. If, by the will of providence, a mature *yogī* does develop a desire to enjoy, he also can attain enjoyment like Kardama and Saubhari Ṛṣis.

The word *śuci* means those who are of good character and conduct, and *śrī* means wealthy business people or royalty. A fallen *yogī* takes birth only in the houses of such families after residing in Svarga and other higher planets.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

The *yogīs* who have fallen from the path of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* can be divided into two categories. In the first category are those who have fallen after following the process of *yoga* for a short time. Such *yogīs* do not attain lower destinations according to the *śloka*: *nehābhikrama-nāśo 'sti* (*Gītā* 2.40); rather, they enjoy happiness on the higher planets attained by pious persons who perform *yajñas* such as the *aśvamedha-yajña*. They then take birth in the houses of qualified *brāhmaṇas* or rich men who are engaged in *dharma* activities. Both of these situations are favourable for their continued practice of *yoga*.

In the second category are those who have practised *yoga*

for a long time and whose practice has almost matured. By the will of providence, however, they have developed a desire to enjoy sense gratification in this life. In their next life some of them achieve their desired enjoyment and finally becoming indifferent to that, they complete their process of *yoga*. Examples of this are Kardama (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.23) and Saubhari Ṛṣis. Kardama Ṛṣi was a *yogī* of high calibre. On the order and inspiration of his father Brahmā, he unwillingly married Devahūti and enjoyed conjugal pleasure superior to that of the Prajāpatis. Kapiladeva, an *avatāra* of Bhagavān, appeared as Kardama Ṛṣi's son, and, after renouncing all material enjoyment and sense pleasure, again engaged in the worship of Bhagavān. The life history of Saubhari Ṛṣi has been related in the *Sārārtha-varṣiṇī prakaśikā vṛtti* of *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.65.

ŚLOKA 42

अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम् ।
एतद्वि दुर्लभतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् ॥४२॥

*athavā yoginām eva / kule bhavati dhīmatām
etad dhi durlabhataram / loke janma yad idṛśam*

atha vā—or else; *eva bhavati*—he becomes; (*placed*) *kule*—in a family; *dhīmatām*—of wise; *yoginām*—transcendentalists; *yat janma*—a birth; *idṛśam*—such as; *etat*—this; *hi*—certainly; *durlabhataram*—is more difficult to obtain; *loke*—in this world.

The *yogī* who deviates after practising for a long time takes his birth in the home of *yogīs* who are great in wisdom. Such a birth is undoubtedly very rare in this world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān has explained the destination of a yogī who falls after practising for a short while. Now, in this *śloka* beginning with *athavā*, He explains the destination of a yogī who falls after practising for a long time. Yogīs such as Nimi are in this category.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Some yogīs from the second category who deviate from their practice take birth in a dynasty of yogīs who are steadfast in *tattva-jñāna*. They then complete their progress on the path of *yoga*. Such a birth is certainly very rare. Nimi Mahārāja is given as an example of such a yogī (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 9.13.1-10).

ŚLOKA 43

तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदैहिकम् ।
यतते च ततो भूयः संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन ॥४३॥

*tatra tam buddhi-samyogam / labhate paurva-daihikam
yatate ca tato bhūyah / saṁsiddhau kuru-nandana*

kuru-nandana—O descendant of Kuru Mahārāja; *tatra*—then; *labhate*—he obtains; *buddhi-samyogam*—connection through his intelligence; *tam*—with that (intelligence); *paurva-daihikam*—of his previous life; *ca*—and; *tataḥ*—then; *yatate*—he endeavours; *bhūyah*—further; *saṁsiddhau*—for complete perfection.

O Kuru-nandana, that unsuccessful yogī regains the divine consciousness of his previous birth that is related to Paramātmā, and he again endeavours to attain perfection in *yoga*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In both types of birth, the fallen yogīs attain the divine intellect of their previous birth. That intellect is fixed in Paramātmā.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In both of these births, due to *samskāras* resulting from *yoga* practice in their previous birth, the fallen yogī attains intelligence which is fixed in his own *dharmika* principles and also knowledge related to Paramātmā. After attaining purity of heart in a natural way, he begins to endeavour seriously for perfection in *yoga*, like one who has awoken from sleep. Now he cannot be checked by any obstacle. That is why such a yogī neither attains a degraded destination nor becomes lost.

ŚLOKA 44

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव ह्रियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः ।
जिज्ञासुरापि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्त्तते ॥४४॥

*pūrvābhyaśena tenaiva / hriyate hy avaśo'pi saḥ
jijñāsur api yogasya / śabda-brahmātivarttate*

abhyāsena—due to the practice; *pūrva*—of his previous life; *sah*—he; *eva hi hriyate*—is certainly attracted; *api*—even; *avaśah*—forcibly; *tena*—by that; *api*—even though just; *jijñāsuḥ*—an inquisitive person; *yogasya*—concerning the practice of transcendental realisation; *ativarttate*—he transcends; *śabda-brahma*—the fruitive portions of Vedic study.

By virtue of his previous practice, he is automatically attracted to the path of *mokṣa*, and after enquiring a little about *yoga*, he transcends the path of *sakāma-karma* described in the *Vedas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

The word *hriyate* means attracted. Being attracted to *yoga* he becomes inquisitive. He then surpasses the path of *sakāma-karma* that is described in the *Vedas*, while remaining situated on the path of *yoga*.

ŚLOKA 45

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः ।
अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥४५॥

*prayatnād yatmānas tu / yogī saṁśuddha-kilbiṣah
aneka-janma-saṁsiddhas / tato yāti parām gatim*

tu—indeed; *yogī*—that transcendentalist; *yatmānah*—endeavouring; *prayatnāt*—with great effort; (being) *saṁśuddha-kilbiṣah*—freed from all sins; *aneka-janma*—after many births; *saṁsiddhah*—becomes completely perfect; *tataḥ*—then; *yāti*—enters; *parām gatim*—the supreme destination.

However, the *yogī* who practises sincerely is freed from all sins after many births, and ultimately becomes perfect. Thus he attains the supreme destination.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

According to *Gītā* (6.37), one falls from the path of *yoga* because he is negligent in his endeavour. For such a fallen *yogī*, the path of *yoga* is attained in his next life, but perfection is not. He will attain perfection in as many lives as it takes him to become mature. He who never weakens in his endeavour does not fall from the path. Rather, after many births, he becomes mature in *yoga* and attains perfection. Kardama Muni has also said:

draṣṭurūn yatante yatayah / śūnyāgāreṣu yat-padam
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.24.28

Even the renounced sages who endeavour in a solitary place to have *darśana* of the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa cannot attain perfection in one lifetime.

It is for this reason that Bhagavān speaks this *śloka*, *prayatnād yataṁnas tu*, which means endeavouring harder than before. The word *tu* shows a difference between these persons and those previously mentioned who fall from *yoga*. *Samśuddha-kilbiṣāḥ* indicates that even a person whose impurities have been completely removed cannot attain *samśiddhi* or *mokṣa* in one life.

ŚLOKA 46

**तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः ।
 कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥४६॥**

*tapasvibhyo'dhiko yogī / jñānibhyo'pi mato'dhikah
 karmibhyas cādhiko yogī / tasmād yogī bhavārjuna*

yogī—the Paramātmā-yogī; *mataḥ*—is considered; *adhikāḥ*—greater; *tapasvibhyah*—than the ascetics; *adhikāḥ*—greater; *api*—even; *jñānibhyah*—than the brahma-vādis; *ca*—and; *yogī*—the yogī; (is) *adhikāḥ*—greater; *karmibhyah*—than the fruitive workers; *tasmāt*—therefore; *arjuna*—O Arjuna; *bhava*—be; *yogī*—a yogī.

The *yogī* is considered superior to the *tapasvī* (ascetic), the *jñānī* and the *karmī*. Therefore, O Arjuna, be a *yogī*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Which is superior among *karma*, *jñāna*, and *yoga*?” In answer to this, Śrī Bhagavān says that a *jñānī* (one who worships *brahma*) is superior to an ascetic (*tapasvī*), or one

who is devoted to performing severe austerities such as *cāndrāyaṇa-vrata*, and superior to such a *jñānī* is a *yogī* (worshipper of Paramātmā). “This is My opinion.” If a *yogī* is superior to a *jñānī*, then what can be said about his superiority over a *karmī* (fruitive worker)?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀSIKĀ-VRITTI

Generally, it is thought that a *karmī*, *jñānī*, *tapasvī*, *yogī* and *bhakta* are all equal. In this present śloka, Śrī Bhagavān is giving His definite opinion that they are not equal; rather, there is a gradation. A *niṣkāma-karma-yogī* is superior to a *sakāma-karmī* (*tapasvī*) and a *jñānī* is superior again. An *aṣṭāṅga-yogī* is superior to a *jñānī*, and a *bhakti-yogī* is superior to all, as is described in the next śloka.

ŚLOKA 47

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।
श्रद्धावान्भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥४७॥

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

api—however; *sarveṣām*—amongst all; *yoginām*—of the *yogīs*; *śraddhāvān*—one endowed with faith; *mad-gatena*—by attaching himself to Me; *antarātmanā*—through his mind; *yah*—who; *bhajate*—worships; *mām*—Me; (it is) *me*—My; *mataḥ*—opinion; (that) *sah*—he; (is) *yuktatamah*—most intimately connected in *yoga*.

He who constantly performs My *bhajana* with full faith, always thinking exclusively of Me within himself is, in My opinion, the topmost of all *yogīs*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Is there no one, then, who is superior to the *yogī*?” In response to this question Śrī Bhagavān says, “Don’t say that,”

and He speaks this *śloka* beginning with *yoginām*. The word *yoginām* is in the sixth case, but actually it is to be taken in the fifth case. In the previous *śloka* the words *tapasvibhyo jñānibhyo dhikah* are in the fifth case. Similarly, it should also be understood here as *yogībhyah*, the *bhakta* is even superior to the *yogi*. “My *bhakta* is not superior to only one type of *yogi*, but to all types, whether they are *yogarūḍha*, situated in *samprajñāta-samādhi*, or situated in *asamprajñāta-samādhi*.”

The import of the word *yoga* is that it is the means to *karma*, *jñāna*, *tapa*, *bhakti* and so on. “Among such *yogīs*, those who worship Me with *bhakti* are My devotees and are the best of *sādhakas*.”

Karmīs, *tapasvīs*, and *jñānīs* are also accepted as *yogīs*, but an *aṣṭāṅga-yogī* is superior to them. “A *bhakti-yogī* however, who is engaged in hearing and chanting about Me, is the topmost.” As it is said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.14.5):

*muktānām api siddhānām / nārāyana-parāyaṇāḥ
sudurlabhaḥ praśāntātmā / koṭiṣv api mahā-mune*

O *mahā-muni*, among millions of *muktās* and *siddhas*, a peaceful person who is devoted to Śrī Nārāyaṇa is most rare.

In the next eight chapters, *bhakti-yoga* will be delineated. This *śloka*, which is the *sūtra* of those chapters, is like an ornament adorning the necks of the *bhaktas*. In the First Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*, the crest jewel of all *śāstra*, an outline of the text has been given. In the Second, Third and Fourth Chapters, *niṣkāma-karma* is explained. In the Fifth Chapter *jñāna* has been described and the Sixth Chapter describes *yoga*. These six chapters, however, primarily describe *karma* (action).

*Thus ends the Bhāvānuvāda of the Sārārtha-Varsinī Tīkā,
by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, on the Sixth Chapter of
Śrimad Bhagavad-gītā, which gives pleasure to the bhaktas
and is accepted by all saintly persons.*

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

At the end of this chapter Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has categorically stated that a *bhakti-yogī* is superior to all other *yogīs*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gives a special explanation of this *śloka* as follows:

“Amongst all types of *yogīs*, the practitioner of *bhakti-yoga* is superior. One who performs My *bhajana* with faith is the best of *yogīs*. Amongst righteous, regulated human beings, the *niṣkāma-karmī*, the *jñānī*, the *aṣṭāṅga-yogī* and the practitioner of *bhakti-yoga* are all *yogīs*, whereas the *sakāma-karmī* is not. In fact, *yoga* is one, not two. *Yoga* is a progressive path on which there are various steps. Taking shelter of this path, the *jīva* situates himself on the path of *brahma* realisation. *Niṣkāma-karma-yoga* is the first step. When *jñāna* and *vairāgya* are added, it becomes *jñāna-yoga*, which is the second step. When *dhyāna*, in the form of meditation on Īśvara, is added to *jñāna-yoga*, it is called *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, the third step. And when *prīti*, affection for Bhagavān, is added to this third step of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, then that is *bhakti-yoga*, the fourth step. All these steps combined together constitute the one staircase called *yoga*. In order to explain this *yoga* clearly, all other partial types of *yoga* have been delineated. One who desires eternal auspiciousness takes exclusive shelter of *yoga*. As he gradually progresses on this ladder, he first becomes steady on the step he is on, then he rises to the next step. But one who clings to a particular step, having only established himself in that type of *yoga*, is known by the name of that particular *yoga*. Therefore, one is known as a *karma-yogī*, one as a *jñāna-yogī*, one as an *aṣṭāṅga-yogī* and another as a *bhakti-yogī*.