

CHAPTER ONE



Sainya-Darśana

Observing the Armies

ŚLOKA 1

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच—

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः ।
मामकाः पाण्डवाशचैव किमकुर्वत् सञ्जय ॥१॥

dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca

*dharma-kṣetre kurukṣetre / samavetā yuyutsavah
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāś caiva / kim akurvata sañjaya*

ANVAYA

dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca—King Dhṛtarāṣṭra said; *sañjaya*—O Sañjaya; *kim*—what?; *eva*—indeed; *akurvata*—did they do; *māmakāḥ*—my sons (headed by Duryodhana); *ca*—and; *pāṇḍavāḥ*—the sons of Pāṇḍu (headed by Yudhiṣṭhīra); *samavetā*—assembled; *dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre*—in the land of *dharma* named Kurukṣetra; *yuyutsavah*—desiring to fight.

TRANSLATION

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said: O Sañjaya, what did my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu do, having assembled at the sacred land of Kurukṣetra, desiring to fight?

THE BHĀVĀNUVĀDA
OF THE SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ TĪKĀ

The Innermost Intention of The Shower of Essential Meanings

BY ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTI THĀKURA

*gaurāṁśukah sat-kumuda-pramodī
svābhikhyayā gos tamaso nihantā
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-sudhā-nidhir me
mano'dhiṭiṣṭhan sva-ratīm karotu
prācīna-vācaḥ suvicārya so'ham
ajño'pi gītāṁṛta-leśa-lipsuh
yateḥ prabhor eva mate tad atra
santaḥ kṣamadhvam śaraṇāgatasya*

May Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who dispelled the darkness of the earth by distributing His own name; who is increasing the bliss of the lotus-like *bhaktas*; who is the storehouse of the nectar of *prema*; and who is the bestower of *unnata-ujjvala-rasa*, which is the most elevated relationship of divine conjugal love, perform His playful pastimes in my heart. Although I am ignorant, by following the conclusions of Śrī Gaurāṅga-Sundara, the crest-jewel of all *sannyāsīs*, and by deliberating on the thoughts expressed by the previous Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, I have become greedy to taste a drop of nectar in the form of the *Gītā*. Therefore, saintly persons should forgive this surrendered soul.

The Supreme Absolute Truth, *parabrahma* Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose lotus feet are the ultimate objective of all devotion and *śāstra*, appeared in His original human-like form as Śrī Vasudevanandana, the son of Śrī Vasudeva, in Śrī Gopāla-purī. Although He is *adhoṣaja*, supremely inconceivable, beyond the cognition of material senses, He nevertheless became visible

to the eyes of common men through the medium of His *yogamāyā* potency. He imparted the instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā*, thus delivering the *jīvas* of this world who were drowning in the ocean of birth and death. He submerged them in the great ocean of *prema* by bestowing upon them a taste of the sweetness of His beauty (*saundarya-mādhuryā*) and other qualities. He appeared in this world, being bound by His promise to protect the saintly persons and annihilate the *asuras*. But on the pretext of removing the burden of the earth, He in fact awarded supreme protection in the form of *mukti* (liberation) to miscreants, to those who were antagonistic towards Him and to all those *jīvas* drowning in this vast ocean of material existence which is compared to Kumbhipāka-naraka, a hellish planet where sinful persons are cooked in boiling oil.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructed *Bhagavad-gītā* so that even after His disappearance, *buddha-jīvas*, conditioned souls, who have been influenced by ignorance since time immemorial and completely bound by lamentation, illusion and so forth, could be delivered. Another purpose was to uphold His glories which are found in the *śāstra* and sung by the *munis*. He directed these instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā* to His very dear associate, *priya-parikara* Arjuna, who had voluntarily accepted a veil of lamentation and illusion.

This *Gītā* has three divisions: *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga*. The eighteen chapters of *Bhagavad-gītā* are blessed with the purport of the entire *Vedas* which manifest as eighteen types of knowledge. Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa reveals the *parama-puruṣārtha* or supreme objective. *Niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, working without attachment to the fruits of one's prescribed duties, is described in the first six chapters, and *jñāna-yoga* (acquiring union through knowledge) in the last six chapters. The six chapters placed between them are more confidential, describing *bhakti-yoga*, which is more rarely

attained than either *karma-yoga* or *jñāna-yoga*. *Bhakti* is the very life of *karma* and *jñāna*. Without *bhakti*, *karma* and *jñāna* are fruitless. Therefore, they are partially successful only when they are mixed with *bhakti*.

Bhakti is of two types: *kevalā* (exclusive) and *pradhānī-bhūtā* (with *bhakti* predominating). *Kevala-bhakti*, being independent and supremely powerful, does not need any assistance from *karma* and *jñāna*. Therefore, it is known as *parama-prabala* (supremely powerful), *akiñcanā* (whereby Kṛṣṇa is one's only possession), *ananyā* (unalloyed), and so on. On the other hand, *pradhānī-bhūtā-bhakti* remains mixed with *karma* and *jñāna*. This will be examined later in more detail.

To explain the nature of Arjuna's lamentation and illusion, the speaker of the *Mahābhārata*, Śrī Vaiśampāyana, a disciple of Vyāsadeva, recited the *Bhīṣma-parva* section to his listener, Janamejaya, by beginning with *dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca*. Dhṛtarāṣṭra asked Sañjaya, "O Sañjaya, what did my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu do, having assembled at Kurukṣetra, desiring to fight?" Here a question arises. Dhṛtarāṣṭra has mentioned that his sons and the Pāṇḍavas have assembled with the sole purpose of fighting, so it is certain that they will fight. What, then, is his intention in asking, "What did they do?" In response to this, Dhṛtarāṣṭra has used the words *dharma-kṣetre*, the land of *dharma*. In the *śruti* it is said: *kuruksētram deva-yajanam*. "Kurukṣetra is the sacrificial arena of the devas." Therefore, this land is famous as that which nourishes *dharma*. Thus, by the influence of association with this land, the anger of *adharmaika* (irreligious) persons like Duryodhana and others can be subdued and they may become inclined to follow and accept *dharma*. The Pāṇḍavas are already *dharmika* by nature. The influence of Kurukṣetra may arouse the faculty of discrimination when they take into consideration that the massacre of one's own relatives is improper. Thus both parties may agree to a peaceful settlement. Outwardly Dhṛtarāṣṭra

is pretending that he will be happy with a peace treaty, but internally he is feeling great dissatisfaction. He considers that, if they negotiate a truce, the presence of the Pāṇḍavas will continue to remain an impediment for his sons. Dhṛtarāṣṭra thinks, “The warriors on my side, like Bhīṣma, Drona and others cannot be conquered, even by Arjuna. Therefore, since our victory is certain, it will be beneficial to fight.” These internal sentiments of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, however, are indiscernible to others.

Here, by the component *kṣetra* in the word *dharma-kṣetra*, Sarasvatī-devī is indicating a special meaning for *dharma*; Yudhiṣṭhīra, the incarnation of *dharma*, and his associates are like plants of rice, and their maintainer, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is like a farmer. The various kinds of assistance given by Kṛṣṇa to the Pāṇḍavas are likened to watering the crop and making a causeway around the field. The Kauravas, headed by Duryodhana, are like the *śyāmā* (blackish) weeds which grow in the rice field. This indicates that as the *śyāmā* weeds are uprooted from the rice field, similarly Duryodhana, along with the other Kauravas, will be uprooted from this *dharma-kṣetra*, land of *dharma*.

THE SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The Commentary which Illuminates The Shower of Essential Meanings

BY ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYANA MAHĀRĀJA

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayāḥ
cakṣur unmilitam yena tasmai śrī-gurave namah*

I offer my most humble obeisances unto Śrī Gurudeva, who with the torchlight of transcendental knowledge has opened my eyes which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance.

*namah om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-presthāya bhū-tale
śrī-śrīmad-bhakti-prajñāna-keśava iti nāmine
ati-martya-caritrāya svā-śritānāñca-pāline
jīva-duḥkhe sadārttāya śrī-nāma-prema-dāyine*

I offer my obeisances unto the lotus feet of *om viṣṇu-pāda* *aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti-Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is so dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in this world. He is a completely divine personality who nurtures with great affection those who have taken shelter of him. Aggrieved upon seeing the suffering of those *jīvas* who are averse to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he bestows upon them *śri-nāma* along with *prema*.

*namah om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-presthāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhakti-siddhānta sarasvatīti nāmine*

I offer my obeisances unto *om viṣṇu-pāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti-siddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, who is so dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

*namo bhaktivinodāya sac-cid-ānanda nāmine
gaura-śakti-sva-rūpāya rūpānuga-varāya te*

I offer my obeisances unto Saccidānanda Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who is the foremost of *rūpānuga* devotees and the embodiment of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *śakti*.

*viśvasya nātharūpo'sau bhakt vartma pradarśanāt
bhakta-cakre varttitvāt cakravartty ākhyayā bhavat*

Because he illuminates the path of *bhakti* for everyone (*viśva*), he is known as Viśvanātha. And because he has attained the foremost position among the community of *bhaktas* (*bhakta-cakra*), he is known as Cakravartī. Hence his name has become significant as Viśvanātha Cakravartī.

The great preceptor, *mahā-mahopādhyāya* Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, an eminent *ācārya* and great scholar of *Vedānta* in the Śrī Gaudīya *saṃpradāya* and the crest-jewel

of *rasika-bhaktas*, has compiled an invaluable commentary on Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā named *Sārārtha-Varṣiṇī*, a shower of essential meanings. This commentary was written in Sanskrit and was previously only available in Bengali translations. Consequently, the Hindi and English-speaking audience have been completely deprived of reading this invaluable treasure. Thus, for the comprehensive welfare of faithful persons, I am translating the commentary into Hindi and English. The style and *bhāva* of the commentary are extremely deep and enriched with exalted philosophical conclusions (*siddhānta*). To make the translation simple and comprehensive, I found it necessary to write a *Sārārtha-Varṣiṇī Prakāśikā-vṛtti*, a further explanation to illuminate the commentary. This arduous task is not possible without the mercy of Śrī Guru, Vaiṣṇavas and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura himself. Therefore, first of all, in a mood of great distress, I pray at their lotus feet for their mercy and blessings.

Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā is the essence of all śrutis, Upaniṣads and Purāṇas. Based on the sound evidence of Vedic literature received through *guru-paramparā*, it is concluded that Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, the son of the King of Vraja, is Svayam Bhagavān, the Original Personality of Godhead. He is the embodiment of all nectarean mellows (*akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrti*) and He is the omnipotent (*sarva-saktimān*), non-dual Absolute Reality (*advaya-jñāna-paratattva*). Among His unlimited potencies three are prominent: *cit-śakti* (the internal potency), *jīva-śakti* (the marginal potency) and *acit-śakti* (the external potency). By the will of Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Vaikuṇṭha, Goloka and Vṛndāvana are transformations of His *cit-śakti*. All *jīvas* are a transformation of His *jīva-śakti* and the material creation is the transformation of His *māyā-śakti*. The *jīvas* are of two types: *mukta* (liberated) and *baddha* (bound). The *mukta-jīvas* are eternally engaged in relishing the bliss derived from

serving Bhagavān in Vaikuṇṭha, Goloka and various other *dhāmas*. They never become bound in this material world, the prison-house of *māyā*, and hence they are called *nitya-mukta*, eternally liberated. Sometimes, by the will of Bhagavān, they appear in this illusory world as His associates for the sole purpose of bestowing welfare to the people. The other type of *jīva* is called *anādi-baddha*, or bound by *māyā* since time immemorial. As a result of being bound, the *jīva* is being burnt by the three types of miseries while wandering in the cycle of birth and death.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is an ocean of compassion, seems to have created illusion (*ajñāna*), by the influence of His *acintya-śakti* (inconceivable potency) in the heart of His *nitya-siddha-parikara* Arjuna. Thus, on the pretext of dispelling this illusion, He spoke *Bhagavad-gītā*, which establishes *ātma-tattva* for the deliverance of all *jīvas* under the grip of *māyā*. The subject ultimately established in *Bhagavad-gītā* is *viśuddha-bhagavad-bhakti*, supremely pure devotional service to Bhagavān. The *jīvas* under the influence of *māyā* become situated in their pure constitutional position (*viśuddha-svarūpa*) only by taking shelter of *śuddha-bhakti*, as described in the *Gītā*, and can thus render service to Śrī Bhagavān. Aside from this, there is no beneficial path for the *baddha-jīvas*.

On the basis of concrete evidence from *śāstra* and invincible arguments, Śrila Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura and other prominent Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava ācāryas have clearly established that the speaker of *Bhagavad-gītā* is not *niḥśaktika* (devoid of potency), *nirviśeṣa* (devoid of variety), or *nirākāra* (formless), nor is He *nirguṇa* (devoid of transcendental qualities such as *aprākṛta-dayā*, transcendental mercy). The *jīva* is never *parabrahma*, and even in the liberated stage can never become *parabrahma*. Even after attaining *mukti*, the *jīva* will remain a pure atomic spiritual particle. However, at that time

he is said to be a *bhagavat-parikāra*, an eternal associate of Bhagavān.

In Vedic mantras (*śruti*), it is proven that both Parameśvara, the Supreme Controller, and the *jīvātmā* are qualified as having knowledge (*jñāna-svarūpa*), as being the knower (*jñātā-svarūpa*), the enjoyer (*bhoktā-svarūpa*), the doer (*karttā-svarūpa*) and possessed of a pure spiritual ego (*cimmayahaṅkāra*). Therefore, regarding their constitutions, there is no difference between them from the perspective of *tattva*. However, because the *jīva* is an atomic spirit, his knowledge is limited and he can be overpowered by *māyā*. Parameśvara is the master of *māyā*. Although there is no difference between Īśvara and the *jīva* on the basis of *tattva*, the perception of a difference is real. This perception of difference is called *vaiśiṣṭya*, meaning speciality or having a uniquely distinguishing characteristic. Just as the sun and the sun's rays are simultaneously one yet different, being the possessor of attributes and the attribute respectively, similarly, the relationship between Parameśvara and the *jīva*, which is that of being one and different, is firmly proven in the *Vedas*. Since this relationship of simultaneous oneness and difference is beyond intellect and is only intelligible with the help of *śāstra*, it is therefore called *acintya*, inconceivable. Thus the subject matter of *Bhagavad-gītā* is the *nitya acintya-bhedābheda-rūpa para-tattva*, the eternal Supreme Reality, who is inconceivably one with and different from His potencies.

Although it is accepted that *para-tattva* Śrī Kṛṣṇa is simultaneously one with and different from the *jīva* and the material world, which are both transformations of His *sakti*, it is the perception of difference which is eternal and predominant, not the perception of oneness. Knowledge of the *jīvātmā*, Paramātmā, the abode of Paramātmā and the means to attain Paramātmā have been delineated in appropriate places in this *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Although *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti* have been explained as the three means to attain *brahma*, *bhakti-yoga* is the only means to achieve Bhagavān. The preliminary stage of *bhakti-yoga* is called *karma-yoga*. When there is further progress, the intermediate stage is called *jñāna-yoga* and in its mature and elevated stage it is called *bhakti-yoga*. *Karma* in itself is not a direct *sādhana* (practice) to attain Bhagavān, but only a means to attain that direct *sādhana*. When the heart becomes purified by following *karma-yoga* mixed with *bhakti*, which is *bhagavad-arpita-karma* (offering the fruits of one's activities to Bhagavān) as described in the Vedas, *tattva-jñāna* (the true knowledge of spirit and non-spirit) appears there. Both *jñāna* and *karma* which are devoid of a sense of *bhagavat-tattva* are futile.

Along with the appearance of *tattva-jñāna*, *kevala-bhakti* manifests in the heart. When this *kevala-bhakti* attains its mature stage, then *prema* manifests in the heart of the *jīva*. This *prema* is the only means of attaining and having direct realisation of Bhagavān. This is the concealed mystery of the Bhagavad-gītā. One cannot achieve *mukti* merely by *nirviśeṣa-jñāna* (knowledge of Bhagavān's impersonal feature). Only when *jñāna* is mixed with *bhakti-bhāva*, can one obtain *mukti* in the form of *sālokya*, *sārūpya* and so on, as an extraneous result. One can attain *prema-mayī sevā* to Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His supreme abode, Goloka-Vṛndāvana by performing *kevala-bhakti* as described in the Gītā. When one attains this abode, there is no possibility of coming back to the material world. For the *jivas*, achievement of this *prema-sevā* is the *prayojana*, the ultimate goal.

Bhakti is of two types: *kevalā* (exclusive) and *pradhānī-bhūtā* (principally inherent). *Kevala-bhakti* is also called *ananyā*, *akiñcanā*, *viśuddhā* and *nirguṇā bhakti*. *Pradhānī-bhūtā-bhakti* is also of two types: *karma-pradhānī-bhūtā*, where *bhakti* predominates over *karma*, and *jñāna-pradhānī-*

bhūtā, where *bhakti* predominates over *jñāna*. By performance of *karma-pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*, which gradually purifies the heart, *tattva-jñāna* is achieved. The result of performing *jñāna-pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti* is *mukti*. Only that *karma-pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti* which aims at *tattva-jñāna* and that *jñāna-pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti* which aims at obtaining *kevala-bhakti* are to be known as *karma-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga* respectively. These are only steps to *bhakti*. Otherwise, without *bhakti* both *jñāna* and *karma* are futile.

This *Gitopaniṣad* is composed of eighteen chapters, beginning from Chapter Twenty-five of the *Mahābhārata*'s *Bhiṣma-parva* to Chapter Forty-two. It has three divisions, each consisting of six chapters. The first division explains that the *jīvātmā* is an *amṛta* (part) of *Īśvara*, and that his *svarūpa* (constitution) is such that he can acquire the eligibility to render service to *Bhagavān*, the *amṛta* (whole). *Śuddha-bhakti-tattva*, the principle of pure devotional service, has been explained in the middle six chapters. It is this type of *bhakti* that is the topmost means of attaining *bhagavat-prema*, which is the supreme object to be achieved. In the third and final part, *tattva-jñāna* is defined. The subject matter of the *Gītā* is *kevala-bhakti*, which is like *cintāmaṇi*, a wish-fulfilling jewel. This *cintāmaṇi* has been safely kept inside *Bhagavad-gītā*, which is likened to a treasure chest. The base of this chest is *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, the lid is *jñāna-yoga* and the treasure is *bhakti*. Only those who have staunch faith, who are fixed in *dharmika* principles, who have good character and who are self-controlled are qualified to study this conversation.

For the proper flow of the book, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa has included in the first twenty-seven *ślokas* phrases such as: *dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca* or *sañjaya uvāca*. They should be accepted as the introductory part of *Gītā*. Just as a piece of salt when mixed with the salty ocean completely dissolves to become one with the ocean, these introductory

words composed by Śrī Vedavyāsa have similarly become one with the great ocean of *Bhagavad-gītā* spoken by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Arjuna: Arjuna is an eternal associate of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is completely impossible for him to fall into a state of lamentation and delusion. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.7.7) it is said: *yasyām vai śrūyamāṇāyām*. “*Bhakti* unto the lotus feet of Puruṣottama Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is transcendental to the modes of material nature, at once appears in the hearts of those who with great faith hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which is filled with the topics of His sweet pastimes, and thus destroys lamentation, illusion and fear.” How then, is it possible that *bhakta-pravara* (the greatest devotee) Arjuna, who is a *nitya-parikāra* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa serving in *sakhya-rasa* (divine friendship), can be in a state of illusion and lamentation? Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, having arranged Arjuna’s illusion for the sake of the *jīvas* afflicted with grief and delusion, says: *teṣām ahaṁ samuddhartā mṛtyu-saṁsāra-sāgarāt*. “I deliver them from the ocean of material existence” (*Gītā* 12.7).

Through the medium of questions and answers, He defines the *svarūpa* (true nature) of His own *tattva*, as well as that of the *jīva*, *dhāma*, *māyā*, *bhakti* and so forth.

While commenting on the *śloka*: *sarva-dharmān parityajya* (*Gītā* 18.66), Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying: *tvām avalambyaiva sāstram idāṁ loka-matrām evo padeṣṭāmi*. “Having made you the instrument, I am delivering this message of *Bhagavad-gītā* for the benefit of every *jīva*.” Apart from this, in his commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* called *Sārārtha-darśinī-ṭīkā*, Śrīla Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains the *śloka*, *yogīndrāya namah* (12.13.21), to mean that the description of Arjuna’s bewilderment in *Bhagavad-gītā* is just a statement of words. In fact, Arjuna is an eternal associate of Bhagavān. There is not even a tinge of this illusory world in him, what to speak of his being overwhelmed by lamentation

and delusion. But beneficial instructions are given through the medium of famous personalities among perfected saints who are very merciful and highly expert in performing activities for the welfare of the *jīvas*. This is seen throughout the *śāstras* and such is the position of Arjuna.

Aṣṭādaśa Vidyās (Eighteen Types of Knowledge): There are four Vedas – *Rg*, *Yajur*, *Sāma* and *Atharva* – and six *Vedāṅgas* (limbs of the Vedas) – *śikṣā*, *kalpa*, *vyākaraṇa*, *nirukta*, *jyotiṣa* and *chanda*. Then there are *mīmāṁsā*, *nyāya*, *dharma-śāstra*, *purāṇa*, *āyur-veda*, *dhanur-veda*, *gāndharva-veda* and *artha-śāstra*. These are the eighteen *vidyās*, or types of knowledge, as mentioned in *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*:

aṅgāni vedaś catvāro mīmāṁsā nyāya-vistarah
dharma-śāstram purāṇaḥ ca vidyā hy etāṁ catur daśah
āyurvedo dhanurvedo gāndharvāś ceti te trayah
artha-śāstram caturtham ca vidyā hy aṣṭādaśaiva tāḥ

Kurukṣetra: Śrila Vyāsadeva has referred to the battlefield of Kurukṣetra as *dharma-kṣetra*. This has a hidden meaning. According to Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (9.22.4), this land is named Kurukṣetra after King Kuru. The Śalya-parva of the Mahābhārata relates the following story:

Once, when Kuru Mahārāja was ploughing this land, Devarāja Indra appeared and asked him, “For what purpose are you doing this?” Kuru Mahārāja answered, “I am ploughing this land so that those people who give up their bodies here may attain Svarga-loka (the heavenly planets).” Hearing this, Devarāja ridiculed him and returned to Svarga-loka. The king again began ploughing with great enthusiasm. Although Devarāja returned again and again to deride and deliberately disturb the king, Kuru Mahārāja remained unperturbed and continued his work. Finally, on the insistence of other *devatās*, Indra became pleased with Kuru Mahārāja and gave him the

benediction that whoever gives up his body or is killed in battle on this land certainly attains Svarga. Hence, this land, known as *dharma-kṣetra*, was chosen for the battle.

Also in the *Jāvālopaniṣad* (1.2), Kurukṣetra is described as a *yajña-sthalī* (place of sacrifice) for the *devatās* and all living entities. One attains Svarga-loka by the performance of *yajña* at this place.

Also in the *Sat-Patha Brāhmaṇa*, it is written: *kurukṣetram deva-yajanam-āsa tasmād ahuh kurukṣetram deva-yajanam*. “The devas performed worship of the Lord in Kurukṣetra. Therefore, sages have named this place *deva-yajanam*.” The phrase *dharma-kṣetra* is composed of two words: *dharma* and *kṣetra*. The word *kṣetra* indicates land for cultivation. When a farmer waters the rice field, a type of weed called *śyāmā* grass also grows along with the rice plants. This grass looks exactly like the rice plants, and grows by taking the water used for the rice field, thereby covering the rice plants. Eventually, the rice plants dry up. Therefore, an expert farmer uproots these weeds because they are harmful to the rice crop. In the same way, in this land of Kurukṣetra, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa maintained and nourished Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, the personification of *dharma*, along with his associates by annihilating those who are anti-religious, pseudo-religious and non-religious, like Duryodhana and others.

The land between the rivers Sarasvatī and Drṣadvatī is known as Kurukṣetra. At this place, both the great sage Mudgala and Pṛthu Mahārāja performed austerities. Śrī Paraśurāmajī performed *yajñas* at five different places in this land after annihilating the *kṣatriyas*. Therefore, previously this *kṣetra* was known as Samanta Pañcaka. It later became famous as Kurukṣetra, following the activities of Mahārāja Kuru.

Sañjaya: Sañjaya was the son of a charioteer named Gavalgama. He was *śāstra-jña* (a knower of the conclusions

of *śāstra*), generous and *dharmatmā* (dedicated to religious principles). Because of these virtuous qualities, Grandsire Bhīṣma appointed him and Vidura as Dhṛtarāṣṭra's royal ministers. Sañjaya was considered to be a second Vidura and was also an intimate friend of Arjuna. Due to receiving divine vision by the mercy of Śrī Vyāsadeva, he was able to narrate all the events of the war to Dhṛtarāṣṭra. This enabled him to view the battle of Kurukṣetra from within the distant royal palace in Hastināpura. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhīra also described Sañjaya as a sweet-speaking well-wisher of everyone, who had a peaceful temperament, and was always satisfied and impartial. He was fixed in the bounds of morality (*maryādā*) and was never agitated by others' ill behaviour. Always remaining unbiased and fearless, his speech was fully consistent with *dharma*ka principles.

ŚLOKA 2

सञ्जय उवाच—

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।
आचार्यमुपसङ्गम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥२॥

sañjaya uvāca

dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkam / vyūḍham duryodhanas tadā
ācāryam upasaṅgamyā / rājā vacanam abravīt

sañjayaḥ uvāca—Sañjaya said; dṛṣṭvā—after surveying; pāṇḍava-anīkam—the army of the Pāṇḍavas; vyūḍham—arrayed in military formation; rājā—king; duryodhanaḥ—Duryodhana; tadā—then; upasaṅgamyā—approached; ācāryam—Dronācārya (the teacher); tu—and; abravīt—spoke; (these) vacanam—words.

Sañjaya said: O King, after surveying the Pāṇḍava army arrayed in military formation, Duryodhana then approached Dronācārya and spoke the following words.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

After understanding the internal intention of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Sañjaya confirmed that there would definitely be a war. But knowing that the result would be contrary to Dhṛtarāṣṭra's expectations, Sañjaya is speaking these words beginning with *dṛṣṭvā* etc. Here, the word *vyūḍham* means the arrangement of the Pāṇḍava army into a strategic formation. Thus King Duryodhana, who felt fear within himself, spoke nine *ślokas* beginning with *paśyaitām* in the next *śloka*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Unfortunately, apart from being blind since birth, at the time of the Mahābhārata war, Dhṛtarāṣṭra was also bereft of both *dharmika* and spiritual vision. Thus he became overwhelmed with lamentation and illusion. Due to the influence of the *dharma-kṣetra*, his son Duryodhana might return half of the kingdom to the Pāṇḍavas. Fearing this, he became dejected. Sañjaya, being highly *dharmika* and a visionary (*dūrdarśī*), could sense the internal feelings of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Although Sañjaya knew that the result of this battle would not be in Dhṛtarāṣṭra's favour, he very intelligently hid this information and, while pacifying Dhṛtarāṣṭra, said, "Duryodhana is not going to compromise with the Pāṇḍavas. Rather, after seeing the extremely strong arrangement of the Pāṇḍava army, he is personally approaching Dronācārya, his *guru* in military science, to inform him of the actual situation." Duryodhana had two motives for approaching the *ācārya*. First, he was fearful after seeing the formidable arrangement of the Pāṇḍava army. Second, on the pretext of giving his *guru* due respect, he wanted to display his political expertise. Due to his expertise in politics, he was certainly qualified in all respects for the post of king. This is verified here by his diplomatic behaviour. This is the meaning of the *śloka*: *sañjaya uvāca* etc.

Duryodhana: Among the one hundred sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī, Duryodhana was the eldest. At the time of his birth, there were various bad omens which caused many saintly persons such as Vidura to fear that he would be the cause of the destruction of the Kuru dynasty. According to the *Mahābhārata*, Duryodhana took birth from an *amṛta* (a part) of Kali. He was sinful, cruel and a disgrace to the Kuru dynasty. At the time of his name-giving ceremony, the family priests and other learned astrologers, seeing the indications of his future, gave him the name Duryodhana. Finally, after a hint from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma killed him in such a horrific way that even to think of it would make one's hair stand on end.

Vyūha: It is said in *Śabda-ratnāvalī*: *sainyasya vinyāsaḥ sthāna-bhedataḥ / sa vyūha iti vikhyāto yuddheṣu pṛthivī-bhujām*. “A *vyūha* is the formation of a military phalanx, arranged by an expert king in such a way that it is impenetrable by opponents from any direction, thereby assuring victory in battle.”

Dronācārya: Dronācārya taught *astra-śastra*, the science of weaponry, to the sons of both Pāṇḍu and Dhṛtarāṣṭra. He was the son of Mahāṛsi Bharadvāja. Because he was born from a *drona*, a wooden water-pot, he became famous by the name Drona. Just as he was a great teacher of *astra-śastra*, he was similarly expert in the knowledge of *Veda* and *Vedāṅga* (auxiliary portions of the *Vedas*). After pleasing the Mahāṛsi Paraśurāma, he learned from him the secrets of *dhanur-veda* (the science of archery) and other sciences. Since he had the benediction that he could die at the time of his own choosing, no one could kill him. After being insulted by his childhood friend, King Drupada of Pāñcāla, Dronācārya went to Hastināpura to earn a livelihood. Impressed by Drona’s qualifications, Grandsire Bhīṣma appointed him the *ācārya* to instruct and train Duryodhana, Yudhiṣṭhira and the other

princes. Arjuna was his dearmost disciple. In the battle of Kurukṣetra, King Duryodhana, by polite persuasion and diplomacy, appointed him as commander-in-chief of the Kaurava army, second-in-command to Bhīṣma.

ŚLOKA 3

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्यं महतीं चमूम् ।
व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥३॥

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

ācārya—O teacher; *paśya*—behold; *etām*—this; *mahatīm*—great; *camūm*—army; *pāṇḍu-patrāṇām*—of the sons of Pāṇḍu (the Pāṇḍavas); *vyūḍhām*—arranged in a military phalanx; *tava dhīmatā*—by your intelligent; *śiṣyeṇa*—disciple; *drupada-putreṇa*—Dhṛṣṭadyumna, the son of Drupada.

O Ācārya! Behold this great army of the Pāṇḍavas, arranged in a military phalanx by your intelligent disciple Dhṛṣṭadyumna, son of Drupada.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

With these words Duryodhana is implying, “Dhṛṣṭadyumna, the son of Drupada, is indeed your disciple. He has taken birth only to kill you. Although you knew this, you continued to give him *śikṣā* (military training). This certainly exposes your dull intelligence.” Here, Duryodhana has used the word *dhīmatā*, intelligent, for Dhṛṣṭadyumna. This has a deep meaning. Duryodhana wants Droṇācārya to realise that, although Dhṛṣṭadyumna is Droṇācārya’s enemy, he learned from Droṇācārya personally how to kill him. Thus he is very intelligent. Just to arouse the anger of his teacher, Duryodhana diplomatically remarks, “Now see his great intelligence at the time of employing the fruits of his training.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Dhṛṣṭadyumna: Drupada, The King of Pāñcāla, performed a *yajña* with the desire to beget a son who would kill Droṇācārya. From the fire of the *yajña* a boy appeared holding armour and weapons. At the same time a voice from the sky predicted that this son of Drupada would kill Droṇa. The *brāhmaṇas* named this heroic looking boy Dhṛṣṭadyumna. He learned the *dhanur-veda* from Droṇācārya, who was extremely benevolent. Although he knew that one day Dhṛṣṭadyumna would kill him, still, with great effort he trained him in *astra-śastra*. Thus Ācārya Droṇa was killed by his own disciple in the Mahābhārata war.

ŚLOKAS 4-6

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमा युधि ।
 युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथः ॥४॥
 धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशिराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।
 पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च शैव्यश्च नरपुङ्गवः ॥५॥
 युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।
 सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः ॥६॥

atra śūrā maheṣvāsā / bhīmārjuna-samā yudhi
 yuyudhāno virātaś ca / drupadaś ca mahā-rathāḥ

dhṛṣṭaketuś cekitānāḥ / kāśirājaś ca vīryavān
 purujit kuntibhojaś ca / śaibyaś ca nara-puṅgavāḥ
 yudhāmanyuś ca vikrānta / uttamaujāś ca vīryavān
 saubhadro draupadeyāś ca / sarva eva mahā-rathāḥ

atra—present (here); (are) śūrāḥ—mighty; mahā-iṣu-āsāḥ—great bowmen (lit. great arrow-throwers); samāḥ—equal; yudhi—in battle; bhīma-arjuna—to Bhīma and Arjuna; yuyudhānāḥ—Sātyaki; virātaḥ—Virāṭa; ca—and; mahā-rathāḥ—the great

chariot fighter; *drupadaḥ*—Drupada; *ca*—also; *dhrṣṭaketuḥ*—Dhṛṣṭaketu; *cekitānah*—Cekitāna; *kāśirājah*—Kāśirāja, the King of Kāśi (Varanasi); *ca*—and; *vīrya-vān*—heroic; *puruṣit*—Purujit; *kuntibhojah*—Kuntibhoja; *ca*—and; *śaibyah*—Śaibhya; *ca*—and; *nara-puṇḍavah*—the best of men; *yudhāmanyuh*—Yudhāmanyu; *ca*—and; *vikrāntah*—achiever of victory; *uttamaujāḥ*—Uttamaujā; *ca*—and; *vīrya-vān*—heroic; *saubhadraḥ*—Abhimanyu, son of Subhadrā; *draupadeyāḥ*—the sons of Draupadī; *ca*—and; *sarve*—all; *eva*—these; *mahā-rathāḥ*—great chariot fighters.

Present in this army are mighty bowmen, equal in combat to Arjuna and Bhīma, such as Sātyaki, King Virāṭa and the great warrior Drupada. Also present are Dhṛṣṭaketu and Cekitāna, heroic Kāśirāja, Purujit, Kuntibhoja, the most valiant Śaibya, and other noble men such as the victorious Yudhāmanyu, the powerful Uttamaujā, Abhimanyu, as well as Pratibindhya and the other sons of Draupadī. All of these are *mahārathīs*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Here the word *maheśvāsāḥ* means that all these great warriors carry strong bows which cannot be broken by the enemy. The word *yuyudhāna* refers to Sātyaki. Saubhadraḥ refers to Abhimanyu, and Draupadeyāḥ indicates the sons of the five Pāṇḍavas born from Draupadī, headed by Pratibindhya. The characteristics of a *mahārathī* are now described here. Among a group of great warriors who are expert in *astra-śastra*, one who can fight against ten thousand warriors single-handedly is called a *mahārathī*. One who can fight alone against unlimited warriors is known as an *atirathī*. One who can only fight with a single person is known as a *yoddhā*, and one who requires assistance to defeat a single opponent is called an *arddharathī*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Yuyudhāna: Yuyudhāna is another name for the heroic Sātyaki. He was a very dear servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, extremely valiant and an *atirathī* among the commanders-in-chief of the Yādava army. He learned the secrets of *astra-śastra* from Arjuna. In the Mahābhārata conflict he fought on the side of the Pāṇḍavas.

Virāṭa: Virāṭa was the pious king of the land of Matsya. The Pāṇḍavas spent one year incognito under his shelter. His daughter Uttarā, later married Abhimanyu, the famous son of Arjuna. Virāṭa was killed in the Mahābhārata war along with his sons Uttara, Sveta and Śāṅkha.

Drupada: Drupada was the son of Pṛṣata, the king of Pāñcāla. Since Mahārāja Pṛṣata and Mahāṛsi Bharadvāja, the father of Dronācārya were friends, Drupada and Dronācārya were also friends in their childhood. Later, when Drupada became king, Dronācārya approached him for financial help, but Drupada insulted him. Dronācārya did not forget this disrespect. When Arjuna completed his education in *astra-śastra*, Dronācārya asked Arjuna to capture Drupada and offer him at Drona's feet as *guru-dakṣinā*. Arjuna followed his order. Dronācārya took half of Drupada's kingdom and then released him. To avenge this insult, Drupada performed a *yajña* in which Draupadī and Dhṛṣṭadyumna appeared from the fire.

Cekitāna: Cekitāna was a Yādava in the dynasty of Vṛṣṇi. He was a very chivalrous *mahārathī* and was one of the commanders-in-chief of the Pāṇḍava army. In the Mahābhārata war, he met his death at the hands of Duryodhana.

Kāśirāja: Kāśirāja was the king of Kāśi. He was born from a part of the *asura* Dīrghajihva. A valiant and courageous hero, he fought on the side of the Pāṇḍavas.

Purujit and Kuntibhoja: Purujit and Kuntibhoja were brothers of Kuntī, the mother of the Pāṇḍavas, and were thus the maternal uncles of the Pāṇḍavas. In the Mahābhārata war they were killed by Droṇācārya.

Śaibya: Śaibya was the father-in-law of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. His daughter Devikā was married to Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja. He is known as *nara-puṇḍava*, the best of men, and was recognised as a powerful, heroic warrior.

Yudhāmanyu and Uttamaujā: The valiant, powerful blood brothers Yudhāmanyu and Uttamaujā were princes of the Pāñcāla kingdom. At the end of the Mahābhārata war, they were killed by Aśvaththāmā.

Saubhadra: Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sister, Subhadrā, was married to Arjuna. The heroic Abhimanyu was born from the womb of Subhadrā, and therefore he is also known as Saubhadra. He received training in *astra-śastra* from his father, Arjuna, and from Śrī Balarāma. He was an exceptionally chivalrous hero and a *mahārathī*. At the time of the Mahābhārata war he was sixteen years old. In the absence of Arjuna, Abhimanyu alone was able to penetrate the *cakra-vyūha*, a special military formation which had been arranged by Droṇācārya. Trapped in the *vyūha*, he was unjustly killed by the combined efforts of seven *mahārathīs*, including Drona, Kṛpācārya and Karna.

Draupadeya: Draupadī gave birth to a son from each of the five Pāṇḍavas. Their names were Pratibindhya, Sutasoma, Śrutakarmā, Śatānika and Śutasena. Collectively, they were known as Draupadeya. Their fathers were Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva respectively. At the end of the Mahābhārata war Aśvaththāmā, desiring to please his friend Duryodhana, murdered these five princes at night as they slept.

In addition to the names of the warriors mentioned by Duryodhana, there were many other *mahārathīs* in the army

of the Pāṇḍavas. Duryodhana has referred to all of them by using the words *sarva eva*.

ŚLOKA 7

अस्माकन्तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संजार्थ तान् ब्रवीमि ते ॥७॥

*asmākan tu viśiṣṭā ye / tān nibodha dvijottama
nāyakā mama sainyasya / samjñārtham tān bravīmi te*

dvija-uttama—O best of the twice-born; *saṃjñā-artham*—for your information; *nibodha*—be informed; *bravīmi*—I am mentioning; *te*—to you; *tān*—the names; *ye*—who; (*are*) *tu*—indeed; *viśiṣṭāḥ*—outstanding warriors; *nāyakāḥ*—commanders; *mama sainyasya*—of the soldiers; *asmākam*—of our army.

O Dvija-uttama, best of the *brāhmaṇas*, for your information I am also mentioning the names of those who are particularly talented in the art of military strategy.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here, the word *nibodha* means ‘please understand’, and *saṃjñārtham* means ‘for your precise knowledge’.

ŚLOKAS 8-9

भवान् भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिज्जयः ।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिर्जयद्रथः ॥८॥
अन्ये च बहवः शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः ।
नानाशास्त्रप्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥९॥

*bhavān bhīṣmaś ca karṇaś ca / kṛpaś ca samitiñjayayaḥ
aśvatthāmā vikarṇaś ca / saumadattir jayadrathah
anye ca bahavaḥ śūrā / mad-arthe tyakta-jīvitāḥ
nānā-śastra-praharanāḥ / sarve yuddha-viśāradāḥ*

bhavān—your good self; *bhiṣma*—Grandsire Bhīṣma; *ca*—and; *karnaḥ*—Karṇa; *ca*—and; *kṛpaḥ*—Kṛpācārya; (are) *samitiñjayah*—always victorious in battle; *ca*—and; *aśvathhāmā*—Aśvatthāmā; *vikarṇaḥ*—Vikarṇa; *ca*—also; *saumadattih*—Bhūriśravā, the son of Somadatta; *jayadrathaḥ*—the king of Sindhu, Jayadratha; *anye*—other than those mentioned before; (there are) *ca*—also; *bahavaḥ*—many other; *śurāḥ*—heroes; *tyakta-jīvitāḥ*—bound by a vow to give up their life; *mat-arthe*—for my sake; *praharaṇāḥ*—equipped with; *nānā*—many; *śastra*—weapons; *sarve*—all of them; (are) *yuddha-viśāradāḥ*—expert in warfare.

In my army there are heroes like your good self (Dronācārya), Grandsire Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Kṛpācārya who is ever-victorious in battle, Aśvatthāmā, Vikarṇa, Bhūriśravā, the son of Somadatta, and Jayadratha, the King of Sindhu. There are many other heroes who are prepared to give up their lives for my sake. All are equipped with varieties of *astra-śastra* and are expert in warfare.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here the word *somadattih* refers to Bhūriśravā. *Tyakta-jīvitāḥ* denotes a person who is determined to do whatever is required of him, having properly realised that he will be greatly benefited whether he survives or not. In *Gītā* (11.33) Bhagavān says, “O Arjuna! All these persons have already been killed by Me; you need only become an instrument.” In accordance with this statement, Sarasvatī-devī made the word *tyakta-jīvitāḥ* come from the mouth of Duryodhana, indicating that his army had already been destroyed.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Kṛpācārya: In the lineage of Gautama, there was a ḥṣi by the name of Śaradvān. Once, after seeing the *apsarā* Jānapadī, his semen spontaneously fell on a clump of forest grass. This

semen became divided in two parts, from which a boy and a girl were born. The girl was named Kṛpī and the boy, Kṛpa. Kṛpa later became renowned as a great warrior. Śaradvān Ṛṣi personally endowed Kṛpa with expertise in *dhanur-veda* and other arts. Kṛpa was exceedingly valiant and pious. In the battle of Mahābhārata he fought on the side of the Kauravas. After the battle, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhīra appointed him to train Prince Parīkṣit.

Aśvatthāmā: Kṛpī, the sister of Kṛpācārya, was married to Dronācārya. From her womb Aśvatthāmā was born, being a combination of the portions of Lord Śiva, Yama, *kāma* (lust) and *krodha* (anger). He learned the *śāstras* and *astra-śastra* (science of weaponry) from his father Dronācārya. He also accepted the responsibility of being the last commander-in-chief of the Kauravas in the battle of Mahābhārata. He murdered the five sons of Draupadi while they were in deep sleep, having mistaken them for the five Pāṇḍavas. In retaliation, the Pāṇḍavas insulted him severely and forcibly removed a jewel which was a part of his forehead. After this insult, he burnt with anger and attempted to kill the unborn Parīkṣit Mahārāja, who was the sole heir to the Pāṇḍava dynasty, by targeting his *brahmāstra* at the child in the womb of Uttara, the wife of Abhimanyu. However, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is *bhakta-vatsala*, affectionate to His *bhaktas*, invoked His *sudarśana cakra* to protect Mahārāja Parīkṣit in the womb.

Vikarṇa: Vikarṇa was one of the one hundred sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. He was killed by Bhīmasena in the Mahābhārata war.

Somadatta: Somadatta was the son of Bāhlīka and the grandson of King Pratīka of the Kuru dynasty. In the battle of Mahābhārata he was killed by Sātyaki.

Bhūriśravā: Bhūriśravā was the son of King Somadatta in the Candra-vamśa (Moon-dynasty). He was a highly courageous and famous king. In the Mahābhārata conflict he was killed by Sātyakī.

Śastra: A weapon such as a sword or sabre that is used to kill others in hand-to-hand combat, is called a *śastra*.

Astra: A weapon such as an arrow that is thrown at the enemy is known as an *astra*.

ŚLOKA 10

अपर्याप्तं तदस्माकं बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।
पर्याप्तं त्विदमेतेषां बलं भीमाभिरक्षितम् ॥१०॥

*aparyāptam tad asmākam / balam bhīṣmābhiraṅkṣitam
paryāptam tv idam eteṣām / balam bhīmabhiraṅkṣitam*

asmākam—our; *tat balam*—military strength; *abhirakṣitam*—well protected; *bhīṣma*—by Grandsire Bhīṣma; (*is*) *aparyāptam*—incompetent; *tu*—but; *idam*—this; *balam*—strength; *eteṣām*—of the Pāṇḍavas; *abhirakṣitam*—well protected; *bhīma*—by Bhīma; (*is*) *paryāptam*—competent.

Our forces, though protected by Bhīṣma, are not sufficient. On the other hand the army of the Pāṇḍavas, under the careful protection of Bhīma, is fully competent.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

Here, the word *aparyāptam* means incompetent or insufficient. That is, the Kauravas are not competent and are of insufficient strength to fight with the Pāṇḍavas. *Bhīṣmābhiraṅkṣitam* means, “Although our army is well-protected by Grandsire Bhīṣma, who is endowed with extremely fine intelligence and expertise both in *śastra* (weaponry) and *sāstra* (knowledge),

the strength of this force is still insufficient because Bhīṣma is favouring both sides.” *Paryāptam bhīmā-bhirakṣitam* means, “But the army of the Pāṇḍavas, though protected by Bhīma, who is less expert in śāstra and śastra, is competent to fight with us.” It is indicated by these statements that Duryodhana is feeling deeply apprehensive.

ŚĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Grandsire Bhīṣma is an unparalleled hero. He received a boon from his father that he could die at the time of his own choosing. He is unconquerable. Although he is fighting on the side of Duryodhana, he is fully affectionate toward the Pāṇḍavas and does not want them to be destroyed. Because he is concerned for the welfare of both sides, the army led by him will not be able to fight with expertise in the battle. Moreover, Bhīṣma cannot use his full ability to fight against the Pāṇḍavas. Therefore, the army headed by him is described as *aparyāpta*, incompetent or insufficient. On the other side, Bhīma, who is not as great a hero as Bhīṣma, will use his full ability to gain victory for his side. Thus the army under his leadership has been described as *paryāpta*, competent or sufficient.

ŚLOKA 11

**अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।
भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥११॥**

*ayaneṣu ca sarveṣu / yathā-bhāgam avasthitāḥ
bhīṣmam evābhikṣantu / bhavantah sarva eva hi*

eva—surely; *bhavantah*—you; *sarve*—all; (*being*) *avasthitāḥ*—situated; *yathā-bhāgam*—in the assigned positions; *ayaneṣu*—at the entry points; *ca*—and; *bhīṣmam*—unto Grandsire Bhīṣma; *eva hi*—certainly; *sarveṣu*—all; *abhirakṣantu*—protect in every respect.

Therefore, you must all remain in your strategically assigned positions at the entry points and give protection to Grandsire Bhīṣma in every respect.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Duryodhana is saying, "Therefore all of you (Droṇa and others) have to be careful." For this purpose only he tells them, "Divide yourselves among all the phalanx entrances and do not leave your assigned areas in the battle. In this way, Bhīṣma will not be killed from behind while fighting the enemy. Right now, Bhīṣma's strength is our very life."

ŚLOKA 12

तस्य सञ्जनयन् हर्षं कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः ।
सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥१२॥

tasya sañjanayan harṣam / kuru-vṛddhah pitāmahah
siṁha-nādaṁ vinadyoccaih / śaṅkham dadhmau pratāpavān

pitāmahah—the Grandsire (Bhīṣma); pratāpa-vān—the valiant; kuru-vṛddhah—elder Kuru; dadhmau—blew; tasya—his; śaṅkham—conch-shell; vinadya—vibrating; uccaiḥ—very loudly; siṁha-nādam—with a sound like a lion's roar; sañjanayan—giving (Duryodhana); harṣam—joy.

Then Grandsire Bhīṣma, the valiant elder of the Kuru dynasty, loudly blew his conch-shell making a sound like the roar of a lion and thus delighted the heart of Duryodhana.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Grandsire Bhīṣma became very pleased to hear Duryodhana's glorification of him in front of Droṇācārya. Producing a sound like the roar of a lion, the elderly Kuru Bhīṣma blew his conch-shell to remove Duryodhana's fear and make him cheerful.

ŚLOKA 13

**ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।
सहसैवाभ्यहन्वन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥१३॥**

tataḥ śaṅkhāś ca bheryaś ca / paṇavānaka-gomukhāḥ
sahasaiवाभ्यहन्वन्त sa śabdas tumulo'bhat

tataḥ—thereafter; śaṅkhāḥ—conch-shells; ca—and; bheryaḥ—kettledrums; ca—and; paṇava-ānaka—small drums and mṛdaṅgas; gomukhāḥ—horns and trumpets; sahasā—suddenly; abhyah-anyanta—were sounded; eva—indeed; saḥ—that; śabdah—sound; abhavat—was; tumulah—tumultuous.

Thereafter, conch-shells, kettledrums, small drums, mṛdaṅgas, horns, trumpets and various other instruments were suddenly sounded, creating a tumultuous, fearsome sound.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The purpose of this *śloka* beginning with the word *tataḥ*, is simply to express that both sides displayed their enthusiasm for war immediately thereafter. Here, *paṇavāḥ*, *ānakāḥ* and *gomukhāḥ* refer to the small drum, *mṛdaṅga*, and various horns and trumpets respectively.

ŚLOKA 14

**ततः श्वेतैर्हयैर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ ।
माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतुः ॥१४॥**

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

tataḥ—thereafter; mādhavaḥ—Śrī Kṛṣṇa; ca—and; eva—certainly; pāṇḍavaḥ—Arjuna; sthitau—situated; mahati—on a great; syandane—chariot; yukte—being yoked; śvetaiḥ—with

white; *hayaiḥ*—horses; *pradadhmatuḥ*—blew; *divyau*—divine; *śaṅkhau*—conch-shells.

Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, stationed on a great chariot drawn by white horses, blew their divine conch-shells.

ŚLOKA 15

पाञ्जजन्यं हर्षिकेशो देवदत्तं धनञ्जयः ।
पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥१५॥

*pāñcrajanyam hr̄ṣikeśo / devadattam dhanañjayah
paunḍram dadhmau mahā-śaṅkham / bhīma-karmā vṛkodarah*

hr̄ṣika-iśah—Hṛṣikeśa (Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the master of the senses); *dadhmau*—blew; *pāñcrajanyam*—the conch-shell named Pāñcrajanya; *dhanañjayaḥ*—Arjuna; (blew) *devadattam*—the conch-shell named Devadatta; *vṛka-udarāḥ*—Bhīmasena; *bhīma-karmā*—the performer of Herculean tasks; *mahā-śaṅkham*—(blew) the great conch-shell; *paunḍram*—named Paunḍra.

Hṛṣikeśa Śrī Kṛṣṇa blew His conch-shell known as Pāñcrajanya; Dhanañjaya blew his conch known as Devadatta; and Bhīma, the performer of Herculean tasks, blew his great conch known as Paunḍra.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Pāñcrajanya: After completing His education in the *āśrama* of His *guru*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa requested His *guru* and his wife to accept some *guru-dakṣiṇā*. As their *guru-dakṣiṇā*, they asked that their son, who had drowned in the ocean, be returned to them alive and well. Inquiring from Varuṇa, the presiding deity of the ocean, Śrī Kṛṣṇa discovered that His *guru*'s son had been swallowed by an ocean-dwelling *asura* named Pāñcrajanya. However, after killing Pāñcrajanya, Śrī Kṛṣṇa did

not find the boy inside his belly. From there Śrī Kṛṣṇa went to Mahākālapurī, brought back His *guru*'s son and presented the boy to His *guru* as *dakṣiṇā*. Since Śrī Kṛṣṇa accepted the external limb (the shell) from the body of the *asura* Pāñcajanya as His conch, it is known as Pāñcajanya.

ŚLOKA 16

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।
नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ॥१६॥

*anantavijayam rājā / kuntī-putro yudhiṣṭhirah
nakulaḥ sahadevaś ca / sughoṣa-maṇipuṣpakau*

rājā—the king; *yudhiṣṭhirah*—Yudhiṣṭhira; *kuntī-putrah*—the son of Kuntī; (*blew*) *ananta-vijayam*—the conch named Anantavijaya (meaning limitless victory); *nakulaḥ*—Nakula; *ca*—and; *sahadevah*—Sahadeva; (*blew*) *sughoṣa-maṇipuṣpakau*—the conches named Sughoṣa and Maṇipuṣpaka.

Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Kuntī, blew the conch named Anantavijaya; Nakula blew the Sughoṣa conch and Sahadeva blew the conch known as Maṇipuṣpaka.

ŚLOKAS 17-18

काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथः ।
धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ॥१७॥
द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते ।
सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान्दध्मुः पृथक्पृथक् ॥१८॥

*kāṣyasaḥ ca parameṣvāsaḥ / śikhāṇḍī ca mahā-rathaḥ
dhṛṣṭadyumno virātaś ca / sātyakiś cāparājitaḥ
drupado draupadeyāś ca / sarvaśaḥ pṛthivī-pate
saubhadraś ca mahā-bāhuḥ / śaṅkhān dadhmuh pṛthak pṛthak*

pṛthivī-pate—O lord of the earth; *parama-iṣu-āsaḥ*—the excellent wielder of arrows; *kāśyaḥ*—the king of Kāśī; *ca*—and; *sikhaṇḍī*—Śikaṇḍhi; *mahā-rathāḥ*—the great chariot fighter; *ca*—also; *dhṛṣṭadyumnaḥ*—Dhṛṣṭadyumna; *virāṭaḥ*—Virāṭa; *ca*—and; *aparājitaḥ*—the unconquerable; *sātyakiḥ*—Sātyaki; *ca*—and; *drupadāḥ*—Drupada; *ca*—and; *draupadeyāḥ*—the sons of Draupadī; *ca*—also; *mahā-bāhuḥ*—mighty-armed; *saubhadraḥ*—Abhimanyu, the son of Subhadrā; *dadhmuḥ*—blew; *pṛthak pṛthak*—respective; *śaṅkhān*—conch-shells; *sarvaśaḥ*—on all sides.

O King of the earth, Dhṛtarāṣṭra! That great archer the King of Kāśī, the *mahārathī* Sikhaṇḍī, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Virāṭa-rāja, the unconquerable Sātyaki, King Drupada, the sons of Draupadī, and Abhimanyu the son of Subhadrā, then loudly resounded their respective conch-shells on all sides.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

Pāñcajanya and others are the names of conches belonging to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and various warriors on the battlefield. *Aparājitaḥ* means one who cannot be defeated by anyone, or one who is adorned with a bow.

ŚLOKA 19

स घोषे धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।
नभश्च पृथिवीञ्चैव तुमुलोऽभ्यनुनादयन् ॥१९॥

sa ghoṣo dhārtarāṣṭrāṇām / hṛdayāni vyadārayat
nabhaś ca pṛthivīñ caiva / tumulo 'bhyanunādayan

abhi-anunādayan—reverberating; *pṛthivīm*—on the earth; *ca*;— and also; *nabhaḥ*—in the sky; *sah*—that; *tumulah*—tumultuous; *ghoṣaḥ*—sound; *eva*—indeed; *vyadārayat*—shattered; *hṛdayāni*—the hearts; *dhārtarāṣṭrāṇām*—of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sons.

Reverberating between the earth and sky, the tumultuous sound of those conches shattered the hearts of the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

ŚLOKA 20

अथ व्यवस्थितान्वृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान् कपिध्वजः ।
प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसम्पाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवः ।
हर्षीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ॥२०॥

*atha vyavasthitān dṛṣṭvā / dhārtarāṣṭrān kapi-dhvajah
pravṛtte śastra-sampāte / dhanur udyamya pāṇḍavah
hṛṣīkeśam tadā vākyam / idam āha mahī-pate*

mahi-pate—O lord of the earth; *atha*—thereupon; *dṛṣṭvā*—seeing; *dhārtarāṣṭrān*—the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *vyavasthitān*—situated; *kapi-dhvajah*—(Arjuna) whose flag was marked with Kapi (Hanumān); *pāṇḍavah*—Arjuna, the son of Pāṇḍu; *udyamya*—taking up; (his) *dhanuh*—bow; *pravṛtte*—while about to embark; *śastra-sampāte*—in releasing his arrows; *tadā*—then; *āha*—spoke; *idam*—these; *vākyam*—words; *hṛṣīkeśam*—unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the master of the senses.

O King, after seeing your sons in military array, Kapi-dhvaja Arjuna raised his bow and prepared to shoot his arrows. He then spoke the following words to Śrī Hṛṣīkeśa.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Kapi-dhvaja: Kapi-dhvaja is a name for Arjuna that denotes the presence of the mighty Hanumān on the flag of his chariot. Arjuna was very proud of his skill in archery. Once, he was strolling on the bank of a river carrying his Gāṇḍīva bow. There he saw an old monkey. Paying obeisances to him, Arjuna asked, “Who are you?”

The monkey politely replied, “I am Hanumān, servant of Śrī Rāma.”

Arjuna then asked, “Are you the servant of the same Rāma, who, unable to make a bridge of arrows over the ocean, employed monkeys to build a bridge of stones? It was only then that His army could cross the ocean. If I had been there at that time, I would have built such a strong bridge of arrows that the entire army could have easily crossed over.”

Hanumān replied very politely, “But your bridge would not have endured the weight of even the weakest monkey in Śrī Rāma’s army.”

Arjuna said, “I am going to make a bridge of arrows over this river and you may cross it with as heavy a load as you can carry.”

Hanumān then expanded himself into a huge form and jumped towards the Himalayan mountains. He returned with heavy stones tied to every hair on his body. As soon as he placed one foot on the bridge, it started to quiver but, surprisingly enough, did not break. Arjuna trembled in fear. Remembering his worshipable Deity, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he prayed, “O Lord! The honour of the Pāṇḍavas is in Your hands.”

When Hanumān put the full weight of both his feet on the bridge, he was astonished to find that it did not break. If the bridge did not break, it would be a matter of great shame for him. Within his heart, Hanumān remembered his worshipable Lord, Śrī Rāmacandra. Meanwhile, his glance fell upon the water below the bridge, where he saw streams of blood flowing. Hanumān immediately jumped off and peered below the bridge. “Oh! What is this? My worshipable Lord, Śrī Rāmacandra, is personally supporting the bridge of sharp arrows on His back!” He at once fell at the lotus feet of Śrī Rāmacandra.

At the same time, Arjuna saw the Lord not as Śrī Rāma but as Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Both Hanumān and Arjuna lowered their

heads in shame before their worshipable Lord, who said, “There is no difference between these two forms of Mine. I, Kṛṣṇa, in the form of Śrī Rāma, come to establish the bounds of morality and proper dharmika conduct (*maryādā*) and, in this very form of *līlā-puruṣottama* Kṛṣṇa, I am *akhila rasāṁṛta mūrti*, the personification of the nectar of all *rasas*. From today onwards, you, who are both My servants, should become friends. In a battle in the near future, the mighty Hanumān, situated on the flag of Arjuna’s chariot, will give him protection in all respects.”

For this reason, Hanumān graced the flag of Arjuna’s chariot in the battle of Mahābhārata. Arjuna thus received the name Kapi-dhvaja, or one who has a monkey on his flag.

ŚLOKAS 21-23

अर्जुन उवाच—

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥२१॥

यावदेतात्रिरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।

कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन् रणसमुद्यमे ॥२२॥

योत्स्यमानानवक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः ।

धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेर्युद्धे प्रियचिकीर्षवः ॥२३॥

arjuna uvāca

senayor ubhayor madhye / ratham sthāpaya me ‘cyuta

*yāvad etān nirikṣe ‘ham / yoddhu-kāmān avasthitān
kair mayā saha yoddhavyam / asmin rāṇa-samudyame*

*yotsyamānān avekṣe ‘ham / ya ete ‘tra samāgatāḥ
dhārtarāṣṭrasya durbuddher / yuddhe priya-cikīrṣavāḥ*

arjunah uvāca—Arjuna said; *acyuta*—O infallible one; *sthāpaya*—please place; *me*—my; *ratham*—chariot; *madhye*—in the midst; *ubhayoh*—of the two; *senayoh*—armies; *aham*—I; *nirikṣe*—wish to examine; *yāvat*—as many as (they are); *etān*—all these;

avasthitān—arrayed on the battlefield; *yoddhu-kāmān*—desiring battle; *kaiḥ*—with which fighters; *saha*—together; *mayā*—with me; *yoddhavyam*—there should be a fight; *asmin*—in this; *samudyame*—strenuous; *rāṇa*—battle; *aham avekṣe*—I wish to see; *yotsyamānān*—those who wish to fight; *ete*—those; *ye*—who; *cikīrśavah*—desire; *priya*—well being; *yuddhe*—in the fight; *durbuddheḥ*—for the evil-minded; *dhārtarāṣṭrasya*—son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *samāgatāḥ*—assembled; *atra*—here.

Arjuna said: O Acyuta! Please place my chariot between the two armies so that I may observe all who desire to fight in this great battle. I want to see all those warriors, the well-wishers of the evil-minded son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who have assembled here.

ŚLOKAS 24-25

सञ्जय उवाच—

एवमुक्तो हृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥२४॥
भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः सर्वेषांच महीक्षिताम् ।
उवाच पार्थं पश्यैतान् समवेतान् कुरुनिति ॥२५॥

sañjaya uvāca

evam ukto hṛṣikeśo / guḍākeśena bhārata
senayor ubhayor madhye / sthāpayitvā rathottamam
bhīṣma-droṇa-pramukhataḥ / sarveṣāṁ ca mahīkṣitām
uvāca pārtha paśyaitān / samavetān kurūn iti

sañjayaḥ uvāca—Sañjaya said; *bhārata*—O descendent of Bharata; *hṛṣikeśaḥ*—Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *evam*—thus; *uktah*—addressed; *guḍākeśena*—by the conqueror of sleep (Arjuna); *sthāpayitvā*—situating; *ratha-uttamam*—celestial chariot; *madhye*—in the midst; *ubhayoh*—of the two; *senayoh*—armies; *ca*—also; *pramukhataḥ*—in the presence; *sarveṣām*—of all; *mahi-kṣitām*—

the kings of the earth; (headed by) *bhīṣma*—Grandsire Bhīṣma; *drona*—Dronācārya; *uvāca*—He said; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā (Arjuna); *paśya*—behold; *etān*—these; *samavetān*—assembled; *kurūn*—Kurus; *iti*—thus.

Sañjaya said: O Bhārata, having thus been addressed by Guḍākeśa (Arjuna), Hṛṣīkeśa drew the excellent chariot into the midst of both armies in the presence of all the kings and prominent personalities like Bhīṣma, Drona and others. He then said: O Pārtha, just behold this assembly of Kurus.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Hṛṣīkeśah means the controller of all senses. Although Kṛṣṇa is Hṛṣīkeśa, when He received orders from Arjuna, He became controlled by Arjuna's sense of speech alone. Aho! Bhagavān is controlled only by *prema*. Guḍākeśa consists of two words, *guḍā* and *akeśā*. *Guḍā* refers to *guḍ*, very sweet, unrefined sugar. Just as *guḍā* exhibits all sweetness, similarly *akeśāḥ* exhibits the sweet taste of the *rasa* of their affection. *Akeśā* refers to the *guṇa-avatāras*; Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Maheśa. 'A' indicates Viṣṇu, 'ka' Brahmā, and 'iśa' indicates Mahādeva (Śiva). How can these parts, or *guṇa-avatāras*, manifest their *aiśvarya* (superiority of opulence) before a person whose order was followed, out of *prema*, by Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the crest-jewel of all *avatāras*? Instead, they consider their lives to be successful by manifesting the sweet mellow of their affection towards Arjuna, who is therefore known as Guḍākeśa (one who receives sweet affection from the three *guṇa-avatāras*). Indeed, Bhagavān Mahāviṣṇu, Paravyoma-nātha (Lord of the transcendental sky), once admitted to Arjuna, "I only brought the sons of the *brāhmaṇa* here with a desire to see both you and Kṛṣṇa." (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.89.58)

Guḍākā also means sleep, and one who has control over sleep is called *Guḍākeśa*. It is not surprising that the same Arjuna by whose *prema* even Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the controller of *māyā*, becomes controlled, conquered just one ordinary function of *māyā* called sleep. This is its hidden meaning.

Bhiṣma-drona-pramukhataḥ means ‘in front of Bhiṣma and Drona’, and *sarveśāṁ mahikṣitām* means ‘in front of all the other kings also’.

ŚLOKA 26

तत्रापश्यतिस्थितान् पार्थः पितृनथं पितामहान् ।
आचार्यान्मातुलान्भ्रातृन्युत्रान्यौत्रान्सखीस्तथा ।
श्वशुरान् सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि ॥२६॥

tatrāpaśyat sthitān pārthah / pitṛn atha pitāmahān
ācāryān mātulān bhrātṛn / putrān pauratrān sakhibhūtān tathā
śvaśurān suhṛdaś caiva / senayor ubhayor api

atha—thereafter; *tatra*—there; *api*—even; *ubhayoh*—between the two; *senayoh*—armies; *pārthaḥ*—Arjuna, son of Pṛthā (Kuntī); *apaśyat*—saw; *sthitān*—situated; *pitṛn*—the parental uncles; *pitāmahān*—grandfathers; *ācāryān*—teachers; *mātulān*—maternal uncles; *bhrātṛn*—cousins; *putrān*—sons; *pauratrān*—grandsons; *sakhibhūtān*—friends; *tathā*—also; *śvaśurān*—fathers-in-law; *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *suhṛdah*—well-wishers.

There, in the midst of both armies, Arjuna saw his paternal uncles, grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, cousins, nephews, grandsons, friends, fathers-in-law, sons and well-wishers.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

Arjuna saw the sons and grandsons of Duryodhana and many others.

ŚLOKA 27

तान् समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेयः सर्वान् बन्धूनवस्थितान् ।
कृपया परयाविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ॥२७॥

tān samīkṣya sa kaunteyāḥ / sarvān bandhūn avasthitān
kṛpayā parayāviṣṭo / viṣidann idam abravīt

samīkṣya—after seeing; sarvān—all; (of) tān—those; bandhūn—relatives and friends; avasthitān—standing near; saḥ—he; kaunteyāḥ—Arjuna, the son of Kuntī; viṣidān—lamenting; āviṣṭāḥ—overcome; parayā—by great; kṛpayā—by compassion; abravīt—spoke; idam—thus.

Seeing all his friends and relatives standing near him on the battlefield, Kaunteya, lamenting and overwhelmed with compassion for them, spoke thus.

ŚLOKA 28

अर्जुन उवाच—

द्रष्ट्वेमान् स्वजनान् कृष्ण युयुत्सून समवस्थितान् ।
सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखञ्च परिशुष्यति ॥२८॥

arjuna uvāca
dṛṣṭvemām svajanān kṛṣṇa / yuyutsūn samavasthitān
sīdanti mama gātrāṇi / mukhañ ca pariśuṣyati

arjunah uvāca—Arjuna said; kṛṣṇa—O Kṛṣṇa; dṛṣṭvā—after seeing; imām—all these; sva-janān—kinsmen; samavasthitān—assembled (here); yuyutsūn—desiring battle; mama—my; gātrāṇi—limbs; sīdanti—are slackening; ca—and; (my) mukham—mouth; pariśuṣyati—is drying up.

Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa, seeing all my kinsmen assembled here with a desire to fight, I feel my limbs weakening and my mouth becoming dry.

ŚLOKA 29

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ।
गाण्डीवं संसते हस्तात् त्वकचैव परिद्वयते ॥२९॥

*vepathuś ca śarīre me / roma-harṣaś ca jāyate
gāṇḍīvam sramṣate hastāt / tvak caiva paridvayate*

jāyate—there is; *vepathuh*—trembling; *me śarīre*—in my body; *ca*—and; *roma-harṣah*—hairs standing on end; *ca*—and; *gāṇḍīvam*—my bow called Gāṇḍīva; *sramṣate*—is slipping; *hastāt*—from the hand; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; (*my*) *tvak*—skin; *paridvayate*—is burning.

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

ŚLOKA 30

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ।
निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ॥३०॥

*na ca śaknomy avasthātum / bhramatīva ca me manah
nimittāni ca paśyāmi / viparītāni keśava*

keśava—O Keśava; *na śaknomi*—I am unable; *avasthātum*—to remain standing; *ca*—and; *me*—my; *manah*—mind; *iva*—appears; *bhramati*—to reel; *ca*—and; *paśyāmi*—I see; *viparītāni*—inauspicious; *nimittāni*—portents; *ca*—also.

O Keśava, I am unable to remain standing. My mind appears to be reeling and I detect only inauspicious omens.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“I am living here for the purpose (*nimitta*) of gaining wealth.” Just as in this statement, the word *nimitta* indicates

purpose, similarly in this *śloka*, the word *nimitta* is also indicative of purpose. Arjuna is saying, “Thereafter, in spite of winning the battle, attainment of the kingdom will not bring us happiness. Rather, it will be a cause of distress and sorrow.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Keśava: Here the *bhakta* Arjuna is revealing the feelings within his heart by addressing Bhagavān as Keśava. “Despite killing prominent *asuras* such as Keśī and others, You always maintain Your *bhaktas*. In the same way, please remove the lamentation and delusion from my heart and maintain me.”

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam gives a further, confidential meaning of the word Keśava which is only for *rasika-vaiṣṇavas*. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has explained that the word Keśava means: *keśān vayate saṁskārotīti*. “Because He arranges the hair of His beloved, Kṛṣṇa is called Keśava.”

ŚLOKA 31

न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ।
न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण न च राज्यं सुखानि च ॥३१॥

na ca śreyo ‘nupaśyāmi / hatvā svajanam āhave
na kāṅkṣe vijayam kṛṣṇa / na ca rājyam sukhāni ca

kṛṣṇa—O Kṛṣṇa; *ca*—also; *na anupaśyāmi*—I do not see; *śreyah*—auspiciousness; *hatvā*—by killing; (*my*) *sva-janam*—own relatives; *āhave*—in battle; *na*—nor; *kāṅkṣe*—do I desire; *vijayam*—victory; *na*—nor; *ca*—as well; *rājyam*—kingdom; *ca*—also; *sukhāni*—pleasures.

O Kṛṣṇa, I do not see how anything auspicious can arise from killing my own kinsmen in battle. Nor do I desire victory, the resulting kingdom, or even happiness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Śreyo na paśyāmīti means 'I do not see anything auspicious'. The sannyāsīs who have attained perfection in *yoga*, and the warriors who are killed in battle both attain the celestial sun planet. From this statement it appears that a person who is killed in battle attains auspiciousness, but one who kills receives no such *sukṛti* (pious result). One may question this by saying that a person who kills and is victorious in battle will certainly receive both fame and the pleasure of sovereignty over a kingdom, therefore it is beneficial for Arjuna to fight. In answer to this, Arjuna says: *na kāṅkṣe*. "I do not desire this."

ŚLOKAS 32-34

किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ।
 येषामर्थे कातिं नो राज्यं भोगाः सुखानि च ॥३२॥
 त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणास्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ।
 आचार्यः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः ॥३३॥
 मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः सम्बन्धिनस्तथा ।
 एतात्र हन्तुमिच्छामि धनतोऽपि मधुसूदन ॥३४॥

kim no rājyena govinda / kim bhogair jīvitena vā
 yeṣām arthe kāṅkṣitam no / rājyam bhogāḥ sukhāni ca
 ta ime 'vasthitā yuddhe / prāṇāṁś tyaktvā dhanāni ca
 ācāryāḥ pitaraḥ putrāḥ / tathaiva ca pitāmahāḥ
 mātulāḥ śvaśurāḥ pautrāḥ / śyālāḥ sambandhinās tathā
 etān na hantum icchāmi / ghnato 'pi madhusūdana

govinda—O Govinda; *naḥ*—for us; *kim*—what use; (*is there*) *rājyena*—by (having) a kingdom; *kim*—what use; (*is there*) *bhogaiḥ*—by (experiencing) pleasures; *vā*—or even; *jīvitena*—by having life; *te*—they; *yeṣām*—for whose; *arthe*—sake; *rājyam*—kingdom; *bhogāḥ*—enjoyment; *sukhāni*—all pleasures;

kāṅkṣitam—are desired; *nah*—by us; *ca*—also; *ime*—they; *ācāryāḥ*—teachers; *pitarāḥ*—fathers; *putrāḥ*—sons; *tathā*—as well; *eva*—certainly; *ca*—also; *pītāmahāḥ*—grandfathers; *mātulāḥ*—maternal uncles; *śvaśurāḥ*—fathers-in-law; *pautrāḥ*—grandsons; *śyālāḥ*—brothers-in-law; *sambandhināḥ*—relatives; *avasthitāḥ*—present here; *tyaktvā*—giving up; *prāṇān*—lives; *ca*—and; *tathā*—as well; *dhanāni*—riches; *yuddhe*—in warfare; *madhusūdana*—O slayer of the *asura* Madhu; *api*—even; (if I am) *ghnataḥ*—slain; *na icchāmi*—I do not wish; *hantum*—to kill; *etān*—these people.

O Govinda! Of what use to us is a kingdom, enjoyment or even life itself, when those for whom we desire them; teachers, uncles, sons, grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law and other relatives, are all standing before us in battle array, ready to give up their lives and wealth? Therefore, O Madhusūdana, even if they kill me, I still do not wish to kill them.

ŚLOKA 35

अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किन्तु महीकृते ।
निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान् नः का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दनं ॥३५॥

*api trailokya-rājyasya / hetoḥ kin nu mahī-kṛte
nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrān nah / kā prītiḥ syāj janārdana*

janārdana—O Janārdana; *nihatya*—by killing; *dhārtarāṣṭrān*—the sons of Dhārtarāṣṭra; *api*—even; *hetoḥ*—for the sake of; *rājyasya*—the kingdom; *trai-lokya*—of the three worlds; *kim nu*—what to speak of; *mahī-kṛte*—the earth; *kā*—what; *prītiḥ*—satisfaction; *syāt*—will there be; *nah*—for us.

O Janārdana, if we kill the sons of Dhārtarāṣṭra, even for the sake of sovereignty over the three worlds, what to speak of this earth, what satisfaction will we derive?

ŚLOKA 36

पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान् हत्वैतानाततायिनः ।
 तस्मान्नार्हा वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान् सबान्धवान् ।
 स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ॥३६॥

*pāpam evāśrayed asmān / hatvaitān ātatāyinah
 tasmān nārhā vayam hantum / dhārtarāṣṭrān sa-bāndhavān
 svajanam hi katham hatvā / sukhinah syāma mādhava*

mādhava—O Mādhava; *pāpam*—sin; *eva*—certainly; *āśrayet*—will cling; *asmān*—to us; *hatvā*—by killing; *etān*—these; *ātatāyinah*—aggressors; *tasmāt*—therefore; (*it is*) *na*—not; *arhāḥ*—befitting; *vayam*—for us; *hantum*—to slay; *dhārtarāṣṭrān*—the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *sa-bāndhavān*—along with relatives; *hi*—indeed; *katham*—how; *syāma*—will we be; *sukhinah*—happy; *hatvā*—by killing; *sva-janam*—our kinsmen.

O Mādhava, we will only incur sin by killing all these aggressors. Therefore, it is improper to kill Duryodhana and our other relatives. How could we be happy by slaying our own kinsmen?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

According to *śruti*, there are six types of aggressors (*ātatāyī*): those who set fire to the house, give poison, attack with deadly weapons, steal one's wealth, usurp one's land or abduct one's wife. Arjuna argues. "If you say 'O Bhārata, immediately upon seeing these six types of aggressors one should kill them without consideration because, according to the injunctions of *śāstra*, such killing is proper and no sin is incurred', then in reply I would say 'that by killing those assembled here, we will certainly incur sin'."

There is a reason behind Arjuna's logic. According to *arthashastra*, the science of economics, to kill an aggressor is proper. The injunctions of *arthashastra*, however, are less important

than those of *dharma-śāstra*. As Yājñavalkya Ṛṣi has said, “Know *dharma-śāstra* to be superior to *artha-śāstra*.” Hence, Arjuna said, “According to *dharma-śāstra*, by killing ācāryas and others we will certainly incur sin. Not only that, we will not even derive any mundane pleasure from it.” For this reason, Arjuna uses phrases such as *sva-janam*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

According to *smṛti-śāstra*, no sin is incurred by killing six types of aggressors. But by the statement of *śruti*: *mām hiṁsāt sarva bhūtāni*, the injunction not to kill any living entity is established. Whenever there seems to be a contradiction between *śruti* and *smṛti*, the statements of *śruti* are accepted as superior. This is the instruction of the *śāstras*. Similarly, in comparison to *artha-śāstra*, the path provided by *dharma-śāstra* should be considered superior. Following this logic, Arjuna feels that although the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra are the aggressors, sin will be incurred by killing them.

Here, we also see another speciality in the character of Arjuna. At the end of the battle of Mahābhārata, Arjuna tied Aśvathāmā as one would tie up an animal and brought him to the feet of Draupadī for the offence of killing the sons of the Pāṇḍavas. At that time Draupadī was crying. Being generous and liberal, she said that Aśvathāmā, the son of their *guru*, should be forgiven. Bhīma, on the other hand, said that he should be killed immediately. Arjuna, finding himself in a dilemma, looked towards Kṛṣṇa, who said, “A *brāhmaṇa* is not deserving of the death sentence even if he has fallen from his status. On the other hand, a person who comes to make a lethal attack with weapons must certainly be killed.” Understanding Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s inner intention, Arjuna cut the hair of that unqualified *brāhmaṇa* Aśvathāmā, forcibly removed the gem from his forehead and expelled him from the camp. The internal feeling of Arjuna is that whatever the situation may

be, no one can be happy by engaging in sin. Such a person cannot even receive worldly happiness, what to speak of transcendental pleasure. Adherence to the Vedas, smṛti, sadācāra (the injunctions of saintly behaviour) and self-satisfaction are the four symptoms of dharma. Fighting against one's kinsmen is an activity which is contrary to both the Vedas and sadācāra, and brings with it feelings of repentance.

ŚLOKAS 37-38

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् ॥३७॥
कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्विवर्त्तिम् ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्विर्जनादनं ॥३८॥

yadyapy ete na paśyanti / lobhopahata-cetasah
kula-kṣaya-kṛtam doṣam / mitra-drohe ca pātakam
katham na jñeyam asmābhiḥ / pāpād asmān nivarttitum
kula-kṣaya-kṛtam doṣam / prapaśyadbhir janārdana

janārdana—O Janārdana; *yady api*—even though; *ete*—they; *cetasah*—whose hearts; *upahata*—are afflicted; *lobha*—by greed; *na paśyanti*—do not see; *doṣam*—the fault; *kṛtam*—incurred; *kula-kṣaya*—in the destruction of the dynasty; *ca*—and; *pātakam*—the sin; *mitra-drohe*—in treachery to friends; *katham*—why; *asmābhiḥ*—we; *prapaśyadbhiḥ*—who can see; *doṣam*—the crime; *kṛtam*—in performing; *kula-kṣaya*—the destruction of the dynasty; *na jñeyam*—should not consider; *nivarttitum*—to desist; *asmāt pāpāt*—from this sin.

O Janārdana, the intelligence of Duryodhana and others has been polluted by greed to attain the kingdom. Thus, they are unable to conceive of the lawlessness that arises from destroying the dynasty, or the sin incurred by betraying their friends. But why

should we, who have such knowledge, engage in such improper acts as these?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna asks, “Aho! Why are we still engaged in this battle?” To answer his own question he speaks this śloka beginning with the words *yady apy*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Arjuna considers that in this battle there are teachers such as Droṇācārya and Kṛpācārya, maternal uncles such as Śalya and Śakuni, family elders such as Bhīṣma, the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and relatives and kinsmen such as Jayadratha. Śāstra forbids turning against such persons: *r̥tvik-purohitācārya-mātulātithi-samśriteḥ / bāla-vṛddhātūrair vaidya-jñāti-sambandhi-bāndhavaiḥ*. “One should not quarrel with one who performs *yajña*, a family priest, a teacher, maternal uncle, a guest, those who are dependents, young children, elderly persons and relatives.”

“But I have to fight with these very persons.” Thus, Arjuna expressed his unwillingness to fight with his own kinsmen, who now stood before him. “But why are they all determined to fight with us?” Contemplating this, Arjuna concludes that they have become overpowered by their petty, selfish interests and have thus lost their ability to discriminate between what is beneficial and what is not beneficial, between *dharma* and *adharma*. As a result, they have forgotten what sinful reactions are incurred by destroying one’s own dynasty. “We do not have any selfish motives, so why should we engage in such an abominable and sinful act?”

*Thus ends the Sārārtha-Varśinī Prakāśikā-vṛtti,
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja,
on the First Chapter of Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā.*

ŚLOKA 39

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।
धर्मे नष्टे कुलं कृत्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥३९॥

*kula-kṣaye praṇaśyanti / kula-dharmāḥ sanātanaḥ
dharme naṣṭe kulam kṛtsnam / adharmaḥ 'bhibhavaty uta*

kula-kṣaye—when a dynasty is destroyed; *sanātanaḥ*—the ancient; *kula-dharmāḥ*—religious traditions of the family; *praṇaśyanti*—perish; (and when) *dharme*—virtue; (is) *naṣṭe*—lost; (that which is) *adharmaḥ*—sin; *abhibhavati*—overpowers; *kṛtsnam*—the whole; *kulam*—the family; *uta*—also.

When a dynasty is destroyed, the ancient *dharmaika* traditions of the family handed down through that dynasty are also destroyed. Upon the destruction of *dharma*, the entire dynasty becomes overpowered by *adharma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Sanātanaḥ refers to those principles which have descended through the dynasty from a remote time.

ŚLOKA 40

अधर्माभिभवात् कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।
स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वार्ष्ण्यं जायते वर्णसङ्करः ॥४०॥

*adharmaḥbhībhavāt kṛṣṇa / praduṣyanti kula-striyah
strīṣu duṣṭāsu vārṣṇeya / jāyate varṇa-saṅkaraḥ*

kṛṣṇa—O Kṛṣṇa; *adharma*—irreligion; *abhibhavāt*—having become predominant; *kula-striyah*—ladies of the family; *praduṣyanti*—are polluted; *vārṣṇeya*—O descendant of Vṛṣṇi; *strīṣu*—when the womanhood; *duṣṭāsu*—is so corrupted; *varṇa-saṅkaraḥ*—mixed or impure progeny; *jāyate*—are born.

O Kṛṣṇa, when a dynasty is overpowered by *adharma*, the women of that dynasty become degraded. O descendant of Vṛṣṇi, when women become degraded and unchaste, *varṇasaṅkaraḥ* (unwanted progeny) are born.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

It is *adharma* which causes them to engage in unchaste activities.

ŚLOKA 41

अथमाभिभवात् कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।
स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वार्ष्यं जायते वर्णसङ्करः ॥४०॥

*saṅkaro narakāyaiva / kula-ghnānāṁ kulasya ca
patanti pitaro hy eśām / lupta-pīndodaka-kriyāḥ*

saṅkarah—such unwanted children; *narakāya*—make for hellish life; *kulasya*—for the dynasty; *eva*—certainly; *eśām kula-ghnānām*—for those who are destroyers of the dynasty; *ca*—also; *hi*—indeed; *pitaraḥ*—the ancestors; (since) *pīṇḍa-udaka-kriyāḥ*—their offerings of sanctified food and water; *lupta*—are given up; *patanti*—also fall down.

Such unwanted progeny certainly force hellish conditions upon both the family and the destroyers of the dynasty. Indeed, their forefathers, bereft of oblations of sanctified food and water, must also suffer the same fate.

ŚLOKA 42

दोषैरेतैः कुलघ्नानां वर्णसङ्करकारकैः ।
उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः ॥४२॥

doṣair etaiḥ kula-ghnānāṁ / varṇa-saṅkara-kārakaiḥ

utsādyante jāti-dharmāḥ / kula-dharmāś ca sāśvatāḥ

etaih doṣaih—by these faults; *kula-ghnānām*—of the destroyers of the family; *kārakaiḥ*—causing; *varṇa-saṅkara*—impure progeny; *jāti-dharmāḥ*—the dharmika occupation according to birth; *ca*—and; *sāśvatāḥ*—the eternal; *kula-dharmāḥ*—family tradition; *utsādyante*—sink into oblivion.

Due to the evil deeds of these destroyers of the dynasty, the teachings of *dharma* in accordance with timeless family tradition, are sunk into oblivion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Utsādyante means they become lost.

ŚLOKA 43

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दनं ।
नरके नियतं वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम ॥४३॥

*utsanna-kula-dharmāṇām / manusyāṇām janārdana
narake niyatam vāso / bhavatītī anuśuśruma*

utsanna—devoid of; *kula-dharmāṇām*—those who have the family traditions; *manuṣyāṇām*—of such men; *janārdana*—O Janārdana; *narake*—in hell; *niyatam*—always; *vāsaḥ*—residence; *bhavati*—becomes; *iti*—thus; *anuśuśruma*—I have heard from authorities.

O Janārdana, I have heard that those who abolish their dynasty's *dharma* suffer in hell for an unlimited period of time.

ŚLOKA 44

अहो बत महत्पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम् ।
यद्राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यताः ॥४४॥

aho bata mahat-pāpaṁ / karttum vyavasitā vayam

yad rājya-sukha-lobhena / hantum svajanam udyatāḥ

aho—alas; bata—how lamentable; vayam—we; vyavasitāḥ—being determined; karttum—to do; mahat—great; pāpam—sin; yat rājya-sukha-lobhena—on account of greed for royal happiness; udyatāḥ—are prepared; hantum—to slay; sva-janam—our own kinsmen.

Alas! How regretable it is that we are determined to engage in this great sin. Driven by greed for royal happiness, we are prepared to slay our own kinsmen.

ŚLOKA 45

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणयः ।
धार्तराष्ट्राः रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतरं भवेत् ॥४५॥

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

yadi—if; śastra-pāṇayah—those with weapons in hand; dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ—the sons of Dhārtarāṣṭra; hanyuh—may kill; mām—me; apratīkāram—not countering, unresisting; aśastram—unarmed; raṇe—on the battlefield; tat—that; me—for me; bhavet—would be; kṣemataram—more beneficial.

Even if the fully-armed sons of Dhārtarāṣṭra were to kill me unarmed and unresisting on the battlefield, that would be more auspicious for me.

ŚLOKA 46

सञ्जय उवाच—

एवमुक्त्वाजुनः संख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।
विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्नमानसः ॥४६॥

sañjaya uvāca

*evam uktvārjunah saṅkhye / rathopastha upāviśat
visṛjya sa-śaram cāpam / śoka-saṁvigna-mānasah*

sañjayaḥ uvāca—Sañjaya said; *evam uktvā*—having thus spoken; *saṅkhye*—in the midst of the battlefield; *arjunah*—Arjuna; *mānasah*—his mind; *saṁvigna*—distressed; *śoka*—by lamentation; *ratha-upasthah*—standing on the chariot; *upāviśat*—sat down; *visṛjya*—throwing aside; *cāpam*—his bow; *sa-śaram*—along with his quivers of arrows.

Sañjaya said: Having spoken these words in the midst of the battlefield, Arjuna, his mind distracted by lamentation cast aside his bow and arrows and sat down on the chariot.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Saṅkhye means in the battle and *rathopasthe* means on the chariot.

Thus ends the Bhāvānuvāda of the Sārārtha-Varşinī Ṭīkā, by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, on the First Chapter of Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, which gives pleasure to the bhaktas and is accepted by all saintly persons.

CHAPTER TWO



Sāṅkhya-Yoga Yoga Through the Principle of Analysis

ŚLOKA 1

सञ्जय उवाच—

तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रूणाकुलेक्षणम् ।
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥१॥

sañjaya uvāca
tam tathā kṛpayāviṣṭam / aśru-pūrṇākulekṣaṇam
viṣidantam idam vākyam / uvāca madhusūdanaḥ

sañjaya uvāca—Sañjaya said; madhusūdanaḥ—Śrī Madhusūdana; tathā—thus; uvāca—spoke; idam—these; vākyam—words; tam—unto him (Arjuna); viṣidantam—the lamenting; āviṣṭam—overwhelmed; kṛpayā—with compassion; (and whose) ākula—restless; iksaṇam—eyes; (were) aśru-pūrṇa—full of tears.

Sañjaya said: Śrī Madhusūdana thus spoke these words to the lamenting Arjuna, who was overwhelmed with compassion and whose restless eyes were full of tears.

ŚLOKA 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्त्तिकरमजुन् ॥२॥

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

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—Śrī Bhagavān said; *arjuna*—O Arjuna; *kutah*—whence?; (has) *idam*—this; *kaśmalam*—delusion; *samupasthitam*—come; *tvā*—to you; *viṣame*—in these adverse circumstances; (it is) *juṣṭam*—practised; *anārya*—by the non-Āryans; (it is) *karam*—the cause of; *akīrtti*—infamy; (it) *asvargyam*—does not lead to Svarga.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O Arjuna, what is the cause of your delusion at this crucial hour? This is not at all proper for an Āryan. It will neither enhance your reputation nor lead you to Svarga-loka.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this Second Chapter, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra delineates the symptoms of liberated persons. He removes the darkness caused by lamentation and delusion by first giving the wisdom to discriminate between matter and spirit (the self).

Kaśmalam means delusion, *viṣame* means at this crucial moment or at the crisis of battle, *kutah* means what is the cause? And *upasthitam* means it has taken shelter in you. The word *anārya-juṣṭam* implies that this action would not be appreciated by noble or respectable persons, and *asvargyam akīrtti-karam* means that this action is unfavourable for the attainment of both mundane and transcendental happiness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Dhṛtarāṣṭra was pleased to know that even before the battle began, a religious feeling (*dharma-pravṛtti*) had suddenly awakened within Arjuna's heart. Arjuna was expressing aversion to facing the battle by adhering to the principle of non-violence, considering it to be the supreme *dharma* (*ahiṁsā paramo dharmah*). Dhṛtarāṣṭra deliberated as follows: "It would be fortuitous for us if this battle did not take place, because my sons could then be permanent sovereigns of the kingdom, without any obstacle." However, he still inquired as to what happened next.

Sañjaya, who was endowed with fine intelligence, could understand Dhṛtarāṣṭra's inner motive; thus he very expertly detected the inference, and crushed the hopes of the blind king. He said, "Even after seeing Arjuna in such a condition, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has not neglected him. Rather, He will instil that same natural propensity into the heart of Arjuna with which He annihilated Madhu and other *asuras*. Through Arjuna, He will arrange the death of all your sons. Therefore, do not harbour any hope of attaining the kingdom without a battle."

Sañjaya continued describing to Dhṛtarāṣṭra the statements of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. "To fight is the *sva-dharma* (prescribed duty) of *kṣatriyas*. Why, at this time of battle, are you becoming averse to your *sva-dharma*? To lose interest in this *dharma-yuddha* (righteous battle) is unfavourable for any higher attainment (*anārya-juṣṭa*) that will give you *mokṣa*, *Svarga* and fame. Such loss of interest destroys reputation and happiness in this material world (*akīrti-kara*)."

ŚLOKA 3

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थं नैतत्त्वव्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥३॥

*klaibyam mā sma gamah pārtha
naitat tvayy upapadyate
kṣudram hṛdaya-daurbalyam
tyaktvottīṣṭha parantapa*

pārtha—O Pārtha; *mā sma gamah*—do not take to; *klaibyam*—cowardice; *etat*—this; (*is*) *na*—not; *upapadyate*—befitting; *tvayi*—unto you; *tyaktvā*—giving up; *kṣudram*—petty; *daurbalyam*—weakness; *hṛdaya*—of heart; *parantapa*—O chaser of the enemy; *uttiṣṭha*—arise.

O Pārtha, do not yield to such cowardice; it does not befit you. Abandon this petty weakness of heart, O Parantapa, and arise to do battle.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Here the word *klaibyam* means unworthiness or impotence in the form of cowardice. Kṛṣṇa is saying, “O Pārtha, in spite of being the son of Prthā, you are behaving like a coward.” For this purpose, Śrī Bhagavān uses the words: *mā sma gamah*. “Do not be a coward.” He is saying, “Such apparent cowardice befits a low-class *kṣatriya*. But you are My friend. Therefore in no way does it befit you.” Arjuna may say, “O Kṛṣṇa, do not doubt my lack of courage. I am enthusiastic to fight. Rather, please understand that from a *dharmika* point of view my decision not to fight is a sign of discrimination, to show respect to my *gurus* such as Bhīṣma and Droṇa; and it is a symptom of my compassion for the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who are weak and about to die from wounds caused by my weapons.” Kṛṣṇa replies, “My answer to this is *kṣudram*; this is not discrimination and compassion, but lamentation and delusion. Both reveal the weakness of your mind. Therefore, O Parantapa, abandon this weakness of heart and stand up and fight.” *Para* refers to enemies and *tapa* to the act of chastising them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Bhagavān said, “For *kṣatriyas* who are brave and situated in their *sva-dharma*, to be cowardly in battle is not befitting or glorious. Having been born of Pṛthā from the portion of Devarāja Indra, you are as brilliant and powerful as he. Besides this, since I am *mahā-maheśvara*, the Supreme Controller, and you are My friend, you are therefore very influential; so it is not befitting for you to be cowardly. If you claim that such behaviour is not cowardice but wisdom and compassion, then My reply is that this is not true. This is not wisdom and compassion; it is lamentation and delusion born from weakness of mind. Wisdom and compassion do not give rise to confusion and delusion. From your previous statement, *na ca śaknomy avasthātum bhramativa ca me manah* (*Gītā* 1.30), it is clear that your mind is reeling.”

It is appropriate to mention here that, once being pleased by the service of Kuntī, the sage Durvāsā gave her a boon in the form of a *mantra* by which she could summon any *devatā* to appear before her and fulfil her desires. On the order of Mahārāja Pāṇḍu, Kuntī chanted that *mantra* to call Dharmā (Yamarāja), Vāyu and Indra. As a result, Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma and Arjuna, respectively, were born. Through the twin Aśvinī Kumāras, Pāṇḍu’s second wife, Mādrī, gave birth to Nakula and Sahadeva.

ŚLOKA 4

अजुन उवाच—

कथं भीष्ममहं संख्ये द्रोणञ्च मधुसूदनं ।
इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हवरिसूदनं ॥४॥

arjuna uvāca

*katham bhīṣmam aham saṅkhye / droṇañ ca madhusūdana
iṣubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi / pūjārḥāv arisūdana*

arjunah uvāca—Arjuna said; madhusūdana—O Madhusūdana; arisūdana—O slayer of the enemies; katham—how?; aham pratiyotsyāmi—shall I counter-attack; iṣubhiḥ—with arrows; saṅkhye—in battle; bhīṣmam—Grandsire Bhīṣma; ca—and; droṇam—Dronācārya; pūjā-arhāu—who are worthy of my worship.

Arjuna said: O Madhusūdana! O Arisūdana, slayer of enemies! How can I fight with arrows in battle Grandsire Bhīṣma and Dronācārya, who are my worshipable superiors?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

In answering the question as to why he is not fighting, Arjuna claims that, according to *dharma-śāstra*, violating the honour of a worshipable personality brings inauspiciousness. “Therefore I shall not fight.” To support his action he speaks this *śloka*, beginning with *katham*. If Kṛṣṇa says, “Bhīṣma and Drona are fighting against you, so how can you not fight back?” then Arjuna may answer, “Because I consider them to be *pūjā-arhau*, worshipable, it is therefore right that I not fight them. Is it proper for me to angrily pierce with sharp arrows those persons at whose feet I should offer flowers with devotion? No, it is not proper.”

By addressing Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Madhusūdana, Arjuna is presenting this logic: “O dear friend, You have also killed enemies in battle, but You have not killed Your *guru*, Sāndīpani Muni, nor Your relatives, the Yadus. O You who are known as Madhusūdana (killer of Madhu), are Madhus (enemies) Yadus (Your relatives)? No, this is not so. Madhu was Your enemy (*ari*), therefore have addressed You as Arisūdana, the killer of enemies.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Sāndīpani Muni was a famous sage belonging to the Kaśyapa dynasty, who lived in the city of Avanti, the present-day Ujjain.

While enacting Their human-like pastimes in order to set an example for others, *jagad-guru* Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva accepted him as Their *śikṣā-guru*. While living in his *āśrama*, They performed the pastime of learning the sixty-four arts in sixty-four days. In his *Dig-darśinī* commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has indicated that Sāndīpani Muni was a Śaivite, a follower of Lord Śiva. Why, then, did Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva accept him as Their *guru*? In answer to this, Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes that if They had accepted a Vaiṣṇava *guru*, he would have immediately recognised Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Svayam Bhagavān, and the pastime of learning would not have taken place. Therefore, these two brothers intentionally went to the Śaivite Sāndīpani Muni, son of the renowned Yogamāyā-Paurṇamāsī of Vraja. The famous friends of Kṛṣṇa, Madhumaṅgala and Nāndimukhī, are the son and daughter of Sāndīpani Muni.

ŚLOKA 5

गुरुनहत्वा हि महानुभावान्
श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।
हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरुनिहैव
भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥५॥

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

hi—certainly; (*it is*) *śreyah*—better; *bhoktum*—to maintain my life; *iha loke*—in this world; *bhaikṣyam*—by begging; *ahatvā*—by not killing; *mahā-anubhāvān*—great personalities; (*who are my*) *gurūn*—gurus; *api*—even though; *artha-kāmān*—motivated

by wealth; (they are) *eva*—certainly; *gurūn*—superiors; *tu*—but; *hatvā*—by killing; *iha*—in this world; *bhuñjīya*—one has to enjoy; *bhogān*—sense enjoyments; *pradigdhān*—tainted; *rudhira*—with blood.

It would be better to maintain my life in this world by begging than to kill these great personalities who are my *gurus*. Even though motivated by material gain, they remain my superiors. After killing them, any worldly enjoyment I might attain would certainly be tainted by their blood.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Arjuna is saying to Kṛṣṇa, “If You ask how I will maintain my life if I do not desire to accept the kingdom, my answer is that it is better for me to eat food acquired by begging, an act condemned for *kṣatriyas*, than to kill my *gurus*. Even though I may be defamed in this world for such an act, inauspiciousness will not fall upon me. It is not proper to abandon my *gurus* simply because they are following the proud and *adharmika* Duryodhana, who is unable to discriminate between what is just and what is not. If You say that it is recommended in *dharma-śāstra* (*Mahābhārata Udyoga Parva*) to reject the *guru* if he is proud, unable to discriminate between good and bad actions and engaged in abominable activities, then my reply is, *mahānubhāvān*, ‘Where is the possibility of these defects in such personalities as Bhīṣma and Droṇa, who have conquered lust, time and so forth?’ It may then be argued: although a man is a servant of wealth, wealth is not the servant of anyone. This is confirmed in Bhīṣma’s statement to Yudhiṣṭhīra Mahārāja: ‘O Mahārāja, it is true that I am bound by the wealth of the Kauravas.’ Thus, if You say that his reputation as a *mahānubhāvān* (great personality) has already been ruined by the word *artha-kāmī* (one desirous of wealth), then I must reply,

'Yes, this is true.' Still, if I kill them, I will only feel distress. For that reason I am using the word *artha-kāmān* (desirous of wealth). How can I enjoy the objects of the senses if I kill all of the Kauravas, who are very greedy for wealth, when such sense objects will be tainted with their blood? In other words, despite their greed for wealth, they will always be my *gurus*. I will become a traitor by killing them, and any pleasure derived will be adulterated with sinful deeds."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

As though inattentive to Kṛṣṇa's words, due to being over-powered by grief and delusion, Arjuna once more asserted, "I consider it extremely inauspicious and sinful to kill my *gurus*, Dronācārya, Kṛpācārya and my most worshipable Grandsire Bhīṣma, who are standing before me in this battle array, what to speak of my own family members and relatives, just for the sake of this petty material kingdom. The chance of a place in the higher planets is completely lost for one who kills such *gurus*. Therefore, I consider it better to maintain my life in this world by begging."

It is stated in the *Kurma Purāṇa*:

*upādhyāyah pitā jyeṣṭha-bhrātā caiva mahī-patiḥ
mātulaḥ śvasuras trātā mātāmaha-pitāmahau
bandhur jyeṣṭhah pitṛvyaś ca puṁśyete guravah smṛtāḥ*

He who instructs the Vedas, the father, elder brother, king, maternal uncle, father-in-law, protector, maternal grandparents, paternal grandparents, relatives and those who are elderly all are considered one's *gurus*.

Śrī Dronācārya and Kṛpācārya were born in high-class *brāhmaṇa* families. Besides knowledge of *dhanur-veda* (the science of archery), they were also scholars of the Vedas and *dharma-sāstras* and were *dharmika* by nature. Even on the battlefield, Arjuna saw them as his *gurus*. Dronācārya, who

had foreseen the possibility of war, made Arjuna take a vow that, if for any reason they came face to face in battle, Arjuna must fight with him.

Grandsire Bhīṣma, the son of King Śāntanu and Gaṅgā devī, remained a lifelong celibate. According to Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (9.22.19), he was a *bhakta* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, extremely chivalrous, in control of his senses, generous, a knower of the Absolute Truth and, by vow, bound to speak the truth. Even death was under his control. He is prominent among the twelve *mahājanas*:

svayambhūr nāradāḥ śambhuḥ / kumāraḥ kapilo manuḥ
prahlādo janako bhīṣmo / balir vaiyāsakir vayam
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.3.20

Thus Bhīṣma, the knower of the Absolute Truth and the spiritual master of the whole world, was Arjuna's teacher in the same category as Dronācārya. Even though he supported the Kauravas in their fight against the Pāṇḍavas, who were devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he is Kṛṣṇa's very dear *bhakta* and he acts only for His pleasure. Bhīṣma is counted among the *jñānī-bhaktas*. He said to Yudhiṣṭhīra Mahārāja, "What can I do? I am completely bound by the wealth (salary) of the Kauravas. Although it is not my desire, I have to fight on their side. But I give you this boon: you will be victorious in the battle."

Here, Grandsire Bhīṣma externally appears to be greedy for wealth and dependent on others, but in fact he is the master of his senses and supremely independent. Therefore, to glorify him in the present *śloka*, Śuddha-Sarasvatī has combined the two words *hi* and *mahānubhāvān* into *himahānubhāvān*. *Hima* indicates ice or snow. That which destroys *hima* is called *himahā*, sun or fire, and *anubhāvān* means one who has the capability. Therefore, a person who is extremely powerful like the sun or fire is *himahānubhāvān*. The powerful sun and fire can burn all impure objects without becoming contaminated

themselves. They always remain pure. Similarly, Bhīṣma is himahānubhāvān, a greatly powerful person. It is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.33.29) that fire can burn all pure and impure objects and is thus known as *sarva-bhuk*, that which can consume everything without becoming impure itself. Similarly, even if a pure and powerful person appears to transgress the principles or etiquette of *dharma*, he remains completely free from all defects.

Someone may say that the powerful Bhīṣma committed no injustice by taking the side of the Kauravas and fighting the Pāṇḍavas. One may question, however, how Kṛṣṇa's *paramabhakta* could pierce the body of his worshipable Lord with sharp arrows? Is this a symptom of his *bhakti*? In answer it is said:

1) To allure the *asuras*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa made His great devotee Mahādeva, Śaṅkara, preach *māyāvāda* which is nothing but covered Buddhism and is against the principles of the Vedas. From an external perspective this does not seem to be *bhakti*, but from the transcendental perspective it is *bhakti*, because Mahādeva simply carried out the order of Bhagavān to bewilder the *asuras*.

2) Mahādeva, being a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa, assisted Him in relieving the earth of *āsurika* forces by instigating and supporting Bāṇāśura's fight against the Lord. Alone, Bāṇāśura would never have dared to fight with Kṛṣṇa, and thereby would not have been eliminated. Just as Mahādeva, taking the side of his own devotee, Bāṇāśura, personally fought with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, similarly Grandsire Bhīṣma is siding with the Kauravas and fighting against his Lord. Where, then, is the question of his *bhakti* being lost?

3) To relieve Mother Earth from the burden of *āsurika* forces, Śrī Kṛṣṇa wanted to annihilate them in the Mahābhārata conflict and thus re-establish *dharma*. If Grandsire Bhīṣma and *gurus* like Dronācārya and others had not assisted the opposing *āsurika* side, then the battle at Kurukṣetra would

never have been possible. Therefore, by omniscient Śrī Kṛṣṇa's own will, *yogamāyā* inspired Bhīṣma to fight on the side of the opposing party. Thus, Bhīṣma performed this act for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa.

4) In his commentary on a *śloka* from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that in the Mahābhārata war, by the will of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, an *āsurika* mood entered Grandsire Bhīṣma's heart. Imbued with that mood, he aimed sharp arrows at Kṛṣṇa, otherwise, it would have been impossible for a *śuddha-bhakta* like Bhīṣma to act in such a way.

5) The *parama-bhakta* Grandsire Bhīṣma teaches ordinary *sādhakas* that even if a person of his exalted status accepts the food or association of materialistic persons, his mind will become contaminated and his discrimination lost.

6) Śrī Bhagavān understood that Jaya and Vijaya wanted to satisfy Him by fulfilling His desire to fight. He therefore inspired the four Kumāras to visit Him and, in order to infuse inimical thoughts into the hearts of Jaya and Vijaya, He intentionally had the four Kumaras curse them. This curse was just a pretence, because there is no possibility of any anger existing in Vaikuṇṭha, what to speak of a curse. In fact, for the satisfaction and pleasure of Śrī Bhagavān, Jaya and Vijaya personally begged to have an inimical mood and by doing so there was no diminution in their *bhakti*.

Had Grandsire Bhīṣma shown any symptom of desiring to kill Kṛṣṇa instead of pleasing Him, he would have fallen from his position as a *bhakta* forever. Grandsire Bhīṣma offered the following prayer glorifying Śrī Kṛṣṇa on the battlefield at Kurukṣetra:

yudhi turaga-rajo-vidhūmra-viśvak-
kaca-lulita-śramavāry-alaṅkṛtāsyे
mama niśita-śarair vibhid�amāna-
tvaci vilasat-kavace 'stu kṛṣṇa ātmā

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.9.34

While commenting on this *śloka*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives a very *rasika* description of Grandsire Bhīṣma's *bhakti-bhāva* by saying that Bhīṣma perceives that, just as the dust raised from the hooves of the cows in Vraja decorates the charming face of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and increases His beauty and sweetness, in the same way the dust raised from the hooves of the horses on the battlefield also increases Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beauty and sweetness. There is nothing ugly in a beautiful object. Although dust in itself is not beautiful, when it falls on the soft, lotus-like face of Śrī Kṛṣṇa it enhances His beauty and charm. When Kṛṣṇa ran towards Bhīṣma carrying the wheel of a chariot, His hair was dishevelled. Bhīṣma was then reminded of how Kṛṣṇa's hair looks when, upon returning from cow-grazing, He runs behind the lowing cows as they quickly move toward their sheds. *Śrama-vāri* means that, due to the forceful exertion of Kṛṣṇa running towards Bhīṣma on the battlefield, drops of perspiration fell from His lotus-like face and beautiful limbs. To Bhīṣma they appeared to be like the perspiration drops caused by Kṛṣṇa's exertion in *kandarpa-yuddha*, amorous war of cupid. Kṛṣṇa's running at Bhīṣma is also a manifestation of His mood of *bhakta-vātsalya*. Kṛṣṇa broke His own vow not to fight in order to keep Bhīṣma's vow that he would make Śrī Kṛṣṇa take up weapons against him. Grandsire Bhīṣma observes, "The reddish marks appearing on the limbs of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which are bruised and cut by my sharp arrows, look like the love-bites made by the teeth of a passionate lover absorbed in *kandarpa-rasa* with her beloved." Although a young beloved may behave haughtily with her lover, whom she loves millions of times more than her own life, by marking him with her nails and teeth, she cannot be said to be devoid of love. Similarly, Bhīṣma's madness in *vīra-rasa* (the chivalrous mellow) is not an indication that he is devoid of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *raso vai saḥ* (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.7.2), meaning that He embodies the nectar of all mellites (*akhila-rasāṁṛta-mūrti*). In order to fulfil the desire of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to taste *vīra-rasa*, Bhīṣma, one of His prominent *bhaktas*, took the side of the Kauravas and wounded the limbs of Śrī Bhagavān. Bhīṣma thus pleased Him by fulfilling His desire.

In Śrī *Mahābhārata*, it is seen that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa took a vow not to use any weapon in the battle. On the other hand, Bhīṣma, His *bhakta*, took a vow that if he could not make Kṛṣṇa use weapons, he would not be considered the son of Mahārāja Śāntanu. Bhagavān, who is affectionate to His *bhaktas* (*bhakta-vatsala*), broke His own vow and protected the vow of Bhīṣma.

sva-nigamam apahāya mat-pratijñām
ṛtam adhikartum avapluto rathasthāḥ
dhṛta-ratha-caraṇo 'bhayāc caladgur
harir iva hantum ibham gatottariyāḥ

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.9.37

Grandsire Bhīṣma says, “I offer my *praṇāmas* again and again unto *bhakta-vatsala* Śrī Bhagavān who, in order to protect my vow, broke His own promise. He jumped from the chariot, took a wheel in His hand and ran towards me with great speed.”

In spite of taking the side of the opposing party, Grandsire Bhīṣma is a *parama-bhakta*. Of this there is no doubt. From the character of Bhīṣmadeva, we learn that whatever he does is favourable; it is for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa and it assists Kṛṣṇa’s *līlā-vilāsa*. His profound character is beyond any mundane reasoning. However, if a conditioned soul (*māyā-buddha-jīva*) imitates Bhīṣma and engages in illicit activities or commits *aparādha* while making a show of being a *guru*, he can never be considered a *sad-guru*. Bhagavān Rṣabhadeva has said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.5.18):

*gurur na sa syāt sva-jano na sa syāt
 pitā na sa syāj jananī na sā syāt
 daivam na tat syān na patiṣ ca sa syān
 na mocayed yaḥ samupeta-mṛtyum*

A *guru* who cannot deliver a disciple from the imminent cycle of birth and death (*mṛtyu-saṁsāra*) by giving him instructions on *bhakti* is not qualified to be a *guru*.

Only a *mahā-puruṣa* who is *śāstra-jñā* (thoroughly expert in the imports of the *śāstra*), who is endowed with realisation of *parabrahma* and who is detached from this material world is qualified to be a *guru*. For this reason, Bali Mahārāja rejected Śukrācārya, who was opposed to the principles of *bhakti*. Thus, it is the injunction of the *śāstra* to reject such a *guru*. There is no sin or fault in not surrendering to or not following an unqualified *guru*, nor indeed in rejecting him.

Life-long celibate Bhīṣma, after winning the *svayamvara* of the three daughters of the king of Kāśī – Ambā, Ambikā and Ambālikā – had Ambikā and Ambālikā married to his brother Vicitravīrya. The first girl, Ambā, insisted on marrying Bhīṣma, but he had taken a vow of life-long celibacy, and thus rejected her request. Not finding any other solution, Ambā approached Paraśurāma, Bhīṣma's *astra-śastra-guru*. Paraśurāma called Bhīṣma and ordered him to marry Ambā, but Bhīṣma remained resolute. At this, Paraśurāma told him either to marry her or fight with him. Bhīṣma accepted the fight while speaking the following words:

*guror apy avaliptasya kāryākāryam ajānatāḥ
 utpatha-pratipannasya parityāgo vidhīyate*
Mahābhārata Udyoga Parva 179.25

A *guru* who is engrossed in sense gratification, who is a fool with no ability to discriminate between proper and improper behaviour, and who is following a different path, devoid of *śuddha-bhakti*, is a false *guru*. One should immediately reject him.

Such a *parama-bhakta* as Bhīṣma cannot perform any activity which is against the principles of *bhakti*. Paraśurāma is an *avatāra* of Bhagavān. Considering that the vow of Bhīṣma to be righteous, Paraśurāma accepted defeat in this fight, which would have continued indefinitely because they were evenly matched.

SLOKA 6

**न चैतद्विद्धः कतरन्नो गरीयो
यद्वा जयेम यदि वा ना जयेयुः ।
यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषाम—
स्तेऽवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥६॥**

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

ca—and; na vidmaḥ—I do not know; etat—this; katarat—which; garīyah—is better; nah—for us; yad vā—whether; jayema—we may conquer; vā—or; yadi—whether; jayeyuḥ—they may conquer; nah—us; eva—certainly; yān—those persons whom; hatvā—by killing; na jijīviṣāmaḥ—we can not desire to live; te—they; dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ—those who are on the side of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; avasthitāḥ—are arrayed; pramukhe—in the battlefield.

I am unable to decide what is better for us, to conquer them or be conquered by them. Even after killing them we will not desire to live. Yet they have taken the side of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and now stand before us on the battlefield.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna is speaking the *śloka* beginning with *na caitad* while considering, “By fighting against our *gurus*, I do not know whether we will be victorious or defeated. Moreover, I do not

even know whether it is better for us to win or lose." Here Arjuna, considering two perspectives, is speaking about the possibility of both his victory and his defeat. Arjuna is saying, "For us, the result of victory is equal to defeat." Thus he is using the words *yān eva*, etc.

ŚLOKA 7

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः
 पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसम्मृद्धेताः ।
 यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे
 शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥७॥

kārpaṇya-doṣopahata-svabhāvah
 pṛcchāmi tvāṁ dharma-sammūḍha-cetāḥ
 yac chreyah syān niścitam brūhi tan me
 śiṣyas te 'ham sādhi mām tvāṁ prapannam

upahata—being overpowered; *doṣa*—by the fault; *kārpaṇya*—of cowardliness; (I am) *sammūḍha*—bewildered; *cetāḥ*—in heart; *dharma*—about virtue; (I have given up) *sva-bhāvah*—my chivalrous nature; (I) *pṛcchāmi*—am asking; *tvāṁ*—You; *yat*—what; *syāt*—may be; (the) *niścitam*—certain; *śreyah*—auspicious path; *brūhi*—tell; *tat*—that; *me*—to me; *aham*—I (am); *te*—Your; *śiṣyah*—disciple; (and) *prapannam*—surrendered; *tvāṁ*—unto You; *sādhi*—please instruct; *mām*—me.

Having become overpowered by weakness of heart and bewildered about how to ascertain *dharma*, I have given up my natural quality of chivalry. I implore You to tell me what is actually auspicious for me. I am Your disciple and surrendered unto You. Please instruct me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa may ridicule Arjuna by saying, "Although you are a *kṣatriya*, you have decided to wander here and there

and beg on the basis of your own deductive understanding of the imports of *śāstra*. What then, is the use of My speaking?" In anticipation of this, Arjuna begins this *śloka* with *kārpaṇya*. "To give up the natural characteristic of chivalry is *kārpaṇya*, cowardly behaviour. The principles of *dharma* are very subtle and therefore bewildering to me, so please tell me with certainty what is auspicious for me." Arjuna tells Kṛṣṇa "If You are proud of Your scholarship and You refute my statements, therefore how can I instruct you? Then I assure you that I am Your disciple and from now on I will not refute Your statements unnecessarily."

SLOKA 8

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्या-
द्यच्छोकमुच्छोषणमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।
अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमृद्धं
राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ॥८॥

na hi prapaśyāmi mamāpanudyād
yac chocakam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇām
avāpya bhūmāv asapatnam ṛddham
rājyam surāṇām api cādhipatyam

api—even; *avāpya*—after attaining; (an) *asapatnam*—unrivalled; *ṛddham*—prosperous; *rājyam*—kingdom; *bhūmau*—on the earth; *ca*—also; *ādhipatyam*—sovereignty; *surāṇām*—over the *devas*; *hi*—certainly; *na prapaśyāmi*—I do not see; (how) *apānudyāt*—it can drive away; *mama*—my; *śokam*—lamentation; *yat*—which; *ucchoṣaṇam*—is drying up; *indriyāṇām*—my senses.

Even if we attain an unrivalled and prosperous kingdom on earth with sovereignty over the *devas*, I do not see any way to dispel this lamentation which is drying up my senses.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa may say, “You do not have a reverential attitude towards Me, rather you have a friendly mood. How will I accept you as My disciple? You should take shelter of personalities such as Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, for whom you have a reverential attitude.” In anticipation of this, Arjuna is speaking the present *śloka* beginning with the words *na hi*. “In the three worlds, I do not find anyone other than You who can dispel my lamentation. I do not consider even Bṛhaspati to be more intelligent than You. Therefore, being overwhelmed with grief, whose shelter other than Yours can I take? Just as the intense heat of the summer season dries up small ponds, similarly this grief is drying up my senses.” Kṛṣṇa may also say, “Despite being overwhelmed with grief, you should still fight. When you win the battle, you will become absorbed in enjoying the pleasure of your kingdom and be freed from this grief.” Arjuna therefore replies with the expression beginning with *avāpya*. “Even if I attain the unrivalled kingdom of the earth or sovereignty over the *devatās* in Svarga, my senses will remain as dry as they are now.”

ŚLOKA 9

सञ्जय उवाच—

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेशं गुडाकेशः परन्तपः ।
न योत्स्य इति गोविन्दमुक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूव ह ॥९॥

sañjaya uvāca
evam uktvā hṛṣīkeśam / guḍākeśah parantapaḥ
na yotsya iti govindam / uktvā tūṣṇīm babhūva ha

sañjayah uvāca—Sañjaya said; evam—thus; uktvā—having spoken; hṛṣīkeśam—to Kṛṣṇa; guḍākeśah—Arjuna; parantapaḥ—slayer of the enemies; uktvā—saying; govindam—unto Govinda; na yotsye—I shall not fight; iti—thus; babhūva ha—he became; tūṣṇīm—silent.

Sañjaya said: After speaking these words, Guḍākeśa, the chastiser of enemies, said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, “O Govinda, I shall not fight,” and fell silent.

ŚLOKA 10

तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वचः ॥१०॥

*tam uvāca hṛṣikeśah / prahasann iva bhārata
senayor ubhayor madhye / viṣidantam idam vacah*

bhārata—O descendant of Bhārata; *hṛṣikeśah*—Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *iva*—as if; *prahasan*—smiling; *madhye*—in the midst; *ubhayoh*—of both; *senayoh*—of the armies; *uvāca*—spoke; *idam*—these; *vacah*—words; *tam viṣidantam*—unto the grieving one.

O descendant of Bhārata (Dhṛtarāṣṭra), at that time, Hṛṣikeśa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, smiling in the midst of both armies, spoke the following words to the grieving Arjuna.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

To ridicule His friend Arjuna, who is in *sakhya-bhāva*, Kṛṣṇa shows him that it is improper to be aggrieved in this way, thus drowning him in an ocean of embarrassment. Śrī Kṛṣṇa remarks, “O, you are devoid of discrimination.” Arjuna has accepted the position of Kṛṣṇa’s disciple (*śiṣya*) however, it is improper to immerse a disciple in an ocean of shame in this way. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa is pursing His lips and trying to hide His smile. Here, the import of the word ‘Hṛṣikeśa’ is that, although Kṛṣṇa was previously controlled by the loving statements of Arjuna, now, for Arjuna’s own welfare, Kṛṣṇa is controlling his mind, out of love.

Senayor ubhayor madhye indicates that Arjuna’s grief and the instructions and assurances given by Śrī Bhagavān were equally visible to both armies. In other words, this message

of *Bhagavad-gītā* was manifest before all present. It was not kept secret from anyone.

ŚLOKA 11

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥११॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
aśocyān anvaśocas tvam / prajñā-vādāṁś ca bhāṣase
gatāsūn agatāsūṁś ca / nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—Śrī Bhagavān said; bhāṣase—you are speaking; prajñā-vādān—learned words; ca—but; tvam—you; anvaśocah—are lamenting; aśocyān—for what is not worthy of grief; ca—yet; paṇḍitāḥ—the wise; na anuśocanti—do not lament; gata—lost; asūn—life; (or) agata—not lost; asūn—life.

Śrī Bhagavān said: While speaking learned words you are mourning for what is not worthy of grief. Those who are wise do not lament, either for the living or the dead.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “O Arjuna, your grief which is born from the pain of killing your relatives is illusory. Your question, ‘How shall I fight with Bhīṣma?’ shows that your reasoning is based on ignorance.” To explain why the above statement is true, Śrī Bhagavān says: aśocyān anvaśocah, “You are grieving for that which is not worthy of grief.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa further says, “Even after being reassured by Me, you are speaking statements such as: katham bhīṣmam ahaṁ saṅkhye (*Gitā* 2.4), thereby presenting yourself as a *paṇḍita*. In other words, although you have knowledge, you are arguing. This proves that actually you do not have knowledge, because the wise do not

lament for gross bodies from which the life air (*prāṇa*) has gone (*gata-āśūn*), as such gross bodies are temporary.

“Agatāśūn means from whom the *prāṇa* has not gone. The learned or wise do not lament, even for the subtle bodies of such persons, because the subtle body is indestructible before the stage of *mukti*. In both conditions, *gatāśūn* (without life) and *agatāśūn* (with life), both the *svabhāva* (nature) of the gross and subtle bodies is unchangeable. Foolish people lament, however, for the gross body of their father or relatives when the *prāṇa* leaves it. They do not lament for the subtle body, because generally they do not have knowledge of it.

“Bhīṣma and others are also *ātmā*, with coverings of gross and subtle bodies. Since the *ātmā* is eternal, to lament for it is improper. Thus, earlier you were saying that *dharma-śāstra* is superior to *artha-śāstra*, but My response is that *jñāna-śāstra* (from where this understanding comes) is superior even to *dharma-śāstra*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

That portion of *sac-cid-ānanda para-tattva* (the Supreme Absolute Reality, composed of eternality, consciousness and bliss), which is endowed only with the *taṭastha-śakti*, is called the *jīvātmā* or the *jīva*. The *jīvas* are atomic particles of consciousness by constitutional nature. Their eternal and natural characteristic is *bhagavat-sevā*. *Jīvas* are of two types, *mukta* and *baddha*. The *mukta-jīvas* are eternally engaged in the service of Śrī Bhagavān in His abode. They never fall down. The *baddha-jīvas* have forgotten the service of Śrī Bhagavān since time immemorial, and thus being covered by the two types of material bodies, gross and subtle, are suffering three types of miseries as punishment in this material world.

The gross body of the *baddha-jīva* is made of the five material elements – earth, water, fire, air and sky – and is temporary and perishable. After death, the *jīva* changes his gross

body. Where there is birth, death will always follow. Today, tomorrow, or after some years, death is certain.

mṛtyur janmavatāṁ vīra / dehena saha jāyate
 adya vābda-śatānte vā / mṛtyur vai prāṇināṁ dhruvah
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.1.38

In Gītā (2.27), it is said: *jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyuh*. “For one who has taken birth, death is a certainty.”

The *jīva*’s immediate designation, which is made up of mind, intelligence and false ego, and which covers his pure nature, is called *sūkṣma-śarīra* (the subtle body). One is granted a new gross body in each birth, and at the time of death it is destroyed, but such is not the case with the subtle body. Due to the *jīva*’s forgetfulness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *svarūpa*, the subtle body has been covering his *svarūpa* since time immemorial. This subtle body cannot be dissolved even after remembering Bhagavān through such processes as *jñāna*, *yoga*, *tapasyā*, *dhyāna* or study of the Vedas. It can only be dissolved by remembering Him through the medium of *bhagavad-bhakti*. At that time the *jīva* becomes situated in his pure nature (*śuddha-svarūpa*).

<i>prītir na yāvan mayi vāsudeve</i>	(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.5.6)
<i>sa lingena vimucyate</i>	(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.29.83)
<i>bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniiveśataḥ syād</i>	(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.2.37)
<i>yadā ratir brahmaṇi naiṣṭhikī pumān</i>	(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.22.26)
<i>mām upetya tu kaunteya</i>	(Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gītā 8.16)

When we study these *ślokas*, it is quite clear that although the subtle body has no beginning, it is acquired by forgetfulness of Bhagavān (*bhagavat-vismṛti*) and destroyed by remembrance of Him (*bhagavat-smṛti*).

Therefore, those who are *ātmā-tattva-vit*, who know the nature of the *ātmā* to be immutable, imperishable and eternal, do not lament or become disturbed at the loss of the gross body. They grieve neither for a gross body without an *ātmā*

(*gatāsun*), nor for a gross body with an *ātmā* (*agatāsun*) which will be destroyed in the future. On the other hand, those who consider their gross body to be their self are ignorant. Such persons are not even aware of the subtle body, what to speak of the *ātmā*. They consider the gross body (containing the *ātmā*) to be their mother, father, brother, or relative. When the *ātmā* leaves that body, they consider their mother, father, brother or relative to be dead, and they lament for that body.

ŚLOKA 12

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥१२॥

*na tv evāham jātu nāsam / na tvam neme janādhipāḥ
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ / sarve vayam atah param*

tu eva—most certainly; *na*—never; *jātu*—at any time; *aham na āsam*—did I not exist; *na*—nor; *tvam*—you; *na*—nor; *ime*—these; *jana-adhipāḥ*—kings; *ca*—also; *na*—nor; *ataḥ param*—hereafter; *sarve vayam*—all of us; *eva*—certainly; *na bhaviṣyāmaḥ*—shall not exist.

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

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Kṛṣṇa asks the question, “O My friend, Arjuna, when one grieves over the death of a dear person, what is the object of his love, the body or the *ātmā*?” In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.50) it is said:

sarveśām api bhūtānāṁ / nr̥pa svātmaiva vallabhaḥ
“O king, for all *jivas*, the *ātmā* is certainly dearmost.” According to this statement of Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, it is the

ātmā that is the only object of love. Although there is a difference between Īśvara and the *jīva*, both types of ātmā are eternal and free from death. Thus, it is not the ātmā that is the object of grief. For this reason only, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is speaking this śloka beginning with *na tv evāham*. “It is not true that I, Paramātmā, did not exist in the past. Certainly I was existing. In the same way, you, the *jīva*, also existed in the past, as did the *jīvas* who are all these kings. The possibility of the soul not existing prior to his existence in his present body is refuted by this statement. Similarly, it is also not true that you, these kings and I, will not continue to exist in the future. We will all continue to exist.” Thus, it has been proven that the soul is indestructible. In this regard, the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (2.2.13) states: *nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām / eko bahūnām yo vidadhātī kāmān*. “He who is the supreme eternal amongst all eternal entities, the supreme conscious being among all conscious beings, is fulfilling the desires of all living beings.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

The *jīva*’s contact with the gross body is called birth, and separation from it is called death. When the *jīvātmā* is situated in the gross body, people have loving dealings with each other. But, such ignorant persons, who consider the gross body to be the ātmā, do not realise that the real self is not material, and thus, when a *jīva* disappears from a body, they become absorbed in grief.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Parīkṣit Mahārāja asked Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, “O brāhmaṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was not born to the same parents as the other cowherd boys. How was it possible for those parents to have such unparalleled *prema* for Him, that they did not even have for their own children?” In response to this Śrīla Sukadeva Gosvāmī says, “O King,

for all living entities, one's own self (*ātmā*) is the most dear. Although entities who are separate from one's self, such as a son, wealth, house and other objects, are dear to the self, they are not as dear as the self itself. It is secondary to the affection one has towards one's own self. O King, the affection an embodied soul has for that for which he feels possessiveness, such as a son, wealth and house, is not the same as the affection he feels for his own self." In other words, there is a difference between 'I' and 'mine'. The amount of *prīti* (affection) one has for objects which are possessed by him is not the same as the *prīti* that one has for one's own self. Those who consider the body to be the self do not feel that which is related to the body, such as a house, a wife, or a son, is as dear to them as their own body. And even though a person's body is the object of his affection, it is not as dear to him as the self, because when the body becomes old, the desire for survival still remains strong. This is due to the excessive attachment one has for the self. Because Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the very Self of the self, He is the most dear object (*priyatama*) for every *ātmā*. The world, which is related to Kṛṣṇa, is also dear but not dearmost. Kṛṣṇa is the object of the word 'I', because He is the *ātmā* of all *ātmās*. And that which is related to Kṛṣṇa, such as the universe, is the object of the word 'mine'. That is why Kṛṣṇa is so dear to the cowherd boys.

The above statements are also verified by the dialogue between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī in *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (2.4.5) where it is said:

sa hovāca na vā are patyuh kāmāya priyo
 bhavaty ātmans tu kāmāya pātiḥ priyo bhavati na
 vā are sarvasya kāmāya sarvam priyam
 bhavaty ātmanas tu kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati

The great sage Yajñāvalkya said to Maitreyī, ‘No living entity loves another for the other’s satisfaction. Only for one’s own satisfaction does the husband love his wife, the wife love her husband, the father love his son and the son love his father. A person is dear, not for someone else’s satisfaction, but for the happiness and satisfaction of one’s own self (*ātmā*)’.

ŚLOKA 13

देहिनोऽस्मिन् यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धर्मस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥१३॥

*dehino 'smiṇ yathā dehe / kaumāram yauvanam jarā
tathā dehāntara-prāptir / dhīras tatra na muhyati*

yathā—just as; *asmin*—in this; *dehe*—body; *dehinah*—belonging to the embodied soul; (*passing from*) *kaumāram*—boyhood; *yauvanam*—to youth; *jarā*—to old age; *tathā*—in the same way; (*when there is*) *prāptih*—achievement; *dēha-antara*—of a change of body; *tatra*—then; *dhīrah*—a thoughtful person; *na muhyati*—is not confused.

Just as the embodied *ātmā* passes from boyhood to youth to old age, similarly, after death, he passes into another body. An intelligent person is not bewildered by the birth and death of the body.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The following point may be raised: Since the *ātmā* is associated with the body, the body will also be an object of our love. Furthermore, those who are related to the body, such as sons, brothers, relatives, grandsons and so on, will also be the objects of our love, so when they die, we will certainly feel grief. Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *dehinah*, in answer to this. “The *jīva* in the body attains boyhood; at the end of boyhood he attains youth, and at the end of youth he attains

old age. Similarly, at the loss of the body he attains another body. Just as one does not grieve at the end of boyhood and youth, which are objects of love due to their relationship with the *ātmā*, similarly, one should not grieve for the loss of the body itself, which is also an object of love due to its relationship with the *ātmā*, when it is lost. If a person grieves when he attains old age at the loss of youth, then he also feels happy when he attains youth at the loss of boyhood. Therefore, you should feel happy because when Bhīṣma and Drona lose their old bodies they will attain new ones. Or you should consider that, just as in one body various stages of growth are reached, the same *jīva* attains various types of bodies.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

The word *dehī* means the *ātmā* or *jīva*, which is unchangeable, whereas the body is subject to transformation. Even when the body undergoes changes from boyhood to youth to old age and to death, the embodied *ātmā* does not undergo any change. It always remains the same. Therefore, it is not proper to lament for the loss of the body. Just as when one leaves boyhood and attains youth, one feels happiness instead of grief, similarly, after death one attains a new, able and beautiful body. Therefore, why should one feel distress? Rather, one should only feel happiness.

King Yayāti became old in his youth because he was cursed by his father-in-law, Śukrācārya. In great distress, he humbly begged forgiveness at the feet of Śukrācārya. To please his daughter who was married to the king, Śukrācārya gave him the boon that he could exchange his old age for the youth of any of his young sons. His eldest son, Yadu, refused because he wanted to perform *bhagavad-bhajana*, but his youngest son, Puru, gave his youth and accepted the old age of his father. In this way, Yayāti again became young and enjoyed with his queens (Devayānī and others). In the company of his sons and grand-

sons, he considered himself very happy. Finally, however, he understood that all these pleasures were temporary and the cause of unlimited misery. Thus, he returned his son's youth to him and went to the forest to perform *bhajana* of Bhagavān (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 9.18.1-51). Therefore, it is appropriate to feel happy, knowing that, at the loss of an old, weak and withered body, one will achieve a healthy, strong and beautiful new body.

ŚLOKA 14

मात्रास्पर्शस्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तास्तिक्षस्व भारत ॥१४॥

*mātrā-sparśas tu kaunteya / śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ
āgamāpāyino 'nityās / tāṁs titikṣasva bhārata*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *sparśāḥ*—sense perceptions; *mātrā*—(are) momentary; *tu*—only; *dāḥ*—they give; (the sensations of) *śīta*—cold; (and) *uṣṇa*—heat; *sukha*—happiness; (and) *duḥkha*—distress; (they are) *anityāḥ*—flickering; (and) *āgama-apāyināḥ*—come and go; *bhārata*—O Bhārata; *titikṣasva*—you must tolerate; *tān*—them.

O Kaunteya, when the senses come in contact with the sense objects, one experiences cold, heat, happiness and distress. Such experiences are flickering and temporary, and therefore, O Bhārata, you must learn to tolerate them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna may tell Kṛṣṇa, "What You have said is true. Yet, the troublesome mind of an indiscriminate person like myself, which is covered by grief and lamentation, is a source of misery. It is not only the mind which causes trouble. Through the impressions of the mind, the senses experience their respective sense objects. Thus the senses, such as the sense of touch,

also become the cause of trouble.” For this reason, Kṛṣṇa says *mātrā*, indicating the sense objects that are accepted by the senses. The experience of such sense objects is called *sparsāḥ*. Śrī Bhagavān explains *śitoṣṇah āgamāpāyinah*. “Although cool water gives pleasure in the summer, that same water is the cause of distress in winter. Therefore, knowing them to be temporary and flickering, one should tolerate the experience of these sense objects.” To tolerate them is an obligation prescribed in the *śāstra*. Taking bath is troublesome in the month of Māgha (the winter month of January). In spite of this, one is not supposed to give up the obligatory routine of bathing as enjoined in the *śāstra*. Similarly, those same persons (one’s brother, son, etc.) who give happiness both when they are born and when they earn wealth, give pain at the time of their death. Knowing this happiness and distress to be temporary and flickering, you should tolerate it. You cannot give up your *sva-dharma* of fighting in the battle on the plea of affection for such relatives. It is definitely a cause of great disturbance to give up one’s *sva-dharma* that has been recommended in *śāstra*.

ŚLOKA 15

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्यते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥१५॥

*yam hi na vyathayanty ete / puruṣam puruṣarṣabha
sama-duḥkha-sukham dhīram / so 'mṛtatvāya kalpate*

puruṣa-ṛṣabha—O best among men; *dhīram*—the sober; *puruṣam*—person; *yam*—whom; *ete*—these (contacts of the senses with the sense objects); *na vyathayanti*—do not disturb; (and for whom) *duḥkha*—distress; *sukham*—and happiness; *sama*—are the same; *sah*—he; *hi*—indeed; *kalpate*—is qualified; *amṛtatvāya*—for liberation.

O best among men, that sober person for whom hap-

piness, distress and the experience of various sense objects are the same, and who is not disturbed by them, is certainly qualified to attain liberation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

If one properly deliberates on the influence of the sense objects and practises tolerance of them, they will not be the cause of misery when one experiences them. When the sense objects are no longer a cause of misery, one will naturally become closer to attaining *mukti*. Therefore, the śloka beginning with *yam hi na* is being spoken. Here the word *amṛtavāya* means *mokṣa*.

ŚLOKA 16

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।

उभयोरपि द्रुष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥१६॥

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

asataḥ—of the temporary; *vidyate*—there is; *tu*—indeed; *na*—no; *bhāvah*—existence; *sataḥ*—of the eternal; *vidyate*—there is; *na*—no; *abhāvah*—destruction; *darśibhiḥ*—by the knowers; *tattva*—of the truth; (this) *api*—very; *antaḥ*—conclusion; (was) *dṛṣṭah*—observed; *anayoh*—of these; *ubhayoh*—two.

Of the temporary, such as winter or summer, there is no permanent existence, and of the eternal, such as the *jīvātmā*, there is no destruction. Those who are knowers of the truth have reached this conclusion by deliberating on these subject matters.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

These words are spoken for persons who have not yet attained discrimination. According to the *śruti* statement,

asaṅgo hi ayam puruṣah, the *jīvātmā* does not factually have a relationship with either the subtle or gross body, nor with the characteristics of the body such as lamentation and delusion, which are imagined only due to ignorance (*avidyā*). For this reason, the present *śloka* beginning with the word *nāsataḥ* is spoken. The word *asataḥ* means that due to their non-spiritual nature, lamentation and delusion which appear to be in both the *jīva* (who is spiritual by nature) and his shelter, the gross body, have no real existence. Similarly, the word *sataḥ* means that, the *jīvātmā*, whose nature is *sat* (eternal), is never destroyed. In this way the fundamental principle of *sat* and *asat* is understood. “Thus you and Bhīṣma are eternal. Knowing that bodily identification, lamentation and delusion do not exist in relationship to the imperishable *ātmā*, how can Bhīṣma and the others be annihilated, and why should you grieve for them?”

ŚLOKA 17

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति ॥१७॥

*avināśi tu tad viddhi / yena sarvam idam tatam
vināśam avyayasyāsyā / na kaścit karttum arhati*

tat—that; *yena*—by which; *idam*—this; *sarvam*—entire body; (*is*) *tatam*—pervaded; *viddhi*—know; (*is*) *tu avināśi*—indeed indestructible; *na kaścit*—no one; *arhati*—is able; *karttum*—to effect; *vināśam*—the destruction; *asya avyayasya*—of the imperishable (soul).

That by which the entire body is pervaded, you should know to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy the imperishable *ātmā*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Nā bhāvo vidyate sataḥ. That which is *sat* (eternal truth), cannot be destroyed. Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *avināśi* to clarify this statement. The fundamental nature (*svarūpa*) of the *jīva* is such that it pervades the whole body. One may question, that if the consciousness of the *jīva* only pervades the individual body and is therefore limited in size, will it not be temporary? In response, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “No, it is not so.” There is evidence of this in the *śruti* and in *smṛti* also: *sūkṣmānām apy aham jīvah* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.16.11). “Among that which is subtle I am the *jīva*.” Also in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.1.9) it is stated: *eṣo 'nur ātmā cetasā veditavyo yasmin prāṇam pañcadhā samviveśa.* “The *ātmā* is very minute. It can only be realised in a pure heart which is free from the three modes. The life air, divided into *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *vyāna*, *saṁāna* and *udāna*, remains situated in the body.” In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (5.9) it is said:

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

One should know that the *jīvātmā* is the size of one ten-thousandth the tip of a hair.

Also in the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (5.8): *ārāgra-mātro hy avara
api drṣṭah.* “The *jīva* has an extremely subtle form.”

The above statements of *śruti* prove that the *jīvātmā* is atomic in size; it is very subtle. Just as the entire body can be nourished by the application to the head or chest, of a potent herb or a precious gem set in lac, similarly the *jīvātmā* is able to pervade the entire body although it is situated in one place. There is no difficulty in reconciling this. Being bound by material designations, the *jīva* enters various species and wanders in different heavens and hells. Dattātreya has also verified this in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.9.20): *yena saṁsaratे pumān.* “The *jīvātmā* wanders in the material world.”

In the present *śloka*, it has been described that the *jīvātmā* pervades the whole body. The *jīvātmā* is called *avyayasya*, or eternal. This is also verified in the *śrutis*:

nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām
eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān

Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.2.13

He who is the supreme eternal (*nitya*) amongst all eternal entities (*nitya-jīvas*), the supreme conscious being among all conscious beings, fulfils the desires of all living entities.

If we view this *śloka* from a different angle, we can say that all three: the body, the *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā*, are seen in all human beings, birds, animals and so forth. The natures of the body and the *jīvātmā* have been explained in the previous *śloka*: *nāsato vidyate bhāvo* (*Gītā* 2.16), so what is the nature of the third entity, *Paramātmā*? To answer this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *avināśi*. The word *tu* is used to indicate a different context. This material world has come into existence only because *māyā* and the *jīvātmā* are by nature fundamentally different from *Paramātmā*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

There are two indestructible truths. One is the atomic conscious *jīva*, *aṇu-caitanya-jīvātmā*, and the other is the manifesting source and controller of all *jīvātmās*, *Paramātmā*. The same *Paramātmā* is present as a witness in that which is both inert and conscious. The *jīvas* are unlimited. An individual *ātmā* exists in each gross body. The *jīva* in each body individually experiences happiness and misery. The Supreme Absolute Truth, *Paramātmā*, is situated only as a witness and is untouched by the *jīva*'s happiness and distress. In this *śloka*, the nature of the indestructible *jīva* has been described. How is it that the atomic *jīvātmā*, being situated in one part of the body, is experienced throughout the entire body? Śrī Kṛṣṇa

answers this question in the present *śloka*. His statement above is verified by *Vedānta-sūtra* (2.3.22):

avirodhaś candanavat

Just as a single drop of *hari-candana* applied to one place makes the whole body cool, similarly, the *jīvātmā*, situated in one part of the body, is experienced throughout the entire body.

This is also verified in the *smṛti-śāstra*:

*aṇumātro 'py ayam jīvāḥ svadehe vyāpya tiṣṭhati
yathā vyāpya śarīrāṇi hari-candana-vipruṣah*

Just as a drop of *hari-candana* applied to one part of the body gives pleasure to the whole body, similarly, the *jīvātmā*, being situated in one part of the body, pervades the whole body.

If the question is asked, ‘In which part of the body does the *jīvātmā* reside?’ the answer is, ‘Within the heart.’ *Hṛdi hy eṣa ātmeti* (*Ṣaṭ-Praśnī-śruti*). This is also stated in the *Vedānta-sūtra*: *gunād vālokavat* (*Brahma-sūtra* 2.3.24). Like light, the *jīvātmā*, by its quality, pervades the whole body. Although the *jīvātmā* is atomic, by its quality of consciousness it pervades the entire body. Just as the sun, situated in one part of the sky, illuminates the whole universe, similarly, the *jīvātmā* also pervades the whole body. This has been stated by Śrī Bhagavān Himself in *Gītā* (13.33).

ŚLOKA 18

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीरिणः ।
अनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युध्यस्व भारत ॥१८॥

*antavanta ime dehā / nityasyoktāḥ śarīriṇāḥ
anāśinō 'prameyasya / tasmād yudhyasva bhārata*

ime—these; *dehāḥ*—material bodies; *nityasya*—of the eternal; *anāśināḥ*—indestructible; *aprameyasya*—immeasurable;

śarīriṇah—embodied soul; *uktāḥ*—are said; (to be) *anta-vantah*—perishable; *tasmāt*—therefore; *bhārata*—O Arjuna; *yudhyasva*—fight.

The material bodies of the *jīvātmā*, who is eternal, indestructible and immeasurable, are known to be perishable. Therefore, O Arjuna, fight.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

To clarify the meaning of *nāsato vidyate bhāvah*, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *antavantah*. The word *śarīriṇah* has been used to describe the embodied *jīva*. *Aprameyasya* means that the *jīvātmā* is very difficult to understand because he is extremely subtle. *Tasmād yudhyasva* means ‘therefore fight’. Based on these arguments, Kṛṣṇa concludes that it is completely improper to give up one’s *sva-dharma* which is prescribed in *śāstra*.

ŚLOKA 19

य एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यश्चैनं मन्यते हतम् ।
उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥१९॥

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

yah—he who; *vetti*—knows; *enam*—this (soul); (to be) *hantāram*—the killer; *ca*—and; *yah*—who; *manyate*—considers; *enam*—this soul; *hatam*—to be killed; *na vijānītaḥ*—is not in knowledge; *tau ubhau*—of the two; *ayam*—this *ātmā*; *na hanti*—does not kill; *na*—nor; *hanyate*—is killed.

He who considers the *jīvātmā* to be either the killer or the killed is ignorant, for the self neither slays nor is he slain by anyone.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Kṛṣṇa says, “O friend, Arjuna, you are an ātmā and therefore you are neither the subject nor the object of the act of killing.” To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this śloka beginning with *ya enam*. “One who thinks that the *jīvātmā* kills (e.g. Arjuna kills Bhīṣma), or the *jīvātmā* is killed (Arjuna is killed by Bhīṣma), is ignorant. Therefore, O *sakhā*, why do you fear achieving infamy just because ignorant people will call you the killer of your superiors?”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is instructing Arjuna, “You are an ātmā, and therefore you are neither the subject nor the object of the verb ‘to kill’.” Here, He is explaining that Arjuna is not the subject, the killer of heroes such as Bhīṣma on the opposite side, nor is he the object of the killing done by them. On the other hand, ignorant people who identify the self with the body consider only the gross body to be the subject and object of killing. Kṛṣṇa concludes, “Therefore, becoming fully aware of this truth, give up your identification with the gross body and become situated in the nature of the self. Surrendering unto Me, fearlessly engage in your *sva-dharma* for My pleasure. You should not be in ignorance about this.” The same concept is also stated in śruti:

*hantā cen manyate hataṁ / hataś cen manyate hatam
ubhau tau na vijānīto / nāyam hanti na hanyāte*
Kaṭha Upaniṣad 1.2.19

If one who identifies the self with the body thinks that he will kill someone, and one whose body is being killed thinks that he is killed, both are ignorant because the ātmā neither kills anyone nor is killed.

ŚLOKA 20

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।

अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥२०॥

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

ayam—this (soul); *na jāyate*—does not take birth; *vā*—or; *mriyate*—die; *kadācit*—at any time; *na bhūtvā*—he has not come into being; *vā*—nor; *bhavitā*—will he come into being; *na*—nor; *bhūyaḥ*—repeatedly (accept material bodies); *ayam*—he; (*is*) *ajah*—unborn; *nityaḥ*—eternal; *śāśvataḥ*—ever-existing; (*and*) *purāṇaḥ*—primeval; *śarīre*—when the body; *hanyamāne*—is destroyed; *na hanyate*—he is not killed.

The *jīvātmā* neither takes birth nor dies, nor does he experience repeated creation or growth. He is unborn, eternal and ever-existing. Though primeval, he remains ever-youthful. When the body is destroyed, the *jīvātmā* is not destroyed.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

To establish the eternity of the *jīvātmā*, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the words *na jāyate mriyate*, in which it is proven that there is never any time when the *jīvātmā* is born or dies. That there was no birth or death for the *jīvātmā* in the past and nor will there be in the future is proven by the words *nāyaṁ bhūtvā bhavitā*. Śrī Bhagavān is further explaining, by the use of the word *ajah*, that the *jīvātmā* does not take birth in either the past, present or future. Thus He establishes that the *jīva* also existed in the past. The word *śāśvataḥ* means that which is ever-existing, which is not destroyed in the past, present, or future. Therefore the *jīvātmā* is eternal. If one still raises a doubt that because the soul exists for a long time, he may be over-

powered by old age, Śrī Bhagavān says in response, “No, that is not true because he is *purāṇah*. Although he is primeval, he is ever-fresh and free from the six types of transformations, including birth and death.” If someone then raises the question, “Will the soul not die, even figuratively, at the death of the body?” Śrī Kṛṣṇa answers, “No, the soul has no relationship at all with the body.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

The eternal nature of the *jīvātmā* has been established in this *śloka*. He is beyond birth and death, and is eternal and ever-existing. He is not destroyed when the body is destroyed. Consequently, the *jīvātmā* is devoid of the six types of transformations: birth, duration of existence, growth, procreation, diminution and death. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.2.18) a similar conclusion is given:

*na jāyate mriyate vā vipaścin / nāyam kutaścin na vibhūva kaścit
ajo nityah sāśvato 'yam purāṇo / na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*

The meaning of this *śloka* is the same as Gītā 2.20, but in this *śloka* there is one special word, *vipaścit*, which means one who knows the self. Br̄had-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.25) also verifies this conclusion: *sa vā eṣa mahān aja ātmā 'jaro 'maro 'mr̄to 'bhayah*. “The *ātmā* is indisputably great, unborn, deathless, free from old age, immortal and fearless.”

ŚLOKA 21

वेदाविनाशिनः नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम् ।
कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥२१॥

*vedāvināśinam nityam / ya enam ajam avyayam
katham sa puruṣah pārtha / kam ghātayati hanti kam*

pārtha—O Pārtha; *katham*—how; *yah*—one who; *veda*—knows;

enam—this (soul); (to be) *avināśinam*—indestructible; *nityam*—eternally; *ajam*—unborn; *avyayam*—immutable; *kam*—whom?; *hanti*—can he kill; *kam*—whom?; (can) *sah*—that; *puruṣah*—person; *ghātayati*—cause to kill.

O Pārtha, how can a person who knows the ātmā to be eternally birthless, immutable and indestructible kill anyone or cause anyone to be killed?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is answering Arjuna, “O Pārtha, after acquiring this knowledge, you will not be guilty of committing sin even after engaging in battle, and I will also not be guilty of inspiring you to fight.” For this purpose, the present *śloka* beginning with *vedāvināśinam* is being spoken. Here the word *nityam* is an adverb. The use of the words *avināśi* (indestructible), *aja* (unborn) and *avyayam* (immutable) denies that the ātmā can be diminished at all by acts of destruction. Śrī Bhagavān says, “With this knowledge, how can a person like Me kill anyone or be killed by any means? In the same way, how can a person like you kill someone or cause someone to be killed?”

ŚLOKA 22

**वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णन्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥२२॥**

*vāsāṁsi jīrnāni yathā vihāya / navāni gṛhṇāti naro 'parāṇi
tathā śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrnāny / anyāni samyāti navāni dehī*

yathā—just as; *naraḥ*—a person; *vihāya*—giving up; *jīrnāni*—old and worn out; *vāsāṁsi*—clothes; *gṛhṇāti*—accepts; *aparāṇi*—other; *navāni*—new ones; *tathā*—in the same way; *dehī*—the embodied soul, *jīvātmā*; *vihāya*—giving up; *jīrnāni*—old; *śarīrāṇi*—bodies; *samyāti*—accepts; *anyāni*—other; *navāni*—new ones.

Just as a person discards his old garments and acquires new ones, the *jīvātmā* similarly gives up old, useless bodies and accepts new ones.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this *śloka* beginning with *vāsāmsi*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, “Is there any harm in giving up old clothes to accept new ones? If you say, ‘By fighting against Bhīṣma, You and I will be the cause of the *jīvātmā* named Bhīṣma giving up his body,’ I reply that Bhīṣma will simply give up his old and useless body and take a new body. How can you or I be blamed for this?”

ŚLOKA 23

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥२३॥

*nainam chindanti śastrāṇi / nainam dahati pāvakah
na cainam kledayanty āpo / na śoṣayati mārutah*

śastrāṇi—various weapons; *chindanti*—do not pierce; *enam*—him (the *jīvātmā*); *pāvakah*—fire; *na dahati*—does not burn; *enam*—him; *āpaḥ*—waters; *na kledayanti*—do not moisten; *enam*—him; *ca*—and; *mārutah*—the wind; *na śoṣayati*—does not dry (him).

The *jīvātmā* can never be pierced by any weapon, burned by fire, moistened by water nor dried by the wind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“O Arjuna, the weapons used by you in battle cannot cause any pain or misery to the *ātmā*.” To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *nainam*. Here the word *śastrāṇi* means swords (or any earthly weapons), *pāvakah* means the fire weapon, *āpaḥ* the water weapon and *mārutah* the air weapon. “O Arjuna, even if you use all these weap-

ons, they will not cause any pain to the *ātmā*."

ŚLOKAS 24-25

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेश्योऽशोष्य एव च ।
नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥२४॥
अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।
तस्मादेवं विदित्वैन नानुशाश्चितुमर्हसि ॥२५॥

acchedyo 'yam adāhyo 'yam / akledyo 'śoṣya eva ca
nityah sarva-gataḥ sthāṇur / acalo 'yam sanātanaḥ
avyakto 'yam acintyo 'yam / avikāryo 'yam ucyate
tasmād evam viditvainam / nānuśocitum arhasi

ucyate—it is said (that); *ayam*—this (soul); (is) *acchedyah*—indivisible; *akledyah*—insoluble; *ca*—and; *adāhyah*—cannot be burned; *ayam*—this (soul); *eva*—certainly; *aśoṣyah*—cannot be dried; (he is) *nityah*—eternal; *sarva-gataḥ*—all-pervasive; *sthāṇuh*—fixed; *acalaḥ*—non-moving; *ayam*—this (soul); (is) *sanātanaḥ*—ever-existing; *ayam*—this (soul); (is) *avyaktaḥ*—imperceptible; *ayam*—this (soul); (is) *acintyah*—inconceivable; *ayam*—this (soul); (is) *vikāryah*—immutable; *tasmāt*—therefore; *viditvā*—knowing; *evam*—like this; *na arhasi*—it is not befitting; *anuśocitum*—to lament; *enam*—for this (soul).

The *jīvātmā* is indivisible, insoluble and cannot be burned or dried. He is eternal, all-pervasive, permanent, non-moving and ever-existing. He is imperceptible, inconceivable and, being free from the six types of transformations such as birth and death, is immutable. After understanding the *ātmā* in this way, it is not proper for you to lament.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The *ātmā* has been described as indivisible, etc. Repetition of this indicates the eternity of the *jīvātmā* and removes the doubts of those who are uncertain of its nature. If one says three or four times that there is *dharma* in Kali-yuga, the repetitive use of the words will stress the fact that, without a doubt, there is *dharma* in Kali-yuga. Similarly, the *jīvātmā*'s qualities have been repeated to confirm the eternity of his nature. Here, the word *sarva-gataḥ* (all-pervasive) indicates that due to his own actions the *jīva* transmigrates through all species of life such as *devas*, human beings, animals and birds. The words *sthānuḥ* (fixed) and *acalaḥ* (immovable) have been repeated in order to give a clear conception of the stable nature of the *jīvātmā*. The *jīvātmā* is called *avyaktaḥ* (imperceptible) because he is very subtle. He is called *acintya* (inconceivable, beyond reasoning) because he pervades the whole body as consciousness. He is called *avikāryah* (immutable) because he is free from the six types of transformations, such as birth and duration of existence.

ŚLOKA 26

अथ चैनं नित्यजातं नित्यं वा मन्यसे मृतम् ।
तथापि त्वं महाबाहो नैनं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥२६॥

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

ca—also; *atha*—if however; *manyase*—you think; *enam*—this soul; *nitya-jātam*—always takes birth; *vā*—or; *nityam*—always; *mṛtam*—dies; *tathāpi*—still; *tvam na arhasi*—you should not; *śocitum*—grieve; *enam*—for this (soul); *mahā-bāho*—O mighty-armed one.

If, however, you think that the *ātmā* is always born and always dies, there is still no reason for you to

grieve, O Mahā-bāho.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is saying, “O Arjuna, what I have explained to you so far has been based on *śāstra*, but now I will help you to understand from the point of view of ordinary experience. Please listen very attentively. If you consider that the self is always born, and if you think that when the body perishes, the soul dies, even then, O Mahā-bāho, as a valiant *kṣatriya* it is your duty to fight.” Regarding one’s *sva-dharma*, it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.54.40):

*kṣatryāṇām ayaṁ dharmah / prajāpati-vinirmitah
bhrātāpi bhrātarām hanyād / yena ghorataras tataḥ*

According to the *sva-dharma* of *kṣatriyas* who were created by Prajāpati, one brother can even kill another brother. Therefore, *kṣatriya-dharma* is said to be very fearsome.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa stops trying to make Arjuna understand from the perspective of *śāstra* and is here making him understand from a common sense point of view by telling him that if he understands the *ātmā* to be eternal, as explained in the *śruti* and other *śāstras*, then there is no reason for grief. But even from a practical point of view, there is also no reason to grieve. Atheists like Cārvaka consider the *ātmā* to be temporary like the gross body and say that it does not exist after death. Also, according to the philosophy of *vaibhāṣika* Buddhists, if one considers the *ātmā* to be always taking birth and dying there is still no reason to grieve for it.

ŚLOKA 27

*जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।
तस्मादपरिहार्यऽथं न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥२७॥*

jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyur dhruvam janma mṛtasya ca

tasmād aparihārye 'rthe / na tvam śocitum arhasi

jātasya—for one who is born; hi—certainly; mṛtyuḥ—death; (is) dhruvah—certain; ca—and; mṛtasya—for one who dies; janma—birth; dhruvam—is certain; tasmāt—therefore; tvam—you; arhasi—should; na śocitum—not grieve; aparihārye arthe—in this inevitable situation.

For one who is born death is certain and for one who has died birth is certain. Therefore you should not grieve for that which is unavoidable.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

When someone's *prārabdha-karma* is exhausted, his death is certain. After death, he will inevitably take birth again so that he can enjoy the fruits of the actions performed in his previous body. It is not possible for anyone to escape the inevitability of birth and death.

ŚLOKA 28

**अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।
अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥२८॥**

*avyaktādīni bhūtāni / vyakta-madhyāni bhārata
avyakta-nidhanāny eva / tatra kā paridevanā*

bhārata—O Bhārata; eva—certainly; (all) bhūtāni—beings; (are) avyakta-ādīni—unmanifest in the beginning; vyakta—manifest; madhyāni—in the interim; nidhanāni—and after death; (they become) avyakta—unmanifest; tatra—therefore; kā—why?; paridevanā—lament.

O Bhārata, all beings are unmanifest before their birth, they become manifest in the interim, and after death they once again become unmanifest. So what cause can there be for lamentation?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this way, having dispelled lamentation in respect to the *ātmā* by the *śloka*: *na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin* (*Gītā* 2.20), and in respect to the body by the *śloka*: *jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyur* (*Gītā* 2.27), Śrī Bhagavān now dispels the cause of lamentation for both the *jīvātmā* and the body by speaking this *śloka*, beginning with the word *avyaktaḥ*. Before birth, *devas*, human beings, animals, birds and so on remain unmanifest. Even at that time, the subtle and gross bodies also exist in their causal state in the form of matter, such as earth, but they are in an unmanifest stage. They become manifest in the middle period and after death they again become unmanifest. In the period of dissolution and devastation (*mahā-pralaya*), the *jīvātmā* also remains in his subtle form because of the existence of his *karma* and *mātrā* (tendency to accept sense objects). Therefore, all *jīvas* remain unmanifest in the beginning and again become unmanifest at the end. They only become manifest in the middle period. The *śruti* also states: *sthira-cara-jātayah syur ajayotthanimitta-yujah*. “All the moving and non-moving *jīvas* become manifest due to *karma*. Therefore, why should one cry out of grief?” (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 10.87.29).

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.13.44) Śrī Nārada Muni says:

*yan manyase dhruvam lokam / adhruvam vā na cobhayam
sarvathā na hi śocyās te / snehād anyatra mohajāt*

Whether you consider the human to be an eternal *jīvātmā* or a temporary body, or even if you accept an indescribable opinion that he is both eternal and temporary, you do not have to lament in any way. There is no cause for lamentation other than the affection which has arisen out of delusion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

All living entities are born from the unmanifest stage, remain manifest for some time and again become situated in an unmanifest state. Just to explain this point, the present *śloka* has been spoken. In his explanation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.87.29) cited in the above commentary, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes that, because all *jīvātmās* are manifest from Parameśvara, they are under His control. Parameśvara is beyond material nature, remaining detached from it. When He performs His pastime of glancing over the material nature, the moving and non-moving *jīvas* become manifest with their past impressions of *karma*. Wherever the word *utpanna* (created) is used it means to become manifest. If one asks how the *jīvas*, being merged in Parameśvara, can take birth, the answer is given that it is by His glance and the inspiration of His will (*icchā-sakti*). Past *karma* then becomes active, after which the *jīvātmā* appears along with his subtle body. Then, becoming united with the gross body, the *jīvātmā* takes birth. In other words, when the designations born from the effect of material nature are dissolved, the *jīvas* are considered to have died; and when the *jīvātmā* appears with his past *karma*, impressions, and gross and subtle bodies in various species of life in this material world, he is said to have taken his birth. This is stated in *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka-śruti*:

yathāgneh kṣudrā visphulingā
vyuccaranty evam evāsmād ātmanah
sarve prāṇāḥ sarve lokāḥ sarve
devāḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni vyuccaranti

Just as sparks appear from a fire, so the senses (such as the power to speak), the results of *karma* (such as happiness and distress), all the *devas* and all the living entities from Brahmā down to the ant appear from Me, Paramātmā.

Mahābhāgavata Śrī Yamarāja also says: *yatrāgatas tatra gataṁ manusyam*. “The living entity goes back to the same unknown place from whence he came.”

ŚLOKA 29

आश्चर्यवत् पश्यति कश्चिदेनमाश्चर्यवद् वदति तथैव चान्यः ।
आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित् ॥२९॥

āścaryavat paśyati kaścid enam-
āścaryavad vadati tathaiva cānyah
āścaryavac cainam anyah śṛṇoti
śrutvāpy enam veda na caiva kaścit

kaścit—some person; *paśyati*—sees; *enam*—this (soul); *āścarya-vat*—as amazing; *ca*—also; *anyah*—another; *vadati*—speaks of (him); *āścarya-vat*—as amazing; *tathā*—in the same way; *eva*—indeed; *anyah*—another; *śṛṇoti*—hears (of him); *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *kaścit*—some person; *api*—even; *śrutvā*—having heard; *enam*—of this (soul); *na veda*—does not understand.

Some look upon the *ātmā* as amazing, some speak of him as amazing and some hear of him and accept him as amazing. Others, however, even after hearing about him, cannot understand him at all.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is saying, “O Arjuna, if you ask what this amazing subject is that I am speaking about, then listen. It is indeed a matter of wonder that even after receiving this knowledge, your wisdom has not been awakened. In this regard it is true; this subject is a matter of wonder.” Only for this reason is this *śloka*, beginning with the word *āścarya-vat*, being spoken. This whole material world, in the form of the combination of the body and the *ātmā*, is indeed a wonder.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Since the truth about the science of the *ātmā* is very difficult to understand, the *ātmā*, the person who instructs about the *ātmā*, the instruction itself and the audience are all amazing. In other words, only some very rare, great persons look upon the *ātmā* as amazing, and some very rare persons hear about the *ātmā* and accept him as amazing. That most of the audience, even after hearing these instructions from one who is *tattva-vit* (a knower of the Absolute Reality), cannot realise the *ātmā* is most amazing. This is also explained in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.2.7):

śravaṇayāpi bahubhir yo na labhyah
 śṛṇvanto 'pi bahavo yaṁ na vidyuḥ
 āścaryo'sya vaktā kuśalo 'sya labdhā
 āścaryo 'sya jñātā kuśalānuśiṣṭaḥ

The opportunity to hear instructions about the science of the self (*ātma-tattva*) is very rare. Even after hearing them, most cannot realise the instructions because a master who is self-re-alised (*ātma-tattva-vit*) is very rare. If, by great fortune, such a teacher is available, the students themselves who are willing to hear this topic are also extremely rare.

For this reason, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has instructed the *jīvātmās* in Kali-yuga to perform *śrī hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana*. If even faithless persons chant the name of Śrī Hari while talking, walking, sitting, standing, eating, drinking, crying, laughing, or in any other way, they will still benefit from it. Gradually, they attain the association of *śuddha-bhaktas*. By such association they can even attain *bhagavad-prema*, and they easily attain knowledge of *ātma-tattva* as a secondary result.

madhura-madhuram etan maṅgalam maṅgalānām
 sakala-nigama-vallī-sat-phalam cit-svarūpam

sakṛd api parigītāṁ śraddhayā helayā vā
bhṛguvara nara-mātraṁ tārayet kṛṣṇa-nāma
Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 11.234

Kṛṣṇa-nāma is the sweetest of the sweet and the most auspicious of all that is auspicious. It is the flourishing creeper, the eternal, fully-ripened fruit of the Bhāgavata and the embodiment of knowledge, *cit-śakti*. O Bhṛgu Muni! Even if someone chants the holy name only once, either with faith or indifference, he is immediately delivered from this ocean of birth and death!

sāṅketyam pārihāsyam vā / stobham helanam eva vā
vaikuṇṭha-nāma-grahaṇam / aśeṣāgha-haram viduh
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.2.14

One who chants the holy name of the Lord is immediately freed from the reactions of unlimited sins, even if he chants indirectly (to indicate something else), jokingly, for musical entertainment, or even neglectfully. This is accepted by all learned scholars of the śāstra.

ŚLOKA 30

देही नित्यमवध्योऽयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।
तस्मात् सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमहसि ॥३०॥

dehī nityam avadhyo 'yam / dehe sarvasya bhārata
tasmāt sarvāṇi bhūtāni / na tvam śocitum arhasi

bhārata—O Bhārata (Arjuna); *ayam*—this; *dehī*—the embodied soul; *nityam*—is eternal; (he resides) *dehe*—within the body; *sarvasya*—of all beings; (he) *avadhyah*—cannot be killed; *tasmāt*—therefore; *tvam*—you; *arhasi*—should; *na śocitum*—not grieve; *sarvāṇi*—for all; *bhūtāni*—living beings.

O Bhārata, the eternal *jīvātmā* who resides within

the body of all living beings, can never be slain. Therefore, you need not grieve for anyone.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

If Arjuna asks, “What should I do now? Please instruct me definitively,” Kṛṣṇa’s answer is, “Give up your lamentation and fight.” For this purpose, the two lines of this śloka beginning with *dehī* and *dehe* are being spoken.

ŚLOKA 31

स्वधर्मपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमहसि ।
धर्म्याद्वि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत् क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥३१॥

*svadharmam api cāvekṣya
na vikampitum arhasi
dharmyād dhi yuddhāc chreyo 'nyat
kṣatriyasya na vidyate*

ca—and; *api*—also; *avekṣya*—considering; *sva-dharmam*—your own dharmic duty; *arhasi*—you should; *na*—not; *vikampitum*—hesitate; *hi*—indeed; *kṣatriyasya*—for the *kṣatriya*; *na vidyate*—there does not exist; *anyat*—another; (*more*) *śreyah*—auspicious engagement; *yuddhāt*—than fighting; *dharma*—for *dharma*.

Considering your duty as a *kṣatriya* you should not hesitate, as there is no better engagement for you than to fight for *dharma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“Since the *ātmā* is indestructible, it is not proper for you to be disturbed by thinking that he can be killed. And if you consider your own *sva-dharma*, it is also not proper for you to be perturbed.”

ŚLOKA 32

यदृच्छया चोपपन्नं स्वगद्वारमपावृतम् ।
सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् ॥३२॥

*yadṛcchayā copapannam / svarga-dvāram apāvṛtam
sukhinah kṣatriyāḥ pārtha / labhante yuddham īdrśam*

pārtha—O Pārtha; *sukhinah*—fortunate; *kṣatriyāḥ*—kings; *labhante*—achieve; *yuddham*—a battle; *īdrśam*—like this; *ca*—and; *upapannam*—arrived; *yadṛcchayā*—of its own accord; (it) *apāvṛtam*—is a wide open; *dvāram*—door; *svarga*—to the higher planets.

O Pārtha, fortunate are those *kṣatriyas* for whom such an opportunity to fight comes of its own accord and thus opens wide the doorway to Svarga.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Śrī Bhagavān says, “In a dharmika battle, those who are killed by the conquerors attain more happiness than those who kill them. Therefore, to give more pleasure to Bhīṣma and others than to yourself, you should kill them.” To support this statement, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking the present śloka, beginning with the word *yadṛcchayā*. *Yadṛcchayā* means to attain Svarga without performing *karma-yoga*. *Apāvṛtam* means uncovered or unveiled, in this case the celestial kingdom which is unveiled for the fortunate *kṣatriya* who dies in battle.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Arjuna asked in Gītā (1.36), “O Mādhava, what happiness will come by killing our relatives?” In answer to this, Śrī Bhagavān is instructing Arjuna that a *kṣatriya*’s *sva-dharma*

is to fight in battle, which is an open door to Svarga. “If you win this battle, you will attain great fame and the pleasure of a kingdom. On the other hand, because this is a battle for justice, if you die you will definitely attain Svarga. Even the aggressors and those fighting on the side of *adharma* will attain Svarga if they are killed in this battle.” Dharma Śāstra states:

āhaveṣu mitho 'nyonyam / jighāṁsanto mahī-kṣitah
yuddhamānāḥ param śaktyā / svargam yānty aparān-mukhāḥ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is telling Arjuna, “Therefore, it is not proper for you to become averse to this battle which will be fought for the sake of justice.”

ŚLOKA 33

अथ चेत्वमिमं धर्य संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।
ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं ज्य हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥३३॥

atha cet tvam imam dharmyam / saṅgrāmam na kariṣyasi
tataḥ svadharmam kīrttim ca / hitvā pāpam avāpsyasi

atha—on the other hand; *cet*—if; *tvam*—you; *na*—do not; *kariṣyasi*—perform; *imam*—this; *dharmyam*—dharmika duty; *saṅgrāmam*—of war; *tataḥ*—then; *hitvā*—losing; *sva-dharmam*—personal duty; *ca*—and; *kīrttim*—fame; *avāpsyasi*—you will gain; *pāpam*—sinful reaction.

However, if you do not perform your *sva-dharma* of fighting this *dharmika* battle, you will not only lose your status as a *kṣatriya*, but your only gain will be sinful reaction.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In the present śloka beginning with *atha* and the following three ślokas, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the defects in taking the stance of not fighting.

ŚLOKA 34

अकीर्तिंज्वापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् ।
सम्भावितस्य चाकीर्तिमरणादतिरिच्यते ॥३४॥

akīrttim cāpi bhūtāni / kathayiṣyanti te 'vyayām
sambhāvitasya cākīrttir / maraṇād atiricyate

ca—and; *bhūtāni*—people; *kathayiṣyanti*—will speak; *te*—of your; *avyayām*—unending; *akīrttim*—infamy; *ca*—and; *api*—also; *sambhāvitasya*—for an honourable person; *akīrttiḥ*—dishonour; *atiricyate*—becomes more (powerful); *maraṇāt*—than death.

People will speak of your infamy for all time, and for an honourable person, dishonour is more painful than death.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Here the word *avyayām* means indestructible, and *sambhāvitasya* indicates one who is very well-established, or a very honourable person.

ŚLOKA 35

भयाद्रणादुपरतं मस्यन्ते त्वां महारथाः ।
येषाज्ज्व त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥३५॥

*bhayād raṇād uparataṁ / maṁsyante tvāṁ mahā-rathāḥ
yeṣām ca tvaṁ bahu-mato / bhūtvā yāsyasi lāghavam*

mahā-rathāḥ—the great warriors; *maṁsyante*—they will think; *tvāṁ*—you; (*have*) *uparataṁ*—retired; *raṇāt*—from the battle; *bhayāt*—out of fear; *ca*—and; *yeṣām*—for those for whom; *tvaṁ*—you; *bhūtvā*—were; *bahu-mataḥ*—greatly honoured; *yāsyasi*—you will become; *lāghavam*—insignificant.

Great warriors such as Duryodhana and others will think that you have left the battlefield out of fear.

Those who have always honoured you so highly will consider you to be insignificant.

ŚĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Your opponents are of the opinion, ‘Our enemy, Arjuna, is extremely valiant.’ If you run away from the battle, after being the object of such honour, you will be deemed a coward in their eyes. Mahārathīs such as Duryodhana and others will think that you have fled the battlefield out of fear. ‘It must be due to fear, not affection for his relatives, that a *kṣatriya* becomes averse to fighting while on the battlefield.’ They will only consider your position in this way.”

ŚLOKA 36

अवाच्यवादांशं च बहून् वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिताः ।
निन्दन्तस्तव सामर्थ्यं ततो दुःखतरं नु किम् ॥३६॥

*avācyā-vādāṁś ca bahūn / vadiṣyanti tavāhitāḥ
nindantas tava sāmarthyam / tato duḥkhataram nu kim*
tava—your; *ahitāḥ*—enemies; *vadiṣyanti*—will say; *bahūn*—many; *avācyā*—harsh; *vādān*—words; *ca*—also; *nindantāḥ*—criticizing; *tava*—your; *sāmarthyam*—ability; *kim*—what?; *nu*—indeed; (is) *duḥkha-taram*—more painful; *tataḥ*—than this.

Your enemies will scorn you with many harsh words, while criticising your ability. What could be more painful for you than this?

ŚĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Avācyā-vādān implies the use of harsh words, such as ‘eunuch’.

ŚLOKA 37

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।

तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥३७॥

*hato vā prāpsyasi svargam / jitvā vā bhokṣyase mahīm
tasmād uttiṣṭha kaunteya / yuddhāya kṛta-niścayah*

vā—either; *hataḥ*—being killed; *prāpsyasi*—you will attain; *svargam*—the celestial kingdom; *vā*—or; *jitvā*—by achieving victory; *bhokṣyase*—you shall enjoy; *mahīm*—the earthly kingdom; *tasmāt*—therefore; *uttiṣṭha*—arise; *kaunteya*—O son of Kunti; *kṛta-niścayah*—with determination; *yuddhāya*—for battle.

O Kaunteya, if you are killed in the battle you will attain Svarga, and if you are victorious you will enjoy this earthly kingdom. Therefore, stand up and fight with determination.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

If a question arises in the mind of Arjuna as to why he should engage in battle when it is not certain that he will win, Śrī Bhagavān responds by speaking this *Śloka* beginning with *hataḥ*.

ŚLOKA 38

**सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्यसि ॥३८॥**

*sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā / lābhālābhau jaya-ajayau
tato yuddhāya yujyasva / naivam pāpam avāpsyasi*

kṛtvā—having made; *sukha*—happiness; *duḥkhe*—and distress; *lābha-alābhau*—both gain and loss; *jaya-ajayau*—both victory and defeat; *same*—to be equal; *tataḥ*—then; *yujyasva*—fight; *yuddhāya*—for the sake of fighting; *evam*—in this way; *na avāpsyasi*—you will not gain; *pāpam*—sinful reaction.

Considering happiness and distress, gain and loss, and victory and defeat to be equal, you should fight.

In this way you will not incur any sin.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “O Arjuna, fighting is your only *sva-dharma*. If you doubt this and think that by fighting you will incur sin, you should still accept My instructions and fight. Through victory or defeat you will either gain or lose a kingdom, and as a consequence you will experience either happiness or distress. Therefore, O Arjuna, deliberate with proper wisdom, and fight, knowing both of them to be equal. You will not incur sin as long as you are endowed with this equanimity.” This subject is also described later in *Gītā* (5.10): *lipyate na sa pāpena / padma-patram ivāmbhasā*. “Just as a lotus leaf remains in water but never becomes wet, similarly, though engaged in battle, you will not incur sin.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In *Gītā* (1.36) Arjuna is thinking, “I will incur sin by killing them.” In speaking this *śloka*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is refuting Arjuna’s argument as baseless. The question of incurring sin by killing one’s relatives in battle arises only because of attachment to happiness and distress. “I am explaining to you the means by which you can become free from sin. Sin will not touch you if you perform your *sva-dharma* of fighting as per My instructions, considering happiness, distress, gain, loss, victory and defeat as equal.” One becomes sinful or bound by action (*karma*) if he is attached to the fruits of his actions. Therefore, it is certainly necessary to renounce attachment to *karma*. This conclusion has been established in *Gītā* (5.10):

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

Those who give up all attachments to *karma* (work), and surrender all the results of their *karma* unto Me, Parameśvara, do

not become affected by sin, just as a lotus leaf remains untouched by water.

ŚLOKA 39

एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धियोगे त्विमां शृणु ।
बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पारथ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥३९॥

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

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; (*I have*) *abhihitā*—explained; *te*—to you; *eṣā*—this; *buddhiḥ*—knowledge; *sāṅkhye*—regarding *sāṅkhya yoga*; *tu*—but; *śṛṇu*—now hear; *imām*—this (knowledge); *yuktaḥ*—connected; *yoge*—in *bhakti-yoga*; *yayā buddhyā*—with which knowledge; *prahāsyasi*—you shall be freed from; *karma-bandham*—bondage of the material world.

O Pārtha, thus far I have explained this knowledge of *sāṅkhya-yoga*, but now I will impart to you the science of *bhakti-yoga*, by which you will become freed from the bondage of this material world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

At this point Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “Until now I have instructed you in *jñāna-yoga*. I am concluding My instructions on *jñāna-yoga* with this *śloka* beginning with the word *eṣā*. That which properly illuminates the *tattva* of an object is called *sāṅkhya* (complete knowledge). That intelligence with which you must act has been explained here by the word *eṣā*. Now hear about the intelligence required to act for *bhakti-yoga*.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s statement in which *yayā* is used explains that when a person is endowed with intelligence related to *bhakti*, he will become freed from bondage to this material world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Here, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is concluding His explanation of sāṅkhyayoga and beginning His instructions on *buddhi-yoga*, or *bhakti-yoga*. Śrila Cakravartī Ṭhākura defines sāṅkhyayoga as follows: *samyak khyāyate prakāśyate vastu tattvam aneneti sāṅkhyam samyak jñānam*. “That which properly illuminates the *tattva* of an object is called sāṅkhyayoga. Sāṅkhyayoga gives complete knowledge about the *tattva* of the *ātmā* and *anātmā* (an inert object).” From the śloka, *na tv evāham* (Gītā 2.12) to *dehī nityam* (Gītā 2.30), various facets of *ātma-tattva* have been explained, and from *sva-dharmam api cāvekṣya* (Gītā 2.31) to *sukha-duḥkhe* (Gītā 2.38), knowledge other than *ātma-tattva* (*anātma-tattva*), that is, knowledge of *sva-dharma*, has been explained. When one performs *niṣkāma-karma* (selfless activities) with *buddhi-yoga* related to *bhakti*, he becomes free from the bondage of *karma*, that is, his bondage to the material world is destroyed. This conclusion is verified in Śrī Īśopaniṣad (1.1):

*iśāvāsyam idam sarvam / yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat
tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā / mā gṛdhah kasya svid dhanam*

Everything moving and non-moving in the entire universe is pervaded or enjoyed by Parameśvara, the Supreme Controller.

All moving and non-moving objects in this world are to be enjoyed only by Parameśvara, the sole enjoyer of this world. *Jīvas* are servants of Bhagavān. They should engage in service to Him using this universe as an instrument, and should maintain their lives accepting His remnants. The supreme duty of the *jīvas* is to render loving service to Śrī Bhagavān (*bhagavat-sevā*) with His property, without desiring to accept that property as the object of their own enjoyment. In this way, the *jīvas* do not become bound by their *karma* (actions).

kurvann eveha karmāṇi / jijivīsec chataṁ samāḥ

evam tvayi nānyatheto 'sti / na karma lipyate nare
Śrī Īsopaniṣad 1.2

One may aspire to live for hundreds of years if he continuously goes on working in that way, for that sort of work will not bind him to the law of *karma*. There is no alternative to this for mankind.

ŚLOKA 40

**नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमध्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥४०॥**

nehābhikrama-nāśo 'sti / pratyavāyō na vidyate
svalpam apy asya dharmasya / trāyate mahato bhayāt

abhikrama—endeavours; *iha*—in this *bhakti-yoga*; *asti*—there is; *na*—no; *nāśah*—destruction; *vidyate*—there is; *na*—no; *pratyavāyāḥ*—diminution; *api*—even; *su-alpam*—a very little; *asya dharmasya*—of this *yoga*; *trāyate*—frees (one); *mahataḥ*—from great; *bhayāt*—fear.

Endeavours on the path of *bhakti-yoga* are neither fruitless nor subject to loss. Even a little progress frees one from great fear in the form of this material world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Yoga (buddhi-yoga) is of two types: (1) *bhakti-yoga* in the form of hearing and chanting; and (2) *bhagavad-arpitaniṣkāma-karma-yoga* which entails surrendering the fruits of one's selfless actions to Śrī Bhagavān. In Gītā (2.47), Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, "O Arjuna, you have the qualification only to perform action (*karma*).” Now, before *karma-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga* is being delineated. Gītā (2.45) states, "O Arjuna, situate yourself beyond the three modes of material nature." This statement certainly refers to *bhakti* as being beyond the three modes because only by *bhakti* can a person transcend the

modes of nature. This is well known from the Eleventh Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. *Jñāna* and *karma* are described as *sāttvika* and *rājasika* respectively, which proves that they are not beyond the three modes of nature.

Bhagavad-arpita-niṣkāma-karma-yoga is *bhakti* which is characterised by offering the fruits of one's *karma* to Śrī Bhagavān. It does not allow the *karma* to go in vain, as is the case with the performance of *karma* that is not offered to Bhagavān. However, due to the lack of *bhakti*'s predominance in such activities, they are not accepted as actual *bhakti*. If *karma*, in which the fruits are offered to Śrī Bhagavān, were also described as *bhakti*, then what would constitute *karma*? If one says that *karma* is only action, that is not offered to Śrī Bhagavān, it is not correct. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.12) states that one of the characteristics of *brahma* (the effulgence of Śrī Bhagavān) is that it is *niṣkarma* (inactive) and, being identical with the mood of inactivity, is called *naiṣkarmya*. When even *brahma-jñāna*, knowledge of *brahma* which is *niṣkāma* (without any material motive) and *nirdoṣa* (faultless), is not praiseworthy, being devoid of *bhakti*, then how can *sakāma* and *niṣkāma-karma*, if not offered to Bhagavān, be praiseworthy, since they are troublesome in the stages of both *sādhana* (practice) and *sādhyā* (the goal)?

According to the above-mentioned statement spoken by Śrī Nārada (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.5.12), *karma* which is not offered to Śrī Bhagavān is useless. Therefore, only that *bhakti* characterised by hearing and chanting has been accepted as the *sādhana* to attain the sweetness of the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān. Nevertheless, *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* which is offered to Śrī Bhagavān is also worthy of consideration. Both types of *yoga* (*bhakti-yoga* and *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*) are to be understood by the word *buddhi-yoga*. This is evident from the statements of *Bhagavad-gītā* such as, "I bestow upon them that *buddhi-yoga* by which they can attain Me," (*Gītā* 10.10)

and, “O Dhanañjaya, compared to *buddhi-yoga*, *sakāma-karma* (action with fruitive desire) is very insignificant” (*Gītā* 2.49).

Now, in this *śloka* beginning with *neha*, the glory of *nirguṇabhakti* (*bhakti* free from the modes), which is characterised by *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam*, is being explained. Śrī Bhagavān says, “The benefit that comes from even the initial steps of *bhakti-yoga* can never be destroyed, and thus it does not have the adverse effect of becoming lost. Conversely, if one starts to perform *karma-yoga* but does not complete it, the result of whatever *karma* has been performed is lost, and the fault of irregularity is incurred.”

The question may be raised, “Can the result of *bhakti* be attained by those who have the desire to follow the process, but are unable to perform it properly?” Śrī Kṛṣṇa responds to this by saying *svalpam*, which means that even if the practice of *bhakti* has only just begun, the result is never lost and it will deliver one from the danger of this material world. The life histories of Ajāmila and others are evidence of this. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.16.44) also states that just by once hearing Śrī Bhagavān’s name, even a *cāndāla* is freed from the great fear caused by material existence. Moreover in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.29.20) it is stated:

*na hy aṅgopakrame dhvamso / mad-dharmasyoddhavāṇv api
mayā vyavasitaḥ samyaṇ / nirguṇatvād anāśiṣah*

O Uddhava, because I have deliberately determined the transcendental nature of this process, even if *niṣkāma-dharma* or pure *bhakti* in the form of hearing and chanting is improperly performed, there is no possibility of the slightest loss.

The purport of these statements of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Bhāgavatam* seems to be the same, but the above statement of *Bhāgavatam* has a special characteristic: since a transcendental object or activity is *nirguṇa*, it is never lost. This is the

only point which is worthy of deliberation in this context. One may argue that *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, if offered to Śrī Bhagavān, can also become *nirguṇa* by His grace. But it is not a fact. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.15.23) gives evidence of this: “*Nitya* and *naimittika* (obligatory and occasional) activities which are performed without any fruitive desire and offered to Me are considered *sāttvika*.” In other words, they are not transcendental to the three modes.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here, *buddhi-yoga* is described as being of two types. The first is *bhakti-yoga*, in the form of hearing and chanting, and the second is *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* wherein the results of *karma* are offered to Śrī Bhagavān. Of these two, the first is *mukhya* (primary) and the second is *gauṇa* (secondary and related to the *guṇas*) *bhakti-yoga*. In fact, *bhakti-yoga* is completely *nirguṇa*, transcendental to the modes. No irregularities, faults or unwanted reactions can occur at the beginning or in the course of one’s practice of *bhakti-yoga*, even if for some reason, one is unable to complete it. Rather, a little performance of *bhakti-yoga* delivers the performer from the terrible dangers of the material world and makes his life successful by giving him the service of Śrī Bhagavān.

The following example can be cited. Because Bharata Mahārāja became attached to a deer, he was not able to complete the full process of *bhakti* in that life. In his next birth, although he took the body of a deer, the influence of his previous life’s performance of *bhakti* enabled him to associate with *śuddha-bhaktas* of Bhagavān. Taking birth again, he became an *uttama-bhāgavata* and performed service to Śrī Bhagavān. Therefore, Bhagavān says in Gītā (6.40): *pārtha naivēha nāmutra vināśas tasya vidyate*. “A person who has fallen from the path of *bhakti* is never lost in this world or in the next, nor does he obtain a miserable condition.”

On the other hand, in *bhagavat-arpita niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, even if *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* is offered to Bhagavān, it is still referred to as *karma-yoga*, not *bhakti-yoga*. By first performing *karma-yoga*, the heart becomes purified and eventually one attains *bhakti-yoga*. Therefore, this *karma-yoga* only aims indirectly at *bhakti* from far away. Unlike pure *bhakti*, however, *karma-yoga* is not *nirguṇa* (free from the *guṇas*). Rather, it is called *karma* in *sattva-guṇa*. Moreover, if this *karma* is not performed perfectly or, if it is left incomplete, it may become lost and some unwanted reactions will be incurred. However, as stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.23): *mad-arpaṇam niṣphalam vā / sāttvikam nija-karmat*. If a *sādhaka* even begins to perform this *bhakti-yoga* slightly, but due to his own incapability leaves the path, or his practices cease due to his sudden, untimely death, either in the beginning or intermediate stage, his endeavours in *bhakti* will never go in vain. In other words, neither do his endeavours become faulty nor does he incur any sin even if he is unable to complete the process. In his next life, the *sādhaka* will continue from that same point where his performance of *bhakti-yoga* was obstructed. The presiding Deity of *bhakti-yoga*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or Bhakti-devī herself, make all these arrangements. In this context, there is one important point to note. Although a *sādhaka* has faith, if there are some irregularities in his performance due to ignorance of the process, the results of *bhakti-yoga* will never be lost nor does he incur sin. However, if someone offends *guru*, Vaiṣṇavas or *tadiyavastu* (that which belongs or is related to Śrī Bhagavān such as Tulasī, Yamunā or the *dhāma*), his *bhakti-yoga* can be completely ruined.

ŚLOKA 41

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।

बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥४१॥

*vyavasāyātmiikā buddhir / ekeha kuru-nandana
bahu-śākhā hy anantāś ca / buddhayo 'vyavasāyinām*

kuru-nandana—O beloved child of the Kurus; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *ihā*—on this path of *bhakti*; (is) *vyavasāya-ātmikā*—resolute; (and) *ekā*—one-pointed; *hi*—certainly; *buddhayāḥ*—the intelligence; *avyavasāyinām*—of the irresolute; (is) *bahu-śākhāḥ*—many-branched; *ca*—and; *an-antāḥ*—without a conclusion.

O Kuru-nandana, the intelligence of those who are on this path of *bhakti* is resolute and one-pointed, but the intelligence of those who are averse to *bhakti* is many-branched and inconclusive.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

When compared to all other types of intelligence, that intelligence whose aim and object is *bhakti-yoga* is supreme. Bhagavān explains this by speaking the above śloka beginning with the word *vyavasāya*: “Resolute intelligence in *bhakti-yoga* is one-pointed.” He describes the characteristic mood of one who possesses such intelligence as follows: “The instructions that my Gurudeva has given me about *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *smaraṇam*, *pāda-sevanam*, etc. of Śrī Bhagavān are my very *sādhana*, my very *sādhya* and my very life. I am unable to relinquish them in either the *sādhana* stage or in *sādhya*. My single desire and only engagement is to follow them. Besides this, I have no other desire or engagement, even in my dreams. There is no loss for me, whether by following these instructions I attain happiness or misery, or whether my material life is destroyed or not.” This type of resolute intelligence is possible only in pure *bhakti* which is free from hypocrisy and cheating. It is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.28):

tato bhajeta māṁ bhaktyā / śraddhālur dṛḍha-niścayah

Knowing that all perfection is achieved through My *bhakti* alone, a man of resolute faith will perform My *bhajana* with devotion.

Only by *bhakti* can intelligence become one-pointed. Śrī Bhagavān further explains this by also referring to *bahu-sākhāḥ*, that which has many branches. Because there are unlimited types of desires in *karma-yoga*, intelligence applied to it is also of unlimited types. Similarly, because there are unlimited varieties of *sādhana* in *karma-yoga*, it has unlimited branches. In the initial stage of *jñāna-yoga* one fixes one's intelligence in *niṣkāma-karma* to purify the heart. When the heart is purified, the *sādhaka* fixes his intelligence in *karma-sannyāsa*, the renunciation of fruitive *karma*. Having attained this stage, one fixes one's intelligence in *jñāna*. When one realises that even *jñāna* is unsuccessful and unable to grant service to the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān, one fixes one's intelligence in *bhakti*. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.19.1) it is said: *jñānam ca mayi sannyaset*. "Jñāna must also be renounced to attain Me."

According to the above statement of Śrī Bhagavān, after attaining the stage of *jñāna*, one has to fix one's intelligence in *jñāna-sannyāsa* (the renunciation of *jñāna*). Thus, intelligence is of unlimited varieties. Since *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti* all ought to be performed, their branches are also unlimited.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Of the three types of *buddhi-yoga*: *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti*, only that *buddhi* (intelligence) which is related to pure *bhakti-yoga* is supreme. The exclusive aim and object of *mukhya-bhakti-yoga* is Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and that intelligence which is related only to Him is called *aikāntikī* or *ananyā* (one-pointed or exclusive). The *sādhakas*

of such *aikāntika-bhakti* are free from the desires for mundane enjoyment, *mokṣa* and from duplicity, therefore their intelligence is resolute. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.28). “They resolutely think, ‘Even if there are millions of obstacles in the performance of my *bhajana*, even if I lose my life, or if I have to go to hell because of offenses or if lust overpowers me, I can never give up *bhakti*, whatever the circumstance may be. I will not perform *jñāna* and *karma*, even if Brahmā himself orders me to. Under no circumstances can I give up *bhakti*.’ Only this type of determination can be called *niścayātmikā buddhi*.”

Due to lack of such exclusive *niṣṭhā* in Bhagavān, a person’s intelligence remains engaged in *karma-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga*. His intelligence is called many-branched because of a variety of aims and objectives, such as the pleasures in this world or the next related to profit (*lābha*), adoration (*pūjā*) and distinction (*pratiṣṭhā*). His intelligence is filled with unlimited desires.

According to the Vaiṣṇava ācāryas, Bhagavān Himself is the non-dual, conscious Supreme Absolute Reality. He is called *nirguṇa*, being simultaneously beyond the material qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, and endowed with all transcendental qualities such as *aiśvarya* (opulence), *mādhurya* (sweetness), *dayā* (compassion) and *bhakta-vātsalya* (affection for His *bhaktas*). However, modern people who are uneducated, bereft of *tattva-jñāna*, whose intelligence is covered by illusion and who consider *brahma* to be without transformations (*nirvikāra*), without variety (*nirvišeṣa*) and untainted (*nirañjana*), accept Him as *nirguṇa* in only a mundane sense.

They consider the *līlā-avatāras* of Bhagavān to be *brahma* but covered by *māyā*, and that His *svarūpa* and qualities, such as compassion, are therefore material like their own. They say that by worshipping *saguṇa-brahma* (*brahma* full of

material qualities) their hearts will gradually become purified and they will become one with *nirguṇa-brahma* (*brahma* devoid of material qualities). The establishment of such conclusions is as useless as trying to hit the sky because śāstras such as the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which describe the transcendental form and characteristics of Śrī Bhagavān, refute this despicable concept in all cases. Therefore, pure devotion for *nirguṇa-brahma* (Kṛṣṇa), who is endowed with all transcendental qualities, is called *nirguṇa-bhakti*. In Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī's commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.29.11), he explains *nirguṇa-bhakti* to be of one kind only, *aikāntika* (one-pointed). Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī has stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.29.7-10) that because *sakāma-bhakti* is performed with various material desires, it has unlimited branches such as *tāmasika sakāma-bhakti*.

ŚLOKA 42

यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः ।
वेदवादरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिनः ॥४२॥

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

pārtha—O Pārtha; *avipaścitaḥ*—the unwise; (who are) *veda-vāda-ratāḥ*—attached to the statements of the Vedas; *pravadanti*—proclaim; *yām imām*—all these; *puṣpitām*—flowery; *vācam*—statements; *vādinaḥ*—they say; *iti*—thus; *asti*—there is; *na anyat*—nothing else.

O Pārtha, those who are foolish reject the real meanings of the Vedas out of attachment to those ornamental statements which glorify the pursuit of celestial pleasures, but which yield only poisonous effects. They say there is no higher truth (*Īśvara-tattva*) than

these.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The irresolute *sakāma-karmīs* (persons with material desires) are extremely dull-witted. To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with *yām imām*. The phrase *puṣpitāṁ vācaḥ* implies that these statements of the Vedas are only temporarily pleasing, just like flowery creepers that are ultimately poisonous. *Pravadanti* refers to those who in all respects accept such Vedic statements as the summum bonum. Those whose hearts have been captivated by such statements have no resolute intelligence. This śloka is in natural sequence with Gītā 2.44: *bhogaiśvarya-prasaktānām*. It is impossible for such people to have resolute intelligence, so it is not for them that this instruction is given. What to speak of not having resolute intelligence, Śrī Bhagavān even says that they are fools, *avipaścitaḥ*. This is because they accept as the ultimate objective of the Vedas the declaration of flowery statements such as, “By performing the *cāturmāsyā-vrata* one will attain imperishable results,” or, “After drinking *soma-rasa* one becomes immortal.” They also speculate that beyond this there is no truth, such as *īśvara-tattva*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The prime objective established in the *Vedas* is *Svayaṁ Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His *prema-bhakti*. If one does not understand this prime objective of the *Vedas*, one’s transcendental faith and intelligence will be inappropriately placed in their apparent, exterior meanings which initially appear very attractive and sweet to the ear but which deliver a fearsome result. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has further clarified in Gītā 2.45: *traiguṇya-viṣayā vedā*. Also in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.29.47) one is warned to be careful of the assertions of the *Vedas*:

tasmāt karmasu barhiṣmann / ajñānād artha-kāsiṣu
 mārtha-dṛṣṭiṁ kṛthāḥ śrotra- / sparśiṣv asprṣṭa-vastuṣu

O Prācīnabarhiṣat, to ignorant vision, the ritualistic activities mentioned in the Vedas appear as the ultimate objective. Though their accounts are alluring to the ear, in fact they are devoid of any connection with the Absolute Truth. Therefore, disregard them.

ŚLOKA 43

**कामात्मानः स्वर्गपराः जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।
 क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥४३॥**

kāmātmaṇah svarga-parā / janma-karma-phala-pradām
 kriyā-višeṣa-bahulām / bhoga-iśvarya-gatim prati

kāma-ātmānah—having lusty natures; (they perform) *bahulām*—many; *kriyā-višeṣa*—pompous Vedic rituals; *svarga-parāḥ*—dedicated to entering heaven; *prati*—towards; *gatim*—the goal; *bhoga*—of sense enjoyment; *aiśvarya*—and opulence; (which) *pradām*—result; *janma-karma-phala*—in good birth and fruitive results.

Those whose hearts are contaminated by lust perform many pompous ceremonies to attain Svarga-loka, thinking these to be the highest objective of the Vedas. Though leading to enjoyment and opulence, such rituals bind their followers in the cycle of birth and death.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

What type of statements do these people follow? In response, it is said that by analysing the profit and loss of such Vedic rituals, they establish how to increase those activities which will give them *bhoga* (enjoyment) and *aiśvarya*, even though such activities result in birth and death.

ŚLOKA 44

**भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयापहतचेतसाम् ।
व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥४४॥**

*bhogaiśvarya-prasaktānām / tayāpahṛta-cetasām
vyavasāyāt̄mikā buddhiḥ / samādhau na vidhīyate*

prasaktānām—for those who are attached; *bhoga*—to enjoyment; *aiśvarya*—and opulence; *apahṛta-cetasām*—whose minds are captivated; *tayā*—by those (words of the *Vedas*); *na vidhīyate*—there does not take place; *vyavasāya-ātmikā*—the resolute; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *samādhau*—in trance on the Supreme.

Those who are attached to enjoyment and opulence, whose minds have been captivated by celestial happiness, do not attain the resolute intelligence for exclusive absorption in Bhagavān

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Those whose minds have been captivated by such flowery statements become attached to enjoyment and opulence. Such persons are not able to attain *saṁādhi* or concentration of the mind; they lack that resolute intelligence which reposes only in Parameśvara.

ŚLOKA 45

**त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥४५॥**

*trai-guṇya-viṣayā vedā / nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna
nirdvandvo nitya-sattva-stho / niryoगkṣema ātmavān*

arjuna—O Arjuna; *vedāḥ*—the Vedic; *viṣayāḥ*—subject matter; (is) *trai-guṇya*—pertaining to the modes of material nature; *bhava*—be; *nistraiguṇyah*—beyond the three modes; *nirdvandvah*—be free from duality; (and) *nitya-sattva-sthah*—situated in pure goodness or spiritual existence; (be) *niryoगkṣema*—

kṣemah—detached from the tendency to preserve and acquire; *ātma-vān*—and be endowed with intelligence given by Me.

O Arjuna, rise above the modes described in the *Vedas* and become established in *nirguṇa-tattva*. Be free from all dualities such as honour and dishonour, and do not worry about profit and loss. Become situated in *suddha-sattva* by using the intelligence awarded by Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

“Becoming detached from the means to attain *catur-varga* (*dharma, artha, kāma* and *mokṣa*), only take shelter of *bhakti-yoga*.” Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *traiguṇya*, because the predominant subject matters of the *Vedas* illuminate *karma, jñāna*, etc., which are under the *guṇas*. The meaning of the word *traiguṇya* is formed with the suffix ‘*syañ*’. Since, in the *Vedas*, there are excessive descriptions of *karma* and *jñāna*, according to the logic of *bhūmnā vyapadeśā bhavanti* (wherein the title is based on the predominating composition), the *Vedas* are called *traiguṇya* (pertaining to the three modes of nature). Only *bhakti*, however, can take one to Śrī Bhagavān. This is the verdict of the *Mātharāḥ-śruti*. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* states: *yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau*. “The meaning of the *Vedas* can only be revealed to one who has the same transcendental *bhakti* to both Śrī Bhagavān and his *gurudeva*.”

Nirguṇa-bhakti is the only subject matter of the *smṛtis*, such as the *Pañcarātra* and the *Upaniṣads*, including the *Gītopaniṣad* and *Gopāla-tapani Upaniṣad*. If it is accepted that *bhakti* is not described in the *Vedas*, *bhakti* will become unauthoritative. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa directs Arjuna to become free from the Vedic injunctions of *jñāna* and *karma*, which are under the influence of the *guṇas*. He tells him not to

perform them, but to always follow the process for achieving *bhakti* as stated in the *Vedas*. It is mentioned in *Brahmāyāmala Purāṇa*, “The pretentious display of exclusive *hari-bhakti*, neglecting the process of *pañcarātra* recommended in *śruti*, *smṛti* and the *Purāṇas*, etc., results only in eventual disturbance.” This mistake or fault is inexcusable.

Those subject matters of the *Vedas*, that pertain to the *guṇas* (*saguṇa*) and those that are beyond the *guṇas* (*guṇatīta*) are called respectively *traiguṇya* (with the three *guṇas*) and *nistraiguṇya* (free from the three *guṇas*). Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “Of the two, pursue only *nistraiguṇya*. Become free from the three *guṇas* by the influence of My *nirguna-bhakti*. Only then will you become free from dualities such as honour and dishonour. Therefore, remain exclusively in the association of My *bhaktas* who are always situated in *nitya-sattva*.”

Here, the explanation of how to become situated in *viśuddha* (*nitya*) *sattva-guṇa* will contradict the explanation on becoming free from the *guṇas*. To achieve that which is lacking is called *yoga*, and to protect that which one possesses is called *kṣema*. By the word *niryoga-kṣema*, Śrī Bhagavān is telling Arjuna to become free from the concern for both *yoga* and *kṣema*. “Upon becoming overpowered by the taste for My *bhakti-rasa*, *yoga* and *kṣema* will not be a cause for concern.” When Śrī Bhagavān states in *Gītā* (9.22), “I personally carry *yoga* and *kṣema*,” He is displaying His affection for His *bhaktas* by stating, “Because I carry their burden of maintenance there is no need for them to separately endeavour for it.” Ātmavān means ‘become a person endowed with intelligence granted by Me.’

Now the words *nistraiguṇya* and *traiguṇya* are being discussed. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.25.23-29) it is said:

mad-arpaṇam niṣphalam vā / sāttvikam nija-karma tat
rājasam phala-saṅkalpam / hiṁsā-prāyādi-tāmasam
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.23

Know that *niṣkāma-karma* offered to Śrī Bhagavān is in *sattva-guṇa*. That action which is performed with a desire for the fruit is in *rajo-guṇa*, while action performed with violence or envy is in *tamo-guṇa*.

In the above *śloka* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.23) *niṣphalam vā* implies *naimittika-karma* (work which is occasional), performed without fruitive desires.

*kaivalyam sāttvikam jñānam / rajo vaikalpikam ca yat
prākṛtam tāmasam jñānam / man-niṣṭham nirguṇam smṛtam*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.24

Jñāna related to the self (*kaivalyam*) which is beyond the conception of the body, is *sāttvika*. *Jñāna* related to the body (the false conception of ‘I’ and ‘mine’, considering oneself to be the doer and the enjoyer) is *rājasika*. *Jñāna* of inert matter, the mundane world or the body is *tāmasika*, while *jñāna* related to Me is *nirguṇa*.

*vanaṁ tu sāttviko vāso / grāmo rājasa ucyate
tāmasam dyūta-sadanaṁ / man-niketaṁ tu nirguṇam*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.25

To live in the forest is in *sattva-guṇa*, to live in the village is in *rajo-guṇa*, to live in a gambling house (city) is in *tamo-guṇa* and to live where I live (the temple) is *nirguṇa*.

*sāttvikah kārako 'saṅgī / rāgāndho rājasah smṛtah
tāmasah smṛti-vibhraṣṭo / nirguṇo mad-apāśrayah*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.26

The doer who is not attached to the result is in *sattva-guṇa*, the doer who is blinded by attachment is in *rajo-guṇa*, the doer who has lost his memory is in *tamo-guṇa* and the doer who has taken complete shelter of Me is *nirguṇa*.

*sāttviky ādhyātmikī śraddhā / karma-śraddhā tu rājasī
tāmasy adharme yā śraddhā / mat-sevāyāṁ tu nirguṇā*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.27

Faith related to the self is in *sattva-guṇa*, faith related to *karma* (action) is in *rājo-guṇa*, faith related to irreligious activities is in *tamo-guṇa* and faith related to My service is *nirguṇa*.

pathyam pūtam anāyas tam / āhāryam sāttvikam smṛtam
rājasam cendriya-preṣṭham / tāmasam cārttidāśuci
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.28

Food which is wholesome, pure and easily available is in *sattva-guṇa*. Food which is pungent, sour and gives pleasure to the senses is in *rājo-guṇa*. Food which is impure and the cause of misery is in *tamo-guṇa* and that food which is offered to Me is *nirguṇa*.

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the word *ca* in the above mentioned śloka (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.28) means that that which is offered to Śrī Bhagavān is *nirguṇa*.

sāttvikam sukham ātmottham / viṣayottham tu rājasam
tāmasam moha-dainyottham / nirguṇam mad-apāśrayam
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.29

Happiness which comes from the self is in *sattva-guṇa*, that which comes from sense objects is in *rājo-guṇa*, that which comes from delusion and depravity is in *tamo-guṇa* and that happiness which comes in relation to Me is *nirguṇa*.

After explaining objects which exemplify the three *guṇas* in the above-mentioned Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam ślokas (11.25.23-29), Śrī Bhagavān further explains how to attain perfection in realizing the nature (*nistraiguṇya-bhāva*) of an object which is beyond the three *guṇas* (*nirguṇa-vastu*). He says that only by performing *nirguṇā-bhakti* can one conquer the influence of the *guṇas* that exist within oneself. This is stated in the following ślokas:

dravyam deśah phalam kālo / jñānam karma ca kārakah
śraddhāvasthākṛtir niṣṭhā / traiguṇyah sarva eva hi

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.30

Everything material such as the substance, place, results, time, knowledge, action, the agent, faith, situation, form and determination are all *traiguṇya*.

*sarve guṇa-mayā bhāvāḥ / puruṣāvyakta-dhiṣṭhitāḥ
dr̥ṣṭam̄ śrutam̄ anudhyātām̄ / buddhyā vā puruṣarṣabha*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.31

O best of human beings, whatever states of being that are heard, seen or conceived, which exist between the *puruṣa* (the enjoying self) and *prakṛti* (material nature), are comprised of the three modes of nature.

*etāḥ saṁśrtayah pūṁso / guṇa-karma-nibandhanāḥ
yeneme nirjītāḥ saumya / guṇā jīvena citta-jāḥ
bhakti-yogena man-niṣṭho / mad-bhāvāya prapadyate*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.32

O gentle one, all material conditions of the living entity (*puruṣa*) are born from action performed in the three *guṇas*. Only those *jīvas* who, by practising *bhakti-yoga*, have conquered these modes manifested in the *citta* become endowed with *niṣṭhā* and are able to attain Me.

Therefore, only by *nirguṇā-bhakti* can one conquer the three *guṇas* and not by any other means. In response to the question asked in *Gītā* (14.21): *katham caitāṁś trīn guṇān ativartate*, “How can one conquer the *guṇas* of material nature?” Then it is said later in *Gītā* (14.26):

*māṁ ca yo 'vyabhicāreṇa / bhakti-yogena sevate
sa guṇān samatītyaitān / brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

Only those who render service to Me with *aikāntika bhakti-yoga* can transcend the three *gunas* and become qualified to realise *brahma*.

In his commentary on this śloka (Gītā 14.26) Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī says, “Ca is an emphatic. That is, those who exclusively perform *aikāntika-bhakti* (unflinching devotional service) to Me, Parameśvara, can conquer all the *guṇas*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Dharma, artha, kāma and *mokṣa* are called *catur-varga* (the four goals of human life). *Bhakti* is the fifth goal (*pañcama-puruṣārtha*). Although in śāstras such as the *Vedas* the paths of *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti* have been instructed as the *sādhana* for the *jīvas*, one can only attain Śrī Bhagavān by giving up all other paths and engaging exclusively in *viśuddhā-bhakti*. This is also made clear by studying these two ślokas from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam:

*bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyah / śraddhayātmā priyah satām
bhaktih punāti man-niṣṭhā / sva-pākān api sambhavāt*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.14.21

I can only be attained through *bhakti* performed with full faith. I am naturally dear to My *bhaktas* who take Me as the exclusive goal of their *bhajana*. Even the dog-eaters can purify themselves of their lower birth by performing *bhajana* to Me.

*na sādhayati māṁ yogo / na sāṅkhyaṁ dharma uddhava
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo / yathā bhaktir mamorjītā*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.14.20

O Uddhava! *Yoga*, *sāṅkhya*, study of the *Vedas*, *tapasyā* and *dāna* (charity) cannot overpower Me as does intense *bhakti* performed solely to attain Me.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “In śāstra there are two types of subjects: *uddiṣṭha* and *nirddiṣṭha*. The subject which is the highest objective of any śāstra is called *uddiṣṭha-viṣaya*. That instruction which indicates *uddiṣṭha-viṣaya* is called *nirddiṣṭha-viṣaya*. For example, because it is so dim, it is very difficult to

see the Arundhati star in the sky without assistance. If someone's objective is to see it, he must first take an indication from the biggest star closest to it. So, if Arundhati is the *uddiṣṭa-viṣaya*, the biggest star closest to it is the *nirddiṣṭa-viṣaya*. All the Vedas indicate *nirguṇa-tattva* to be the *uddiṣṭa-viṣaya*. Because *nirguṇa-tattva* cannot be understood immediately, the Vedas first describe *saguṇa-tattva* (reality with the *guṇas*) which is the *nirddiṣṭa-viṣaya*. Thus, *māyā*, consisting of the three modes, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, initially appears to be the subject matter of the Vedas. 'O Arjuna, do not remain entangled in this *nirddiṣṭa-viṣaya*. Rather, attain *nirguṇa-tattva*, or that which is indicated to be the *uddiṣṭa-tattva*, and become free from the *guṇas*. Some parts of the Vedic literatures describe *karma* in *rajo-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa*. Other parts describe *jñāna* in *sattva-guṇa*, and in specific places there is a description of *nirguṇa-bhakti*. You should attain *nitya-sattva* (pure spiritual existence) by becoming free from dualities such as honour and dishonour. In other words, by associating with My *bhaktas*, renounce the endeavour for *yoga* (acquisition) and *kṣema* (preservation) sought after by the processes of *jñāna* and *karma* and, by the process of *buddhi-yoga*, become free from the modes of nature."

ŚLOKA 46

**यावनर्थं उदपाने सर्वतः सम्प्लुतोदके ।
तावान् सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः ॥४६॥**

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

yāvān—whatever; *arthaḥ*—purpose; (*is served*) *uda-pāne*—by wells; (*are*) *sarvataḥ*—in all respects; *sampluta-udake*—served by a large lake; *tāvān*—similarly; *arthāḥ*—the purpose; *sarveṣu*—within all; *vedeṣu*—the Vedas; *vijānataḥ brāhmaṇasya*—is known by the learned *brāhmaṇa*.

All the purposes served by a variety of wells can easily be fulfilled by a large lake. Similarly, whatever results are attained by the worship of various *devas* as described in the *Vedas* can easily be attained through the worship of Bhagavān by a *brāhmaṇa* endowed with *bhakti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa continues, “O, what more can I say about the glories of that *bhakti*-*yoga* which is *nirguṇa* and *niṣkāma*. Even initial endeavours in *bhakti* are neither lost nor adverse in their effect.” Also in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.29.20) Śrī Kṛṣṇa has told Uddhava:

na hy aṅgopakrame dhvāṁso / mad-dharmasyoddhavāṇuḥ
mayā vyavasitaḥ samyaṇ / nirguṇatvād anāśiṣaḥ

O Uddhava, I have established the transcendental nature of this *dharma*. If one engages in this selfless *dharma* for My sake, there is not the least possibility that it may lead to loss by fault or degradation.

However, in this context *vyavasāyātmikā buddhi* (resolute intelligence) also indicates *sakāma-bhakti*-*yoga*. Śrī Bhagavān uses an example to prove this when He speaks the *śloka* beginning with the word *yāvān*. Since *udapāne* is a singular noun, it has been used here in a similar case. Here, the word *udapāne* indicates a group of wells. Many purposes are fulfilled by different wells. One well is used for the purpose of cleaning after evacuation, one for brushing teeth, one for washing cloth, one for cleaning hair, one for bathing and one for drinking water. These different purposes which are fulfilled by various wells can all be fulfilled at one and the same time by a large reservoir of water. It is laborious to go to different wells for various purposes, but there is no labour in going to one reservoir. Moreover, a small well often has salty water, but water from a large

lake is sweet. One should deliberate on this difference between a well and a lake. Similarly, the different fruits one attains through worshipping various *devas*, by the procedures described in the *Vedas* can all be attained simply by the worship of Śrī Bhagavān. The word *brāhmaṇasya* means those who know *brahma* (*Veda*). Only a *brāhmaṇa* knows the *Vedas* but, beyond such knowledge, the real *brāhmaṇas* are those who specifically know *bhakti* as the ultimate meaning of the *Vedas*. In Śrimad-Bhāgavatam (2.3.2) it is also said:

*brahma-varcasa-kāmas tu / yajeta brahmaṇah patim
indram indriya-kāmas tu / prajā-kāmaḥ prajāpatin*

A person desiring the *brahma* effulgence should worship Brahmā, the master of the *Vedas*. One desiring satisfaction of the senses should worship Indra. A person desiring progeny should worship the Prajāpatis, while a person desiring wealth should worship Durgā.

After this it is said:

*akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā / mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhiḥ
tīvrenā bhakti-yogena / yajeta puruṣāṁ param*
Śrimad-Bhāgavatam 2.3.10

Whether one is free from desires, full of desires or desirous of *mokṣa*, one should, having attained a higher intelligence, worship *parama-puruṣa* (Bhagavān) with intense *bhakti-yoga*.

Just as the rays of the sun are very intense when the sky is free from clouds, similarly *bhakti-yoga*, which is devoid of *jñāna* and *karma*, is also very intense. One's intelligence becomes many-branched by worshipping a number of *devas* to fulfil various desires. Śrī Bhagavān, however, can fulfil all of one's desires. When even a particle of such intelligence is engaged in worship, it is considered to be one-pointed because of the superlative nature of the object of worship.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The various activities that can be performed by the use of separate wells can all be performed by using a large reservoir of water, such as a lake. Similarly, the various desires which can be fulfilled by worshipping different *devas* as directed in the *Vedas* can all be fulfilled simply by worshipping Bhagavān. If the heart is filled with many material desires, various *devas* are worshipped to fulfil those desires. The resulting intelligence, which is many-branched, is called *avyavasāyātmikā buddhi*. In contrast to this, the *aikāntika* (one-pointed) worship of Śrī Bhagavān is only achieved by focused, resolute intelligence. For this reason, knowers of the *Vedas* explain *bhakti* to be the sole essence of the *Vedas*. Therefore, *bhakti-yoga* alone is *vyavasāyātmikā buddhi*.

ŚLOKA 47

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुभूर्भा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥४७॥

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

eva—certainly; *te*—you have; *adhikāraḥ*—a right; *karmaṇi*—to your prescribed duty; (you have) *mā*—no (right); *kadācana*—at any time; *phaleṣu*—to the fruits of work; (do) *mā*—not; *bhūḥ*—be; *hetuh*—motivated; *karma-phala*—towards the results of work; *te mā astu*—you should not have; *saṅgaḥ*—attachment; *akarmaṇi*—to not doing prescribed duties.

You are eligible only to perform your prescribed work, but you have no right to the fruits. You should not consider yourself to be the cause of the result of your actions, nor should you become attached to neglecting your duties.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Śrī Bhagavān, the instructor of *jñāna-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga* and *karma-yoga*, has so far aimed His instructions about *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga* towards His dear friend Arjuna. Now, having considered Arjuna's *anādhikāra* (ineligibility) to perform these two processes, He explains *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* in two *ślokas*, the first beginning with *karmaṇi*.

By the words *mā phaleṣu*, Kṛṣṇa intends to say that those who desire the fruits of their actions have extremely impure hearts. "Your heart, however, is almost pure. I know this, and that is why I am speaking in this way." If one points out that any action one performs will bear fruit, Śrī Bhagavān responds: *mā karma-phala-hetur bhūḥ*. "A person becomes the cause of the fruit only when he acts with a desire for it. You should not act like that. I bless you not to fall into this category. *Akarma* means neglecting prescribed duties and *vikarma* means performing sinful activities. You should not become attached to either of these. Rather, you should despise them. I again bless you that you will be able to do this."

In *Gītā* (3.2), Arjuna says: *vyāmiśreṇeva vākyena buddhim mohayasīva me*. "My intelligence is bewildered by Your apparently ambiguous instructions." From this it should be understood that the previous statements of this chapter are not entirely consistent with later statements. But here, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's inner feelings (*mano-bhāva*) towards Arjuna are worth considering. "Just as I have become your subordinate by acting as your chariot driver, similarly you should also become a follower of My order."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, having made Arjuna His instrument, gives instruction on *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* for those who do not have the *adhikāra* (eligibility) to follow the paths of

jñāna-yoga and *bhakti-yoga*. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.3.43) it is stated: *karmākarma vikarmeti veda-vādo na laukikah*. “An understanding of *karma*, *akarma*, and *vikarma* can only come from the Vedic literature, not from the words of mundane persons.”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “There are three types of *karma* to consider: *karma*, *akarma* and *vikarma*. Of these, two – namely *vikarma* (engaging in sinful activities) and *akarma* (not performing one’s *sva-dharma*) – are extremely inauspicious. You should not desire these. Give up *vikarma* and *akarma*, and carefully follow the path of *karma*. *Karma* is of three types: *nitya-karma* (daily duties), *naimittika-karma* (occasional duties) and *kāmya-karma* (fruitive activities). Of these three, *kāmya-karma* is inauspicious. Those who perform *kāmya-karma* become the cause of the fruit of their activities. So it is for your benefit that I am telling you not to adopt *kāmya-karma*, because if you do, you will become the cause of the results of your actions. You have the right to perform your prescribed duties, but you do not have the right to the fruits of any action. It is acceptable for those who take shelter of *bhakti-yoga* to perform *nitya-karma* and *naimittika-karma* solely in order to maintain their lives.”

ŚLOKA 48

योगस्थः कुरु कर्मणि सङ्गः त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥४८॥

yoga-sthāḥ kuru karmāṇi / saṅgam tyaktvā dhanañjaya
siddhy-asiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā / samatvaṁ yoga ucyate

dhanañjaya—O Dhanañjaya; *yoga-sthāḥ*—being situated in *bhakti-yoga*; *tyaktvā*—abandoning; *saṅgam*—attachment; *kuru*—perform; *karmāṇi*—prescribed duties; *bhūtvā*—becoming; *samaḥ*—equipoised; *siddhi-asiddhyoḥ*—in success and failure;

samatvam—(such) equanimity; *ucyate*—is called; *yogaḥ*—*yoga*.

O Dhanañjaya, in a devotional mood, give up attachment to the fruits of *karma*, perform your prescribed duties and become equipoised in success and failure. Such equanimity is called *yoga*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this *śloka* beginning with *yoga-sthāḥ*, Śrī Bhagavān gives instructions on *niṣkāma-karma*. He says, “Become equipoised in victory and defeat, and just perform your prescribed duty of engaging in this battle.” The result of this *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* is that it culminates in *jñāna-yoga*, and thus *jñāna-yoga* is the purport of the previous *śloka* and the following *śloka*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

Intelligence which is equipoised in the face of the success or failure of one’s actions is called *yoga*.

ŚLOKA 49

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्वनज्जय ।
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणः फलहेतवः ॥४९॥

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

dhanañjaya—O Dhanañjaya; *dūreṇa*—(throw) far away; *avaram*—inferior; *karma*—fruitive activity; *hi*—certainly; *buddhi-yogāt*—by the *yoga* of intelligence; *anviccha*—accept; *śaraṇam*—shelter; *buddhau*—of intelligence (*niṣkāma-karma*); *phala-hetavaḥ*—those desiring the fruits of their activities; (are) *kṛpaṇāḥ*—misers.

O Dhanañjaya, because *kāmya-karma* is very much inferior, take shelter of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* that is offered to the Lord. Those who desire the fruits of their *karma* are misers.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In speaking this śloka beginning with the word *dūreṇa*, Śrī Bhagavān is criticising *sakāma-karma* or *kāmya-karma* (fruitive activities). *Kāmya-karma* is *avaram* (very inferior) to *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, which is offered to Parameśvara and which is also called *buddhi-yoga*. Here, the word *buddhau* implies *niṣkāma-karma*, while *buddhi-yoga* implies *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Kṛpaṇāḥ refers to those who are unable to understand the meaning of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Such people are attached to the fruits of their activities, and consequently, they are sometimes happy and sometimes distressed. This topic has been explained at length in *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

Once, there was a great assembly of realised sages, *mahāṛṣis* and *brahmaṛṣis* in the royal court of Janaka Mahārāja. Janaka Mahārāja, assisted by his royal servants, brought hundreds of milk-giving cows along with their beautiful calves to that assembly. The horns of the cows were encased in gold and their hooves in silver. Beautiful cloth decorated with golden ornaments graced their backs. Folding his hands, Janaka Mahārāja addressed the sages with great humility. “Whoever among you is *brahma-vettā* (a knower of *brahma*), I beg you to come and accept these cows.”

All assembled there began to whisper amongst themselves. No one dared come forward to establish himself as *brahma-vettā* and take the cows. Again, Janaka Mahārāja looked towards them, with all seriousness. This time the *mahāṛṣi* Yājñavalkya got up and told his students, “O *brahmacārīs*, take these cows to my *āśrama*.”

Hearing this, the other *mahāṛṣis* objected, saying, “Are you *brahma-vettā*? ”

Mahāṛṣi Yājñavalkya said, “I offer my obeisances at the

feet of those who are *brahma-vettā*. If you want to examine me or ask any question, please do so.”

The various sages asked different questions and Yājñavalkya Mahārṣi gave them befitting answers. At last, the greatly learned Gārgī humbly inquired, “Who is a *kṛpaṇa* and who is a *brāhmaṇa*?”

Yājñavalkya Mahārṣi’s response to this was: *yo vā etad akṣaram gārgy aviditvāsmāl lokāt praiti sa kṛpaṇah* (Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.8.10). “O Gārgī, that person is a *kṛpaṇa* (miser) who leaves this world without knowing Śrī Bhagavān, who is Acyuta, the Infallible Absolute Reality.”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.9.49) it is said: *kṛpaṇah . . . guṇavastu-dṛk*. “*Kṛpaṇas* are those who consider that the ultimate reality consists only of sense objects produced from the material modes.” Furthermore, it is stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.19.44): *kṛpaṇo yo ’jitendriyah*. “A *kṛpaṇa* is a person who has no control over his senses.”

ŚLOKA 50

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।
तस्माद् योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥५०॥

*buddhi-yukto jahātīha / ubhe sukṛta-duṣkṛte
tasmād yogāya yujyasva / yogah karmasu kauśalam*

buddhi-yuktaḥ—a person endowed with intelligence; *jahāti*—gives up; *ubhe*—both; *sukṛta-duṣkṛte*—pious and impious actions; *iha*—in this birth; *tasmāt*—therefore; *yujyasva*—strive; *yogāya*—for *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; (*this*) *yogaḥ*—yoga; (*is*) *kauśalam*—the art; *karmasu*—in (all) activities.

One who practises *buddhi-yoga* gives up both pious and impious actions in this very life. Therefore, strive for *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Working under the shelter of *buddhi-yoga* with equanimity is the art of work.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Here, the word *yogāya* refers to that *yoga* which possesses the characteristics defined in Gītā 2.48. *Yujiyasa* means ‘make an endeavour’. It is *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* (performing *karma* without personal motivation), which is the essence of *yoga*, not *sakāma-yoga*.

ŚLOKA 51

**कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।
जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥५१॥**

*karma-jam buddhi-yuktā hi / phalam tyaktvā maniṣinah
janma-bandha-vinirmuktāḥ / padam gacchantu anāmayam*

hi—indeed; *maniṣinah*—sages; *buddhi-yuktāḥ*—endowed with *buddhi*; *tyaktvā*—giving up; *phalam*—results; *karma-jam*—born of fruitive activities; (are) *vinirmuktāḥ*—liberated; *janma-bandha*—from the bondage of birth and death; *gacchanti*—they attain; *padam*—the place; *anāmayam*—without misery.

Sages endowed with *buddhi-yoga* give up the results born of *karma*. Thus becoming freed from the cycle of birth and death, they eventually attain *Vaikuṇṭha*, the state beyond all mundane miseries.

ŚLOKA 52

**यदा ते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिव्यतितरिष्यति ।
तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥५२॥**

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

yadā—when; *te*—your; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *vyatitariṣyati*—has crossed beyond; *kalilam*—the dense forest; *moha*—of illusion; *tadā*—at that time; *gantāsi*—you shall become; *nirvedam*—indifferent; *śrotavyasya*—to that which is to be heard; *ca*—and;

śrutasya—to all that is already heard.

When your intelligence has crossed beyond the dense forest of illusion, you will become indifferent to all that has been heard and all that is to be heard.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *yadā* to explain that one becomes situated in *yoga* by practising *niṣkāma-karma* offered to Parameśvara. “When your heart completely transcends the deep forest of delusion, you will become indifferent to all the topics which have already been heard and the various topics yet to be heard.” If one raises the question, “I have already become free from doubt, and I no longer have the fault of an adverse attitude, so what need is there for me to hear the instructions of *śāstra*?” then Bhagavān responds, “Even so, at present it is appropriate for you to practise at every moment this process which has been explained by Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Nirveda means that the *jīvas* are attached to this world because of their identification with the body. This is the root cause of material existence. As long as this material attachment remains, the *jīvātmā* cannot attain *tattva-jñāna*, nor can he become detached from the material world. *Nirveda* means to become detached from the material world. It is not an easy achievement. Through the practice of *niṣkāma-karma* offered to Bhagavān, one gradually becomes free from the false conception that the body is the *ātmā* (self). One then achieves *nirveda* (renunciation) of all types of activities about which one has heard or will hear, and which originate from material desires described in the *śāstra*. Eventually, he engages

in *aikāntika-bhajana*. This instruction is also in the *Vedas*:

*parīkṣya lokān karma-cittān brāhmaṇo
nirvedam āyān nāsty akṛtaḥ kṛtena*
Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 1.2.12

A *tattva-vettā brāhmaṇa* (a knower of the Absolute truth) attains *nirveda* after understanding that the happiness and pleasure one attains by *karma* in this world or the next are temporary and distressful.

Prahlāda Mahārāja has given a similar instruction:

*ādy-antavanta urugāya vidanti hi tvām
evam vimṛṣya sudhiyo viramanti śabdāt*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.9.49

O Urukrama, those who realise with discrimination that all objects have a beginning and an end give up the study of the *Vedas* and exclusively engage in *bhajana* to You.

ŚLOKA 53

**श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला ।
समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्यसि ॥५३॥**

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

yadā—when; *te*—your; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *sthāsyati*—becomes situated; *śruti-vipratipannā*—detached from the various interpretations of the *Vedas*; *niścalā*—non-moving; *acalā*—steadfast; *samādhau*—in trance; *tadā*—at that time; *avāpsyasi*—you shall achieve; *yogam*—(the fruit) of *yoga*.

When your intelligence becomes detached from hearing various interpretations of the *Vedas*, and when it becomes free from all other attachments while remaining steadfast in Parameśvara, then you will attain the fruit of *yoga*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is saying, “You will become detached from hearing about mundane subject matters, and also Vedic instructions, and as you do so, you will become steadfast; your mind will not be deceived by the apparent attraction of such topics.” In the Sixth Chapter also, *samādhi* is described as *acalā* (fixed or undisturbed). Śrī Bhagavān assures Arjuna, “Then, by having direct experience of transcendence through *yoga*, you will attain freedom from material bondage.”

ŚLOKA 54

अर्जुन उवाच—

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।
स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत व्रजेत किम् ॥५४॥

arjuna uvāca

*sthita-prajñasya kā bhāṣā / samādhi-sthasya keśava
sthita-dhīḥ kim prabhāṣeta / kim āsīta vrajeta kim*

arjunaḥ uvāca—Arjuna said; *keśava*—O Keśava; *sthita-prajñasya*—for one whose intelligence is fixed; *samādhi-sthasya*—and situated in trance; *kā*—what?; *bhāṣā*—(are his) symptoms; *kim*—in what way?; *sthita-dhīḥ*—one with fixed intelligence; *prabhāṣeta*—does speak; *kim*—how?; *āsīta*—does he sit; *kim*—how?; *vrajeta*—does he walk.

Arjuna said: O Keśava! What are the symptoms of a person whose intelligence is fixed in *samādhi*? How does he speak? How does he sit? And how does he walk?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

In the previous *śloka*, Arjuna heard about intelligence fixed in trance (*samādhau acalā*). Arjuna now inquires about the symptoms of a true yogī. “How do those who are *sthita-prajñā*

(of undisturbed, fixed intelligence) speak? What is the symptom of their *bhāṣā* (language)? How do those in *samādhi* remain situated in trance? The designations *sthita-prajñā* and *samādhi-stha* (situated in trance) apply to liberated persons. How do they speak when they face a situation of pleasure or misery, honour or dishonour, glorification or criticism, affection or envy and so on? Do they speak clearly or do they just contemplate within themselves? How do they sit? How do they engage their senses in external objects? How do they walk? In other words, how do their senses behave in relationship to external sense objects?"

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Beginning from this *śloka*, Arjuna asks Śrī Kṛṣṇa sixteen questions. In response, Śrī Kṛṣṇa illuminates the deep secrets of *karma*, *karma-yoga*, *jñāna*, *jñāna-yoga*, *dhyāna*, *tapasyā*, *karma-miśrā-bhakti*, *jñāna-miśrā-bhakti* and *śuddha-bhakti*. In this regard, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has given indications in the Eighteenth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* regarding *prema-bhakti*, which is the most confidential knowledge. In His conclusion to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, He explains that one can have entrance into this *prema-bhakti* through the gateway of *śaranāgati* (surrender) to Him.

The sixteen questions asked by Arjuna are as follows:

- 1) *sthita-prajñāsyā kā bhāṣā* (2.54). "What are the symptoms of one who is *sthita-prajñā*?"
- 2) *jyāyasi cet karmaṇas te* (3.1). "Why engage me in this ghastly warfare?"
- 3) *atha kena prayukto 'yam* (3.36). "By what is one impelled to perform sinful acts?"
- 4) *aparam bhavato janma* (4.4). "How am I to understand that You previously instructed this science to Vivasvān?"

- 5) *sannyāsaṁ karmaṇāṁ kṛṣṇa* (5.1). “Which path is better, renunciation or selfless action?”
- 6) *yo ‘yam yogas tvayā proktah* (6.33). “This path of *yoga* appears impractical due to the unsteady nature of the mind.”
- 7) *ayatiḥ śraddhayopeto* (6.37). “What is the destination of the unsuccessful transcendentalist?”
- 8) *kim tad brahma kim adhyātmam* (8.1-2). “What are *brahma*, *karma*, *adhyātma*, *adhībhūta*, *adhidaiva* and *adhīyajñā*, and how can You be known at the time of death?”
- 9) *vaktum arhasy aśeṣeṇa* (10.16). “Please tell me in detail about Your *vibhūtis*.”
- 10) *evam etad yathāttha tvam* (11.3). “I wish to see how You have entered this cosmic manifestation.”
- 11) *ākhyāhi me ko bhavān ugra-rūpo* (11.31). “O Ugra-Rūpa (fierce one)! Please tell me who You are.”
- 12) *teṣām ke yoga-vittamāḥ* (12.1). “Who is more perfect, he who performs *bhajana* or the impersonalist?”
- 13) *prakṛtim puruṣam caiva* (13.1). “I wish to know about *prakṛti*, *puruṣa*, *kṣetra*, *kṣetrajñā*, *jīvāna* and *jīveyam*.”
- 14) *kair liṅgais trīṇ guṇān etān* (14.21). “By what symptoms can one identify a person who has transcended the *guṇas*? ”
- 15) *teṣām niṣṭhā tu kā kṛṣṇa* (17.1). “What is the situation of one who does not follow the principles of *śāstra*? ”
- 16) *sannyāsasya mahā-bāho* (18.1). “O Mahā-bāho! What is the purpose of *sannyāsa*? ”

ŚLOKA 55

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थ मनोगतान् ।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥५५॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
*prajahāti yadā kāmān / sarvān pārtha mano-gatān
 ātmany evātmāna tuṣṭah / sthita-prajñas tadocaye*

śrī bhagavān uvāca—Śrī Bhagavān said; *pārtha*—O Pārtha; *yadā*—when; *prajahāti*—he gives up; *sarvān*—types of; *kāmān*—of material desires; *mano-gatān*—arising from the mind; (and) *eva*—indeed; *ātmani*—within his (controlled) mind; *tuṣṭah*—he is satisfied; *atmanā*—by his (blissful) soul; *tadā*—at that time; *ucyate*—he is called; *sthita-prajñah*—a person of steady intelligence.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O Pārtha, when the *jīvātmā* gives up all material desires arising from the mind and when, with his mind thus controlled, he becomes satisfied by the blissful nature of the self alone, then he is to be known as *sthita-prajña*, a person of steady intelligence.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

Now, Śrī Bhagavān, from this *śloka* beginning with *prajahāti* until the end of the chapter, answers four of Arjuna's questions in sequence. *Sarvān* denotes one who does not have a scent of material desire. The word *mano-gatān* indicates the ability to give up material desires born of a non-spiritual nature which are opposed to the *dharma* of the soul. If the nature of these desires were spiritual, it would not be possible to give them up, just as fire cannot give up heat. This is because a controlled mind, after realizing the *ātmā*, which is blissful by nature, becomes satisfied by the *ātmā* alone. The śruti confirm this:

*yadā sarve pramucyante / kāmā ye 'sya hṛdi śhitāḥ
 atha martyo 'mrto bhavaty / atra brahma samaśnute
 Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.3.14*

When all desires are removed from the heart, the mortal (bound)

jīvātmā attains realisation of *brahma* and immortality.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

One should also study the śloka: *ātmany eva ca santuṣṭah* (Gītā 3.17). The great bhakta Prahlāda Mahārāja has given a similar instruction in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.10.9):

*vimuñcati yadā kāmān / mānavo manasi sthitān
tarhy eva puṇḍarīkākṣa / bhagavattvāya kalpate*

O lotus-eyed Lord, when a man gives up all the material desires situated in his heart, he becomes eligible to attain opulence equal to Your own.

SĀLOKA 56

*दःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीमुनिरुच्यते ॥५६॥*

*duḥkheṣv anudvigna-manāḥ / sukheṣu vigata-spr̄hāḥ
vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ / sthita-dhīr munir ucyate*

anudvigna-manāḥ—one whose mind is unagitated; *duḥkheṣu*—in the (presence of the threefold) miseries; *vigata-spr̄hāḥ*—and remains free from hankering; *sukheṣu*—in the presence of sense-pleasures; (one who is) *vīta*—free from; *rāga*—attachment; *bhaya*—fear; *krodhaḥ*—and anger; *ucyate*—is called; *muniḥ*—a sage; *sthita-dhīḥ*—of fixed intelligence.

One who is not disturbed by the three types of miseries (*adhyātmika*, *adhibhautika* and *adhidaivika*), who remains free from desires in the presence of happiness, and who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a steady-minded sage.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“How does one who is *sthita-prajña* speak?” To answer this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks the present *śloka* beginning with *duḥkheṣu*, and also the next *śloka*. *Duḥkheṣu* means the threefold miseries: *adhyātmika*, *adhibhautika* and *adhidaivika*. Hunger, thirst, fever, headache and so on (coming from one’s own body and mind) are *adhyātmika* miseries. *Adhibhautika* miseries are those caused by other living entities, such as a snake or a tiger, and miseries such as excessive rain or natural disasters caused by the *devas* are called *adhidaivika*. *Anudvigna-manāḥ* refers to a person who, when faced by such miseries thinks, “I have attained these miseries due to my *prārabdha-karma* (past actions) and I have to suffer them.” Knowing this, he either deliberates upon this within himself, understanding this misery to be due to his *prārabdha-karma*, or he speaks openly and without duplicity when questioned by others. In any case, his face shows no agitation, even in the presence of these miseries. This absence of disturbance is evident to those who are expert in reading such symptoms. However, it is obvious when an imitator artificially manifests symptoms of tolerance. Those who are expert call him corrupted. Similarly, those who remain free from desires when a happy situation appears, knowing it to be *prārabdha-bhoga* (enjoyment resulting from past actions), either contemplate this within themselves or enlighten others. This response is also understood by learned men. In clarifying these symptoms, the present *śloka* describes such persons as:

- 1) *vīta-rāga*—they remain detached from happiness;
- 2) *vīta-bhaya*—they remain free from the fear that entities such as tigers, may eat them;
- 3) *vīta-krodha*—they do not feel anger, even towards a person who comes to attack or kill them. For example, no fear

or anger arose in Jaḍa Bharata when the dacoit king Vṛṣala took him to the deity of Devī Kālī as a human sacrifice.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

A person whose heart is not disturbed by the threefold miseries: *adhyātmika*, *adhibhautika* and *adhidaivika*, who is devoid of the desire to attain happiness, and who does not become elated when happiness comes to him, is called *sthita-prajña*.

*na prahṛṣyet priyam prāpya / nodvijet prāpya cāpriyam
sthira-buddhir asammūḍho / brahma-vid brahmaṇi sthitāḥ*

Gītā 5.20

A person who does not become elated when attaining that which is favourable or dear is called *sthita-prajña*.

The example of this is the life history of Bharata Mahārāja as described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Bharata Mahārāja was worshipping Bhagavān alone in a remote forest, after renouncing his entire kingdom. In the last part of his life, he became attached to an infant deer and, due to the state of his mind when he left his body, he then took birth as a deer. However, because he remembered his previous birth, he remained separate from the association of family and friends, and spent his time in the hermitages of the sages, hearing topics of Śrī Bhagavān. As a result of his worship of Bhagavān in his previous life, he took his next birth in the house of a religiously devoted *brāhmaṇa*. Internally he always remembered Śrī Bhagavān, but externally he kept himself completely aloof by pretending to be a dullard, even though his father tried to make him learn the *Vedas*. Jaḍa Bharata tolerated ill-treatment and taunts by his step-mother, step-brothers and relatives, while remaining ecstatically absorbed in the worship of Bhagavān.

Once, Vṛṣalarāja, the king of thieves, desired a son, and he wanted to offer to his *iṣṭadevī* (worshipable goddess), Bhadra

Kālī, a human being who was free from bodily flaws. He had previously captured a suitable person for sacrifice, but somehow the man had escaped. While the dacoit king was wandering in search of another suitable person to sacrifice, he saw the *mahā-bhāgavata* Jāda Bharata protecting his family's fields. The king became happy when he saw that Jāda Bharata was blessed with a body appropriate for the sacrifice. According to the rules for sacrificing a human, he fed Jāda Bharata nicely, decorated him with turmeric powder, garlands and *candana*, and eventually presented him in front of Kālī Devī as an offering. Even after seeing, hearing and being aware of all this, *parama-bhāgavata* Jāda Bharata was neither fearful nor angry. Rather, fixed in remembrance of Bhagavān, he remained free from anxiety.

Just as the dacoits were ready to sever Jāda Bharata's head, Kālī Devī herself appeared in a ferocious form, making a loud noise. She snatched the sword from the hand of King Vṛṣala, and beheaded him and his servants. After drinking their blood, she danced and played with their heads as if they were balls. Finally, with great affection, she sent the *mahā-bhāgavata* Jāda Bharata on his way. This deity of Bhadra Kālī is still present in Kurukṣetra.

While describing this history of Jāda Bharata in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.9.20), Śukadeva Gosvāmī says to Parīkṣit Mahārāja: "Bhagavān Śrī Viṣṇu, who carries the *sudarśana-cakra*, is death to death personified, and is always anxious to look after His *bhaktas*. O Viṣṇurāta, He completely protects such *parama-bhāgavata paramahāṁsas*, who have become free from falsely identifying the body as the self, who have performed the very difficult task of severing the knot of mundane attachment, whose hearts are anxiously absorbed in thoughts of doing welfare to all living entities, and who neither harm others nor feel enmity towards them. Such

paramahaṁsas who accept the shelter of Śrī Bhagavān’s fearless lotus feet are never disturbed, even at the time of their own execution. There is nothing surprising about this.”

SLOKA 57

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्त् प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥५७॥

yah sarvatrānabhisnehas / tat tat prāpya śubhāśubham
nābhinandati na dveṣṭi / tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā

yah—he who; (*is*) *anabhisnehaḥ*—without excessive attachment; *sarvatra*—in all situations; *tat tat*—whatever; (*whether*) *prāpya*—achieving; *śubha*—favourable; (*or*) *aśubha*—unfavourable; (*and*) *na abhinandati*—he does not rejoice; *na*—nor; *dveṣṭi*—hate; *tasya*—his; *prajñā*—intelligence; *pratiṣṭhitā*—is well fixed.

One who is devoid of mundane affection, and who neither rejoices in gain nor despairs in loss, is known to have fixed intelligence.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

Here, the word *anabhisnehaḥ* means free from all affection arising from material designations. Such persons certainly feel some affection because of compassion, but their affection is free from material designations. They do not welcome pleasing situations such as being honoured or offered palatable food, nor do they glorify those from whom they receive them by saying, “You are a highly dharmika personality who has been rendering service to great *paramahaṁsas*. May you be happy.” Conversely, when they are faced with an unpleasant situation such as being dishonoured or attacked, they do not feel any aversion, nor do they curse their adversary, saying, “You sinful person! May you go to hell!”

The intelligence of such a person is completely fixed, or situated in *samādhi*. This is, indeed, called *sthita-prajñā*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Affection is of two types: (1) related with the body, *sopādhika-sneha* and (2) related with Śrī Bhagavān, *nirupādhika-sneha*. *Sopādhika-sneha* can be seen in ordinary persons who identify themselves with their bodies. Those who are *sthita-prajñā* are free from identification with their bodies, and are, therefore, devoid of *sopādhika-sneha*. They are endowed with *nirupādhika-sneha*, and are the well-wishers of all living entities. This *sneha* is ever-existing and continuously flowing within their hearts, but it rarely manifests externally. It is seen in some special circumstances, although an ordinary person cannot detect it.

ŚLOKA 58

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥५८॥

*yadā samharate cāyam / kūrmo 'ṅgānīva sarvaśah
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyaḥ / tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

ca—and; *yadā*—when; *samharate*—withdraws; *indriyāṇī*—his senses; *indriyā-arthebhyaḥ*—from the sense objects; *sarvaśah*—completely; *iva*—as; *ayam*—a; *kūrmah*—tortoise; *tasya*—his; *aṅgānī*—limbs; *prajñā*—his intelligence; (is) *pratiṣṭhitā*—well fixed.

When a person can completely withdraw his senses from the sense objects at will, just as a tortoise withdraws its limbs into its shell, his intelligence is firmly fixed.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān responds to Arjuna's question, *kim āśīta*, "How does he sit?", with this śloka beginning with *yadā*. *Indriyārthebhyaḥ* means that, just as a person can withdraw his senses, such as the sense of hearing, from its sense object, sound, similarly the *āśana* (seat, situation) of he who is *sthita-prajña* is to be able to withdraw his subordinate senses from the external sense objects, and to fix them in his undisturbed mind. The example of a tortoise is given to illustrate this point. Just as a tortoise can withdraw his eyes, face and so forth inside his shell at will, similarly, a person who is *sthita-prajña* can withdraw his senses from the sense objects.

ŚLOKA 59

विषया विनिवर्त्तने निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
रसवर्ज रसोऽप्यस्य परं द्रष्ट्वा निवर्त्तते ॥५९॥

*visayā vinivarttante / nirāhārasya dehinah
rasa-varjam raso 'py asya / param drṣṭvā nivarttate*

dehinah—for an embodied person; *nirāhārasya*—who practises sense-restraint; *viṣayāḥ*—the sense objects; *vinivarttante*—are forcibly restrained; *asya*—for such a person; (there is) *rasaḥ*—a taste; *api*—however; *drṣṭvā*—having realised; *param*—the *paramātmā* (Supersoul); (there is) *rasa-varjam*—no taste for sense objects; (they) *nivarttate*—cease automatically.

He who identifies himself with his body may artificially restrict his enjoyment by withdrawing the senses from their objects, but his taste for sense-pleasure still remains. This is not genuine detachment. However, for one who is *sthita-prajña*, having realised *Paramātmā*, his taste for sense objects automatically ceases.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

If one raises a doubt that even foolish or less intelligent persons may become detached from the objects of their senses by fasting or through sickness, Śrī Bhagavān clarifies His point in this *śloka* beginning with *vिषयाह्*. The word *rasa-varjam* implies that such persons do not become free from the desire for sense objects. Rather, their taste for sense objects still persists. One who is *sthita-prajña*, however, ceases to desire sense objects because he has direct realisation of Paramātmā. There is no flaw in this definition. Those who are able to realise the self are still *sādhakas*. They are not *siddhas* (perfected souls).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Sometimes an ordinary person restricts his senses because of disease, or by practising *hatha-yoga* or fasting. Still the desire to enjoy the sense objects remains in his heart. It is impossible to eliminate this desire without *bhakti* to Śrī Bhagavān.

In this regard, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes as follows: “The practice of ceasing to indulge in the objects of the senses through the process of *nirāhāra* (forcibly keeping aloof from sense objects) is only for extremely unintelligent people. This practice is followed by *jīvas* who identify the self with the body. *Aṣṭāṅga-yoga* also provides an opportunity for those who are less intelligent to become renounced from sense objects, by engaging in *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma* and *pratyāhara*. This process is not acceptable for one who is *sthita-prajña*. After directly seeing the beauty of *parama-tattva* Bhagavān, one who is *sthita-prajña* becomes attracted to Him and gives up all attachments to ordinary sense objects. Even though there is provision for extremely unintelligent persons to withdraw their senses from sense objects by the process

of *nirāhāra*, still *jīvas* cannot attain eternal auspiciousness without the process of *rāga-mārga*. When a person reaches the stage of *rāga* (attachment to Kṛṣṇa), he realises a superior sense object and, thus, naturally gives up inferior pleasures.”

ŚLOKA 60

**यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥६०॥**

*yatato hy api kaunteya / puruṣasya vipaścitaḥ
indriyāṇi pramāthīni / haranti prasabham manah*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *pramāthīni*—restless; *indriyāṇi*—senses; *hi*—indeed; *prasabham*—forcibly; *haranti*—steal away; *manah*—the mind; *api*—even; *puruṣasya*—of a man; *vipaścitaḥ*—who possesses knowledge and discrimination; *yatataḥ*—who is endeavouring for liberation.

O Kaunteya, the restless senses can forcibly steal away the mind of even a man of discrimination who is endeavouring to achieve liberation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

It is beyond the capacity of the *sādhaka* to have complete control over his senses in the stage of *sādhana*, but the endeavour alone is commendable. Śrī Bhagavān speaks the present *śloka*, beginning with the word *yatataḥ*, to explain this. Here the word *pramāthīni* means those things which cause agitation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The duty of a *sādhaka* is to endeavour very carefully to achieve control over his senses. One cannot become *sthita-prajña* without sense control. It is as difficult to have complete control over the flickering senses, which are always agitated, as it is to control the wind. However, according to the instruc-

tions of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, even this difficult task becomes very easy when one engages all his senses in the service of Śrī Bhagavān.

One can learn how to engage his controlled senses in the service of Śrī Bhagavān from the daily activities of King Ambarīṣa, which are described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam:

sa vai manah kṛṣṇa-padāravindayor
 vacāṁsi vaikuṇṭha-guṇānuvarṇane
 karau harer mandira-mārjanādiṣu
 śrutim cakārācyuta-sat-kathodaye
 mukunda-liṅgālaya-darśane dṛṣṭau
 tad-bhṛtya-gātra-sparśe 'ṅga-saṅgamam
 ghrāṇam ca tat-pāda-saroja-saurabhe
 śrīmat-tulasyā rasanām tad-arpite
 pādau hareḥ kṣetra-padānusarpaṇe
 śiro hṛṣīkeśa-padābhivandane
 kāmaṇi ca dāsye na tu kāma-kāmyayā
 yathottamaśloka-janāśrayā ratih
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 9.4.18-20

“Ambarīṣa Mahārāja always engaged in the worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by fixing his mind in remembering His lotus feet, by engaging his tongue in describing the name, form, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Bhagavān, his ears in hearing the topics of Bhagavān, his eyes in seeing His beautiful Deity form, his sense of touch in experiencing the happiness of serving the feet of the *bhaktas* of Bhagavān, his nostrils in smelling the fragrant objects such as *tulasī* and *candana* which had been offered at the lotus feet of Bhagavān, his feet in circumambulating His abode, and his head in paying obeisances to Bhagavān and His *bhaktas*. In this way, he controlled all his senses, and engaged them in the service of Bhagavān.” It is very beneficial and auspicious for *sādhakas* to follow this

path.

ŚLOKA 61

**तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः ।
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥६१॥**

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

āsīta—he should be situated; *saṁyamya*—keeping under control; *tāni sarvāṇi*—all the senses; *yuktaḥ*—connected in devotion; *mat-paraḥ*—devoted unto Me; *hi*—because; *yasya*—one whose; *indriyāṇi*—senses; *vaše*—are in control; *tasya*—his; *prajñā*—intelligence; *pratiṣṭhitā*—is completely fixed.

Therefore, one should subdue the senses by surrendering to Me in *bhakti-yoga* and living under My shelter. Only one whose senses are controlled is fixed in intelligence. He alone is *sthita-prajña*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

“Here, the word *mat-paraḥ* means ‘My bhakta’, because there is no other way of conquering the senses than by performing *bhakti* unto Me.” This fact is apparent everywhere in the later sections of *Bhagavad-gītā*. As Uddhava says in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.29.2-3):

*prāyaśah puṇḍarīkākṣa / yuñjanto yogino manah
viśidanty asamādhānān / mano-nigraha-karśitāḥ
athāta ānanda-dugham padāmbujam
haṁsāḥ śrayerann aravinda-locana
sukham nu viśveśvara yoga-karmabhis
tvān-māyāmī vihatā na māninah*

O lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, yogīs are generally unsuccessful in controlling their minds and so, after endeavouring for a short time, they become tired and frustrated. Therefore, those who are

expert in discerning between what is substantial and what is insubstantial take exclusive shelter of Your lotus feet, which give unlimited pleasure to everyone, as the foundation of their happiness.

To show the difference between a *sādhaka* and one who is *sthita-prajña*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says *vaśe hi*, which indicates that the senses of one who is *sthita-prajña* are under control.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

One can escape the disturbance of a gang of dacoits by taking shelter of a valiant king. When the dacoits become aware of the shelter this person has taken, they become subordinate to him. Similarly, the senses of a *jīvātmā* are compared to a gang of dacoits, and they automatically become controlled when he accepts the shelter of Antaryāmī Bhagavān, Śrī Hṛṣikeśa. Therefore, one should control one's senses in a simple, natural way by *bhakti* alone. It is said in *śāstra*:

*hṛṣikeśe hṛṣikāṇi / yasya sthairya-gatāni hi
sa eva dhairyam āpnoti / saṁsāre jīva-cañcale
Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-lilā 24.184*

It is very difficult to control the agitated senses in this world, but for those who engage all their senses in the service of Bhagavān Śrī Hṛṣikeśa, the master of the senses, their senses naturally become stable and controlled.

ŚLOKA 62

*ध्यायतो विषयान् पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात् संजायते कामः कामात् क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥६२॥*

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

pumṣah—for a person; *dhyāyataḥ*—one who contemplates; *viśayān*—sense objects such as sound; *saṅgah*—attachment; *upajāyate*—becomes manifest; *teṣu*—towards them; *saṅgāt*—from attachment; *kāmah*—desire; *sañjāyate*—develops; *kāmāt*—from desire; *krodhaḥ*—anger; *abhijāyate*—develops.

By meditating on the sense objects, one develops attachment. Attachment gives rise to desire, which in turn leads to anger.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “Control of the mind is the fundamental means by which those who are *sthita-prajña* control their external senses. Hear from Me, O Arjuna, what happens when one is unable to fully control his mind.” The present śloka beginning with *dhyāyataḥ* is spoken to explain this topic. By meditation on sense objects, one develops *saṅga*, attachment, from which comes *kāma*, excessive desire for those objects. Anger (*krodha*), then arises if the fulfilment of this desire is obstructed for some reason.

ŚLOKA 63

क्रोधाद्ववति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात् स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात् प्रणश्यति ॥६३॥

*krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ / sammohāt smṛti-vibhramah
smṛti-bhraṁśād buddhi-nāśo / buddhi-nāśāt praṇasyati*

krodhāt—from anger; *bhavati*—comes; *sammohaḥ*—utter confusion; *sammohāt*—from such confusion; (there is) *vibhramah*—disorder; *smṛti*—of memory; *smṛti-bhraṁśāt*—from disorder of memory; *buddhi-nāśah*—intelligence is destroyed; *buddhi-nāśāt*—from loss of intelligence; *praṇasyati*—one is completely ruined.

Anger gives rise to delusion, and from delusion comes loss of memory, forgetting the instructions of *sāstra*. Loss of memory destroys intelligence, and when the intelligence is destroyed, everything is lost and one again becomes fallen in the ocean of material existence.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

From anger comes delusion (*sammoha*), in which there is a loss of discrimination between what is to be done and what is not to be done. When the *jīva* is in a deluded condition, he forgets the instructions of *sāstra* (*smṛti-vibramah*), which are the cause of auspiciousness for him. When his memory is lost, proper conduct of the intelligence is lost (*buddhi-nāśah*). After that, the *sādhaka* again falls into the well of material life.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The mind indeed is the king, the ruler and the impelling cause of the senses. Therefore, by controlling the mind the external senses are automatically controlled. Thus, in the *Vedas* it is said:

yadā pancāvatiṣṭhante jñānāni manasā saha
buddhiś ca na viceṣṭati tām āhuh paramāṁ gatim
Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.3.10

If one can control his *pañca-jñānendriya* (five knowledge-acquiring senses), his mind and his intelligence, he attains the supreme destination. Otherwise, if the mind and other senses are not subdued, one has to wander in the cycle of birth and death.

This is also stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.21.19-21):

viṣayeṣu gunādhyāsāt / puṁsaḥ saṅgas tato bhavet
saṅgāt tatra bhavet kāmaḥ / kāmād eva kalir nṛṇām

When one contemplates the qualities of sense objects, attachment arises. From attachment, desires ensue, and unfulfilled

desires lead to quarrel.

*kaler durviṣahāḥ kroḍhas / tamaś tam anuvartate
tamaśā grasyate puṁsaś / cetanā vyāpiṇī drutam*

From quarrel, unrestrained anger arises, anger causes delusion, and when one is in delusion, the wisdom to discriminate between right and wrong vanishes.

*tayā virahitāḥ sādho / jantuḥ śūnyāya kalpate
tato ‘syā svārtha-vibhraṁśo / mūrcchitasya mṛtasya ca*

O gentle one, due to his loss of discrimination, a man becomes like inert matter, and from that condition, he slides down to states of unconsciousness (inertness) and becomes almost dead. Thus the supreme purpose of life is defeated.

If someone forcibly tries to subdue his external senses without controlling his mind, the results are extremely unpleasant. In order to control the mind, it is imperative to direct it to worshipping Bhagavān by following specific practices. Consequently, Śrī Bhagavān's statement in Gītā (2.61): *tāni sarvāṇi saṁyamya*, is completely logical.

ŚLOKA 64

**रागद्वेषविमुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैविधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥६४॥**

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

vidheya-ātmā—a man of controlled senses; *tu*—however; *vimuktaiḥ*—(who is) free; (from) *rāga*—attachment; *dveṣa*—and aversion; *adhigacchati*—attains; *prasādam*—joyfulness; *caran*—even while enjoying; *viṣayān*—sense objects; *indriyaiḥ*—by the senses; *ātma-vaśyaiḥ*—which are under his control.

A man of controlled senses, however, who is free from attach-

ment and aversion, attains happiness of mind even while enjoying various objects through his senses.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Previously Arjuna asked, “How does one who is *sthita-prajña* behave?” In response to this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *rāga*. Since the mind cannot directly accept sense objects, there is no fault in accepting sense objects with controlled senses. *Vidheyātmā* means one whose *ātmā* (mind) is fixed in the instructions of Bhagavān. *Prasādam adhigacchati* implies that there is no fault if such qualified persons accept sense objects. Rather, it is specifically to their credit, because they see that everything is related to Bhagavān. One who is *sthita-prajña* may or may not give up sense objects, and may or may not be motivated to attain them. In any case, everything is auspicious for him.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Even when the external senses are controlled by keeping them aloof from the sense objects, the mind does not stop thinking of them. Such renunciation is called *phalgu* (useless) or *markaṭa-vairāgya* (monkey renunciation). This is stated in *Gītā* 3.6: *karmendriyāṇi samyamya*. When a *sādhaka* practises appropriate renunciation (*yukta-vairāgya*) and worships Śrī Bhagavān, he can control his mind and absorb it in thinking of his worshipable deity. When he has reached such a stage, there is no fault in accepting those sense objects which are favourable to his practice, and rejecting those which are unfavourable.

ŚLOKA 65

प्रसादे सर्वदःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥६५॥

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

prasāde—on attainment of mercy; *hāniḥ*—diminution; *sarva duḥkhānām*—of all miseries; *upajāyate*—takes place; *buddhiḥ*—(the) intelligence; *asya*—of such a man; *prasanna-cetasah*—whose mind is content; *hi*—certainly; *āśu*—very soon; *paryavatiṣṭhate*—becomes fixed in all respects.

When one who is self-controlled achieves happiness all his miseries are dispelled. As a result, the intelligence of such a contented person soon becomes fixed in attaining his desired goal.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Buddhiḥ paryavatiṣṭhate means that, in all respects his intelligence becomes stable and fixed on the desired goal. Thus, he remains happy whether he accepts sense objects or not. *Prasanna-cetasah* indicates that it should be understood that internal happiness will come only from *bhakti*, because without *bhakti* the heart cannot become pleased. This has been explained vividly in the First Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which describes how Vyāsadeva's mind was not happy, even after he had compiled Vedāntasūtra. However, after he followed the instructions of Śrī Nārada, his heart became blissful through the exclusive practice of *bhakti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The heart can be pleased only by *bhakti*, rendering loving devotional service to Śrī Bhagavān. *Bhakti* removes all miseries, and in a very short period a person who practises *bhakti* easily becomes fully fixed at the lotus feet of his iṣṭadeva. This is also described in the dialogue between Vyāsa and Nārada in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam from *dṛṣṭa-vratena hi mayā* (1.4.28) to *yamādibhir yoga-pathaiḥ kāma-lobha-hato muhuḥ*

(1.6.35). “When the *sādhaka* practises *yama* and *niyama* on the path of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* (the eight stages of *yoga*), the mind, which is always under the control of lust and greed, attains a certain level of happiness and peace. However, there is no comparison between this and the immediate and immense pleasure attained by service to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.6.35)

In this regard, it is worth deliberating on the examples of Saubhari Ṛṣi, Yayāti Mahārāja, Viśvāmitra Muni and others. Saubhari Ṛṣi was still unable to control his mind even after performing austerities within the water of the Yamunā for ten thousand years. His mind became agitated by seeing fish engaging in sex life. He emerged from the water to marry the fifty daughters of Māndhātā Mahārāja, but his lust still remained unsatiated even after enjoying with them by expanding himself into fifty forms. Eventually, he attained his desired goal by controlling his senses through the worship of Śrī Bhagavān.

Yayāti Mahārāja was not able to control his mind, despite various endeavours. He exchanged his old age for the youth of his son Puru, and enjoyed for many years, but his lusty desires increased, just as ghee nourishes fire. He could only attain peace when he had finally fixed his mind in the worship of Bhagavān.

Although Viśvāmitra Muni engaged in severe austerities by practising *śama* (mind control) and *dama* (sense control) and subduing his senses, he still abandoned his austerities just upon hearing Menakā’s ankle bells and became absorbed in lustful activity. His agitated mind eventually found peace only in the worship of Bhagavān.

This conclusion is specifically verified in the dialogue between Vyāsa and Nārada in the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Veda-Vyāsa had already divided the *Vedas* into four parts and had compiled *Mahābhārata*, the *Purāṇas* and *Vedānta-*

sūtra and although he had described knowledge of *dharma* and other such topics for the information of people in general, his mind remained unsatisfied. Unable to understand why, he inquired from his spiritual master, Devarṣī Nārada. Śrī Nārada answered:

śrī nārada uvāca
 bhavatānudita-prāyam / yaśo bhagavato 'malam
 yenaivāsau na tuṣyeta / manye tad darśanam khilam
 yathā dharmādayaś cārthā / muni-varyānukīrtitāḥ
 na tathā vāsudevasya / mahimā hy anuvarṇitāḥ
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.5.8-9

O great sage, you have described the processes of *dharma* and *jñāna*, which I consider to be incomplete and insignificant, but you have not clearly described the topics of Śrī Bhagavān's most purifying pastimes and their glories. Śrī Bhagavān cannot be pleased unless one glorifies such pastimes, which manifest themselves in the purified mind by the performance of *bhakti*.

Following the instructions of Nārada Muni, by performing *bhakti-yoga*, Vyāsa was able to see in his pure heart all of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beautiful pastimes, full of *aiśvarya* (opulence) and *mādhurya* (sweetness). Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam consists of the activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa which Vyāsa realised in *samādhi*.

yasyām vai śrūyamāṇāyām / kṛṣṇe parama-pūruṣe
 bhaktir utpadyate pum̄saḥ / śoka-moha-bhayāpahā
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.7.7

By the culture of hearing and following this Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, *bhakti* to Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa immediately manifests in the heart, dispelling lamentation, delusion and fear. Only then is Śrī Kṛṣṇa captured in the heart of such a *bhakta*.

ŚLOKA 66

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।
न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥६६॥

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

ayuktasya—for one whose mind is uncontrolled; *na asti*—there is no; *buddhiḥ*—spiritual intelligence; *ca*—and; *ayuktasya*—for one disconnected; *na bhāvanā*—there cannot be meditation on Parameśvara; *ca*—and; *abhaṭayataḥ*—for the non-meditative; (*there is*) *na*—no; *śāntiḥ*—peace; (*and for*) *aśāntasya*—the non-peaceful; *kutah*—where?; *sukham*—is happiness.

One whose mind is uncontrolled, and who is bereft of intelligence related to the *ātmā*, is unable to meditate on Parameśvara. A person devoid of meditation does not attain peace, and without peace, where is the possibility of happiness?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *nāsti* to indirectly strengthen the previous *śloka*'s conclusion. The intelligence of a person whose mind is uncontrolled will not become fixed in the self. Such a person is *ayukta* (devoid of intelligence) and is unable to meditate on Parameśvara. *Abhaṭayataḥ* means that one who does not meditate cannot have peace. In other words, he cannot become detached from the objects of the senses. A disturbed person can find neither happiness nor pleasure in the self.

ŚLOKA 67

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रजां वायुर्नार्वमिवाभ्सि ॥६७॥

*indriyāṇāṁ hi caratāṁ / yan mano 'nuvidhīyate
tad asya harati prajñāṁ / vāyur nāvam ivāmbhasi*

hi—certainly; *vāyuḥ*—the wind; *harati*—carries away; *nāvam*—a boat; *ambhasi*—on the water; *iva*—similarly; *tat manah*—the mind; *asya*—of a person; *yat*—which; *anuvidhīyate*—follows; *caratām*—while wandering (to the objects); *indriyāṇām*—of the senses; *harati*—carries away; *prajñām*—his intelligence.

Just as the wind sweeps away a boat on the water, the mind of an unrestrained person runs after any one of the senses that wanders in its sense object.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

A person with an uncontrolled mind does not have intelligence. Śrī Bhagavān establishes this point by speaking this śloka beginning with the word *indriyāṇām*. “When the mind follows one of the senses as it wanders amongst its respective sense objects, a person is forced to follow all of the senses by mind. In such a state, the mind is likened to an unfavourable wind sweeping away a boat on water, because it carries away a person’s intelligence.”

SLOKA 68

**तस्माद् यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥६८॥**

*tasmād yasya mahā-bāho / nigṛhitāni sarvaśah
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyaḥ / tasya prajñā pratiṣhitā*

tasmāt—therefore; *mahā-bāho*—O mighty-armed one; (*he*) *yasya*—whose; *indriyāṇī*—senses; *nigṛhitāni*—are restrained; *sarvaśah*—in every respect; *indriya-arthebhyaḥ*—from the sense objects; *tasya*—his; *prajñā*—intelligence; (*is*) *pratiṣhitā*—fixed.

Therefore, O Mahā-bāho, one whose senses are completely restrained from their respective sense

objects is *sthita-prajña*, fixed in intelligence.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Yasya means that those whose minds are already under control are *sthita-prajña*. Kṛṣṇa is telling Arjuna, “O Mahā-bāho, just as you conquer your enemies, you should also conquer your mind.”

ŚLOKA 69

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥६९॥

yā niśā sarva-bhūtānām / tasyām jāgartti saṁyamī
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni / sā niśā paśyato muneḥ

tasyām—in that (state); *yā*—which; (*is*) *niśā*—night; *sarva-bhūtānām*—for all beings; *saṁyamī*—a man of fixed intelligence; *jāgartti*—is awake; *yasyām*—in which (state); *bhūtāni*—ordinary beings; *jāgrati*—are awake; *sā*—that; (*is*) *niśā*—night; *paśyataḥ*—for the enlightened; *muneḥ*—thinker.

That intelligence which is related to consciousness is like night for the materialistic common people. However, a *sthita-prajña* remains awake in that intelligence. The intelligence which is engaged in sense objects in which the common living entity remains awake is like night for the great thinker who knows the absolute reality. In other words such a person accepts sense objects in an appropriate way without being attached to them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

It is natural for one who is *sthita-prajña* to control the senses. For this reason, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this śloka beginning with *yā*. Intelligence is of two types: *ātma-pravaṇā*, intelligence inclined towards the self or conscious reality, and

viṣaya-pravaṇā, intelligence inclined towards material sense objects. Intelligence which is *ātma-pravaṇā* is like night for all conditioned *jīvātmās*. Just as a sleeping person does not know what happens at night, similarly the bewildered *jīvas* do not know what one attains by *ātma-pravaṇā buddhi*. But one who is *sthita-prajña* remains awake in such a night, so he directly experiences the bliss related to intelligence fixed in the conscious reality.

The conditioned *jīvas* remain awake in *viṣaya-pravaṇā buddhi* and they experience lamentation, bewilderment and so on, according to their respective absorption. They are not asleep to it. *Sthita-prajña munis*, however, do not experience anything in such a night. They remain indifferent to the sense objects that give happiness and distress to materialistic persons and, remaining detached, only accept those sense objects which are needed for their maintenance.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Those who are *sthita-prajña* naturally achieve perfection in controlling all the senses. They are *jñānī puruṣas* (knowledgeable persons) in the real sense. On the other hand, the intelligence of ignorant people who identify the body with the *ātmā* remains absorbed in sense objects. Such persons who are attached to sense objects are called materialistic, or ignorant. *Ajñānam tu niśā proktā divā jñānam udīryate*. “Knowledge is like day and ignorance is like night” (*Skanda Purāṇa*).

Everything in the kingdom of that most wonderful Śrī Bhagavān is wonderful. What is night for one person is day for another. For an owl, night is like day, while for a crow it is night. An owl sees only at night, not during the day. Similarly, a man blinded by ignorance cannot have vision of the illumination of *tattva-jñāna*. Knowers of the Absolute, however, always see Śrī Bhagavān, the radiant personification of

tattva-jñāna. They never contemplate objects of the senses. Just as a lotus leaf never becomes wet even though it remains in water, similarly, one who is *sthita-prajña* never becomes attached to sense objects, even while he is living in contact with them.

ŚLOKA 70

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं
समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।
तद्वत् कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे
स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥७०॥

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

yadvat—just as; *āpaḥ*—waters; *praviśanti*—enter; (*the*) *samudram*—ocean; *āpūryamāṇam*—which although being filled; (*is*) *acala-pratiṣṭham*—fixed and unmoved; *tadvat*—similarly; *yam*—(he) within whom; *sarve*—all; *kāmāḥ*—the agitations of the senses; *praviśanti*—forcibly enter; (*remains*) *acala-pratiṣṭham*—fixed and unmoved; *sah*—he; *āpnoti*—attains; *śāntim*—peace; *na*—not; *kāma-kāmī*—he who is intent on fulfilling his desires.

Just as countless rivers flow into the ocean, which never floods, various desires flow into the mind of one who is *sthita-prajña*, yet his equilibrium is never disturbed. Such persons alone can attain peace, not those who strive always to fulfil their desires.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Nirleptā, or remaining unattached to sense objects, indicates that one does not become disturbed even after coming in contact with a sense object. Śrī Bhagavān explains this idea by

speaking this *śloka* beginning with *āpūryamāṇam*. Although different rivers pour so much water into the ocean during the rainy season, they cannot cause it to overflow. *Acalapratīṣṭham* means whose boundary is not crossed. Similarly, various sense objects also present themselves to one who is *sthita-prajña*. But, just as water pouring into or flowing out of the ocean makes no difference to the ocean, similarly, those who remain unaffected both while they are utilising sense objects, and when they are bereft of them, are called *sthita-prajña*. Only they attain *śānti*, that is, *jñāna*.

ŚLOKA 71

**विहाय कामान् यः सर्वान् पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥७१॥**

*vihāya kāmān yaḥ sarvān / pumāṁś carati niḥspṛhah
nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ / sa śāntim adhigacchatī*

yah—who; *pumān*—the person; *vihāya*—giving up; *sarvān*—all; *kāmān*—material desires; *carati*—wanders; *niḥ-spṛhah*—free from hankering; *nir-mamaḥ*—without a sense of possessiveness; *nirahaṅkāraḥ*—without false ego; *sah*—that person; *adhigacchatī*—attains; *śāntim*—peace.

It is only those who give up all desires and wander free from hankering, false ego and possessiveness who attain peace.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Some people lose faith in their material desires and no longer enjoy them. Śrī Bhagavān is explaining this by speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *vihāya*. *Nirahaṅkāra nirmamaḥ* means that only they attain peace who remain freed from the false ego and possessiveness towards the body and objects related to the body.

ŚLOKA 72

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।
स्थित्वास्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिवर्णमृच्छति ॥७२॥

*eṣā brāhmī sthitih pārtha / nainām prāpya vimuhyati
sthitvāsyām anta-kale 'pi / brahma-nirvāṇam ṛcchati*

pārtha—O Pārtha; *eṣā*—this; (*is*) *sthitiḥ*—the situation; *brāhmī*—of one who has attained *brahma*; *na prāpya*—not attaining; *enām*—this state; *vimuhyati*—one is confused (by duality); *api*—and; *sthitvā*—being situated; *asyām*—in this (state); *anta-kale*—at the time of death; *ṛcchati*—one attains; *brahma-nirvāṇam*—spiritual emancipation.

O Pārtha, attaining *brahma* in this way is called *brāhmī sthitih*. After attaining this state, one is no longer deluded. If, at the time of death, one is situated in this consciousness even for a moment, he attains *brahma-nirvāṇa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is now concluding the chapter with this śloka beginning with the word *eṣā*. Attaining the state of *brahma* is called *brāhmī*. If *brahma-nirvāṇa* (spiritual emancipation) is achieved at the time of death by attaining the state of *brahma* for a moment, then what can be said of the result if the practice to attain this state has been performed since childhood?

Jñāna and *karma* are specifically explained in this chapter and *bhakti* is explained indirectly. Therefore, this chapter is called the summary of Śrī Gītā.

Thus ends the Bhāvānuvāda of the Sārārtha-Varśinī Tīkā, by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, on the Second Chapter of Śrimad Bhagavad-gītā, which gives pleasure to the bhaktas and is accepted by all saintly persons.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “That *tattva* which is contrary to inert matter is called *brahma*. One can attain

CHAPTER THREE



Karma-Yoga Yoga Through the Principle of Action

ŚLOKA 1

अर्जुन उवाच—

ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन ।
तत् किं कर्मणि घोरे मां नियोजयसि केशव ॥१॥

arjuna uvāca

*jyāyasī cet karmaṇas te / matā buddhir janārdana
tat kim karmaṇi ghore mām / niyojayasi keśava*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *janārdana*—O Janārdana; *cet*—if; *te*—Your; *matā*—consideration; (*is that*) *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; (*is*) *jyāyasī*—better; *karmaṇah*—than fruitive work; *tat*—then; *kim*—why?; *keśava*—O Keśava; *niyojayasi*—are You engaging; *mām*—me; *ghore*—in this ghastly; *karmaṇi*—work.

Arjuna said: O Janārdana, if You consider that intelligence related to *bhakti*, which is beyond the modes, is superior to action, then why, O Keśava, are You engaging me in this ghastly activity of fighting?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

This Third Chapter gives a detailed explanation of action (*karma*) offered to Śrī Bhagavān without expecting any material return (*niṣkāma-bhāva*). It also describes the wisdom of a person who is willing to conquer lust, anger and so forth.

From the *ślokas* in the previous chapter, Arjuna has understood that *guṇātītā bhakti-yoga*, which bestows freedom from the *guṇas* (*nistrai-guṇya*), is superior both to *jñāna-yoga* and to *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Now, in the mood of a friend (*sakhyabhāva*), he reproaches Śrī Bhagavān, who is eager to engage him in his prescribed duty of fighting, with the following words. “If that intelligence which is resolute (*vyavasāyātmikā*) and free from the *guṇas* (*guṇātītā*) is superior, then why, O Janārdana, are You engaging me in this ghastly warfare?” *Jana* means to Your own people and *ārdana* means giving pain, so Janārdana means by Your order You give pain to Your own people.

Arjuna also addresses Kṛṣṇa as Keśava. “No one can transgress Your order, because You are Keśava, the controller of both Brahmā and Mahādeva (*ka* means Brahmā, *iśa* means Mahādeva and *va* means controller).”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this *śloka* there is a mysterious secret behind Arjuna’s addressing Śrī Kṛṣṇa by the names Keśava and Janārdana. Arjuna inquired, “O Janārdana, first You said that resolute intelligence (*vyavasāyātmikā buddhi*), which is beyond the modes (*guṇātītā*) and fixed in *bhakti*, is superior to *karma* (action). Why, then, are You engaging me in this ghastly warfare? Learned men are right in calling You Janārdana, for by Your order You give pain to Your own people who are dear to You and dependent on You. Janārdana is a very befitting name for You because You killed the *asura* named Jana, which is another indication of Your cruel nature. Keśava is another

appropriate name, because You killed the *asura* Keśī. Moreover, *ka* means Brahmā, *iśa* means Mahādeva and *va* means controller. Since You control them, You are called Keśava. How, then, can an insignificant person such as I transgress Your order? O Prabhu, be merciful to me!"

In Śrī Harivaṁśa Śrī Rudra (Śaṅkara) says in relation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His name, Keśava:

*ka iti brahmaṇo nāma / iśo ‘ham sarva-dehinām
āvāṁ tavāṅga-sambhūtau / tasmāt keśava-nāma bhāk*

Ka is Brahmā and I am *iśa* (Śaṅkara), the controller of all living entities. Since both of us were born from Your limbs, You are called Keśava.

ŚLOKA 2

**व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे ।
तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥२॥**

*vyāmiśreṇeva vākyena / buddhim mohayasīva me
tad ekaṁ vada niścitta / yena śreyo ‘ham āpnuyām*

mohayasi iva—You seem to bewilder; *me*—my; *buddhim*—intelligence; *iva vyāmiśrena*—by (Your) apparently equivocal; *vākyena*—statements; *tat*—therefore; *vada*—please tell; *ekam*—one path; *yena*—by which; *niścitta*—ascertaining; *aham*—I; *āpnuyām*—may have; *śreyah*—welfare.

My intelligence is somewhat bewildered by Your apparently ambiguous statements. Please, therefore, tell me decisively which path will be most beneficial for me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is telling His friend, "O sakhe Arjuna! It is a fact that *guṇatītā bhakti* is the most superior process because it is transcendental. But such *bhakti* can only be attained by

the mercy of My *mahā-bhakta* who is independent (transcendental to the *guṇas*) and *aikāntika* (one-pointed). It can never be attained by one's own endeavour. Therefore, become *nistrai-guṇya* (free from the *guṇas*). I bless you that you will become *nistrai-guṇya* by performing transcendental *bhakti* (*guṇatītā bhakti*) to Me. When this blessing fructifies, you will achieve *guṇatītā bhakti* by the mercy of an independent and *aikāntika-mahā-bhāgavat*, but, as I have already said, at present your eligibility (*adhikāra*) is to perform *karma* only."

Arjuna then says, "If this is so, why don't You definitively tell me to engage only in *karma*? Why are You drowning me in an ocean of doubts?" This is why Arjuna is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *vyāmiśreṇeva*, which has various implications. He is saying, "By such statements You are bewildering my intelligence. Moreover, initially You said: *karmāṇy evādhikāras te* (Gītā 2.47). 'You only have the *adhikāra* to perform *karma*, your prescribed duty.' Then You said: *siddhy-asiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā samatvam yoga ucyate* (Gītā 2.48). 'That equanimity in which one remains equipoised in success and failure is called *yoga*.' Then again, You said: *buddhi-yukto jahātiha ubhe sukṛta-duṣkṛte tasmād yogāya yujyasva yogah karmasu kauśalam* (Gītā 2.50). 'Intelligent persons abandon both pious and impious activities and, because *buddhi-yoga* is the highest goal of *karma*, they endeavour for *niṣkāma-karma*.' Here, by the word *yoga*, You are also referring to *jñāna*. Then You say: *yadā te moha-kalilam buddhir vyatitariṣyati* (Gītā 2.52). 'When your intelligence crosses beyond the dense forest of delusion.' Here again, You are simply speaking about *jñāna*.

"In fact, the word *iva* ('like that' or 'it seems') implies that Your statement is not ambiguous. Since You are merciful, it is not Your desire to bewilder me. Besides, since I am not ignorant of these matters, it is appropriate for You to speak directly." The deep purport is that *karma* (action) in *sattva-*

guṇa is superior to *karma* in *rajo-guṇa*. *Jñāna* is also in *sattva-guṇa*, but it is superior to *karma* in *sattva-guṇa*, and *nirguṇa-bhakti* is far superior to *jñāna*. “If You think that it is impossible for me to engage in *nirguṇa-bhakti*, then please simply instruct me on *sāttvika jñāna*, by which I will become free from bondage to this miserable material world.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

Action (*karma*) in *sattva-guṇa* is superior to action in *rajo-guṇa*. *Jñāna* is superior to *karma* in *sattva-guṇa*, although it is also in *sattva-guṇa*. *Sattvāt sañjāyate jñānam*. “From *sattva-guṇa* real *jñāna* develops” (*Gītā* 14.17).

Superior to *jñāna* in *sattva-guṇa* is *nirguṇa-bhakti*, which is defined as follows in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.29.11-12):

mad-guṇa-śruti-mātreṇa / mayi sarva-guhāśaye
mano-gatir avicchinnā / yathā gaṅgāmbhaso’mbudhau
lakṣaṇam bhakti-yogasya / nirguṇasya hy udāhṛtam
ahaituky avyavahitā / yā bhaktih puruṣottame

While Kapiladeva was instructing His mother, Devahūti in *nirguṇa-bhakti*, He said, “Just as the water of the Gaṅgā flows naturally and without cessation towards the ocean, similarly that natural unbroken flow of the ātmā towards Me, who am situated within the cave of the heart of the living entity, merely hearing about My pastimes and qualities, which are blessed with extraordinary potency, is called *nirguṇa-bhakti-yoga*. *Nirguṇa-bhakti* is *anyābhilāṣa-śūnya*, devoid of the duality of the material world which arises from *dvitīya-abhiniveśa* (forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa), and it absorbs the performer favourably in continuous service to Me, Puruṣottama.”

To forget Kṛṣṇa and become absorbed in *māyā* is called *dvitīya-abhiniveśa*, absorption in the second or false object (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.37). This gives rise to various separate interests, such as ‘I,’ ‘mine,’ ‘you’ and ‘yours’.

ŚLOKA 3

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

लोकेऽस्मिन् द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयानघ ।
ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥३॥

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

śrī bhagavān uvāca—Śrī Bhagavān said; *anagha*—O sinless one; *purā*—previously; *proktā*—it was clearly said; *maya*—by Me; (*that*) *asmin*—this; *loke*—in the world; (*there are*) *dvi-vidhā*—two types of; *niṣṭhā*—strong faith; (*that*) *sāṅkhyānām*—of the analytical philosophers; *jñāna-yogena*—through the linking process of philosophical speculation; (*and that*) *yoginām*—of the *yogīs*; *karma-yogena*—through the *yoga* of *niṣkāma-karma*.

Śrī Bhagavān said, “O sinless Arjuna, I have already explained clearly that there are two types of firm faith in this world. The faith of the *sāṅkhya-vādī jñānīs* is in the path of *jñāna-yoga* and that of the *yogīs* is in *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

In response to Arjuna’s question, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “If I say that *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga*, which are the *sādhana* performed to attain *mokṣa*, are independent of each other, you will again ask Me to speak decisively on one of them. But as I have explained, the two types of *niṣṭhā* (staunchness), *karma-niṣṭhā* and *jñāna-niṣṭhā*, are actually two consecutive stages on the same path. In fact, I have not said that there are two types of people who are eligible to achieve *mokṣa*.”

The two *ślokas* beginning with the present *śloka*, *loke 'smin*, are being spoken for this reason. As explained in the previous

chapter, *dvi-vidhā* indicates two types of *niṣṭhā*. Regarding this *niṣṭhā*, Kṛṣṇa is saying that, since in the stage of *jñāna* the heart of the *jñānī* is pure, *maryādā* (regulated discipline) can be established by the practice of *jñāna-yoga*. Only such persons who accept *maryādā* are well known in this world as *jñānīs*.

In *Gītā* (2.61) Śrī Kṛṣṇa says:

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

Therefore, after controlling all of their senses, the *yogīs* should remain under My shelter and devote themselves to Me. Only a person in control of his senses has fixed intelligence. Only he is *sthita-prajña*.

“On the other hand, there are those who lack the purity of heart to situate themselves on the path of *jñāna*, but are searching for the means to attain that path. The *maryādā* of such *yogīs* is established by following the path of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* which is offered unto Me. They are known as *karmīs*. In *Gītā* 2.31 it is said “For a *kṣatriya* there is no better engagement than to fight for religion.” Therefore the terms “*karmī*” and “*jñānī*” are only two appellations. However, generally when *karmīs* begin to purify their hearts by the process of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* they, too, become *jñānīs* who can in turn become liberated by the process of *bhakti*. This is the import of My statements.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The various processes of *karma*, *yoga*, *jñāna* and *tapasyā* cannot give their own results independently. They are only able to produce beneficial results by taking the support of *bhakti*. *Nirguṇa-bhakti*, however, can give *kṛṣṇa-prema* independently without the help of these other processes. *Bhakti-yoga* mixed with *jñāna* or *karma* is the *sādhana* for

achieving *mokṣa*. There are two types of *niṣṭhā* (staunch faith) related to this *sādhana*. The first is possessed by those with pure hearts, who ascend the path of *bhakti-yoga* through their steady faith in *sāṅkhya* or *jñāna-yoga*. The second is the faith of those whose hearts are impure, but who, by performing *niṣkāma-karma* offered to Śrī Bhagavān, can also ascend the path of *jñāna-yoga* and ultimately achieve *bhakti*.

ŚLOKA 4

न कर्मणामनारम्भात्रैकम्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।
न च सन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥४॥

*na karmaṇām anārambhāt / naiṣkarmyam puruṣo ‘śnute
na ca sannyasanād eva / siddhim samadhgacchati*

(it is) *na anārambhāt*—not by refraining from; *karmaṇām*—prescribed duties; (that) *puruṣah*—a person; *aśnute*—attains; *naiṣkarmyam*—freedom from reaction; *ca*—and; (it is) *na*—not; *eva*—only; *sannyasanāt*—by renouncing prescribed duties; (that a person whose heart is impure) *samadhgacchati*—attains; *siddhim*—perfection.

Without performing *karma* as prescribed in *śāstra*, a person cannot attain knowledge in the form of *naiṣkarmya*, nor can a person with an impure heart attain perfection merely by renouncing action (*sannyāsa*).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this *śloka* beginning with the word *na*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining that *jñāna* will not appear in an impure heart. One cannot attain *naiṣkarmya* (freedom from *karma* and its reaction), without performing the *karma* (action) prescribed in *śāstra* and consequently one cannot attain *jñāna*. Those persons whose hearts are impure cannot attain perfection

merely by accepting *sannyāsa*, the renunciation of prescribed *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Jñāna does not appear unless the heart is pure, and without *jñāna* one cannot perfect *sannyāsa*, which is a limb of the process of attaining *mokṣa*. Therefore, until one attains *jñāna* by purity of heart one should, as stated in *śāstra*, continue performing prescribed duties related to *varṇāśrama-dharma*.

ŚLOKA 5

न हि कश्चित् क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥५॥

na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api / jātu tiṣṭhaty akarmakṛt
kāryate hy avaśah karma / sarvah prakṛti-jair guṇaiḥ

hi—certainly; *na kaścit*—no one; *jātu*—at any time; *tiṣṭhati*—can remain; *akarma-kṛt*—inactive; *api*—even; *kṣaṇam*—for a moment; *sarvah*—everyone; *hi*—certainly; *kāryate*—is engaged; *avaśah*—helplessly; *karma*—in action; *guṇaiḥ*—through the modes; *prakṛti-jaiḥ*—born of one's nature.

No one can remain without performing action, even for a moment. Everyone is impelled to act under the influence of such qualities such as attachment, envy and so on which are born of his nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Those who have accepted *sannyāsa* while their hearts are still impure become absorbed in mundane activities, and give up the *karma* prescribed to them in *śāstra*. It is for this reason only that Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *na hi*. Anticipating Arjuna's question, "By the acceptance of

sannyāsa does a person cease performing activities prescribed in the *Vedas* or activities which are related to the material world?" Śrī Bhagavān responds by saying, *kāryate*. "Being forcibly bound by his own nature, he must act."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here, the word *sannyāsa* means detachment from the fruits of *karma*. It does not mean completely giving up *karma* or becoming inactive, because it is not possible for the embodied soul to completely renounce activity. It is stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.1.44), *dehavān na hy akarma-kṛt*. "Those whose hearts are pure and who control their senses, remain engaged in that *karma* prescribed in *sāstra*. However, persons whose hearts are impure and whose senses are uncontrolled remain attached to *akarma* (neglect of duty) and *kukarma* (sinful actions). It is therefore impossible for such persons to achieve *sannyāsa*."

SLOKA 6

**कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।
इन्द्रियार्थान् विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥६॥**

*karmendriyāṇi samyamya / ya āste manasā smaran
indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā / mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate*

sah vimūḍha-ātmā—a foolish person; *yah*—who; *samyamya*—controls; *karma-indriyāṇi*—the working senses; (yet) *āste*—remains; *smaran*—meditating; *indriya-arthaḥ*—on sense objects; *manasā*—by means of the mind; *ucyate*—is called; *mithyācāraḥ*—one whose behaviour is false, a hypocrite.

A deluded person who forcibly controls his working senses while internally meditating on sense objects is to be known as a hypocrite.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

One may argue, “It seems that, like the hypocrite, some sannyāsīs are seen with their eyes closed and devoid of bodily movements.” In response Śrī Bhagavān says, “One who controls his working senses (*karmendriyas*) such as speech and hands, but who thinks of sense objects on the pretext of meditation, is a hypocrite and an imposter.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

*tvam padārtha-vivekāya sannyasah sarva-karmaṇām
śrutyeha vihito yasmāt tat-tyāgī patito bhavet*

This Vedic injunction from the *dharma-sāstra* states that it is absolutely essential to renounce all fruitive actions in order to attain knowledge of the self (*tvam padārtha*). Those who do not follow this injunction are fallen. Therefore, a man with an impure heart who accepts the dress of a *sannyāsī* and who makes a display of sitting in an āsana to meditate on Bhagavān is a pretender and is *adharma*. To exhibit oneself in society as a devotee while being devoid of *bhakti* is pretentious. Such people are not only hypocritical but also arrogant.

ŚLOKA 7

**यस्त्वन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेर्जुन ।
कर्मन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते ॥७॥**

*yas tv indriyāṇi manasā / niyamyārabhate‘rjuna
karmendriyaiḥ karma-yogam / asaktaḥ sa viśiṣyate*

tu—however; *arjuna*—O Arjuna; *sah yaḥ*—he who; *asaktaḥ*—without attachment; *niyamya*—controls; *indriyāṇi*—the senses; *manasā*—through the mind; (and) *ārabhate*—begins; *karma-yogam*—the process of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; *karma-indriyaiḥ*—through the medium of the working senses; *viśiṣyate*—is superior.

O Arjuna, a person who performs action with his working senses (*karmendriyas*), according to the injunctions of *sāstra*, but who has controlled his senses by his mind, and who is free from all fruitive desires, is superior to the hypocrite who refrains from activity.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

It is indicated here that, even a *gr̥hastha* who acts according to *sāstra* is recognised as superior to the false renunciant described in the previous *śloka*. Śrī Bhagavān explains this by speaking this *śloka* beginning with *yas tu*. Here, *karma-yoga* refers to action prescribed in *sāstra*, and *asaktaḥ* means without desire for the fruits of one's activity. This means that the person who acts according to the instructions of *sāstra* with no desire for the fruits of his activities attains a superior condition. Śrī Rāmānujācārya says: *asambhāvita-pramādatvena jñāna-niṣṭhād api puruṣād viśiṣṭah*. "A householder who has controlled his knowledge-acquiring senses (*jñānendriyas*) and his working senses (*karmendriyas*), is better than a so-called transcendentalist who makes a display of his knowledge. The pseudo-transcendentalist may deviate because his senses are uncontrolled, but there is no possibility that a householder who has controlled his knowledge-acquiring senses will deviate or be careless while performing his prescribed duties with his working senses."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In order to purify the heart, it is imperative to perform actions prescribed in *sāstra* without attachment. Those *sādhakas* who, after controlling their *jñānendriyas* (such as the eyes, ears and tongue), perform *karma-yoga* with their *karmendriyas* (such as the legs, hands and speech) without desiring the fruits, and who are always careful and attentive, are qualified to attain *puruṣārtha*, the supreme goal of human

life. Such *sādhakas* who aspire for the transcendental goal are superior to those *sādhakas* who accept *sannyāsa* impetuously and who forcibly control their working senses while enjoying sense objects through their knowledge-acquiring senses.

ŚLOKA 8

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।
शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिध्येदकर्मणः ॥८॥

niyataṁ kuru karma tvam / karma jyāyo hy akarmaṇah
śarīra-yātrāpi ca te / na prasidhyed akarmaṇah

tvam—you; *kuru*—must perform; *karma*—duties; *niyataṁ*—under regulation of *śāstra* (*sandhyā* and *upāsanā*); *hi*—certainly; *karma*—action; *jyāyah*—is better; *akarmaṇah*—than inaction; *ca*—and; *api*—even; *te*—your; *śarīra*—bodily; *yātrā*—maintenance; *na prasidhyet*—can not be effected; *akarmaṇah*—without work.

Perform your prescribed duties such as *sandhyā* and *upāsanā*, because action (*karma*) is better than inaction (*akarma*). If you refrain from action, you will not even be able to maintain your body.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Therefore, O Arjuna, perform your *nitya-karma* (regulated duties) such as *sandhyā* (morning, noon and evening prayers) and *upāsanā* (worship). It is better to do so than to renounce *karma* (*akarmaṇah*). If you give up all *karma*, you will not even be able to maintain your body.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The above statement is verified in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (7.26.2):

āhāra-śuddhau sattva-śuddhiḥ
 sattva-śuddhau dhruvā smṛtiḥ
 smṛti-lambhe sarvagrānθīnām vipramokṣah

It is by the purity of food that one's mind becomes purified and *sāttvika*. When the mind is purified, one attains a stable memory. When the memory is stable, all the knots of the heart are untied.

Furthermore it is stated in *Gītā* (3.13):

bhuñjate te tv agham pāpā / ye pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt

It is understood from this and other statements that for the perfection of one's *sādhana*, it is necessary to maintain and protect the body, which is essential for the performance of one's *sva-dharma* (prescribed duties). However, those who impulsively give up all action by taking *sannyāsa* do not see the light of knowledge in their impure hearts. Moreover, if they perform no work at all, they can even leave their bodies due to lack of maintenance.

ŚLOKA 9

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।
 तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥९॥

*yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra / loko 'yam karma-bandhanah
 tad-arthaṁ karma kaunteya / mukta-saṅgah samācara*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *anyatra*—other; *karmaṇah*—than *niṣkāma-karma*; *yajña-arthāt*—for the sake of Śrī Viṣṇu; *ayam*—this; *lokaḥ*—humanity; *karma-bandhanah*—has bondage through their work; (being) *mukta-saṅgah*—free from attachment; *samācara*—nicely perform; *karma*—work; *tad-arthaṁ*—for His sake.

O Kaunteya, all actions other than *niṣkāma-karma* offered to Śrī Viṣṇu are a cause of bondage to this

world. Therefore, become free from all desires for the fruits of your actions, and perform appropriate action solely for His satisfaction.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān says, “O Arjuna, if you quote *karmaṇā badhyate jantuḥ* from the *smṛti-śāstra* as evidence that a *jīvātmā* is bound by performing action, and if you think that you will also become bound, then listen carefully. This is not always the case. Karma offered to Parameśvara is not a cause of bondage.” The present śloka beginning with *yajñārthāt* is spoken to explain this. *Niṣkāma-dharma*, performance of one’s prescribed duties wherein the fruits are offered to Śrī Viṣṇu, is called *yajña*. All *karma* (action), except for that performed for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu, binds a person to the material world. Therefore, to attain perfection in *dharma*, one must perform such *karma* properly for the satisfaction of Śrī Viṣṇu. If Arjuna again asks, “Will it be a cause of bondage to make an offering which is materially motivated, even though I am offering the results of my prescribed duties to Śrī Viṣṇu?” Śrī Kṛṣṇa answers, *mukta-saṅgah*. “Perform action without any desire for the fruits.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructed Uddhava in the same way:

*sva-dharma-stho yajan yajñair / anāśih-kāma uddhava
na yāti svarga-narakau / yady anyan na samācaret
asmil loke vartamānah / sva-dharma-stho'naghah śuciḥ
jñānam viśuddham āpnoti / mad-bhaktim vā yadṛcchayā*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.20.10-11

O Uddhava, a person who performs his *sva-dharma* without desiring the fruits and who worships Śrī Bhagavān by *yajña*, not engaging in the pursuit of any desirable sense object or any forbidden activity, attains neither heaven nor hell. Such a person, who is situated in his *sva-dharma*, who has given up all

forbidden activities and who is free from all attachment and envy, attains *viśuddha jñāna*, pure knowledge, even in his present condition in this world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *Vedas* say: *yajño vai viṣṇuh*. “*Yajña* is indeed *Viṣṇu*.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa also tells Uddhava in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.19.39): *yajño 'ham bhagavattamaḥ*. “I, the son of Vasudeva, am *yajña*.” The Tantra-sāra also states *yajña* to be Śrī Hari Himself:

*yajño yajña-pumānś caiva yajñaśo yajña-bhāvanaḥ
yajña-bhuk ceti pañcātmā yajñeṣv ijyo hariḥ svayam*

In the two *ślokas* of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.10-11), which Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has cited in his commentary on the present *śloka*, the word *sva-dharma-stha* (situated in one’s prescribed duties) has been used twice. While commenting on these two *ślokas*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says:

- 1) One does not go to hell if he is situated in his *sva-dharma* and does not transgress the activities prescribed in *sāstra*, that is, he does not engage in forbidden activities. And, since he has no desire for the fruits of his activities, he does not go to Svarga (heaven) either.
- 2) A person who engages in *niṣkāma-karma* is called *sva-dharma-stha*.

When *karma* is performed in accordance with *sāstra*, without any selfish motive and for the pleasure of Śrī Viṣṇu, it purifies the heart. *Sādhu-saṅga* then causes *bhagavat-tattva* to appear in the heart, allowing one to enter the path of *nirguṇa-bhakti*.

Devarṣi Nārada has also said this in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.32):

*etat saṁsūcitaṁ brahmaṁ / tāpa-traya-cikitsitam
yad iśvare bhagavati / karma brahmaṇi bhāvitam*

O knower of *brahma*, that *karma* which is dedicated to the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān, the controller and master of everyone, removes the three types of miseries.

Śrī Bhagavān also told the Pracetās:

gṛheṣ्व अविशताम् चपि / पुम्साम् कुशला-कर्मणाम्
मदवृत्तायाता-यामानाम् / न बन्धाया ग्रहामताः
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.30.19

Those who know Me to be the enjoyer of the fruits of all activities offer all of their *karma* to Me alone. Such expert performers of action, as well as those who spend their time hearing and reciting My pastimes, do not become bound by their actions, even though remaining in household life.

ŚLOKA 10

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥१०॥

saha-yajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā / purovāca prajāpatih
anena prasaviṣyadhwam / eṣa vo 'stv iṣṭa-kāma-dhuk

purā—in ancient times; *sṛṣṭvā*—having created; *prajāḥ*—progeny; *saha-yajñāḥ*—together with *brāhmaṇas* qualified to perform *yajña*; *prajā-patiḥ*—Prajāpati Brahmā; *uvāca*—said; *anena*—by this *yajña*; *prasaviṣyadhwam*—be more and more prosperous; *astu*—let; *eṣāḥ*—this *yajña*; (be) *vah*—your; *iṣṭa-kāmadhuk*—fulfiller of cherished desires.

In the beginning of creation, Prajāpati Brahmā created *brāhmaṇas* who were qualified to perform *yajña*, and also men, *devas* and all the other subjects. He then blessed them, saying, “May you prosper by this *yajñā*, and may it fulfil all your desires.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān says, “A person with an impure heart should exclusively engage in *niṣkāma-karma* and not take *sannyāsa*, but if in his present state he cannot become *niṣkāma*, then let him perform *sakāma-karma* (fruitive action) and offer the results to Śrī Viṣṇu.” To explain this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks seven ślokas, the first of which begins here with the word *saha*. *Sahayajña* means along with sacrifice. In accordance with the *sūta-vikalpe-upasarjana*, *saha* has not been replaced with *sa*.

Purā implies that in the beginning of creation, Brahmā produced progeny who would perform *yajña* in the form of *dharma* activities offered to Śrī Viṣṇu, and then blessed them, saying, *anena dharmena prasaviṣyadhvam*. “By this *dharma* may you become increasingly prosperous in terms of progeny and opulence.” Keeping in mind the tendency of the progeny to enjoy, Lord Brahmā said, “Let this *yajña* fulfil all your desired ends.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Offering *kāmya-karma*, fruitive action, to Śrī Viṣṇu is better than *akarma* (non-action).

SLOKA 11

देवान् भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥११॥

*devān bhāvayatānena / te devā bhāvayantu vah
parasparam bhāvayantah / śreyah param avāpsyatha*

bhāvayatā—by pleasing; *devān*—the devas; *anena*—through this *yajña*; *te*—those; *devāḥ*—devas; *bhāvayantu*—must please; *vah*—you; *bhāvayantah*—may please (by bestowing the results); *parasparam*—one another; *avāpsyatha*—you shall attain; *param*—supreme; *śreyah*—good fortune.

May you please the *devas* by this *yajña*, and may they please you in turn by granting you your desired fruits. Satisfying one another in this way, you will attain the supreme auspiciousness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this *śloka* beginning with *devān*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is explaining how *yajña* can grant all the heart's desires. He says, "May you please the *devas* by this *yajña*, may those *devas* also please you." In this context the word *bhāva* means *prīti*, pleasing.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this *śloka*, Bhagavān instructs that, to please the *devas*, oblations of ghee are to be offered to them. This has a hidden meaning. Bhagavān is not instructing us to give up our devotional service and make sacrificial offerings to worship the *devas*, as if they are independent lords. They are not independent. Śrī Viṣṇu empowers qualified *jīvātmās* and, giving them the post of protectors of the directions, He maintains the universe through them. Thus, these *devas* are like the limbs of Śrī Bhagavān. It is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.11.26): *bāhavo loka-pālānām*. "The arms of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are the shelter for all of the administrative *devas* of the world." Again it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.1.29): *indrādayo bāhava āhur usrāḥ*. "Devas such as Indra are the arms of the *virāt-puruṣa*, the Lord's universal form."

Regarding Indra-pūjā, it is seen in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam that the residents of Vraja used to worship him every year, but Śrī Kṛṣṇa asked them to worship the mountain Giri Govardhana instead. When Indra's arrogance was crushed, he accepted that it was due to pride in his *aiśvarya* (opulence) that he considered himself an independent lord. Śrī Bhagavān showed him great mercy by removing his false ego. Indra said, "Now, having realised that I am the servant of the servant of Your

servants, I surrender to You.” From this context it is evident that the *devas* who protect the various directions are the limbs of the *virāt-puruṣa* (universal form).

SLOKA 12

इष्टान् भोगान्हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः ।
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्के स्तेन एव सः ॥१२॥

*iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā / dāsyante yajña-bhāvitāḥ
tair dattān apradāyaibhyo / yo bhunkte stena eva saḥ*

yajña-bhāvitāḥ—being pleased by the performance of sacrifices; *hi*—indeed; *devāḥ*—the *devas*; *dāsyante*—will award; *vaḥ*—unto you; *iṣṭān*—the desired; *bhogān*—pleasures; *yaḥ*—he who; *bhunkte*—enjoys; *dattān*—ingredients given; *taiḥ*—by them; *apradaīya*—without offering; *ebhyah*—unto the *devas*; *sah*—he; (*is*) *eva*—certainly; *stenaḥ*—a thief.

Being pleased by your *yajña*, the *devas* will award your desired goals. Therefore, a person who enjoys the ingredients given by the *devas*, without first offering them to the *devas*, is certainly a thief.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Failure to perform *karma* is certainly a defect. Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *iṣṭān* to clarify this point. Grains and other products grow due to rain which is caused by the *devas*. After producing grains and other items, a person who enjoys them, without first offering them to the *devas* by performing *pañca-mahā-yajña*, is a thief.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In regard to *pañca-mahā-yajña*, it is stated in the *Garuḍa Purāṇa*:

adhyāpanam brahma-yajñah
 pitṛ-yajñas tu tarpaṇam
 homo daivo balir bhauto
 nṛ-yajño 'tithi-pūjanam

1) Adhyāpana, to give instructions from śāstra to the disciple is brahma-yajña. 2) To offer oblations to the forefathers is pitṛ-yajña. 3) To perform homa-yajña (fire sacrifice) is deva-yajña. 4) To give in charity offerings of fruits, flowers, grains and so on to the living entities is bali or bhūta-yajña. 5) To receive guests warmly-heartedly is called nṛ-yajña.

Many persons think that the word bali in this śloka means to offer a yajña by killing animals and humans, but this is not the opinion of śāstra.

loke vyavāyāmiṣa-madya-sevā
 nityā hi jantor na hi tatra codanā
 vyavasthitis teṣu vivāha-yajña
 surā-grahair āsu nivṛttir iṣṭā
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.5.11

The true meaning of bali is to give grains, water, fruits, flowers and animals in charity for the satisfaction of the devas.

ŚLOKA 13

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः ।
 भुञ्जते ते त्वधं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥१३॥

yajña-śiṣṭāśinah santo / mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ
 bhuñjate te tv agham pāpā / ye pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt

santah—saintly persons; (are) aśinah—eaters; yajña-śiṣṭa—of the remnants of food of yajña; mucyante—they are freed; sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ—from all sins; tu—but; te—those; pāpāḥ—sinners; ye—who; bhuñjate—eat; ātma-kāraṇāt—for their own sake; pacanti—digest; agham—sin.

Saintly persons who accept the remnants of *yajña* become free from all sins, but those who cook grains and other foodstuffs for their own sake are sinful, and certainly partake of sin.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Those who accept the grain remnants of *yajñas*, such as *vaiśvadeva* (a type of *deva-yajña*), become free from the sins incurred due to *pañca-sūnā*. According to *smṛti-śāstra*, the five objects known to the householder as *pañca-sūnā* are: the cooking fire, the grinding instrument, the mortar and pestle, the water-pot and the broom. The word *sūnā* means the place where animals are slaughtered. These five household objects are called *pañca-sūnā* because they may inflict violence upon living entities. It is only because of *pañca-sūnā* that householders do not attain Svarga.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Yajñas related with the worship of the *devatās* are called *vaiśvadeva*.

*vasu-sato kratu-dakṣau kāla-kāmau dhṛtih kuruḥ
purūravā mādravāś ca viśvadevāḥ prakīrtitāḥ*

Bharata Muni

Violence is caused unknowingly to living entities by the householders' use of the pestle, fire, grinding instrument, water-pot, and broom.

Those who cook food for themselves become implicated in such sins. Even if they properly perform their prescribed duties, they do not attain Svarga. Therefore, the *smṛti-śāstras* have prescribed the *pañca-yajña* to nullify the sins from *pañca-sūnā*: *pañca-sūnā kṛtam pāpam pañca-yajñair vyapohati*.

ŚLOKA 14

अत्राद्ववन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्तसम्भवः ।

यज्ञाद्ववति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः ॥१४॥

*annād bhavanti bhūtāni / parjanyād anna-sambhavah
yajñād bhavati parjanyo / yajñah karma-samudbhavaḥ*

bhūtāni—living beings; *bhavanti*—develop; *annāt*—from grains; *parjanyāt*—from rains; *anna*—food grains; *sambhavah*—are produced; *yajñāt*—from the performance of sacrifice; *parjanyaḥ*—rain; *bhavati*—is produced; *yajñah*—sacrifice; *samudbhavaḥ*—is born of; *karma*—prescribed duties.

All living beings are born from food grains, which are produced from rain. Rains are produced from *yajña*, and *yajña* is born of prescribed duties.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān says, “It is still desirable to perform *yajña*, because it maintains the cycle of action in this material world.” To express this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks the śloka beginning with the word *annād*. Living entities take birth from food grains, thus food grains are the cause of living entities. Grain is transformed into blood which then turns into semen, which in turn forms the body of the living entity. Clouds are the source of food grains, which are produced from rain. *Yajña* is the cause of the clouds, because when *yajña* is performed, sufficient rain clouds are produced. The cause of the *yajña* is *karma* (action), because a *yajña* is perfectly executed when the ḗtvik (priest) of the *yajña* and the *yajamāna* (he on whose behalf the *yajña* is performed) both fulfil the prescribed *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

ṛtvik—Priests who perform *yajña* in different seasons are called *ṛtvik*:

*āgnedheyam pāka-yajñān āgniṣṭomādikān makhān
yah karoti vṛto yasya sa tasyartvig ihocaye*

There are four prominent *ṛtviks* in the performance of *yajña*. They are known as: 1) *hotā*, one who chants the *Rg Veda* mantras; 2) *adhvaryu*, one who chants the *Yajur Veda* mantras; 3) *brahmā*, one who chants the *Atharva Veda* mantras, and 4) *udgātā*, one who chants the *Sāma Veda* mantras.

ŚLOKA 15

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् ।
तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥१५॥

*karma brahmodbhavam viddhi / brahmākṣara-samudbhavam
tasmāt sarva-gatam brahma / nityam yajñe pratiṣṭhitam*

viddhi—you should know that; *karma*—prescribed duties; *ubdhavam*—originate; *brahma*—from the *Vedas*; (and that) *brahma*—the *Vedas*; *samudbhavam*—originate; *akṣara*—from Acyute, the immutable Supreme Lord; *tasmāt*—for this reason; *sarva-gatam*—the all-pervading; *brahma*—supreme *brahma*; (is) *nityam*—always; *pratiṣṭhitam*—situated; *yajñe*—in sacrifice.

Know that prescribed duties are inspired by the *Vedas* and that the *Vedas* originate from Acyuta. The all-pervading *brahma* is therefore always situated in *yajña*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

The *Vedas* are the cause of that *karma* (*yajña*), because *yajña* is performed only after hearing Vedic injunctions. *Akṣara-brahma*, or Acyuta, the imperishable Absolute Reality, is the cause of the *Vedas*, because they originated from *brahma*. In this regard it is said in the *Vedas* (*śruti*):

asya mahato bhūtasya niḥśvasitam etad
ṛg-vedo yajur-vedah sāmavedo 'tharvāṅgirasaḥ
Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.5.11

The *Rg Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sāma Veda* and *Atharva Veda* are the breath of the Mahāpuruṣa. Therefore, *sarva-gatam*, the all-pervading *brahma*, is situated in *yajña*.

This statement also establishes that one can attain *brahma* by *yajña*. Although a connection of cause and effect has been shown here by linking food grains to *brahma*, in *śāstra*, only *yajña* is described as the governing factor and only *yajña* is glorified. *Manu-smṛti* also says: “Oblations offered in the fire reach Sūrya-deva, the sun-god. From the sun comes rain, from rain comes food grains, and from food grains progeny are born.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Udyamasthā sadā laksmīḥ. “Wealth always resides in endeavour.” Similarly, the all-pervading *brahma* is always situated in *yajña*. By engaging in *yajña* and righteous acts, the *jīva* not only becomes free from sin but can also attain *brahma*.

ŚLOKA 16

एवं प्रवर्त्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्त्यतीह यः ।
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥१६॥

evam pravarttitam cakram / nānuvartayatīha yaḥ
aghāyur indriyārāmo / mogham pārtha sa jīvati

pārtha—O Pārtha; *iha*—in this world; *yaḥ*—one who; *na anuvartayati*—does not follow; *cakram*—the cycle; *evam*—thus; *pravarttitam*—set into motion; (is) *indriyaārāmaḥ*—attached to the senses; (and) *aghāyuh*—a life of sin; *sah*—he; *jīvati*—lives; *mogham*—in vain.

O Pārtha, in this world one who does not follow this cycle of *karma*, which is established by the *Vedas*, becomes attached to his senses and engaged in sinful activity. Thus he lives in vain.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

By not engaging in this cycle, the fault of irregularity arises. The present *śloka* beginning with *evam* is spoken to give an understanding of this point. *Cakra*, or cycle, means an ordered series of events. For example, clouds and rain come from *yajña*, food grains come from rains, and from food grains come the living beings (men) who again perform *yajña*, which produces rain clouds and so on. One who does not engage in *yajña* to continue this cycle is *aghāyuh*, a sinful person. Who does not go to hell? Only one who performs *yajña* does not go to hell.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Parameśvara has established the cycle of *karma* to fulfil the desires of the *jīvas*. Consequently, one who does not perform *yajña*, which perpetuates the cycle of the universe, becomes implicated in sin and goes to hell.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Thākura says, “O Pārtha, those who are qualified to engage in *kāmya-karma* (action with fruitive desires), but who do not perform *yajña* to perpetuate the cycle of the universe, become servants of their senses, which engage them in sinful life. Thus they live in vain.” The significance is that there is no consideration of sin or piety in *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* which is offered to Śrī Bhagavān, because *śāstra* has established this as the most suitable path to attain *nirguṇa-bhakti* of Bhagavān. A person following this path easily becomes pure at heart and free from material contamination. Those who have not acquired the *adhikāra* to offer this *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* to Śrī Bhagavān are always swayed by material desires and sensual urges and thus engage in sinful acts. The only way to reduce this sinful tendency is to perform *pūṇya-karma*. Those who have acted sinfully should only take shelter of atonement. The provision of *yajña* is certainly *dharma*, pious activity. That which is auspicious for all *jīvas* and conducive for the harmonious development of

the cycle of the universe, is called *pūṇya*, or pious deeds. The performance of *pūṇya* destroys the unavoidable sins that are born of *pañca-sūnā*. So long as the performer of *yajña* protects the interests and welfare of the universe, whatever can be accepted for his happiness and personal enjoyment becomes part of the *yajña*, and is counted as piety.

The unseen controllers who cause auspiciousness for the universe are the specific *devas* born from the *śakti* of Śrī Bhagavān. By satisfying them with the offerings they desire and gaining their favour, one pleases these *devas* and all sins are destroyed. This is called the *karma-cakra*. Thus, *karma*, which is accepted in the form of worship of these *devas*, is called *bhagavat-arpita kāmya-karma*, or *sakāma upāsanā* (worship with fruitive desires). Some people falsely believe that they are righteous and religious, even though they do not offer their *karma* to Śrī Viṣṇu, and are not devotionally inclined. They perform action, but disregard any form of *deva* worship, because they think that it is mundane. Such people are themselves simply following mundane morality. It is therefore auspicious for the *jīvas* of the world who are thus eligible not to follow these deluded religionists, but to perform *bhagavat-arpita kāmya-karma*.

ŚLOKA 17

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।
आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥१७॥

*yas tv ātma-ratir eva syād / ātma-trptaś ca mānavah
ātmany eva ca santuṣṭas / tasya kāryam na vidyate*

tu—however; *eva*—certainly; *mānavah*—the man; *yah*—one who; *ātma-ratiḥ*—delighting in the self; *ca*—and; *syāt*—is; *ātma-trptah*—self-satisfied; *ca*—and; *santuṣṭah*—satisfied; *ātmani*—in the self; *eva*—certainly; *tasya*—for him; *kāryam*—duties; *na*—do not; *vidyate*—exist.

However, a person who delights in the self, and who remains contented and satisfied in the self, has no duties to perform.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

So far, it has been explained that those who are unable to perform *niṣkāma-karma* should perform *sakāma-karma*. Those who are situated on the platform of *jñāna*, realised knowledge, never engage in the routine of *kāmya-karma* (*sakāma karma*), because their hearts are pure. The next two *ślokas*, beginning here with *yas tu*, are spoken to explain this. Ātma-ratiḥ means ātmārāma, taking pleasure in the self. Ātma-tṛptah refers to those who remain satisfied simply by realizing the pleasure of the self. If one is satisfied within the ātmā itself, would he be even slightly satisfied with external sense objects? In response Śrī Bhagavān says, “One who is satisfied within has no need for external sense pleasures, and is therefore not obliged to perform prescribed duties.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Living entities who exist in the cycle of *karma*, which has been described above, perform *karma*, knowing it to be obligatory. However, those who can discriminate between the self and inert objects engage solely in the cultivation of the self. They remain content within the self, because they are ātmārāma (able to take pleasure in the self) and āptakāma (able to satisfy all their desires in the self). Such *mahā-puruṣas* are of two types: 1) the *jñāni-yogīs* who search for the ātmā and 2) the *bhakti-yogīs* who cultivate the path of *bhagavat-prema*. Personalities like the four Kumāras (Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanat-Kumāra) are considered to be in the first category, while personalities like Devarṣi Nārada fall in the second. They do not perform *karma*, although they know it is their obligatory duty, but perform actions which are favourable to *bhakti* simply to maintain their lives. Becoming free from

the cycle of *karma*, they search for peace through *bhagavat-prīti* (affection for Bhagavān). Although they perform all sorts of *karma*, they do nothing. Therefore, their *karma* is not called *karma*. Their *karma* (activity) is called *jñāna* or *bhakti*, depending on their *adhikāra*. It is also said in Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.4): *ātma-kṛida ātma-ratiḥ kriyāvān esa brahma-vidām variṣṭhah*. “Those who take pleasure in the self, whose attachment is in the self, and who are active only in the self, are the best among the knowers of the *Vedas*.”

ŚLOKA 18

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥१८॥

*naiva tasya kṛtenārtho / nākṛteneha kaścana
na cāsyā sarva-bhūteṣu / kaścid artha-vyapāśrayah*

tasya—for him; (there is) na—no; arthah—purpose to be attained; kaścana—whatssoever; iha—in this world; kṛtena—by acting; ca—and; na—not; eva—indeed; akṛtena—by not acting; asya—he has; na—not; kaścit—any; artha—necessity; vyapāśrayah—to take shelter; sarva-bhūteṣu—of any of the living beings.

One who is *ātmārāma* does not attain any virtue by performing action in this world, nor does he incur any fault through not acting, and nor does he need to depend on any *jīva* in the universe for attaining his purpose.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Kṛta refers to a person who neither has interest in performing actions nor has any desires to be fulfilled by such actions. *Akṛta* means that he is not at fault by not performing action. To attain his purpose, there is no *jīva* in the universe, either moving or non-moving, who can act as a suitable shelter for

him. The word *vyapāśrayaḥ* has been described in the *Purāṇas* as follows:

*vāsudeve bhagavati / bhaktim udvahatāṁ nṛṇām
jñāna-vairāgya-vīryāṇāṁ / na hi kaścid vyapāśrayaḥ*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.17.31

A person endowed with *bhakti* for Bhagavān Vāsudeva does not take shelter of *jñāna*, *vairāgya* or *vīrya* (powerful strength), nor is he interested in them.

Moreover, it is stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.4.18): *yad-apāśrayāśrayāḥ śudhyanti*. “A living entity becomes purified merely by taking shelter of those who are surrendered to Śrī Bhagavān.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

A person who derives pleasure only within the self (*ātmārāma*) neither achieves piety by performing his prescribed duties, nor does he become implicated in sin by not performing them. Every *jīva*, both moving and non-moving, beginning with Brahmā, remains absorbed in enjoying material happiness due to his misconception of identifying the body with the self. His every action is performed for sense enjoyment. He does not even care for *jñāna* and *vairāgya*, which are the shelter of the *tyagīs*. This is because he has taken shelter of *bhakti*, the natural function of the self. *Jñāna* and *vairāgya*, which are both subordinate to *bhakti*, manifest in him as a matter of course.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.42), Śrī Kavi speaks to Mahārāja Nimi:

*bhaktih pareśānubhavo viraktir
anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālaḥ
prapadyamānasya yathāśnataḥ syus
tuṣṭih puṣṭih kṣud-apāyo 'nu-ghāsam*

With each mouthful of food that a hungry person takes, three

effects are simultaneously accomplished: he obtains satisfaction, he is nourished and his hunger ceases. Similarly, surrendered souls who are engaged in the performance of *bhajana* simultaneously experience three effects: the awakening of *bhakti* which ultimately develops into *prema*, direct manifestation of Bhagavān's beloved form, and detachment from material objects.

One may raise the following question: In the *Vedas* it is said: *tasmād tan na priyam yad etan manusyā viduh*. "The devas do not want human beings to attain knowledge of *brahma*." (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 1.4.10) It is also seen in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.18.14):

*viprasya vai sannyasato / devā dārādi-rūpiṇah
vighnān kurvanyt ayam hy asmān / ākramya samiyāt param*

Knowing that *brāhmaṇas* will surpass them by taking *sannyāsa* and obtaining *brahma-tattva*, the *devas* take birth to become their wives or children and to create obstacles in their path.

Thus, is it proper to worship the *devas* to eliminate these obstacles?

In this regard, the *śrutis* state that, even though the *devas* present these obstacles, they are, in fact, unable to harm the spiritual aspirants, because the *ātmā* itself protects them. This *ātmā* is the *ātmā* of all *ātmās*, Paramātmā.

vāsudeva-parā vedā / vāsudeva-parā makhāḥ

vāsudeva-parā yogā / vāsudeva-parāḥ kriyāḥ

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.28

According to this statement, Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa is the original *ātmā* of all other *ātmās*. By performing *bhajana* to Him one can gain the affection of everyone. All the *devas* are ultimately compelled to show affection and respect to those who have *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

In addition it is stated: *bhaktis tu bhagavad-bhakta-saṅgena*

parijāyate. “One attains *bhakti* only by the association of *bhaktas*.” According to this statement of *śāstra*, just as Śrī Bhagavān is the only suitable shelter for the *bhaktas*, it is similarly necessary to take shelter of His *bhaktas* if one desires *bhakti*. For this reason, Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.23) states:

yasya deve parā bhaktir / yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ / prakāśante mahātmānah

All the essential purports of *śāstra* are revealed only in the heart of a *mahātmā* who has *parā bhakti* to Śrī Bhagavān and as he has devotion for Bhagavān similarly he has *śuddha-bhakti* for Śrī Gurudeva.

ŚLOKA 19

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।
असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥१९॥

tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ / kāryam karma samācara
asakto hy ācaran karma / param āpnoti pūruṣah

tasmāt—therefore; *asaktaḥ*—without attachment; *satataṁ*—always; *saṁācara*—perform nicely; *karma*—work; *kāryam*—which ought to be done; *hi*—certainly; *ācaran*—performing; *karma*—prescribed duties; *asaktaḥ*—without attachment; *pūruṣah*—a man; *āpnoti*—attains; *param*—*mokṣa*.

Therefore, always perform your prescribed duties without attachment. By working in this way, a person attains *mokṣa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

“O Arjuna, you are not qualified to be on the platform of *jñāna*. But since you are a man of proper wisdom, your *adhikāra* has surpassed the level of performing *kāmya-karma*. Therefore, only perform *niṣkāma-karma*.” This *śloka* beginning with

tasmād is spoken for this reason. *Kāryam* means that which is prescribed as an obligatory duty. After performing that prescribed duty, one attains *mokṣa*, supreme liberation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

By always performing *niṣkāma-karma*, the heart becomes purified. When the heart is purified, one attains *jñāna* by which the *sādhaka* can attain *mokṣa*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura says, “That while engaging in *karma*, the transcendental *bhakti* which one attains as the mature state of *karma yoga* has been called liberation here.”

ŚLOKA 20

कर्मणैव हि सांसिद्धमास्थिता जनकादयः ।
लोकसंग्रहमेवापि सम्पश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि ॥२०॥

*karmaṇaiwa hi saṁsiddhim / āsthitā janakādayaḥ
loka-saṅgraham evāpi / sampaśyan kartum arhasi*

janaka-ādayaḥ—Janaka and other kings; *hi eva*—most assuredly; *āsthitāḥ*—became situated; *saṁsiddhim*—in supreme perfection; *karmaṇā*—by performance of prescribed duties; *eva*—certainly; *sampaśyan*—considering; *loka-saṅgraham*—the protection of the people; *arhasi*—you ought; *api*—also; *kartum*—to do (your prescribed duties).

Saintly kings such as Janaka attained supreme perfection by performing *karma* (prescribed duties). Therefore, in consideration of setting an ideal for people in general, you should perform your prescribed duty.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

This *śloka* beginning with *karmaṇaiwa* presents evidence about the importance of *sadācāra* (proper conduct). Śrī Bhagavān says, “Even if you consider yourself to have the

adhikāra to follow the path of *jñāna*, you should still perform your prescribed duties with the purpose of instructing the people in general.” For this purpose, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says: *lokasaṅgraham*, ‘the people in general’.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī comments that Śrī Bhagavān instructs Arjuna, “In order to engage people in their respective prescribed duties and to restrain them from their tendency to follow a degraded path, the performance of *karma* is necessary for you.”

SLOKA 21

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥२१॥

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas / tat tad evetaro janah
sa yat pramāṇam kurute / lokas tad anuvarttate*

eva—surely; *yat* *yat*—however; *śreṣṭhaḥ*—an exalted person; *ācarati*—acts; *tat* *tat*—that very thing; *itaraḥ*—a common; *janah*—person; *sah*—he; (*yat*)—whatever; *pramāṇam*—standard; *kurute*—he sets; *tat*—that; *lokaḥ*—the people; *anuvarttate*—follow.

Common people will follow the behaviour of a great man, and the whole world will emulate the standards that he sets.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this *śloka* beginning with the words *yad yad*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining how ideals are established for the common people.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

In order to establish an ideal for the people in general, great persons should perform their *karma* (prescribed duties). This *siddhānta* of *Bhagavad-gītā* is also verified in many parts of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: (2.8.25), (3.16.23), (5.4.14) and (6.2.4).

ŚLOKA 22

**न मे पाथस्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥२२॥**

*na me pārthāsti karttavyam / triṣu lokeṣu kiñcana
nānavāptam avāptavyam / varta eva ca karmaṇi*

pārtha—O Pārtha; *me*—for Me; *asti*—there is; *na*—not; *kiñcana*—any; *karttavyam*—prescribed duty; *triṣu*—in the three; *lokeṣu*—planetary systems; (*there is*) *na*—nothing; *anavāptam*—unattainable; (*nor*) *avāptavyam*—needed to be obtained; *eva*—still; *varte*—I am engaged; *ca*—also; *karmaṇi*—in prescribed duties.

O Pārtha, I have no need to perform prescribed duties (*karma*), because there is nothing within the three worlds that I cannot attain, nor is there anything that I desire to attain. Even so, I am always engaged in performing prescribed duties.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this and the next two *ślokas*, Śrī Bhagavān presents Himself as an example in order to instruct the common people of the world.

ŚLOKA 23

**यदि ह्यहं न वर्त्ये जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।
मम वत्मानुवर्त्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥२३॥**

*yadi hy aham na vartteyam / jātu karmaṇy atandritaḥ
mama vartmānuvarttante / manusyāḥ pārtha sarvaśah*

pārtha—O Pārtha; *hi*—certainly; *yadi*—if; *jātu*—at any time; *aham*—did I; *vartteyam na*—not engage; *karmaṇi*—in prescribed duties; *atandritaḥ*—with great care; *manusyāḥ*—all men; *anuvarttante*—would follow; *mama*—My; *vartma*—path; *sarvaśah*—in all respects.

O Pārtha, if I ever failed to engage vigilantly in My prescribed duties, common people would certainly imitate Me in all respects.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

The word *anuvarttante* means they will imitate.

ŚLOKA 24

*उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्या कर्म चेदहम् ।
सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥२४॥*

*utsīdeyur ime lokā / na kuryāṁ karma ced aham
saṅkarasya ca karttā syām / upahanyām imāḥ prajāḥ*

cet—if; *na kuryām*—I did not perform; *karma*—prescribed duties; *ime*—all these; *lokāḥ*—people; *utsīdeyuh*—would become degraded; *aham*—I; *syām*—would be; *karttā*—the creator; *saṅkarasya*—of unwanted population; *ca*—and; *upahanyām*—I would destroy; *imāḥ*—all these; *prajāḥ*—people.

If I did not perform *karma*, then everyone would become degraded and I would become the cause of promoting *varṇa-saṅkara*. In this way, I would be instrumental in the destruction of the entire population.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Utsideyuh means they will become degraded. “By following My example and not engaging in their prescribed duties, common people would become fallen. Consequently, I would be the cause of *varṇa-saṅkara* (unwanted population). By making humanity impure, I would be its destroyer.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Bhagavān is saying, “If I did not perform duties as prescribed in the Vedas, people would imitate Me. In this way, I would be the cause of their deviating from the path of *dharma* and going to hell.” Therefore, it is appropriate for the leaders of society to engage in that *karma* which is prescribed in the Vedas, and which promotes the people’s welfare. At the present time, most of the so-called religious, social, national and world leaders have fallen from the path of *dharma*, and consequently common men are also deviating from the proper path. This root problem of immorality, violence, envy and so forth is present everywhere. The only solution to this problem is the chanting of *hari-nāma* and the cultivation of *bhakti* in the association of genuine *sādhus*.

ŚLOKA 25

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।
कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथासक्तश्चकीषुर्लोकसंग्रहम् ॥२५॥

saktāḥ karmaṇy avidvāṁso / yathā kurvanti bhārata
kuryād vidvāṁś tathāsaktaś / cikīrṣur loka-saṅgraham

bhārata—O Bhārata; *yathā*—just as; *avidvāṁsaḥ*—the ignorant; *saktāḥ*—being attached; *karmaṇi*—to their prescribed duties; *kurvanti*—perform (them); *tathā*—in the same way; *vidvāṁ*—the learned; *kuryāt*—should act; *asaktaḥ*—without attachment; *cikīrṣuh*—desiring to effect; *loka-saṅgraham*—the protection of the people.

O descendant of Bhārata, ignorant people perform *karma* with attachment. Those who are wise should also work, but without attachment, to set an ideal for the people in general.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Thus, even a person who is firmly situated on the platform of *jñāna* must perform *karma*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa concludes this topic with this *śloka* beginning with the word *saktāḥ*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The ignorant perform *karma* with attachment both to the work and its fruits, but one who knows *tattva* performs *karma* without attachment. The activities performed by these two types of people appear to be the same, but there is a difference like heaven and hell between them. The difference lies in the *niṣṭhā* (staunch faith) of those who are performing *karma*; one is attached while the other is detached.

ŚLOKA 26

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम्।
योजयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥२६॥

*na buddhi-bhedam janayed / ajñānām karma-saṅginām
yojayet sarva-karmāṇi / vidvān yuktah samācaran*

vidvān—the learned person; *na janayet*—should not create; *buddhi-bhedam*—confusion in the intelligence; *ajñānām*—of the ignorant; *karma-saṅginām*—who are attached to fruitive work; (*rather*) *yuktah*—with a composed mind; *saṁcaraṇ*—while acting nicely; *yojayet*—he should encourage (them) to engage; (*in*) *sarva*—all; *karmāṇi*—actions.

One who is learned and experienced in *jñāna-yoga* should not bewilder the intelligence of ignorant people

by inducing them to give up their prescribed duties (*karma*) to engage in the culture of *jñāna*. Rather, by properly performing all his own actions in a composed and detached state of mind, he should encourage them to engage in their own prescribed duties.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“O Arjuna, a man of knowledge should not bewilder the ignorant who are *karma-saṅgī* (attached to their actions) by saying, ‘There is no purpose in performing mundane activities, so become perfect like me by renouncing *karma* and cultivating *jñāna*.’ The *karma-saṅgī* is especially attached to *karma* because his heart is impure. Although you may be perfect, by performing *niṣkāma-karma* you can encourage people to engage in their prescribed duties. You yourself become an ideal example by performing *karma* properly. If you say to Me, ‘In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.9.50) You have said:

*svayam nihśreyasaṁ vidvān / na vakty ajñāya karma hi
na rāti rogiṇo 'pathyam / vāñchato 'pi bhiṣaktamah*

“A good physician does not prescribe a diet that is indigestible, even though the patient may desire it. Similarly, a person knowing the highest welfare does not instruct an ignorant person to engage in *karma*,” so You therefore contradict Your own statements,’ then My response is, “This is correct, but I gave that instruction in relation to *bhakti* when the subject of instruction was *bhakti* itself. Now I am giving the instruction in relation to *jñāna*, so there is no contradiction. *Jñāna* depends on purity of heart, which in turn depends on *niṣkāma-karma*. But since *bhakti* is independently powerful, she does not depend upon purity of heart. If one is able to arouse *śraddhā* in *bhakti*, then it is considerate to disturb the intelligence of a person who is attached to *karma*. Those who have developed faith in *bhakti* have surpassed

the necessity to perform *karma*. It is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.9):

tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta / na nirvidyeta yāvatā
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā / śraddhā yāvan na jāyate

One should perform *karma* as long as he has not developed renunciation (from *karma*) or *śraddhā* in hearing and reciting topics about Me.

Furthermore:

dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān
māṁ bhajeta sa tu sattamāḥ
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.11.32

Those who give up all varieties of *varṇāśrama* and perform My *bhajana* are indeed the most elevated *sādhus*.

sarva-dharmān parityajya / māṁ ekam śaraṇam vraja
aham tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo / mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ
Gītā 18.66

Give up all varieties of *dharma* and just surrender unto Me.

tyaktvā sva-dharmam caraṇāmbujam harer
bhajann apakvo 'tha patet tato yadi
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.5.17

One who gives up his *sva-dharma* because he is engaged in the service of Śrī Hari's lotus feet can never be unsuccessful, even if he falls down while in the immature stage.

One should deliberate upon all these statements.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The purpose of *karma*, action, is to attain that *jñāna* which leads to *bhakti*. Those who do not know this fact are *ajña* (ignorant), and those who are attached to *karma* because of this ignorance are called *karma-saṅgī*. A *jñānī* should only engage such *karma-saṅgīs* in the *karma* prescribed in *śāstra*, because,

if the intelligence of such ignorant persons is bewildered, they will lose faith in *karma*. Under such circumstances even *jñāna* will not be able to manifest in their hearts and thus they will deviate from the paths of *karma* and *jñāna*. However, this does not apply to instructions on *bhakti*, because according to *śāstra*, instructions on *bhakti* are auspicious for everyone under all circumstances. Therefore, by instructing *bhakti*, such a preacher of *bhakti* will make everyone perfect.

putrāṁś ca śiṣyāṁś ca nṛpo gurur vā
 mal-loka-kāmo mad-anugrahārthaḥ
 itthāṁ vimanyur anuśiṣyād ataj-jñān
 na yojayet karmasu karma-mūḍhān
 kām yojayan manujo 'rthaṁ labheta
 nipātayan naṣṭa-dṛṣṭāṁ hi garte
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.5.15

R̥ṣabhadeva said, “Only My abode and My mercy are worth praying for. Instructions on *bhakti* unto Me should be given by fathers to their sons, teachers to their disciples and kings to their subjects. One should not become angry with a person who receives instructions, but does not follow them. Even those who are ignorant of *tattva-jñāna* and who are bewildered about the performance of proper duty should not be engaged in *karma*. What *puruṣārtha* (destination) will be attained by engaging a person blinded by delusion in *kāmya-karma* (fruitive activities), thus throwing him further into the dark well of this material world? Nothing will be achieved.”

While commenting on this *śloka* of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī says, “If, instead of giving instruction on *bhakti*, someone instructs others about engaging in *karma*, he incurs sin.”

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura, the present *śloka*, (*Gitā* 3.26): *yojayet sarva-karmāṇi*, is not for those who are preaching the message of *bhakti*, but it is for the consideration of those who give instructions on *jñāna*.

ŚLOKA 27

**प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।
अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्त्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥२७॥**

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni / guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśah
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍha-ātmā / karttāham iti manyate*

sarvaśah—in every respect; *karmāṇi*—activities; *kriyamāṇāni*—are performed; *guṇaiḥ*—by the modes of material nature; *prakṛteḥ*—of material nature; *ahaṅkāra-vimūḍha-ātmā*—a person bewildered by false ego; *manyate*—thinks; *iti*—thus; *aham*—I; (*am*) *karttā*—the doer.

All aspects of material activity are performed by the modes of material nature but a person whose intelligence is bewildered by false ego thinks himself to be the doer.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

If a learned man also has to perform *karma*, what is the difference between his work and that of an ignorant man? This doubt is being addressed. The difference is shown in two ślokas beginning with the present one, *prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni*. Ignorant people believe that they themselves perform all activity (*karma*), but in reality it is performed by the senses, which are impelled by the modes of material nature.

ŚLOKA 28

**तत्त्ववित् तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः ।
गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते ॥२८॥**

*tattvavit tu mahā-baho / guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ
guṇā guṇeṣu varttanta / iti matvā na sajjate*

mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed one; *tu*—but; *tattva-vit*—a knower of the science; *vibhāgayoh*—of the distinctions; (between the *ātmā*) *guṇa-karma*—and the material modes and the laws of *karma*; *matvā*—considering; *iti*—that; *guṇāḥ*—the senses; *varttante*—are engaged; *guṇeṣu*—in their sense objects, like form etc.; *na sajjate*—does not become attached.

O Mahā-bāho Arjuna, one who is *tattva-vit*, who knows that the soul is aloof from the *guṇas* and also knows the laws of *karma* (actions), does not falsely identify himself as the doer. Because he understands that the senses are engaged in their respective sense objects, he is aloof from them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Those who know the distinctive characteristics of *guṇa* and *karma* are called *tattva-vit*, knowers of the truth. There are three categories of *guṇa*: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. The respective categories of *karma* are the different types of activities which are influenced by the *guṇas*, the *devas*, the various prominent senses, and the objects of the senses. One who is *tattva-vit* knows the truth about both *guṇa* and *karma*. The *devas* or the *guṇas* preside over the respective senses, such as sight, and also the sense objects, such as form. However, a learned person knows that he is not the *guṇas*, nor is he the effect or activity of any *guṇa*. He has nothing to do with the *guṇas* or their activities. Understanding this, a wise and learned person does not become attached to them.

ŚLOKA 29

प्रकृतेगुणसंमूढाः सज्जन्ते गुणकर्मसु ।
तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान्कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत् ॥२९॥

*prakṛter guṇa-saṁmūḍhāḥ / sajjante guṇa-karmasu
tān akṛtsna-vido mandān / kṛtsna-vin na vicālayet*

(persons) *sammūḍhāḥ*—bewildered; *guṇa*—by the modes; *prakṛteḥ*—of material nature; *sajjante*—become attached; *guṇa-karmasu*—to the modes and *karma*; *kṛtsna-vit*—one who is in complete knowledge; *na vicālayet*—should not agitate; *tān*—those; *mandān*—less intelligent persons; *akṛtsna-vidāḥ*—of incomplete knowledge.

Those absorbed in the three *guṇas* become attached to sense objects, but those who are complete in knowledge should not unsettle such uninformed and less intelligent persons.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

One may raise the question, “If all *jīvas* are distinct from the *guṇas* and have no relationship with them and their activities, why are they seen to be attached to sense objects?” Śrī Kṛṣṇa answers with this *śloka* beginning with *prakṛteḥ*. “They become bewildered by the *guṇas*. In other words, they become deluded because of their absorption in the *guṇas*. Just as a man haunted by a ghost considers himself a ghost, so the *jīvas* absorbed in the *guṇas* identify themselves as the *guṇas*. Thus influenced by the effect of the modes, they become attached to sense objects. One who is *kṛtsna-vit* (a man of complete knowledge) should not unsettle those who are *akṛtsna-vit* (of incomplete knowledge). This means that a man of complete knowledge should not try to force these thoughts on ignorant persons by saying, ‘You are a *jīva* distinct from the *guṇas*. You are not the modes.’ Just as a person who is haunted by a ghost will never understand that he is actually not a ghost but a human being, even if he is told hundreds of times. His conviction can only be removed by the medicine of *mantras*. Similarly, no amount of verbal instruction will help a bewildered *jīva* to stop identifying himself with the modes of material nature. Such people should simply be engaged in *niṣkāma-karma*, which automatically frees them from their absorption in the *guṇas*.”

ŚLOKA 30

**मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।
निराशीनिर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥३०॥**

*mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi / sannyasyādhyātma-cetasā
nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā / yudhyasva vigata-jvarah*

adhyātma-cetasā—with the mind fixed in the self; *sannyasya*—giving up completely; *sarvāṇi*—all; *karmāṇi*—activities; *mayi*—unto Me; *bhūtvā*—being; *nirāśīḥ*—free from desire; *nirmamah*—without a sense of possessiveness; (and) *vigata-jvarah*—without lamentation; *yudhyasva*—fight.

With your mind fixed in the self and offering all your activities to Me, being freed from desire, possessiveness and lamentation, fight.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Therefore, O Arjuna, fight with your mind fixed in the self (*adhyātma-cetah*), offering all *karma* (actions) unto Me, and being free from all material hopes and desires. Do not let your mind dwell on the sense objects, and give up any sense of possessiveness towards them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrī Bhagavān makes Arjuna the instrument through which He instructs common men to perform their prescribed *karma*, free from the false ego of being the doer, and the desire for the fruits of their actions. Here the word *karma* refers to all types of *karma*, both *laukika* (mundane) and Vedic (as prescribed in the *Vedas*). *Nirmamah* indicates that one should perform action without any sense of possessiveness towards sense objects such as the body, house, son, wife and brother. Here *yudhyasva* (a fight) means one should engage in prescribed actions.

ŚLOKA 31

ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवाः ।
श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः ॥३१॥

*ye me matam idam nityam / anutiṣṭhanti mānavāḥ
śraddhāvanto ‘nasūyanto / mucyante te ‘pi karmabhiḥ*

te—those; *mānavāḥ*—human beings; *ye*—who; (*are*) *anasūyantah*—free from enmity or fault-finding; *śraddhā-vantah*—who have complete faith; (*and who*) *nityam*—always; *anutiṣṭhanti*—abide by; *idam*—this; *matam*—teaching, opinion; *me*—of Mine; *mucyante*—are liberated; *api*—also; *karmabhiḥ*—from the bondage of fruitive actions.

Those who are free from fault finding, who have complete faith in Me, and who always abide by this desire of Mine (to perform *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*), are liberated from the bondage of *karma* (fruitive activities).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Śrī Bhagavān is speaking the present *śloka* beginning with *ye me*, in order to engage people in following His instructions.

ŚLOKA 32

ये त्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम् ।
सर्वज्ञानविमूढांस्तान्विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः ॥३२॥

*ye tv etad abhyasūyanto / nānutiṣṭhanti me matam
sarva-jñāna-vimūḍhāṁs tān / viddhi naṣṭān acetasaḥ*

tu—but; *ye*—those; *abhyasūyantah*—while fault finding; (*who do*) *na anutiṣṭhanti*—not follow; *etat*—this; *matam*—teaching; *me*—of Mine; *viddhi*—know; *tān*—them; *acetasaḥ*—devoid of sense of discrimination; *vimūḍhān*—befooled; *sarva-jñāna*—in all sorts of knowledge; (*and*) *naṣṭān*—ruined.

But know that those envious persons who do not follow these instructions of Mine are bereft of discrimination, devoid of all true *jñāna*, and are ruined in all their endeavours for perfection.

ŚĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In speaking this śloka beginning with the words *ye tu*, Bhagavān is explaining the ill-effect of not following His instructions.

ŚLOKA 33

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥३३॥

*sadṛśam ceṣṭate svasyāḥ / prakṛter jñānavān api
prakṛtim yānti bhūtāni / nigrahaḥ kim kariṣyati*

api—even; *jñāna-vān*—a wise man; *ceṣṭate*—endeavours; *sadṛśam*—in accordance; *svasyāḥ*—with his own; *prakṛteḥ*—disposition; *bhūtāni*—all beings; *yānti*—follow; *prakṛtim*—(their) nature; *kim*—what?; *nigrahaḥ*—suppression; *kariṣyati*—can do.

Even a wise man acts according to his own acquired disposition, for all beings follow their respective natures. What can be achieved by repression?

ŚĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

One may raise the following question: “A person who does not obey the order of a king is punished, so if one does not follow the order of Parameśvara, is he not punished as well? Should he not fear punishment from Him?” In response, Parameśvara says, “Yes, this is true. However, those who are engaged only in satisfying their senses are unable to follow the order of the king or of Parameśvara, even though they have

discrimination. Their nature has become like this.” The present śloka beginning with *sadṛśam* is spoken to explain this.

“People may know that sinful activity will lead to punishment from the royal court, or even going to hell, and may understand that this will bring infamy and criticism. Still, because of the nature that they have acquired over a prolonged period, they endeavour according to the temperament resulting from their sinful deeds, which brings only misery. Such people only follow their own disposition. They can, however, be restrained by My discipline or that of a king. *Śaṁskāras* (purifying impressions) can be made in a person with an impure heart by *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* and in a person of pure heart through *jñāna-yoga*. Both types of people can be enlightened. It is true that neither of these processes can help a person whose heart is extremely impure, but *bhakti*, which appears by My mercy, can easily deliver even sinful people.”

As it is said in the *Skanda Purāṇa*:

aho dhanyo' si devarṣe kṛṣṇayā yasya te kṣaṇat
nīco'py utpulako lebhe lubdhako ratim acyute

O Devarṣi, all glories to you. Because of your mercy, this low-class hunter has, in just one moment, attained *rati* for the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān, and is manifesting the symptom of *pulaka* in which one’s bodily hairs stand on end.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

A person with uncontrolled senses may have discrimination, but cannot restrain his senses by knowledge of *śāstra*.

stambhayann ātmanātmānam / yāvat sattvam yathā-śrutam
na śaśāka samādhātum / mano madana-vepitam
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.1.62

After seeing the prostitute, the mind of Ajāmila became agitated. He tried hard to control his mind by fortitude and knowledge of *śāstra* but, being agitated by Cupid, he was unable to do so.

All uncontrolled, degraded desires can be removed by the powerful influence of *sādhu-saṅga*.

*tato duḥsaṅgam utsṛjya / satsu sajjeta buddhimān
santa evāsyā cchindanti / mano-vyāsaṅgam uktibhiḥ*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.26.26

Saintly people can, by their powerful speech, completely cut asunder all the unfavourable attachments of the mind.

Vyāsaṅga means attachments which make one averse to Śrī Bhagavān. Here, the word *eva* implies the powerful speech of saintly persons alone. Pious actions, holy places, *devas* and knowledge of *śāstra* are by themselves not able to destroy unfavourable attachments. This should be understood.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Arjuna, don’t think that a man of knowledge will attain auspiciousness (liberation from bondage) if he simply deliberates on spirit and matter, and accepts the shelter of *sannyāsa-dharma* by impetuously giving up material *guṇa* and *karma*. Even after the *baddha-jīva* has become enriched with *jñāna*, he should still endeavour according to his long-acquired disposition. It is not true that one can give up one’s nature by suddenly restraining it. All *baddha-jīvas* should continue to endeavour according to the disposition they have naturally acquired over a prolonged period. The proper way to give up this nature is to carefully perform all *karma* (action) in accordance with that nature, while being situated in it. As long as *vairāgya* enriched with the symptoms of *bhakti-yoga* does not appear in the heart, then the only means to attain self-auspiciousness is *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* offered to Śrī

Bhagavān. By this practice, a person can perform his prescribed duties (*sva-dharma*), and also benefit from the *samskāras* generated by them. Renunciation of one's *sva-dharma* will ultimately result in deviation from the path of perfection.

When, by My mercy or by the mercy of My *bhakta*, *bhakti-yoga* appears in the heart, there is no need to follow one's *sva-dharma*, because this path of *bhakti* is superior to *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*. Otherwise, if *bhakti-yoga* has not awokened, to follow *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* offered to Me is auspicious in all cases."

ŚLOKA 34

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।
तयोर्नवशमागच्छेत्तौ हास्य परिपन्थिनौ ॥३४॥

*indriyasyendriyasyārthe / rāga-dveṣau vyavasthitau
tayor na vaśam āgacchet / tau hy asya paripanthinau*

indriyasya arthe—within (each sense object); *indriyasya*—of (each) sense; *rāga*—attachment; (and) *dveṣau*—detachment; *vyavasthitau*—are situated; *na āgacchet*—one should not become; *vaśam*—controlled; *tayoh*—by them; *tau*—they (attachment and aversion); *hi paripanthinau*—are certainly obstacles; *asya*—for him (the spiritual practitioner).

All the senses are invariably controlled by attachment and aversion to their respective objects. Therefore, one should never come under their sway because such attachment and aversion impede auspiciousness for the *sādhaka*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Since it is beyond the control of *śāstra* to enforce injunctions on a person who has an extremely wicked nature, one

should not allow his senses to wander wilfully. By regularly engaging in sinful activities, a person becomes depraved. Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *indriyasya* to explain this. The repetition of the word *indriya* here indicates the sense objects of each respective sense. Although to look at another's wife, touch her, or allure her by giving her gifts is forbidden in *śāstra*, still an immoral man is attracted to such behaviour. On the other hand, although it is prescribed in *śāstra* to see, touch, serve and offer charity to the *guru*, *brāhmaṇas*, holy places and guests, an impious man is averse to such behaviour. To come under the influence of either of these mentalities is not proper. In other words, it is not proper either to develop attachment to a woman by seeing her, or to be malicious to someone who obstructs that attachment. Similarly, a *sādhaka* on the path of self-realisation should neither be attached to rich and palatable foodstuffs which are to his taste, nor averse to dry, unpalatable food items and objects which are not to his taste. In the same way, he should not be attached to seeing and hearing about his own son, nor should he be averse to seeing and hearing about his enemy's son. It is inappropriate to come under the influence of such attachments and aversions. This has been explained.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The senses are of two types: *jñānendriya* (knowledge-acquiring senses) and *karmendriya* (working senses). There are five *jñānendriyas*: the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin, which accept form, sound, smell, taste and touch as their respective objects of gratification. There are also five *karmendriyas*: speech, hands, legs, anus and genitals, which perform the actions of speaking, accepting, moving, evacuating and procreating. The *sādhaka* of *bhakti* engages these eleven senses, including the mind, in various types of service for the

pleasure of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, instead of enjoying the various sense objects himself. In this way, he can easily overpower the uncontrolled senses and, by the use of his controlled senses, he can attain the supreme goal of life.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Arjuna, if you think that the *jīvas’* acceptance of sense objects will make most of them more addicted to worldliness and that liberation from the bondage of *karma* will thus become impossible, then listen to My words. It is not true that all objects are detrimental to the spiritual progress of the *jīvas*. It is only the attachment and aversion to the sense objects which are the greatest enemies of the *jīva*. As long as you have this material body, you have to accept sense objects. For this reason, you should accept sense objects, and at the same time control attachment and aversion towards them. If you act in this way, you can deal with sense objects without becoming bound to them. You will become detached from sense objects by gradually eliminating the attachment and aversion which develops when one falsely identifies the body with the self. In brief, you will develop *yukta-vairāgya*. I have not instructed you to subdue attachment to objects and activities related to Me, Śrī Bhagavān, which stimulate one’s *bhakti*. Nor have I instructed you not to be averse to objects or activities which are obstacles to *bhakti*. Rather, I have only instructed you to control that attachment and aversion which is related to selfish pleasure and which promotes a temperament that is opposed to *bhakti*. This should be understood.”

ŚLOKA 35

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥३५॥

śreyān sva-dharma viguṇah / para-dharmāt svanuṣṭhitat
sva-dharme nidhanam śreyah / para-dharma bhayāvahah

śreyān—better; (to perform) *sva-dharmaḥ*—one's prescribed duties; *viguṇāḥ*—defectively; *para-dharmāt*—than another's duties; *su-anuṣṭhitāt*—perfectly performed; *nidhanam*—death; *śreyah*—is better; *sva-dharme*—in (discharging) one's prescribed duties; *para-dharmaḥ*—duties prescribed for others; *bhaya-āvahah*—bring danger.

It is far better to execute one's *sva-dharma*, even though imperfectly, than to perform another's duty perfectly. It is better to die discharging one's own duty in accordance with the *varṇāśrama* system than to engage in another's duty, for it is dangerous to follow another's path.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān sees that due to attachment and aversion, Arjuna is becoming unable to engage in his own prescribed duty of fighting. Instead, he considers it easier to engage in *ahiṁsā* (non-violence) which is *para-dharma* (the duty of others). Therefore, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *śreyān*. The word *viguṇa* means that, although one's *sva-dharma* may have some defects and one may be unable to execute it properly, it is still superior to performing *para-dharma*, which may contain all good qualities and be executed correctly (*sv-anuṣṭhitāt*). For this reason, this *śloka*, *śreyān sva-dharme*, is spoken.

It is said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.15.12):

*vidharmaḥ para-dharmaś ca / ābhāsa upamā cchalaḥ
adharma-śākhāḥ pañcemā / dharma-jño 'dharmavat tyajet*

The tree of *adharma* has five branches—*vidharma* (activities opposed to *dharma*), *para-dharma* (following another's *dharmika* principles), *ābhāsa* (making a show of *dharmika* principles), *upamā* or *upa-dharma* (practising principles that only appear to be *dharmika*) and *chala-dharma* (cheating *dharma*). A knower of *dharma* (*dharma-jña*) will abandon all of them as forbidden acts.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Activities such as non-violence are prescribed for *brāhmaṇas* situated in *sattva-guṇa*. For *kṣatriyas* in *rajo-guṇa*, the prescribed duty is fighting. Therefore, the *sva-dharma* for *kṣatriyas* is to engage in battle. Even if a *kṣatriya* dies in battle he attains Svarga; therefore, it is better for him to fight.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “One who follows *sva-dharma* may die before attaining a more elevated state of *dharma* (a higher *adhikāra*). Still it is auspicious, because to perform *para-dharma* is always fearful and dangerous in any circumstance. This consideration, however, does not apply to *nirguṇa-bhakti*. When the stage of *nirguṇa-bhakti* is attained, one can give up *sva-dharma* without hesitation because at that time his *nitya-dharma* or *svarūpa-dharma* (constitutional nature) manifests as his *sva-dharma*. Here *sva* means the real self and *dharma* means the *jīva*'s eternal function. In that stage the *sva-dharma* which one previously accepted in relation to the body and mind becomes *para-dharma*, that is, secondary to the duties of the awakened self.”

devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇāṁ pitṛṇāṁ
 na kiṅkaro nāyam ḥnī ca rājan
 sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇāṁ śaraṇyām
 gato mukundāṁ parihrtya kartam
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.5.41

Those who have taken exclusive shelter of Śrī Mukunda, who is the only shelter, and who have renounced all varieties of *karma*, no longer remain indebted to the *devas*, sages, living entities, perfected persons and forefathers.

tāvat karmāni kurvīta / na nirvidyeta yāvatā
 mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā / śraddhā yāvan na jāyate
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.20.9

One who has not become fully detached from enjoying the fruits of his activities (*karma*), and whose faith in the process of *bhakti* and the hearing of My pastimes is not yet sufficiently developed, must certainly engage in *karma* (prescribed duties). *Tyāgīs* or *bhaktas* of Bhagavān, on the other hand, have no purpose to achieve by engaging in *karma*.

ŚLOKA 36

अर्जुन उवाच—

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापञ्चरति पूरुषः ।

अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्ण्यं बलादिव नियोजितः ॥३६॥

arjuna uvāca

*atha kena prayukto 'yam / pāpañ carati pūruṣah
anicchann api vārṣṇeya / balād iva niyojitaḥ*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *vārṣṇeya*—O descendant of Vṛṣṇi;
atha—then; *kena*—by whom?; *ayampūruṣah*—a person;
prayuktah—is engaged; *api*—even; *anicchann*—unwillingly; (so
that) *carati*—he performs; *pāpam*—sin; *iva*—as if; *niyojitaḥ*—
engaged; *balāt*—by force.

Arjuna said: O descendant of Vṛṣṇi, what is it that
forcibly impels a person to engage in sinful activi-
ties, although he is unwilling to do so?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Earlier (in *Gitā* 3.34) it was said: *rāga-dveśau vyavasthitau*. “Even a man of discrimination can develop attachment to sensual activities such as the desire to enjoy another’s wife, which are forbidden in *śāstra*.” In this connection, Arjuna asks this question beginning with *atha*. “What is it that impels a man to engage in sinful activities as if by force, even though he performs such activities unwillingly, well aware of the

regulations as well as the injunctions of *śāstra*? In other words, by whom is a person impelled to desire to engage in sinful activities?”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this *śloka* Arjuna has addressed Śrī Bhagavān, ‘O Vārṣṇeya.’ Kṛṣṇa appeared in the Vṛṣṇi-vamśa (dynasty) of Arjuna’s maternal grandfather and grandmother. Śūrasena was also born in the Vṛṣṇi-vamśa. His son was Vasudeva (Kṛṣṇa’s father) and his daughter, Pṛthī, was Arjuna’s mother. The hidden indication in Arjuna’s prayer to Kṛṣṇa is, “Since I belong to the same dynasty as You, You should not neglect me. At present I have fallen into a pit of doubts. You have just said that the *ātmā* is completely distinct from inert qualities or mundane relationships (*Gītā* 2.13-31). Who, then, impels the *jīvas* to engage in sinful acts, if such action is not their constitutional nature?”

SLOKA 37

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

**काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥३७॥**

*śrī bhagavān uvāca
kāma esa krodha esa / rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ
mahā-śano mahā-pāpmā / viddhy enam iha vairiṇam*

śrī bhagavān uvāca—Śrī Bhagavān said; (it is) *esaḥ kāmāḥ*—this desire to enjoy sense objects; (and) *esaḥ krodhaḥ*—this wrath; *samudbhavaḥ*—which is born of; *rajaḥ-guṇa*—the mode of passion; (it is) *mahā-āśanah*—all devouring; (and) *mahā-pāpmā*—extremely envious; *viddhi*—know; *enam*—this; (to be) *vairiṇam*—the enemy; *iha*—in this world.

Śrī Bhagavān said: This desire to enjoy sense objects, which indeed transforms into wrath, is born of passion. It is all-devouring and extremely formidable. Know it to be the primary enemy of the *jīvas* in this world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Kāma, the desire for sense objects, invariably engages a person in sinful actions; impelled by it, he acts sinfully. *Kāma* also appears differently and is seen directly as anger (*krodha*). When the desire for sense objects is obstructed, it transforms into *krodha*. *Kāma*, which is born from *rajo-guṇa*, gives rise to anger which is in *tamo-guṇa*. If one asks, “Once a person’s expectations are fulfilled, will the desire for sense objects be satiated?” then Śrī Bhagavān responds by saying: *mahāśanah*, “It is all-devouring.” In *smṛti* it is said:

yat pr̥thivyāṁ vrihi-yavāṁ / hiraṇyāṁ paśavāḥ striyāḥ
nālam ekasya tat sarvam / iti matvā śamāṁ vrajet

All the grains, barley, gold, animals and women on earth cannot satisfy the *kāma* of even one man. It is best to understand this and become content.

According to the above statement of *smṛti*, it is beyond a person’s ability to satisfy his *kāma*. Again, if the question is raised, “If there is no possibility of controlling this lust by offering its desired ends as a truce, then do we have to control it by pacifying it?” then in response, Śrī Bhagavān says, *mahā-pāpmā*. “It is extremely formidable and difficult to control.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

Kāma and *krodha* have been described as the prime enemies of the *jīvas* on the path of liberation. *Kāma*, the desire to enjoy sense objects, is specifically the original enemy; *krodha*, anger, is just its transformation. *Kāma* has been described as *mahat*, or an enemy whose belly is never filled. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

(9.19.14) this is seen in the life history of Yayāti Mahārāja:

na jātu kāmaḥ kāmānām / upabhogena sāmyati
haviṣā kṛṣṇa-vartmeva / bhūya evābhivardhate

By adding ghee to a fire, the fire becomes intensified. Similarly, by the fulfillment of *kāma*, one's desires are intensified. They do not disappear.

yat pṛthivyāṁ vrīhi-yavam / hiraṇyam paśavah striyah
na duhyanti manah-prītim / puṁsaḥ kāma-hatasya te
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 9.19.13

All the grains, gold, animals, and women on earth cannot satisfy the *kāma* of a lusty man.

An enemy is controlled by the four principles of *sāma* (appeasement), *dāma* (bribe), *bheda* (division) and *daṇḍa* (punishment). Here Śrī Bhagavān is explaining that this formidable enemy, *kāma*, cannot be controlled by the principles of *sāma*, *dāma* and *bheda*. He is thus indicating that one should use the principle of *daṇḍa* (a rod of chastisement) to control the desire for sense objects. This will be further clarified in the next *śloka*. The enemy, *kāma*, can be destroyed when one acquires the weapon of *ātma-jñāna*, self-knowledge.

ŚLOKA 38

धूमेनाव्रियते वहिर्यथादर्शो मलेन च ।
यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥३८॥

dhūmenāvriyate vahnir / yathādarśo malena ca
yatholbenāvṛto garbhas / tathā tenedam āvṛtam

yathā—just as; *vahnih*—fire; *āvriyate*—is covered; *dhūmena*—by smoke; *ādarśah*—a mirror; *malena*—by dust; *ca*—and; *yathā*—just as; *garbhah*—an embryo; *āvṛtaḥ*—is covered; *ulbena*—by the womb; *tathā*—in the same way; *idam*—this (knowledge); *āvṛtam*—is covered; *tena*—by that (lust).

Just as fire is covered by smoke, a mirror by dust, and an embryo by the womb, true knowledge of the *jīva* remains covered by degrees of lust.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Kāma is the enemy of everyone, not just a particular person. This is explained through these examples. Although fire may be dirty and covered by smoke, it can still perform its function of burning; but when a mirror is covered by dust, it loses the characteristic of cleanliness and cannot perform its function of reflecting the image of the object in front of it. However, it is still accepted as a mirror. An embryo covered by the womb cannot move its hands and feet nor can it be recognised as a baby. One can remember the supreme goal only when *kāma* is not very deep. When *kāma* becomes intense, such remembrance is impossible and when it is very intense, the world itself appears to be devoid of consciousness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

The knowledge of those *jīvas* averse to self-realisation is covered by three degrees of *kāma*: *mṛdu* (mild), *madhya* (moderate) and *tīvra* (intense). A person whose *jñāna* is covered by *mṛdu-kāma* can accept instruction on *ātma-tattva* to a certain extent. When a person's *jñāna* is covered by *mādhya-kāma*, it is completely impossible for him to understand even a little *tattva-jñāna*, and when *jñāna* is covered by *tīvra-kāma*, *jñāna* is not perceived at all.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "This whole world is covered by that very *kāma*, in some places mildly, in some places deeply and in some places very deeply. I will illustrate this with an example. Please listen. A conscious *jīva* who is mildly covered by *kāma*, just as a fire is covered by smoke, can perform activities such as *bhāgavat-smaraṇam*. This is the situation of *jīvas* who have taken

shelter of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* and whose consciousness is *mukulita-cetana*, a little open, as in the budding stage of a flower. Even if the conscious *jīva* has a human body, when his consciousness is deeply covered by *kāma*, like a mirror covered by dust, it is not possible for him to remember Parameśvara. This is the condition of the extreme moralist and atheist, that is, a *jīva* whose consciousness is *saṅkucita-cetana*, shrunken or contracted. They are like animals and birds. A *jīva* whose consciousness is covered by intense *kāma*, like the embryo covered by the womb, has a consciousness like creepers, stones and trees and is *ācchādita-cetana*, completely covered.”

ŚLOKA 39

**आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।
कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरणानलेन च ॥३९॥**

āvṛtam jñānam etena / jñānino nitya-vairiṇā
kāma-rūpeṇa kaunteya / duṣpūrenānalena ca

kaunteya—O Arjuna; *jñānam*—discrimination; *jñāninaḥ*—of the wise (*ātmā*); (*is*) *āvṛtam*—covered; *etena nitya-vairiṇā*—by this eternal enemy; *kāma-rūpeṇa*—in the form of lust; *ca*—also; *duṣpūreṇa*—never to be satisfied; *analena*—like fire.

O Kaunteya, the true knowledge of the wise is covered by the eternal enemy in the form of *kāma*, which burns like fire and can never be satiated.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Kāma is indeed ignorance for all *jīvas*, as Śrī Bhagavān is explaining in this śloka beginning with *āvṛtam*. This desire to enjoy the sense objects has been described as the eternal enemy; therefore, it must be destroyed by all means. *Kāma-rūpa* means in the form of *kāma*. It is indeed ignorance which envelops the real nature of the *jīva*. Here the word *ca* has been used to mean

'like'. Just as fire cannot be satiated by pouring ghee into it, similarly, *kāma* cannot be fulfilled by enjoying the sense objects.

It is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (9.19.14):

*na jātu kāmāḥ kāmānām / upabhogena śāmyati
haviṣā kṛṣṇa-vartmeva / bhūya evābhivardhate*

Fire is not satiated by ghee, rather it increases. Similarly by enjoying sense objects, the thirst for sense enjoyment increases more and more. It does not become pacified.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Kāma is the root cause of lamentation and distress, and has been compared to fire.

kāmānalāṁ madhu-lavaiḥ śamayan durāpaiḥ
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.9.25

Kāma can never be satisfied by enjoying the sense objects. It is like a fire which cannot be extinguished by drops of honey in the form of momentary satisfaction.

*evam gṛheṣv abhirato / viṣayān vividhaiḥ sukhaiḥ
sevamāno na cātuṣyad / ājya-stokair ivānalaḥ*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 9.6.48

The sage Saubhari Muni was not able to attain peace by profusely enjoying sense objects, just as fire is not pacified when drops of ghee are poured into it.

*sevato varṣa-pūgān me / urvaśyā adharāśavam
na tṛpyaty ātma-bhūḥ kāmo / vahnir āhutibhir yathā*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.26.14

Even after I had served the so-called nectar of the lips of Urvaśī for many years, my lusty desires kept rising again and again within my heart and were never satisfied, just like a fire that can never be extinguished by the oblations of ghee poured into its flames.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “This *kāma* is indeed *avidyā* for the *jīvas* and it is their only eternal enemy. It covers the conscious *jīvas* like an irresistible fire. Just as I, Śrī Bhagavān, am a conscious being, similarly the *jīva* is also a conscious entity. The difference between My nature and that of the *jīva* is that I am infinitely conscious and omnipotent, whereas the *jīva* is atomically conscious and can only act by the energy given by Me. The *nitya-dharma*, eternal occupation, of the *jīva* is to be My eternal servant. This is called *prema* or *niṣkāma-jaiva-dharma*, the eternal function of the *jīva* whose motivation is unalloyed. Every conscious being is, by his constitutional nature, endowed with free will, thus he is My eternal servant by his own free will. According to the degree to which he properly uses this free will, he can act as My eternal servant. The misuse of that pure free will is called *avidyā* or *kāma*. Those *jīvas* who do not serve Me by correctly using their free will have to accept *kāma*, an enjoying mood, which is the perverted form of the *jīvas'* pure state, *prema*. Their *svarūpa* becomes *ācchādita-cetana* (covered consciousness) as they are covered more and more by *kāma*. This is called *karma-bandhana*, the bondage of the *jīva*, or *samsāra-yātanā*, the sufferings of birth and death.”

ŚLOKA 40

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।
एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥४०॥

*indriyāṇi mano buddhir / asyādhishṭhānam ucyate
etair vimohayaty eṣa / jñānam āvṛtya dehinam*

ucyate—it is said (that); *indriyāṇi*—the senses; *manah*—mind; (and) *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; (are) *adhiṣṭhānam*—the residences; *asya*—of this lust; *etaiḥ*—by these; *eṣaḥ*—this lust; *āvṛtya*—covering; *jñānam*—his knowledge; *vimohayati*—bewilders; *dehinam*—the embodied being.

The senses, mind and intelligence are said to be the dwelling places of this desire to enjoy. With their help, this lust covers the knowledge of the *jīva* and completely bewilders him.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Where does this *kāma* reside? In response to this question, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *indriyāṇi*. The senses, mind and intelligence, which are like a great fort or capital city, are the abode of this enemy, *kāma*. The sense objects, such as sound, are like the kingdom of the king. The embodied soul, *dehī*, is bewildered by all of them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

One can easily conquer one's enemy when one has discovered his hiding-place and destroyed it. The senses are the shelter or hiding place of *kāma*. Therefore, by subduing the senses *kāma* can be easily defeated. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has compared *kāma* to a very powerful king, the senses to his capital which is protected by the great fort of the mind, intelligence and false ego, and the various sense objects to the kingdom and the subjects of the king.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "When the pure cognisant *jīva* accepts a body, he is known as *dehī* (embodied). *Kāma* keeps the *jñāna* of the *jīva* covered as long as it dwells in the senses, mind and intelligence. The subtle state of *kāma* is *avidyā* (ignorance). It is this *avidyā* only which originally offers the initial veil of ignorance in the form of material *ahankāra* (false ego) to the *jīva*, who is an atomic conscious entity with pure ego. Material intelligence acts as a shelter for this *kāma* or *avidyā*. Later, when the *ahankāra* develops, the material intelligence provides the mind as a second shelter. The mind, which runs after sense objects, then provides the senses as the third place of shelter for *kāma*. Taking shelter of these three

places, *kāma* casts the *jīva* into worldly enjoyment. When a *jīva* turns towards Śrī Bhagavān by his own will, it is called *vidyā*, and when he wilfully becomes averse to Śrī Bhagavān, it is called *avidyā*.”

ŚLOKA 41

तस्मात् त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभं ।
पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥४१॥

*tasmāt tvam indriyāṇy ādau / niyamya bharatarṣabha
pāpmānam prajahi hy enam / jñāna-vijñāna-nāśanam*

tasmāt—therefore; *bharata-ṛṣabha*—O best of the descendants of Bharata; *ādau*—first of all; *niyamya*—by regulating; *indriyāṇi*—the senses; *hi*—certainly; *tvam prajahi*—you must destroy; *enam*—this; *pāpmānam*—evil; *nāśanam*—destroyer; *jñāna*—of knowledge; (and) *vijñāna*—of realisation of Me.

Therefore, O best of the descendants of Bharata, first control your senses in order to completely slay this evil *kāma*, which is the destroyer of both *jñāna* (wisdom) and *vijñāna* (realisation of Me).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

By conquering the enemy’s place of shelter, the enemy is conquered. This is the strategy. It is progressively more difficult to control the senses, the mind and the intelligence, which are the seats of *kāma* (the desire to enjoy). It is very difficult to control the senses, but they are easier to control than the mind and intelligence. “Therefore, first conquer your senses.” Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *tasmāt* just to explain this point. Although the mind, which is very difficult to control, runs after enjoying another’s wife and wealth, you should understand what is happening; this is only the work of the senses, such as the eyes, ears, hands and legs. One should control these senses by not allowing them

to pursue their respective objects. *Pāpmānam* means to give up this ferocious desire to enjoy. In this way, if a person gradually controls his senses, his mind will also become free from *kāma* in due course of time.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Assisted by the senses, this powerful *kāma* uses the ropes of delusion to bind *jivas* who are averse to Śrī Bhagavān. Therefore, it is imperative from the outset to control the senses such as the eyes. When the external senses are thus controlled, the mind, whose function is *sāṅkalpa* (the determination to accept) and *vikalpa* (the choice to reject), will also be controlled.

Śrī Bhagavān also spoke thus to Uddhava:

viśayendriya-saṁyogān / manah kṣubhyati nānyathā
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.26.22

The mind becomes restless only when the senses come in contact with the sense objects, otherwise not.

asamprayuñjataḥ prāṇān / śāmyati stimitam manah
Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 11.26.23

Therefore, the mind of a person who has control over his senses becomes stable and peaceful.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Therefore, best of the Bharatas, by first controlling the senses and mind, conquer this extremely formidable *kāma* which destroys *jñāna* and *vijñāna*, devotion to Me. Destroying its distorted nature (lust), reinstate its own constitutional nature, *prema*. Thus take shelter of the inherent nature of *prema*. The first commendable duty of a *baddha-jīva* is to follow the principles of *yukta-vairāgya*, genuine renunciation, and to pursue *sva-dharma*, prescribed duties. Thus, by gradually attaining *sādhana-bhakti*, he should perform *sādhana* to attain

prema-bhakti. Nirapekṣa-bhakti unalloyed bhakti independent of jñāna, karma or personal endeavour, is attained by My mercy or by the mercy of My bhakta. Although it is very rare, in some cases it manifests without any cause.”

SLOKA 42

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्बुद्धेयः परतस्तु सः ॥४२॥

*indriyāṇi parāṇy āhur / indriyebhyah param manah
manasas tu parā buddhir / buddher yaḥ paratas tu saḥ*

āhuḥ—they (the sages) say that; *indriyāṇi*—the senses; *parāṇi*—are higher than dull matter; *manah*—the mind; *param*—is higher; *indriyebhyah*—than the senses; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *tu parā*—is indeed higher; *manasaḥ*—than the mind; *tu*—but; (it is) *sah*—he (the soul); *yaḥ*—who; (is) *parataḥ*—still higher; *buddheḥ*—than intelligence.

The senses are said to be superior to inert matter, and the mind is superior to the senses. The intelligence is superior to the mind, and he, the *ātmā*, is superior even to the intelligence.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

It is impractical to try to control the mind and intelligence in the initial stages; to do so is impossible. But to explain the process, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the words *indriyāṇi parāṇi*. He is saying, “The senses are more powerful than a courageous warrior who has conquered the ten directions. Indeed, they are superior to him, for even he cannot have control over his senses. The mind is more powerful than the senses, and superior to them, for it remains active even during dreams when the senses are dissolved. Intelligence which is endowed with realisation is still more powerful than and superior to the mind because

resolute intelligence remains active even during deep sleep, when the mind is dissolved. Over and above this, the *ātma* is more powerful than the intelligence and superior to it, for it continues to exist even when the intelligence is destroyed. It is this glorious soul alone that can conquer *kāma*. This *jīvātmā*, which is more powerful than everything else, can definitely control *kāma*, once it has controlled the senses, mind and intelligence. Of this you should have no doubt.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARSINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In *śrutis* it is also said:

*indriyebhyah parā hy arthā / arthebhyaś ca param manah
manasas tu parā buddhir / buddher ātmā mahan paraḥ*
Katha Upanisad 1.3.10

Certainly, reason is superior to the senses, and mind is higher than reason. Higher than the mind is intelligence, and the great one, the *ātmā* (soul) is highest of all.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “I am explaining the gradation to you in brief. Your real identity is that you are a *jīva*. You have a constitutional function of rendering loving service to Me, but you have accidentally become bound by inert matter, so that you now identify yourself with the senses, mind and intelligence. This is delusion, and it is created by ignorance. The senses are superior to and more subtle than inert objects. Superior and more subtle than the senses is the mind. The intelligence is superior to and more subtle than the mind, and the *ātmā*, which is the *jīva*, is superior even to the intelligence.”

ŚLOKA 43

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।
जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥४३॥

*evam buddheḥ param buddhvā / saṁstabhyātmānam ātmanā
jahi ṣatruṁ mahā-bāho / kāma-rūpam durāsadam*

mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed one; *evam*—in this way; *buddhvā*—knowing; (the soul to be) *param*—superior; *buddheḥ*—to intelligence; *saṁstabhya*—by firmly establishing; *atmānam*—the mind; *ātmanā*—through intelligence; *jahi*—destroy; *durāsadam*—this difficult-to-vanquish; *ṣatruṁ*—enemy; *kāma-rūpam*—in the form of the desire to enjoy.

O Mahā-bāho, in this way, knowing the *jīvātmā* to be superior to the intelligence, control the mind with the pure intelligence that is related to the true self, and destroy this insatiable enemy in the form of *kama*, the desire to enjoy.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is concluding this chapter with this *śloka* beginning with *evam*. “Knowing the *jīva* to be superior to the intelligence and distinct from all mundane designations, and making the *ātmā* steady with the *ātmā* himself, destroy this *kāma* which is very difficult to conquer.”

In this chapter, the *sādhana* of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* and the merits of *jñāna*, which is its aim, have been described.

*Thus ends the Bhāvānuvāda of the Sārārtha-Varṣinī Tīkā,
by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, on the Third 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 quotes Śrī Kṛṣṇa as saying, “In this way, with the help of transcendental knowledge of the *jīvātmā*, know yourself to be *aprākṛta-tattva*, superior to all mundane identification with the senses, body, mind and in-

telligence, and also know yourself to be My eternal servant. Thus, become steady by the grace of My cit-śakti, and destroy this formidable *kāma* by following the gradual steps of devotional practice.”

*Thus ends the Sārārtha-Varṣiṇī Prakāśikā-vṛtti,
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja,
on the Third Chapter of Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā.*

CHAPTER FOUR



Jñāna-yoga Yoga through Transcendental Knowledge

SLOKA 1

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।
विवस्वान् मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥१॥

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

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-VṚTTI

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 *saṃpradāya*. Mantras that are not received from a bona fide *saṃpradāya* are fruitless. In Kali-yuga there are four Vaiṣṇava *saṃpradāyas*: Śrī, Brahmā, Rudra and Sanaka or Kumāra *saṃpradāyas*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original source of all *saṃpradāyas*. Only from Śrī Kṛṣṇa does knowledge of *bhagavat-tattva* flow into this material world: *dharmaṁ tu sāksād bhāgavat-praṇītam*. “Real dharma comes directly from Śrī Bhagavān” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.3.19).

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, 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 *sāṃpradāyika-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-Mādhva 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-lilā* 6.169).

ŚLOKA 2

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

*evam paramparā-prāptam / imam rājarṣayo viduḥ
sa kālēneha mahatā / yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa*

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

(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; *maya*—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; *sakha*—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-VARŞINİ

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 *sakha*, 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; *etad*—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 paramam bhavān
puruṣam sāśvataṁ 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 (*param pavitra*). They also do not believe that He is an eternal person (*sāśvata-puruṣa*), and the original God (*ādi-deva*), who is unborn (*aja*) and all-pervading (*sarvavyāpaka*), 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 vyatitāni / janmāni tava cārjuna
tāny aham veda sarvāṇi / na tvam vettha 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; *vyatītāni*—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-VARSINĪ

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*
Śrimad-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 सत्त्वव्यात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय सम्भवाम्यात्ममायया ॥६॥

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

api—although; *san*—being; *ajah*—unborn; *avyaya-ātmā*—(and having) an imperishable body; *api*—although; *san*—being; *īśvaraḥ*—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-VARŚINĪ

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, *avyayātmā*. “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 *jivas*, 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 (*linga-śarīra*) 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*: *evam 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*: *prakṛtiṁ svām adhiṣṭhāya sambhāmy ātma-māyayā*. If the word *prakṛti* is taken to indicate the external *māyā-sakti*, the meaning here becomes ‘Parameśvara, the presiding controller of *prakṛti*, who becomes the universe with the help of this *sakti*’. However, this does not describe the specific nature of Śrī Bhagavān. In the Sanskrit

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

Śrīla Śrīdhara 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 kasmin 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.”

Śrīla Śrīdhara 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 *jivas*; I am *aja*, without birth, and My form is immutable. I appear through the agency of My *cit-śakti*, whereas the *jivas* 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-VṚTTI

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-śakti*, deludes the *asuras* in such a way that they consider His body to be an object of the material creation. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī has confirmed this in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (9.24.56):

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya kṣayo vṛddhiś ca pāpmanah
tadā tu bhagavān iśa ātmānam sṛjate 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*.

Śrila 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-śakti* 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 *arṁśa-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 Rāvaṇa, Kāṁsa, Keśi and the other *asuras* who give pain to My *bhaktas*, and who cannot be killed by anyone else. *Dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya* 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-VRTTI

Śrī Bhagavān establishes *varṇāśrama-dharma* by transmitting *śakti* 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-vaibhave '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: *aprapāñcāt prapañce 'vataraṇam khalv avatārah.* “The descent of Bhagavān from His unmanifested eternal abode into the mundane plane is called *avatāra*. ”

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

There are four *yugas*: Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali. In Śrīmad-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* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.1.44), Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes, “Although Bhagavān

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

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has also commented in a similar manner:

*lālāne tāḍane mātūr nākāruṇya yathārbhake
tadvad eva maheśasya niyantur guna-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 *jīvas* to bring out their good qualities and diminish their bad ones.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura 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 *kīrtana*, I establish the eternal *dharma* of the *jīvas*.

"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-VARSINĪ

“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 *Śrimad-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)—*oṁ 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-VR̄TTI

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 Ṭhākura 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), *aśabdam* (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-kāmah, the possessor of all types of desires, *sarva-gandhāḥ*, the possessor of all fragrances, *sarva-rasāḥ*, the possessor of all mellows, and so on. This is corroborated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.4.33:

yo 'nugrahārthaṁ bhajatāṁ pāda-mūlam
anāma-rūpo bhagavān anantaḥ
nāmāni rūpāṇi ca janma-karmabhir
bheje sa mahyāṁ paramāḥ prasīdatu

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 मद्भावमागताः ॥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 *sloka*, beginning with the word *vīta-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-VARŚINĪ 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 / tāṁś tathaiva bhajāmy aham
mama vartmānuvarttante / manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśah*

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; *sarvaśah*—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-VARŚINĪ

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-VR̄TTI

*tāṁs tāṁ kāmān harir dadyād yān yān kāmayate janāḥ
ārādhito yathaivaiṣa 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 *Śrīmad-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.

Śrīla 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 (*nirviśeṣa-vādīs*), I award *nirvāṇa-mukti*, total absorption in the *nirviśeṣa-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 कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।
क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥१२॥

*kāṅkṣantah karmaṇāṁ 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; *siddhiḥ*—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-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

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 *nirguṇa-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 / viddhy akarttāram avyayam

cātūr-varṇyam—the system of the four social orders; sṛṣṭam—was created; mayā—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-VRTTI

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 *varna* 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 *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.11.21-4), (11.17.16-19).

ŚLOKA 14

न मां कर्माणि लिप्यन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।
इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्व 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; *yah*—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 (*aṇu-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*).

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Thākura 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 मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥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-VRTTI

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.

SLOKA 17

**कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यज्च 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-VRTTI

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 yāvatā
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā / śraddhā yāvan na jāyate
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.9)

In this current *śloka* of *Gītā*, 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 कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥१८॥**

karmaṇy akarma yah paśyed / akarmaṇi ca karma yah
sa buddhimān manusyeṣu / sa yuktah kṛtsna-karma-kṛt

sah—that; *buddhimān*—intelligent person; *manuṣyeṣu*—among mankind; *yah*—who; *paśyet*—can see; *akarma*—inaction; *karmaṇy*—within action; *ca*—and; *yah*—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-VARSINĪ

Of the three types of *karma*, the *tattva* of *karma* and *akarma* is explained in this *śloka* beginning with the word *karmanī*. 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 asaṁyata-ṣad-vargah / pracaṇḍendriya-sārathih
 jñāna-vairāgya-rahitas / tri-danḍam uपajivati
 surān ātmānam ātma-stham / nihnu te mām ca dharma-hā
 avipakva-kaśayo 'smād / amuṣmāc ca vihīyate
 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 (*durācārī*) due to their impure hearts, who are proud, and who praise themselves, suffer miserable consequences.

ŚLOKA 19

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसङ्कल्पवर्जिताः ।
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्मणं तमाहुः 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-varjitaḥ* 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 nirāśrayaḥ
karmaṇy 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; *nirāśrayaḥ*—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-tṛptah means that internally such a person remains blissfully content. *Nirāśrayah* 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 कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥२१॥

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

ātmā—the soul; *citta*—whose mind; *yata*—is controlled; *nirāśīḥ*—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-VR̄TTI

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 vimatsarah
samah siddhāv asiddhau ca / kṛtvāpi na nibadhyate

(he is) *santuṣṭah*—satisfied; *lābha*—with gain; *yad-ṛcchā*—which comes (of its own accord); (and) *atītah*—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-cetasah
yajñāyācarataḥ karma / samagram pravilīyate

(he who) *gata-saṅgasya*—has given up attachment (for external things); *muktasya*—is liberated; *cetasah*—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 eternity of *karma*. This consideration, however, does not apply to a *niṣkāma-karma-yogī*.

ŚLOKA 24

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्मविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ 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 *brāhmaṇa*; *saṃādhinā*—who is absorbed; *brahma-karma*—spiritual action; *arpaṇam*—his sacrificial spoons and other paraphernalia; *brahma*—are spiritualised; *havīḥ*—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*. *Arpaṇam* 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*."

SLOKA 25

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते ।

ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैवोपजुहति ॥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-devatetyāya*, 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* (*havīḥ*, oblation) in the form of

tvaṁ-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 (*tvaṁ-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-tvaṁ asi* (you are His servant). The superiority of this *jñāna-yajña* will be explained later on."

ŚLOKA 26

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये 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; *saṁyama*—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 *ṛghasthas* offer sense objects, such as sound, into the fire of the senses.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

The resolute *brahmacārīs* offer *indriyāṇi*, 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* (*ṛghasthas*) offer the objects of the senses, such as sound, into the fire of the senses.

ŚLOKA 27

सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे ।
 आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ 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-agnau*—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

Apāre means the knower of pure *tvāṁ-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 *tvāṁ-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>apāṇa</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 saṁśita-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 VR̄TTI

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-saṁhitā*:

Kṛcchra-vrata:

*ekaikam grāsam aśnīyāt try-ahāni trīṇi pūrvava
try-ahañ copavased antyam atikṛcchram caran dvijah*
Manu-saṁhitā 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 asayet pindam krṣne śukle ca varddhayet
upasprśamś tri-śavaṇam etac candrāyaṇam smṛtam*
Manu-saṁhitā 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-yajñā*, and they only perform this *yajñā*.

ŚLOKA 29

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

*apāne juhvati prāṇam / prāṇe 'pānam tathāpare
prāṇāpāna-gatī ruddhvā / prāṇāyāma-parāyanāḥ
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; *prāṇāpāna-gatī*—the movement of these two airs; *prāṇāyāma-parāyanāḥ*—they become absorbed in a trance of breath-control; *apare*—others; *niyata-āhārāḥ*—restricting 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. Yogīs 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 Ṭhākura.

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
Bṛhad-Nāradīya Purāṇa

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

krṣṇa-varṇam tviśākṛṣṇam / sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair / yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ

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-kṣapita-kalmaṣāḥ
yajña-śiṣṭāmṛta-bhujo / yānti brahma sanātanam

api—also; *sarve*—all; *ete*—those; *yajña-vidah*—who are conversant with the principle of *yajña*; (*become*) *kṣapita*—cleansed; *kalmaṣāḥ*—of sins; (*through*) *yajña*—sacrifice; *amṛta-bhujah*—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 लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य 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 lokaḥ*—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 VR̄TTI

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

ŚLOKA 32

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।
कर्मजान्वद्धि तान्सर्वनेवं 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; *brahmaṇaḥ*—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 *yajña* are elaborately explained in the *Vedas*. Knowing all of them to be born of *karma* you will attain *mokṣa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Brahmaṇaḥ 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-VR̄TTI

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 द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप ।
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थं ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥३३॥

*śreyān dravyamayād yajñāj / jñāna-yajñah parantapa
sarvam karmākhilam pārtha / jñāne parisamāpyate*

parantapa—O chastiser of the foe; *śreyān*—better; *yajñāt*—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 PRAKĀSIKĀ-VRTTI

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 *pāṣāṇḍī*, 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-lilā 7.73-74).

ŚLOKA 34

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

*tad viddhi pranipātēna / paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānam / jñāninas tattva-darśinah*

viddhi—you must understand; *tat*—this knowledge; *pranipātēna*—by offering prostrated obeisances to the guru who gives instructions about *jñāna*; *paripraśnena*—by relevant inquiries on every aspect; *sevayā*—by rendering devotional service; *jñāninaḥ*—those in knowledge; *tattva-darśinah*—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 darśī*, 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 *dāṇḍavat-praṇāmas* 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 śrotriyaṁ 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-VRTTI

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 parāmarśaḥ* (*Brahma-sūtra* 1.3.20). The word *tat* refers to *paramātmatattva-jñāna*.

ŚLOKA 35

यज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं 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); *drakṣyasi*—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 *jīvātmas*, 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-śakti*).”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

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 *sakti*."

ŚLOKA 36

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

*api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ / sarvebhyaḥ pāpa-kṛttamah
sarvam jñāna-plavenaiva / vṛjinaṁ 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-VARSINĪ

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 समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुते ऽर्जुन ।
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
aśleṣa-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-sākṣat-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-VARŞINĪ

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 śāntim / acireṇādhigacchati

śraddhāvān—a faithful person; *samyat-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; *śāntim*—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-VARŞINĪ

“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-VRTTI

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 / samśayātma vinaśyati
nāyam loko 'sti na paro / na sukham samśayātmanah*

(he who is) *ajñah*—a fool; *ca*—and; *aśraddadhānah*—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. *Aśraddadhānāḥ* 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 *samśaya-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 ज्ञानसञ्छिन्नसंशयम् ।
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*; *karmāṇī*—*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-VR̥TTI

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 *jīvātma* who has given up the sense of enjoyment and who has attained a devotional attitude towards Bhagavān. Otherwise, a *jīvātma* who is averse to Bhagavān, and who is absorbed in sense gratification, is called *parāk-ātmā*.

ŚLOKA 42

तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतं हृत्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।
छित्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥४२॥

*tasmād ajñāna-sambhūtam / hṛt-stham jñānāsinātmanah
chittvainam samśayam 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-sambhūtam*—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 *niskāma-karma* is the only means to attain *jñāna*. This is the essence of this chapter.

Thus ends the Bhāvānuvāda of the Sārārtha-varśinī Tīkā, by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, 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-cinmaya* 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 *jīvatattva* 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 *nityadharma*. Because the *jīva* has become bound to inert matter by the defect of his own intelligence, Bhagavān descends by the prowess of His *cit-sakti* 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 *yajñā*. The various types of *yajñā* in the world, such as *daiva-yajñā*, *brahmacarya-yajñā*, *grhamedha-yajñā*, *samyama-yajñā*, *astāṅga-yoga-yajñā*, *tapo-yajñā*, *dravya-yajñā*, *svādhyāya-yajñā* and *varṇāśrama-yajñā*, 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—

सन्न्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शांससि ।
यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे 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 *niṣkāma-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—

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ ।
तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो 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; *tayoh*—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 gr̄hāt pūrvam / tri-vargāvapanāt punah
yadi seveta tān bhikṣuh / sa vai vāntāśy apatrapah

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-kāṇḍa* 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-kāṇḍa*. In this case, even the pious activities prescribed in the *Vedas* bind one to the material world. *Karma-kāṇḍa* 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 *Gītā* (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 नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न का ति ।
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-VR̄TTI

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

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

sāṅkhyayogaौ पृथग्बालाः / *pravadanti* na *paṇḍitāḥ*
एकमप्यास्थितः सम्यगुभयोर्विन्दते फलम् ॥४॥

bālāḥ—the ignorant; *pravadanti*—declare; *sāṅkhyayoga*—*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; *ubhayor vindate phalam*—of both.

Only the ignorant say that *sāṅkhyayoga* (*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-sannyāsi* (*Gītā* 5.3). Thus, by taking shelter of either, the result of both is attained.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

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

यत्सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।
एकं साचञ्च योगञ्च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥५॥

*yat sāṅkhyaiḥ prāpyate sthānam / tad yogair api gamyate
ekaṁ 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-VARŞINI

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

संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्नुयोगतः ।
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*) *sann- yāsaḥ*—renunciation; *ayogataḥ*—without *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; *āptum*—brings; *duḥkham*—distress; *tu*—however; *yoga-yuktaḥ*—one who is engaged in *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*; (*becomes*) *munih*—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-VARŞİNİ

The *jñānī*'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-sandūśitāṣayāḥ*

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), “*Tridaṇḍī-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-VARŞİNİ 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-VARŞİNİ

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 श्वसन् ॥८॥
प्रलपन् विसृजन् गृह्णन् उन्मिषन् निमिषन्नपि ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन् ॥९॥

naiva kiñcit karomīti / yukto manyeta tattva-vit
paśyan śṛṇvan spr̄śan jighrann / aśnan gacchan svapnaśasan

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

tattva-vit—a knower of the truth; *yuktaḥ*—a *niṣkāma-karma-yogī*; *eva*—certainly; *paśyan*—while seeing; *śṛṇvan*—hearing; *spṛṣṭan*—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; *indriyāñi*—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-VARŞINĪ

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. *Yuktaḥ* 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

**ब्रह्माण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाभ्सा ॥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 *pūrvasamskāra* (previous impressions) all activities of the material body are automatically performed by the inspiration of Īśvara. 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-yogī*; *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-phalam 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; *śāntim*—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-VARŞINI

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-karmī*, 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 कुर्वन् कारयन् ॥१३॥

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

vaśi—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-VR̥TTI

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.19.43) states: *gṛham 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 कर्मफलसमयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥१४॥

*na kartṛtvam na karmāṇi / lokasya sṛjati prabhuh
na karma-phala-samyogaṁ / svabhāvas tu pravarttate*

prabhuh—Parameśvara, the Supreme Lord; *na sṛjati*—does not create; *lokasya*—a person's; *kartṛtvam*—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 kartṛtvam.*” 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 Iśvara 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 pāpaṁ / na caiva sukṛtam vibhuḥ
ajñānenāvṛtam jñānam / tena muhyanti jantavah*

vibhuḥ—the great (Parameśvara); *eva*—certainly; *na ādatte*—accepts; *na*—neither; *pāpaṁ*—the sinful reaction; *kasyacit*—of anyone; *na*—nor; *sukṛtam*—the pious reaction; *ajñānenā*—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

Iśvara 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 *ajñānenā*, 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 PRAKĀŚIKĀ-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 *avidyāśakti* 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
udāśinavat ḍāśinah / parāvara-dṛg īśvarah*

The *jīvātmā* of Citraketu Mahārāja's dead son gave this instruction to Citraketu Mahārāja, who was suffering from lamentation. "The Paramātmā, Īśvara, 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 ātmanaḥ
teṣām ādityavaj jñānam / prakāśayati tat param*

tu—but; teṣām—for those; yeṣām—whose; tat ajñānam—ignorance; nāśitam—is destroyed; jñānenena—by knowledge; ātmanaḥ—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 *aprākṛta-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-aprākṛta-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-VR̄TTI

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-karī 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 *vivartta*.

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

**तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्त्रिष्ठास्तत्परायणाः ।
गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥१७॥**

*tad-buddhayas tad-ātmānas / tan-niṣṭhās tat-parāyaṇāḥ
gacchānty apunar-āvṛttim / jñāna-nirdhūta-kalmaśāḥ*

(those whose) *tat-buddhayāḥ*—intelligence is in Him; *tat-ātmānah*—whose minds are within Him; *tat-niṣṭhāḥ*—who are fixed on Him; *tat-parāyaṇāḥ*—who are devoted to hearing and chanting; *kalmaśāḥ*—whose inebrieties; *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 *jīvātmā* 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 Paramātmā, 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. *Jñānam 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-VR̥TTI

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 Ṭhākura’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-darśināḥ*

pañḍitāḥ—the learned; *sama-darśināḥ*—look equally; (upon) *brāhmaṇe*—a *brāhmaṇa*; *vidyā-vinaya-sampañne*—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 (*guṇātīta*) 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 *pañḍitas* 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 *jñānī* 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 sphuliṅgake
akrūre krūrake caiva / sama-dṛk pañdito mataḥ*

In My opinion, one who sees with equal vision a *brāhmaṇa* and a *caṇḍala*, 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; *iha 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 प्रहृष्टेत्प्रियं 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*) *sthitaḥ*—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-VARŞINİ

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

ब्रह्मस्पर्शसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखम् ।
स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षयमश्नुते ॥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-VRTTI

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* (*Gītā* 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 संसर्जा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।
 आद्यन्तवन्तः 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-antavantaḥ*—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 yuktah 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-kroda*—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 *kroda*. Those who can tolerate the urges of *kāma* and *kroda* until the time of death are known as *yogīs*, and they are happy.

ŚLOKA 24

योऽन्तःसुखोऽन्तरामस्तथान्तज्योतिरेव यः ।
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥२४॥

*yo'ntah-sukho'ntarārāmas / tathāntar-jyotir eva yah
sa yogī brahma-nirvāṇam / brahma-bhūto'dhigacchati*

(he) *yah*—who; (is) *antah-sukhaḥ*—happy within; *antah-ārāmaḥ*—who enjoys within; *tathā*—and; *yah*—who; (is) *antah-*

jyotiḥ—illumined within; eva—certainly; saḥ—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 Śrila 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 ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमुषयः क्षीणकल्पाः ।
छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥२५॥**

*labhante brahma-nirvāṇam / ṛṣayah kṣīṇa-kalmaṣāḥ
chinna-dvaidhā 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 *ṛṣis* 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 ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥२६॥**

*kāma-krodha-vimuktānāṁ / yatīnāṁ yata-cetasām
abhitō brahma-nirvāṇām / varttate vidiṭātmanām*

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.

SLOKAS 27-28

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

*sparsān kṛtvā bahir bāhyāṁś / cakṣus caivāntare bhruvoh
prāṇāpānau samau kṛtvā / nāsābhyantra-cāriṇau
yatendriya-mano-buddhir / munir mokṣa-parāyaṇah
vigatecchā-bhaya-krodho / yaḥ sadā mukta eva saḥ*

vigata—who is free; *icchā-bhaya-krodhaḥ*—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-VARŞINİ

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 (*tvaṁ-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. *Sparśān* 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 *guṇātīta-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
suhṛdam sarva-bhūtānām / jñātvā mām śāntim ṛcchati*

jñātvā—understanding; *mām*—Me; (to be) *bhoktāram*—the enjoyer; (of all) *yajña-tapasām*—sacrifices and austerities; *mahā-iśvaram*—the great master; *sarva-loka*—of all worlds; *suhṛdam*—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-VARŚINĪ

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 *sānti* 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 Ṭhākura, on the Fifth Chapter of
Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, which gives pleasure to the bhaktas
and is accepted by all saintly persons.*

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

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
 tam 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-çeṣṭā*, 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 sānti*, 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 Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja,
on the Fifth Chapter of Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā.*

CHAPTER SIX



Dhyāna-Yoga

Yoga Through Meditation

ŚLOKA 1

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।
स सन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्वाक्रियः ॥१॥

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

śrī bhagavān uvāca—Śrī Bhagavān said; *yah*—he who; *karoti*—performs; *karma*—work; *kāryam*—as prescribed; *anāśritaḥ*—unattached; *karma-phalam*—to the fruit of his action; *sah*—he; (*is*) *sannyāsī*—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; *akriyah*—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*. *Akriyah* 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-VR̄TTI

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-yājña* 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 हसन्यस्तसङ्कल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥२॥

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

pāñdava—O son of Pāñdu; *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 *niṣkāma-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-VARŚINĪ

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

आरुक्षोमुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।
योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥३॥

ārurukṣor-muner yogam / karma kāraṇam ucyate
yogārūḍhasya 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 yogārūḍhasya*—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-VARŞINI

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-VRTTI

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 कर्मस्वनुषज्जते ।
सर्वसङ्कल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ॥४॥

*yadā hi nendriyārtheṣu / na karmasu anuṣajjate
sarva-saṅkalpa-sannyāsī / yogārūḍhas tadoccyate*

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-ārūḍhaḥ*—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 (*ātma*) 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-VARŞINĪ 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 manusyāñāṁ / kāraṇāṁ bandha-mokṣayoh
bandhāya viśayāsaṅgo / muktyair nirviśayam 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*—of that soul; *yena ātmanā*—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 *jīvātma* who has no control over his mind, it works against him just like an enemy.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

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 ।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥७॥**

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

jita-ātmanah—for the person whose mind is controlled; *praśāntasya*—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-VARŞİNİ

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 *praśānta* (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-VRTTI

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 समलोष्टाश्मकाज्चनः ॥८ ॥**

*jñāna-vijñāna-tṛptātmā / kūṭastho vijitendriyah
yukta ity ucyate yogī / sama-loṣṭāśma-kāñcanah*

ātmā—the soul; *tṛpta*—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 puruṣa*.

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-VR̄TTI

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

सुहन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥९॥

*suhṛṇ-mitrāry-udāśīna / madhyastha-dveṣya-bandhuṣu
sādhuṣu 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, *sādhu* means a saintly (*dharma*ika) person and *pāpī* means a sinful (*adharma*ika) 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-VRTTI

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-cittātmā / 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 yuñjīta* 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-kriyāḥ
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; *upaviṣya*—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-VARŞINĪ

Pratiṣṭhāpya means ‘after establishing’. *Cailājina-kuśottaram* indicates that one should put deerskin on a mat made from *kuṣa* and on top of that a seat made of cloth. A *yogī* 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): *dṛṣyate tv agryayā buddhyā*. “One can see *brahma* with one-pointed intelligence.”

ŚLOKAS 13-14

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः ।
संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥१३॥
प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः ।
मनः संयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत् मत्परः ॥१४॥

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

dhārayan—holding; *kāya*—his body; *sīraḥ*—head; *grīvam*—and neck; *samam*—equipoised; *acalam*—unmoving; *sthiraḥ*—steadfast; *ca*—and; *samprekṣya*—gazing; *svam nāsika-agram*—at the tip of his nose; *anavalokayan*—not glancing; *diśaḥ*—to the (other) directions; *praśānta-ātmā*—filled with peace; *vigata-bhiḥ*—free from fear; *sthitah*—fixed; *brahmacāri-vrate*—in a vow of celibacy; *saṁyamya*—controlling; *manah*—the mind; *yuktah*—engaged in; *mat-cittah*—thinking of Me; *āsīta*—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*." Śrila 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-śāstra* 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

**युञ्जन्वेवं सदात्मानं योगी नियतमानसः ।
शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥१५॥**

*yuñjann evam sadātmānam / yogī niyata mānasah
śāntim nirvāṇa-paramām / mat-saṁsthām adhigacchatī*
 evam—thus; *sadā*—always; *yuñjan*—engaging; *ātmānam*—the mind; *yogī*—the *yogī*; *niyata-mānasah*—of controlled mind; *adhigacchatī*—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 *sānti* 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 *sānti*, 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,” (*Svetāśvatara 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-śīlasya / jāgrato naiva cārjuna*

arjuna—O Arjuna; *ca*—and; *tu*—however; *yogaḥ*—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-śīlasya*—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 aśanenārddhāṁ tṛtīyam udakena tu vāyoḥ sañcaraṇārthāṁ 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-VRTTI

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; *yogaḥ*—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-VR̥TTI

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 ।
निस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥१८॥

*yadā viniyatam cittam / ātmany evāvatiṣṭhate
nispr̥hah 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) *yuktaḥ iti*—connected in *yoga*; *eva*—certainly; *nispr̥hah*—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-yogī* (has attained perfection in *yoga*) when he can situate the controlled *citta* (mind) unwaveringly in the *ātmā* (self).”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

The *yogī* 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 ātmanaḥ*

yathā—as; *dīpaḥ*—a lamp; *nivāta-sthāḥ*—situated in a windless place; *na iṅgate*—does not flicker; *sah*—that; *upamā*—analogy; *smṛtā*—is taught (by the wise); *yogināḥ*—of a yogī; *yata-cittasya*—whose mind is controlled; *yuñjataḥ yogam*—while practicing connection; *ātmanāḥ*—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-VARŚINĪ

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 यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।
 वेति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥२१॥
 यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाथिकं ततः ।
 यस्मिन्निष्ठतो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ॥२२॥
 तं विद्याहुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसञ्ज्ञितम् ।
 स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विणचेतसा ॥२३॥
 सङ्कल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषतः ।
 मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्ततः ॥२४॥
 शनैः शनैरुपरमेद् बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।
 आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥२५॥

*yatroparamate cittam / niruddham yoga-sevayā
 yatra caivātmanātmānam / 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 / guruṇāpi vicālyate
 tam vidyād duḥkha-saṁyoga / viyogam yoga-saṁjñitam
 sa niścayena yoktavyo / yogo'nirviṇṇa-cetasā
 saṅkalpa-prabhavān kāmāṁś / tyaktvā sarvān aśeṣataḥ
 manasaivendriya-grāmaṁ / viniyamya samantataḥ
 śanaiḥ śanair uparamed / buddhyā dhṛti-gṛhītayā
 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; ātmāna—through the mind;
 tuṣyati—one becomes satisfied; ātmāni—in the soul; eva—cer-
 tainly; 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; sthitāḥ—be-
 ing so situated; ayam—this (yogi); na—never; calati—moves
 away; tattvataḥ—from that truth; ca—and; labdhvā—having ob-
 tained; yam—which; manyate—he considers; na aparam—no
 other; lābhām—gain; (is) adhikam—greater; tataḥ—than that;
 sthitāḥ—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; saḥ—
 that; yogāḥ—yoga; yoktavyāḥ—should be practised; niścayena—
 with determination; anirviṇṇa-cetasā—and undeviating con-
 sciousness; 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 *samādhi*, 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-VARŚINI

The word *yoga* in the *śloka*, *nāty-aśnatas 'tu yoga 'sti* (*Gītā* 6.16) and in other *ślokas* means *samādhi*. This *samādhi* is of two types, namely *samprajñāta*, 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 Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkarācārya's *paramaguru*, 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 *kuśa* 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-VR̥TTI

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

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura 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 pratiprasavaḥ
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 śloka beginning with the words *yato yataḥ*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 akalmaśam*

enam yoginam—that *yogī*; *hi*—certainly; (*has*) *praśānta-manasam*—great peace of mind; *brahma-bhūtam*—realisation of *brahma*; *śānta-rajasam*—his passions are pacified; *akalmaśam*—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 PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

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

ŚLOKA 28

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्पषः ।
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥२८॥

*yuñjann evam sadātmānam / yogī vigata-kalmaṣah
sukhena brahma-saṁsparśam / atyantam sukhamaśnute*

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
ikṣate 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; *sarva-bhūta*—in all living beings; *ca*—and; *sarva-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-VARŞINİ

In this *śloka* beginning with the words *sarva-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-VARŞINİ 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 praṇaśyāmi / sa ca me na praṇaśyati*

(he) *yah*—who; *paśyati*—sees; *mām*—Me; *sarvatra*—everywhere; *ca*—and; *paśyati*—sees; *sarvam*—everything; *mayi*—in Me; *tasyāham*—for him; *aham*—I; *na praṇaśyāmi*—am never lost (invisible); *ca*—and; *sah*—he; *na praṇaśyati*—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-VR̄TTI

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 वर्त्मानोऽपि 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-VR̄TTI

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 cānanyāya 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-śāstra*:

*eka eva paro viṣṇuh / sarva-vyāpī na samśayah
aiśvaryād rūpam ekam 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-sāmīpya-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 योऽजुनं ।
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥३२॥**

*ātmaupamyena 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-upamyena*—with himself; *yadi vā*—whether; *sukham*—in happiness; *vā*—or; *duḥkham*—in distress; *mataḥ*—is considered; (to be) *paramaḥ*—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 *ātmaupamyena* 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 *jivas* to be like himself, and considers the happiness and pain of other *jivas* as his own. Therefore, he is always the well-wisher of all *jivas*, and acts accordingly for their eternal benefit. This is called *sama-darśana*.”

ŚLOKA 33

अर्जुन उवाच—

योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदनं ।

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-VARSINI

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 बलवद्दृढम् ।
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥३४॥

cañcalam hi manah kṛṣṇa / pramāthi balavad dṛḍham
tasyāham nigrahām 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; *nigrahām*—subjugation; *tasya*—of it; (*is*) *suduṣkaram*—very hard to do; *iva*—like; *vāyoḥ*—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-VARŞINĪ

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 *panditas* 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-VR̄TTI

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 *sāṃskāra* and the influence of *sādhu-sanga*, he accepted the dress of a *tridaṇḍi-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; *manah*—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) *duṣprāpaḥ*—is difficult to achieve; *asamīyata-ātmanā*—by one whose mind is uncontrolled; *yogah*—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-VARŚINI

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 *samādhi*, which is characterised by the symptom of a controlled mind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

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

अजुन 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-VARSINĪ

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-sāstra* 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*?

SLOKA 38

कच्चनोभयविभ्रष्टश्छन्नाभ्रमिव नश्यति ।
अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमूढो ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥३८॥

*kaccin nobhaya-vibhraṣṭaś / chinnābhram iva naṣyati
apratīṣṭho mahā-bāho / vimūḍho brahmaṇah pathi*

mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa; (*being*) *ubhaya-vibhraṣṭah*—unsuccessful in both (*karma* and *yoga*); *vimūḍhah*—baffled; *pathi*—on the path; *brahmaṇah*—of spiritual realisation; *kaccit*—whether?; *naṣyati*—he perishes; *iva*—like; *chinna-abhram*—a riven cloud; *apratīṣṭhah*—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 saṁśayasyāsya / 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-VR̄TTI

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 ḥṛsi 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—
 पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।
 न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिददुर्गतिं 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 Pr̄thā; *tāta*—dear one; *eva*—certainly; *tasya*—for that person; *vidyate*—there is; *na*—neither; *vināśah*—destruction; *iha*—in this world; *na*—nor; *amutra*—in the next; *hi*—certainly; *kaścit*—someone; *kalyāṇa-kṛt*—who performs auspicious acts; *na gacchatī*—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*, *jñānī* 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 *karma-kāṇḍa* 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 / uṣitvā 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; *uṣitvā*—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-VR̥TTI

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 *dharmika* 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 Devahūtī 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 बुद्धिसम्योगं लभते पौर्वदैहिकम् ।
यतते च ततो भूयः सांसिद्धौ 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 ।
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्त्तते ॥४४॥

*pūrvābhyaśena tenaiva / hrityate hy avaśo'pi saḥ
jijñāsur api yogasya / śabda-brahmātivarttate*

abhyāsena—due to the practice; *pūrva*—of his previous life; *sah*—he; *eva hi hrityate*—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-VARŚINĪ

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 ।
अनेकजन्मसांसिद्धस्ततो 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-VARŚINĪ

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:

draṣṭum 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 yatamānas tu*, which means endeavouring harder than before. The word *tu* shows a difference between these persons and those previously mentioned who fall from *yoga*. *Saṁśuddha-kilbiṣaḥ* indicates that even a person whose impurities have been completely removed cannot attain *saṁsiddhi* 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-vādīs; *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 PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

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; *antar-ātmanā*—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 *yogibhyah*, the *bhakta* is even superior to the *yogī*. “My *bhakta* is not superior to only one type of *yogī*, 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 / nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇah
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-Varṣinī Ṭīkā,
by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, on the Sixth Chapter of
Śrīmad 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*.

“Therefore, O Pārtha, one whose supreme objective is only to perform *bhakti* unto Me is the topmost among all the yogīs. You should become that type of yogī, namely, you should become a *bhakti-yogī*.”

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

CHAPTER SEVEN



Vijñāna-Yoga

Yoga Through Realisation of
Transcendental Knowledge

ŚLOKA 1

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

मव्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युज्जन्मदाश्रयः।
असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु॥१॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
mayy āsakta-manāḥ pārtha / yogam yuñjan mad-āśrayah
asamśayam samagram mām / yathā jñāsyasi tac chṛṇu

śrī bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Lord said; pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; śṛṇu—just hear; yathā—how; jñāsyasi—you shall know; mām—Me; samagram—in truth; yuñjan—by practising; tat—that; yogam—bhakti-yoga; āsakta-manāḥ—with mind attached; mayi—to Me; mad-āśrayah—and taking shelter of Me; asamśayam—free from doubt.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O Pārtha, now hear how you will know Me in full by practising *bhakti-yoga* with your mind attached to Me, taking full shelter of Me alone, being free from all doubt.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

When will I attain the shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu who is an abode of eternal bliss and an ocean of mercy? Having given up the processes of *bhukti* and *mukti* and taking shelter of the path of *bhakti*, when will I become qualified to taste the nectar of *prema*?

This Seventh Chapter describes the *vibhūtis* (opulences) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the supreme object of worship. There is also a description of the four types of worshippers who perform *bhajana* to Him and the four types of persons who do not.

The first six chapters describe the processes of *jñāna* and *yoga*, which both result in *mokṣa* and initially depend on *niṣkāma-karma* to purify the heart. Now, in the next set of six chapters, there is a description of various types of *bhakti-yoga* beginning with *bhakti* mixed with *karma*, *jñāna* and so on. These practices (*śravaṇa* etc.) result in destinations (types of liberations) such as *sālokya*, and are attained by the *sādhakas* of *niṣkāma* and *sakāma-upāsana*. Most prominently, there is a description of the process of *bhakti-yoga* which is independent of *karma*, *jñāna*, etc., and grants that *mukti* in which one becomes a loving associate of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.32-33):

yat karmabhir yat tapasā / jñāna vairāgyataś ca yat

Simply by practising *bhakti-yoga*, My bhakta easily attains in full whatever auspicious results can be achieved by performing *karma* (prescribed duties), *tapasyā* and other auspicious activities, and by cultivating *jñāna*, *vairāgya*, *yoga* and *dāna* (charitable acts).

Even if one desires the destinations of *Svarga*, *mokṣa*, or *Vaikuṇṭha*, one can attain them easily by *bhakti-yoga*. It is clear from these statements that *bhakti* is supremely independent. *Bhakti* is quite capable of granting the fruits of those processes even if one does not perform them. This *bhakti-yoga* is easy to perform, but difficult to attain.

It is said in Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (3.8): *tam eva viditvātimṛtyum eti*. “One can transcend death when one knows Him (Parameśvara).” This statement may cause one to doubt whether one can attain *mokṣa* merely by *bhakti*, without having *jñāna*. In response Śrī Bhagavān says, “Do not raise such an objection.” *Tam eva*, one can only transcend death by knowing *tat-padārtha* (Paramātmā), through direct realisation of Him. One cannot attain freedom from death merely by knowing *tvāṁ-padārtha* (the *jīvātmā*), *prakṛti* (material nature) or any other entity. This is the import of the above statement in Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad.

The only way to taste sugar candy is with the tongue, not with the eyes or ears. Similarly, *bhakti* is the only way to realise *parabrahma*. *Brahma* is *guṇātīta* (beyond the *guṇas*), so it is only possible to attain *brahma* with the help of *bhakti* as *bhakti* is also *guṇātīta*. *Ātma-jñāna*, knowledge of the self which is free from identification with the body and so forth, is in *sattva-guṇa*, so it cannot enable one to attain *brahma*.

Bhakteḥ am ekayā grahyah. “I am attained only by *aikāntika-bhakti*.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.14.21). *Bhakteḥ mām abhijānāti* (Gītā 18.55). “Only by *bhakti* can the *jīva* specifically know the *tattva* of My *svarūpa* and *sva-bhāva*.” Śrī Bhagavān says, “I will establish My *saviśeṣa* (specific nature) by these two statements.”

Jñāna and *yoga* are well known as the means to attain *mukti*, but this is only possible by the influence of *guṇibhūtā bhakti* (*bhakti* predominated by *karma*, *jñāna*, *tapasyā* and so on). *Jñāna* and *yoga* are incapable of giving such a result when they are bereft of *bhakti*. There are many statements that establish that *jñāna* and *yoga* are ineffective without *bhakti*. Moreover, in the above statement from Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad, the word *eva* (only) has been used before the word *viditvā* (knowing). This means that it is not a fact that *mokṣa*

is attained only by *jñāna*. It implies that it is possible to attain *mokṣa* by knowing Paramātmā, and sometimes even without knowing Him. Thus *mokṣa* is attained by *nirguṇa-paramātmā-jñāna* (knowledge of Paramātmā which is beyond the modes) generated from *bhakti*, and sometimes *mokṣa* can be attained solely by *bhakti*, even without knowledge of Paramātmā. This meaning is also conveyed by the *Upaniṣad* statement previously quoted.

The tongue cannot taste the sweetness of *miśri* (rock sugar) if it is affected by the disease of jaundice, but by continuously consuming *miśri*, the defect of the tongue will be cured, and the taste of *miśri* will be relished again. There is no doubt about it. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.59) Śrī Uddhava says, “Nectar always grants immortality, even if one tastes it without knowing its characteristics.” Similarly, one may be ignorant of His *svarūpa*, but if he constantly performs *bhajana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he is granted his desired result. It is also said of Śrī Nārāyaṇa in the *Mokṣa-dharma*, “A person who has taken shelter of Śrī Nārāyaṇa does not need to perform the *sādhana* by which one attains the four goals of life: *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. Indeed, he attains these goals, even without practising this *sādhana*.” It is also said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.32-33): “Whatever is achieved by following these processes or performing one’s prescribed duty and austerities, My *bhaktas* attain easily by *bhakti-yoga*.” Moreover, it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.16.44): “Simply by hearing Your holy name once, even a low born *cāṇḍāla* is liberated from the material world.” These statements establish that, one can only attain *mokṣa* by practising *bhakti*. Furthermore: “Of all *yogīs*, the best is he who performs *bhajana* with great faith within his heart,” (Gītā 6.47). By this statement, Śrī Bhagavān also indicates a special characteristic of His *bhaktas* whose minds are fixed in Him, and who have faith in His *bhaktas*. One may

raise the question, “What type of *bhaktas* are eligible to have *jñāna* and *vijnāna* of Śrī Bhagavān?” This *śloka* beginning with the words *mayy āsakta*, and also the next *śloka*, are spoken in response to this question.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.42) states: “Just as a person has experience of satisfaction, nourishment and the removal of hunger all at the same time when he eats food, similarly one who performs *bhajana* of Śrī Bhagavān simultaneously achieves devotion, realisation of Bhagavān and detachment.”

“It is noteworthy that one who eats only one mouthful of food experiences neither satisfaction nor nourishment. Satisfaction and nourishment are experienced only by one who eats a full meal. In the same way, although one starts to realise Me from the initial stages of performing My *bhajana*, only one who has become situated on the platform of *āsakti*, and whose mind is attached to My Śyāmasundara *svarūpa*, adorned with a yellow dress, realises Me in reality. You can know Me only in this way.

“Please hear how one can have direct realisation of Me and what type of *yoga* grants this. One can become My *ananya-bhakta* even without the help of *jñāna*, *karma*, etc. by gradually becoming united with Me, and eventually taking complete shelter of Me.”

In this *śloka*, the word *asamśayam* indicates a doubt about the possibility of attaining *nirviśeṣa-brahma*, and *samagram* indicates that the realisation of that *svarūpa* is incomplete. This will be stated later on in Gītā (12.5):

*kleśo ‘dhikataras teṣām / avyaktāsakta-cetasām
avyaktā hi gatir duhkham / dehavadbhīr avāpyate*

Those who fix their mind on *nirguṇa-brahma* have to undergo great miseries. It may be difficult for an embodied *jīva* to attain that unmanifest nature.

In other words, there is a doubt as to whether one can attain the *nirviṣeṣa-brahma-svarūpa*. However, in the present śloka Śrī Bhagavān is declaring, “This doubt does not exist in relation to My *bhakti-yoga*, because My devotees always realise Me, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, *parabrahma-tattva*. Moreover, *brahma*, the worshipable object of the *jñānīs*, is only My glorious effulgence. As I said to King Satyavrata in My Matsya avatāra, ‘By following My instructions you will also come to know My glories, which are manifested in your heart by *śabda-brahma*, the sound representation of *parabrahma*’ (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 8.24.38). And in Gītā (14.27) I have said: ‘I am the shelter or basis of *nirviṣeṣa-brahma*.’ Therefore, knowledge of My *nirviṣeṣa-svarūpa* is not complete but only partial compared to knowledge of My Śrī Kṛṣṇa Śyāmasundara *pītāmbara-dhārī svarūpa*. Knowledge of *nirviṣeṣa-brahma* is *asamagram* (incomplete).”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Thākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Pārtha, in the first six chapters, I explained *jñāna* and *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*. These are paths to attain *mokṣa*, and they require the help of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* to purify the heart. In the second set of six chapters, I am explaining *bhakti-yoga*. Please listen. With your mind steadfast in attachment to Me, having taken complete shelter of Me by practising *bhakti-yoga*, you will attain thorough knowledge of Me. There is no doubt about this.

“The knowledge of *nirviṣeṣa-brahma* is incomplete because it denies knowledge of the qualities of the personal feature of the Absolute (*saviṣeṣa-jñāna*). One attains the featureless *nirviṣeṣa* conception by negating material variety. My *nirviṣeṣa-brahma* nature manifests only as the

object of this *nirviśeṣa* conception, which is not *nirguṇa*, because it merely transcends physical and mental knowledge, and is therefore limited to knowledge in *sattva-guṇa*. *Bhakti* is a function of *nirguṇa-vṛtti* (transcendental nature). My form is also *nirguṇa*, and can only be seen by the transcendental (*nirguṇa*) eyes of a *jīva* which have been uncovered by the process of *nirguṇa-bhakti*."

ŚLOKA 2

ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः ।
यज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज् ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥२॥

*jñānam te'ham sa-vijñānam / idam vakṣyāmy aśeṣataḥ
yaj jñātvā neha bhūyo'nyaj / jñātvayam avaśiyate*

aham—I; vakṣyāmi—shall explain; te—to you; aśeṣataḥ—in full; idam—this; jñānam—knowledge; sa-vijñānam—together with the process of realizing that knowledge; yat—which; jñātvā—having understood; na anyat—nothing else; bhūyah—further; avaśiyate—will remain; jñātvayam—to be known; iha—in this world.

I shall reveal to you in full this *jñāna*, enriched with *vijñāna* (realisation). When you know this, there will remain nothing further to be known in this world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Until one is situated on the platform of *āsakti* (attachment) in the process of My *bhakti*, knowledge of Me is *aiśvarya-mayī* (in awe and reverence), and is called *jñāna*. Later, when one attains *āsakti*, My *mādhurya* is realised through *vijñāna*. Please hear about both of these, after knowing which, there will be nothing else to be known. Knowledge of My *nirviśeṣa-brahma* as well as *vijñāna* are included within this."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

When one performs *nirguṇā-bhakti*, he realises the complete *svarūpa* of Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss, and who is the basis of transcendental *aiśvarya* and *mādhurya*. Śrī Vyāsa attained complete vision and realisation of the *svarūpa* of Bhagavān in a state of *saṁādhi*, only through *bhakti-yoga*. Apaśyat *purusam pūrnam* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.7.4). “And thus he saw the complete Personality of Godhead.” It should be understood that both *brahma-jñāna* and *paramātma-jñāna* are included within this complete vision and realisation (*vijñāna*) of Kṛṣṇa’s *svarūpa*. Therefore, when one has attained knowledge of Śrī Bhagavān, nothing else remains to be known.

The synonym for *nirguṇā-bhakti* is *prema-bhakti*. To attain *prema-bhakti*, one must pass through nine stages: (1) *śraddhā*, (2) *sādhu-saṅga*, (3) *bhajana-kriyā*, (4) *anartha-nivṛtti*, (5) *niṣṭhā*, (6) *ruci*, (7) *āsakti* (these seven stages comprise *sādhana-bhakti*), (8) *bhāva* and (9) the appearance of *prema*. Before the *sādhaka bhakta* achieves the stage of *āsakti*, knowledge of Bhagavān is *aiśvarya-mayī*. But when *āsakti* becomes mature, he realises *mādhurya* within his heart. This is called *vijñāna*.

ŚLOKA 3

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मा वेत्ति तत्त्वतः॥३॥

*manuṣyāṇām sahasreṣu / kaścid yatati siddhaye
yatataṁ api siddhānām / kaścin mām vetti tattvataḥ*

sahasreṣu—among thousands; *manuṣyāṇām*—of men; *kaścit*—someone; *yatati*—endeavours; *siddhaye*—for perfection; *api*—yet even; *yatataṁ*—of those who endeavour; *siddhānām*—and attain perfection; *kaścit*—some (rare) person; *vetti*—knows; *mām*—Me; *tattvataḥ*—in truth.

Among thousands of men, one may endeavour for perfection. And among those who attain perfection, it is rare for even one to know My *svarūpa* in truth.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Even *jñānīs* and *yogīs* who are endowed with the symptoms described in the previous six chapters rarely attain knowledge of Me complete with *vijñāna*.” Saying this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks about *vijñāna* (realisation of Him) in this śloka beginning with the word *manuṣyānām*. “Among countless *jīvas*, one becomes a human being, and among thousands of humans one of them tries to attain the ultimate goal of life. Among thousands who make such an endeavour, it is rare for one to know in truth and to have direct realisation of My Śyāmasundara Muralīdhārī form.”

The conclusion is that the bliss one experiences by realisation of *saviśeṣa-brahma* is thousands of times greater than the bliss experienced by realizing *nirviśeṣa-brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this śloka, Bhagavān is showing that *bhagavat-jñāna* is extremely rare. In Śrimad-Bhāgavatam (6.14.5), this has been described:

*muktānām api siddhānām / nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇah
sudurlabhaḥ praśāntātmā / koṭiṣv api mahā-mune*

O Mahā-muni, among millions of such liberated and perfected persons, a *bhakta* of Nārāyaṇa, who is very peaceful, is extremely rare. Even more rare than such *aiśvarya-mayī bhaktas* of Śrī Nārāyaṇa, who are attracted to His majesty, are the *mādhurya-parāyaṇa-bhaktas* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The bliss derived from tasting the sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is millions of times greater than the *brahmānanda*, the bliss of *brahma*.

Also in the Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.25:

*brahmānando bhaved eṣah cet parārdha-guṇī-kṛtaḥ
naiti bhakti-sukhāmbhodheḥ paramāṇu-tulām api*

Even when the bliss of *brahma* is multiplied by the number of days in Brahmā's lifespan, it still cannot be compared to a single particle of the pleasure of tasting the mellows of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sweetness.

This is also stated in Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 7.84-85).

ŚLOKA 4

**भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च।
अहङ्कार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरस्तथा॥४॥**

*bhūmir āpo'nalō vāyuḥ / kham mano buddhir eva ca
ahaṅkāra itīyam me / bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā*

iyam—this; *prakṛtiḥ*—energy; *me*—of Mine; (*has*) *aṣṭadhā*—eightfold; *bhinnā*—divisions; *iti*—as follows; *bhūmiḥ*—earth; *āpaḥ*—water; *analaḥ*—fire; *vāyuḥ*—air; *kham*—ether; *manah*—mind; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *ahaṅkāraḥ*—false ego.

My external material energy has eight divisions: earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In relation to *bhakti*, the word *jñāna* indicates only the *aiśvarya-jñāna* of Śrī Bhagavān. It does not indicate *ātmajñāna*. Hence, in this śloka beginning with the word *bhūmi* and in the next śloka, He is delineating His *aiśvarya-jñāna* by explaining His spiritual (*parā*) and material (*aparā*) energies. The word *bhūmi-ādi* (earth, etc.) indicates the five material elements (*pañca-mahā-bhūta*) along with their respective

subtle elements such as fragrance. The word *ahaṅkāra* (false ego) refers to their effects, the senses, and their cause, the *mahāt-tattva*. Since the intelligence and the mind are prominent among these elements, they have been mentioned separately.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Knowledge of My *svarūpa* and My *aiśvarya* is called *bhagavat-jñāna*.” It is described in this way: ‘I, the Supreme Absolute Reality Śrī Kṛṣṇa, am always situated in My *svarūpa*, and possess all energies (*śaktis*) in full. Brahma is only a featureless (*nirviṣeṣa*) expression of My *śakti*, and does not have a form (*svarūpa*). The existence of *brahma* is based on the concept of negating the created world. Paramātmā is also a partial manifestation of My energy in this world. In fact, He is a reality specifically related to the temporary material world, and does not have an eternal *svarūpa*. *Bhagavat-svarūpa* is My only eternal feature and has two types of *śakti*. One *śakti* is called *bahiraṅgā* or *māyā-śakti*, the external energy. Since it is the cause (mother) of the inert world, it is also called *aparā-śakti*. One should understand the number of elements in this *aparā-śakti* related to inert matter. The five gross elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether are called *mahā-bhūta* (gross elements). Smell, taste, form, touch and sound are their five respective qualities. Hence, there are ten elements. You should understand that the senses are their active elements initiated by the element of the false ego, or *ahaṅkāra*, and that *mahāt-tattva* is their cause. The mind and intelligence have been mentioned as separate elements, because of their prominent and distinctive functions among the group of elements, but in fact they are one. This entire group is all part of My external energy.’”

ŚLOKA 5

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम्।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत्॥५॥

*apareyam itas tv anyām / prakṛtim viddhi me parām
jīva-bhūtām mahā-bāho / yayedam dhāryate jagat*

mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed (Arjuna); *viddhi*—you must understand; *iyam*—this (material energy); (to be) *aparā*—inferior; *tu*—but; *itaḥ*—beyond it; (there is) *anyām*—another; *parām*—superior; *prakṛtim*—energy; *me*—of Mine; (consisting of) *jīva-bhūtām*—the living beings; *yayā*—by which; *idam*—this; *jagat*—universe; *dhāryate*—is accepted.

O Mahā-bāho, you should know that My external energy, which consists of eight divisions, is inferior. There is another potency of Mine known as the *jīva-svarūpa*, which is superior and which accepts this material world for the purpose of enjoying the fruits of *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Because its nature is inert, the earlier mentioned *bahirāṅga-śakti* is external (*aparā*). The *taṭastha-śakti*, in the form of the *jīvas*, is different from this *bahirāṅga-śakti* and superior (*parā*) to it because of the presence of consciousness. The reason that it is superior is that by its conscious nature it sustains the universe, that is, it accepts the material world for the purpose of its own enjoyment.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Besides this material nature (*aparā prakṛti*), there is My

marginal nature (*taṭasthā prakṛti*), which is also called *jīva* or *parā prakṛti*. That *prakṛti* is conscious (*caitanya-svarūpā*), and it is in the form of the *jīvas* (*jīva-svarūpā*). All the *jīvas* emanating from that energy have made this inert material world conscious. The *jīva* has the capacity to understand and move in either the *cit-jagat* (transcendental world), which has emanated from My internal energy (*antaraṅga-śakti*), or in the *jada-jagat* (inert world) which has emanated from My external energy (*bahiraṅga-śakti*). *Jīva-śakti* is also called *taṭastha-śakti* for this reason."

Those *buddha-jīvas* who are averse to Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifest in this world from this *taṭastha-śakti*. It is a great misconception to think that the *buddha-jīvas* have given up their service to Kṛṣṇa, and have come from Vaikunṭha or even higher, from Goloka. This idea is opposed to *siddhānta*. Once a *jīva* has attained service to Kṛṣṇa in His abode, it is impossible for him to fall from that position. As it is said in *Gītā* (15.6):

yad gatvā na nivartante / tad dhāma paramam mama

Those who attain My supreme *dhāma* never return to this material world.

Citraketu Mahārāja and Jaya and Vijaya never fell down. They appeared in this world voluntarily, and enacted the roles of *buddha-jīvas* for the pleasure of Bhagavān. The *jīvas* who are absorbed in service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world manifest either from Śrī Baladeva Prabhu, or from His expansion, Mahā-Saṅkarṣaṇa, who is non-different from Him. They are eternally liberated *jīvas*. It is never possible that they fall.

ŚLOKA 6

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय।
अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा॥६॥

*etad yonīni bhūtāni / sarvāṇīty upadhāraya
aham kṛtsnasya jagataḥ / prabhavaḥ pralayas tathā*

upadhāraya—know; *etad*—that; *iti*—that; *sarvāṇī*—all; *bhūtāni*—living beings; (have come from these) *yonīni*—energies; *aham*—I; (am) *prabhavaḥ*—the origin; *tathā*—and; *pralayah*—annihilation; *kṛtsnasya*—of the whole; *jagataḥ*—universe.

Know that all created beings have been born from these two *prakṛtis*. I alone am the sole cause of the creation and destruction of the entire universe.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here, Śrī Bhagavān establishes Himself as the cause of the universe, for He is the origin of both these śaktis. Māyā-śakti as *kṣetra* (the field) and *jīva-śakti* as *kṣetrajña* (the knower of the field) are the two causes of all moving and non-moving created beings. “Thus, as the controller of these śaktis, I am the creator of the entire universe. At the time of annihilation, these śaktis dissolve and rest in Me, the supreme energetic (*śaktimān*). I am therefore their only destroyer.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Cit and acit (conscious and inert), that is, the *jīvas* and the inert creation, have emanated from these two *prakṛtis*. Both *māyā* and *jīva-śakti* are My potencies as they originate from Me. I, Bhagavān, am therefore the root cause of both the origin and dissolution of the universe.”

ŚLOKA 7

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत् किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय।
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव॥७॥

*mattah parataram nānyat / kiñcid asti dhanañjaya
mayi sarvam idam protam / sūtre maṇi-gaṇā iva*

dhanañjaya—O winner of wealth, Arjuna; *na asti*—there does not exist; *kiñcit*—anything; *anyat*—else; *parataram*—greater; *mattah*—than Me; *sarvam*—all; *idam*—this universe; *protam*—is dependent; *mayi*—on Me; *iva*—as; *maṇi-gaṇāḥ*—jewels; (*strung*) *sūtre*—on a thread.

O Dhanañjaya, there is nothing superior to Me. This whole universe is dependent on Me, like jewels strung on a thread.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān says, “In this way, I am the cause of everything. Just as cause and effect are non-different from each other, so are the energy and the energetic.”

It is said in *śruti*: *ekam evādvitīyam brahma*. “Before the creation of this universe, there was only one Absolute Reality without a second.” (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2.1)

Moreover: *neha nānāsti kiñcana*. “Nothing exists except for *advaya brahma*, the one non-dual Absolute Truth in various forms.” (*Bṛhad-Āranyaka-Upaniṣad* 4.4.19)

Also in *śruti* it is stated: “Since My *śaktis* are the cause of all creations, I am the cause of everything.”

In this way, after first explaining His nature of being everything, Bhagavān is now explaining His quality of being all-pervading by the words *mayi* and so on. *Sarvam idam* means, “Both the *cit* (conscious) and *jāda* (inert) universes are non-different from Me because they are My creations

(effects). In other words, they are My *svarūpa*, and just as jewels are strung on a thread, they are strung on Me, Antaryāmī.” Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatīpāda has written: *sūtre maṇi-gaṇā iva*. “This example merely proves that the universe is resting in Bhagavān, but it does not prove that He is the cause of the universe. However, ‘gold is the cause of a golden earring’ is an appropriate example to establish Him as the cause of the universe.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the previous *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān established Himself as the independent cause of creation and dissolution. Now, in the present *śloka*, He is establishing that as all-pervading Antaryāmī, He alone is the cause of maintenance. “I, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, am the *parama-tattva* and the cause of all causes.” Lord Brahmā also establishes this principle in *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5. 1):

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

The Supreme Lord, the embodiment of truth, consciousness and joy, is Govinda Kṛṣṇa. He is without beginning, the origin of all that be, and the Cause of all causes.

To make this subject easier to understand, we will cite concepts from *Govinda-bhāṣya* written by Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa: “*Parabrahma-svarūpa*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the Supreme Absolute Reality (*para-tattva-vastu*). There is nothing superior to Him because there is no other independent entity. *Yasmāt param nā param asti kiñcit* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 3.9). These statements from the śrutis have not accepted the existence of anything higher than the all-worshippable *brahma*. In the Vedas (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 3.8-9) it is said: “I have known this effulgent *brahma* which is like the sun and beyond all darkness (ignorance).

One attains immortality and the goal of human life (*puruṣārtha*) by knowing Him. The only means to attain immortality is by knowledge of this *mahā-puruṣa*. There is nothing superior to Him."

"After accepting the superiority of *parabrahma* established in these *mantras*, it is further said: 'Those who know the pure or constitutional nature of *brahma* attain immortality in due course of time; otherwise there is no cessation to their miseries.' If something is accepted as superior to *brahma*, then Śrī Kṛṣṇa's statement: *mattah parataram nānyat kiñcid asti dhanañjaya*, becomes false" *Govinda-bhāṣya* (*Brahma-sūtra* 3.2.37).

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.8) repeats the same: *na tat-samaś cābhyaadhikaś ca drśyate*. "There is nothing equal to or greater than *saviṣeṣa-brahma-tattva*."

ŚLOKA 8

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभास्मि शशिसूर्ययोः।
प्रणवः सर्ववेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु॥८॥

*raso'ham apsu kaunteya / prabhāsmi śaśi-sūryayoh
pranavaḥ sarva-vedeṣu / śabdah khe pauruṣam nr̥ṣu*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *aham*—I; *asmi*—am; *rasaḥ*—the taste; *apsu*—in water; *prabhā*—the light; *śaśi-sūryayoh*—of the moon and sun; *pranavaḥ*—the syllable *om*; *sarva-vedeṣu*—in all Vedic mantras; *śabdah*—the sound; *khe*—in ether; (and the) *pauruṣam*—ability; *nr̥ṣu*—in man.

O Kaunteya, I am the taste in water, the radiance of the moon and sun, and the syllable *om* in all Vedic mantras. I am the sound in ether and the ability in man.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

“As Antaryāmī, I enter into and exist in this universe which was created by Me. Similarly, I alone exist as the essence within all humans and all other living entities. Somewhere I am the cause and somewhere I am the effect.” Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the words *raso ‘ham* and the next three *ślokas* in order to establish this truth. *Apsu* (water) means, “The *rasa* (taste) in water, is its cause, which is also My opulence (*vibhūti*). Similarly, My effulgence is the cause of the sun and the moon, and *oṁkāra* is the cause of the Vedas. They are also My *vibhūti*. I am also the cause of the sky, sound, and the very essence of human beings, which is the source of their vital energy (*pauruṣa*).”

ŚLOKA 9

पुण्यो गन्धः पृथिव्याज्च तेजश्चास्मि विभावसौ।
जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चास्मि तपस्विषु॥९॥

*puṇyo gandhaḥ pṛthivyāñ ca / tejaś cāsmi vibhāvasau
jīvanam sarva-bhūteṣu / tapaś cāsmi tapasviṣu*

asmi—I am; puṇyah—the pure; gandhaḥ—fragrances; pṛthivyām—within the earth; ca—and; tejah—the heat; vibhāvasau—within fire; ca—and; jīvanam—life; sarva-bhūteṣu—in all beings; ca—and; asmi—I am; tapaḥ—austerity; tapasviṣu—in ascetics.

I am the pure fragrance of the earth, the heat in fire, the life in all beings and the austerity of the ascetics.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

According to the *Amara-koṣa* dictionary, the word *puṇya* means an original and attractive fragrance. The use of the

word *ca* indicates the relationship of the word *puṇya* with *rasa* (taste), etc. The word *teja* implies the capacity to digest and cook all ingredients. It also means to illuminate and to protect from cold and so on. This capacity is the essence. *Jīvana* means essence in the form of life, and *tapa* means to tolerate dualities.

ŚLOKA 10

बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम्।
बुद्धिबुद्धिमतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम्॥१०॥

*bījam mām sarva-bhūtānām / viddhi pārtha sanātanam
buddhir buddhimatām asmi / tejas tejasvinām aham*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *viddhi*—know; *mām*—Me; (as) *sanātanam*—the eternal; *bījam*—seed; *sarva-bhūtānām*—for all living beings; *aham*—I; *asmi*—am; *buddhiḥ*—the intelligence; *buddhimatām*—of the intelligent; (and the) *tejah*—prowess; *tejasvinām*—of the powerful.

O Pārtha, know Me to be the eternal cause of all beings. I am the intelligence of the intelligent, and the prowess of the powerful.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *bīja* (seed) means the untransformed cause which is called *pradhāna*. *Sanātana* means eternal. “The essence of an intelligent person is his intelligence, and that is Me.”

ŚLOKA 11

बलं बलवतां चाहं कामरागविवर्जितम्।
धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतषभ्॥११॥

*balaṁ balavatāṁ cāhaṁ / kāma-rāga-vivarjitam
dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu / kāmo'smi bharatarṣabha*

bharata-ṛṣabha—O best of Bharata’s line; *aham asmi*—I am; *balaṁ*—the strength; *balavatāṁ*—of the strong; *vivarjitam*—devoid; *kāma-rāga*—of lust and attachment; *ca*—and; *kāma*—passion; *bhūteṣu*—in all living beings; *dharma-aviruddhaḥ*—not incompatible with the codes of *dharma*.

O best of the Bharata dynasty, I am the strength of the strong, free from attachment and desire. In all beings I am sexual union in accordance with *dharma*, for the purpose of procreation alone.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *kāma* generally refers to the desire for one’s maintenance, and *rāga* refers to anger. In this context, however, these meanings do not apply. *Dharmāviruddhaḥ* means that which is not opposed to *dharma*, that is, passion which is used only to produce children from one’s own wife.

ŚLOKA 12

**ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये।
मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि॥१२॥**

*ye caiva sāttvikā bhāvā / rājasās tāmasāś ca ye
matta eveti tān viddhi / na tv aham teṣu te mayi*

ca—and; *viddhi*—you should know; *eva*—certainly; *ye ye*—whichever; *bhāvāḥ*—states of existence (there are); *sāttvikāḥ*—in goodness; *rājasāḥ*—passion; *ca*—and; *tāmasāḥ*—ignorance; *eva*—certainly; *tān*—them; *mattāḥ*—to come from Me; *iti*—thus; *aham*—I (am); *na*—not; *teṣu*—in them; *tu*—but; *te mayi*—they are in Me.

Know that all states of existence: *sāttvika*, *rājasika* and *tāmasika*, are manifested by the modes of My material nature. I am not subject to these modes, for they are all under the control of My energy.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“In this way, I have explained only some of the *vibhūtis*, such as those which are the cause and the essence of objects. But what is the purpose of going into details? Everything is under My control and is My *vibhūti*.” To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the words *ye caiva*. “Control of the mind and senses, as well as the *devas* themselves are *sāttvika bhāvas* (states of existence). Happiness, pride and other such feelings, as well as the *asuras* themselves are *rājasika bhāvas*. And lamentation, delusion and other such attitudes, as well as *rākṣasas* (those who are lower than *asuras*), are *tāmasika bhāvas* (natures). They all come from Me, but it should be understood that they are the effects of the *guṇas* of My material nature, so I am not personally present in them. Unlike the *jīvas*, I am not under their control; rather, they exist under My control.”

ŚLOKA 13

**त्रिभिर्गुणमयैभविरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत्।
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेष्यः परमव्ययम्॥१३॥**

*tribhir guṇa-mayair bhāvair / ebhiḥ sarvam idam jagat
mohitam nābhijānāti / mām ebhyah param avyayam*

mohitam—deluded; *ebhiḥ*—by these; *tribhiḥ*—three; *bhāvaiḥ*—states; *guṇa-mayaiḥ*—of the qualities of material nature; *idam*—this; *sarvam*—entire; *jagat*—world; *na abhijānāti*—does not know; *mām*—Me; (*who am*) *param*—beyond; *ebhyah*—these modes; *avyayam*—and imperishable.

Deluded by these three states of existence (*sattva-guṇa*, *rajo-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa*) the whole world does not know Me, who am beyond the modes and imperishable.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna may ask, “Why do people not know You, Parameśvara?” In response, Kṛṣṇa speaks this śloka beginning with the word *tribhīḥ*. “The *jīvas* of this world are bewildered because they are controlled by their acquired nature, which is composed of the activities of the three *guṇas*. This consists of control of the mind, control of the senses, happiness, lamentation, attachment and envy. But I am beyond the *guṇas* and free from any perverted transformation, and that is why they cannot understand Me.”

ŚLOKA 14

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते॥१४॥

*daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī / mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante / māyām etāṁ taranti te*

hi—indeed; *eṣā*—this; *daivī*—divine; *māyā*—illusory energy; *guṇamayī*—consisting of the *guṇas*; *mama*—of Mine; (is) *duratyayā*—difficult to overcome; *te*—they; *ye*—who; *prapadyante*—surrender; *eva*—only; *mām*—to Me; *taranti*—transcend; *etāṁ*—this; *māyām*—illusion.

This external energy of Mine which consists of the three *guṇas*, and which bewilders the *jīvas*, is certainly very difficult to overcome, but those who take exclusive shelter of Me can easily transcend this *māyā*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The following question may be raised: “How can one become free from the delusion created by the three *guṇas*? ” In response, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *daivī*. “This *māyā* is called *daivī* because it deludes the *devas* (the *jīvas*), who are divine by nature, but who are absorbed in the sporting pleasures of sense enjoyment. This *māyā* is *guṇa-mayī*, composed of the three *guṇas*. The word *guṇa-mayī* has another meaning. It has the form of a strong rope with three strands. This *bahirāṅga-śakti* which belongs to Me, Parameśvara, is *duratyayā*, extremely difficult to cross over. No one is able to cut this rope and become free from the bondage of the *guṇas*. ” Śrī Bhagavān says, “Believe Me.” Then He touches His own chest, and goes on to say *mām*, “A person can only transcend this *māyā* if he exclusively surrenders unto Me in this form of Śyāmasundara.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Parā (spiritual) and *aparā* (material) are Bhagavān’s two types of *śaktis*. The spiritual, internal energy is called *antaraṅgā* (*cit-śakti*) and the material, external energy is called *bahirāṅgā* (*acit, aparā* or *māyā-śakti*). In the *Upaniṣads* it is also said: *māyān tu prakṛtim vidyān mayinam tu maheśvaram*. “*Māyā* should be understood as *aparā-śakti*, and the person (*puruṣa*) who is the shelter of *māyā*, should be understood to be the *maheśvara*, the Supreme Controller.” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 4.10)

This is also confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (8.5.30): *na yasya kaścātitartī māyām / yayā janō muhyati veda nārtham.* ” The *jīva* is bewildered by *māyā-śakti* and therefore he is unable to understand the nature of the self. This insurmountable *māyā* of Bhagavān cannot be overcome by anyone without His mercy.”

One may question that if *māyā-śakti* is the cause of the *jīva*'s bondage, can one become free from this bondage by pleasing this *māyā-śakti*? What is the need to take shelter of Śrī Hari, Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas? In the present *śloka*, Bhagavān responds to this, using the words *mama māyā*. He says, "This *māyā* is not independent, rather, it is under My control, so it has no independence to liberate anyone from the material world." This is what He means by the statement: *mām eva ye prapadyante*. "Only a person who surrenders to Me can cross over this insurmountable *māyā* of Mine; others cannot."

This is also confirmed in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.58):

samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavam
mahat-padam puṇya-yaśo murāreh
bhavāmbudhir vatsa-padam paraṁ padam
padam padam yad viṣadām na teṣām

When a person takes shelter of the boat of the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is supremely famous and is the shelter of great personalities such as Śiva and Brahmā, this ocean of the material world becomes just like the water contained in the hoof-print of a calf. His supreme destination is then Vaikuṇṭha, which is free from all types of miseries.

ŚLOKA 15

**न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः।
माययापहृतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः॥१५॥**

na mām duṣkṛtino mūḍhāḥ / prapadyante narādhamāḥ
māyayāpahṛta-jñānāḥ / āśuram bhāvam āśritāḥ

duṣkṛtinah—miscreants; *mūḍhāḥ*—fools; *nara-adhamāḥ*—the lowest among mankind; (and) *apahṛta-jñānāḥ*—those whose knowledge is stolen; *māyayā*—by illusion; *āśritāḥ*—who take shelter; *āśuram*—of the demonic; *bhāvam*—nature; *na prapadyante*—do not surrender; *mām*—to Me.

Those miscreants and fools who are devoid of discrimination, who are the lowest among human beings, whose knowledge has been completely stolen by *māyā*, and who have an *āsurika* nature, do not surrender unto Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

If the question is raised, “Why, then, do the *pāṇḍitas* not take shelter of You?” Śrī Bhagavān replies, “Those who are genuine *pāṇḍitas* do take exclusive shelter of Me, but those who like to consider themselves to be *pāṇḍitas* do not.” Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this śloka beginning with the words *na mām* to explain this. The word *duṣkṛtināḥ* refers to those who are wicked, though they may have some piety. And some may appear to be *pāṇḍitas* but are actually *kupāṇḍitas* (pseudo *pāṇḍitas*). They are of four types:

(1) *Mūḍhāḥ*—a fruitive worker (a *karmī*), who is no better than an animal. Śrimad-Bhāgavatam (3.32.19) describes, “Just as a stool-eating hog rejects sweet-rice and enjoys stool, those cheated by destiny, who give up the nectar of hearing *hari-kathā* and engage in hearing other useless talks, are most unfortunate.” Who but an animal would not like to perform *sevā* to Śrī Mukunda?

(2) *Narādhama*—the lowest among mankind. Even after performing *bhakti* for some time and attaining the qualities of a human being, they finally give up the process of *bhakti* wilfully, thinking that it is not effective in attaining the desired fruit. Such persons are *narādhamas*.

(3) *Māyayāpahṛta-jñāna*—those whose knowledge has been stolen by *māyā*, even after studying the *śāstra*. They think that only the form of Śrī Nārāyaṇa, situated in Vaikuṇṭha, can be served eternally and can grant eternal *bhakti*; one cannot perform *bhakti* eternally to other forms, such as Rāma

and Kṛṣṇa, because They are human-like. Śrī Bhagavān has said in the Gītā (9.11): “Fools disrespect Me when I appear in My human form. After apparently surrendering unto Me, they have not surrendered in reality.”

(4) *Āsurām bhāvam āśritāḥ*— “Asuras such as Jarāsandha shoot arrows in order to hurt My transcendental body. Similarly, persons who carry this *āsurika bhāva* use illogical reasoning to deny My śrī-vigraha (Deity form), which is eternally situated in Vaikunṭha. They do not surrender unto Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Having taken shelter of an *āsurika bhāva*, four types of persons do not surrender unto Me: the *duṣkṛta* (wicked), the *mūḍhāḥ* (foolish), the *narādhama* (lowest of human beings) and the *māyāyāpahṛta-jñānī* (persons whose knowledge is covered by *māyā*).

(1) *Duṣkṛtas* are those who live an extremely unrighteous life.

(2) *Mūḍhāḥ* are those atheistic persons who only follow moral principles, without taking shelter of Me, the presiding Deity of morality.

(3) *Narādhamas* are the lowest of human beings, are those who consider Me to be only an aspect of morality, but not the Lord of morality.

(4) *Māyāyāpahṛta-jñānīs* are those whose knowledge remains covered by *māyā*, and even when they have studied śāstras such as *Vedānta* they worship the *devas* such as Brahmā. They do not know My omnipotent nature, the eternal conscious nature of the *jīva*, the temporary nature of the relationship of the *jīva* with inert matter, or the eternal nature of the relationship of the *jīva* with Me as My servant.”

ŚLOKA 16

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽजुनं।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरथर्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभः॥१६॥

catur-vidhā bhajante mām / janāḥ sukṛtino’rjuna
ārtto jijñāsur arthārthī / jñānī ca bharatarsabha

arjuna—O Arjuna; bharata-ṛṣabha—best of Bharata's lineage; catur-vidhāḥ—four kinds; sukṛtināḥ—of pious; janāḥ—persons; bhajante—worship; mām—Me; ārtta—the distressed; jijñāsuḥ—the inquisitive; artha-arthī—the seeker of wealth; ca—and; jñānī—the man in knowledge.

O best of the Bharata dynasty, there are four types of pious men who perform My *bhajana*; the distressed (ārtta), the inquisitive (jijñāsu), the seeker of wealth (arthārthī) and the man of wisdom (jñānī).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Who then performs Your *bhajana*?” In response to this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the words *catur-vidhā*. “*Sukṛta* refers to those who worship Me and who follow the rules and regulations of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. *Ārtta* refers to persons afflicted with distress such as disease and who worship Me to get relief. *Jijñāsu* means those who worship Me desiring *ātma-jñāna* (knowledge of the self) or scholarly knowledge of the *śāstra* through grammar. *Arthārthī* refers to those who worship Me with a desire for enjoyment in this world, such as possession of land, elephants, horses, beautiful women, gold, or enjoyment in Svarga. *Jñānī*s with pure hearts also worship Me. Of these four, the first three are *sakāma-ghasthas*, householders who have fruitive desires, and the fourth group consists of *niṣkāma-sannyāsīs* (renunciates who perform selfless actions).

These four types of persons are eligible to perform *pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*, the process wherein *bhakti* predominates over *karma*, *jñāna*, etc. The first three perform *karma-miśrā bhakti*, *bhakti* mixed with *karma*, and the fourth performs *jñāna-miśrā bhakti*, *bhakti* mixed with *jñāna*. Later, in the śloka: *sarva-dvārāṇi samyamya* (Gītā 8.12.), *yoga-miśrā bhakti* will be explained. However, *kevala-bhakti*, which is devoid of *karma* or *jñāna*, is explained in the beginning of the Seventh Chapter: *mayy āsakta-manāḥ pārtha* (Gītā 7.1). *Kevala-bhakti* will also be delineated later in two ślokas: *ananyacetāḥ satatam* (Gītā 8.14) and *mahātmānas tu mām pārtha* (Gītā 9.13).

In the middle six chapters of Gītā, Śrī Bhagavān has explained two types of *bhakti*: *pradhānī-bhūtā* and *kevalā*. In the third process, which is called *guṇibhūtā bhakti*, *bhakti* is present to some extent but it is predominated by *karma*, *jñāna* and so forth. This is the process that *karmīs*, *jñānīs* and *yogīs* perform simply to attain perfection in their respective endeavours. It cannot be called *bhakti* because it is *karma* or *jñāna*, etc., which predominate, and not *bhakti* herself.

Prādhānyena vyapadeśā bhavanti is a name given to something according to its predominating element. According to this principle of logic (*nyāya*), such processes are named after their respective predominating natures: *karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga*. These processes are not categorised as *bhakti* because *bhakti* is not predominant.

The result of *sakāma-karma* is *Svarga*, and the result of *niṣkāma-karma* is *jñāna*. The result of *jñāna* and *yoga* is *mokṣa*. Now, the result of the two types of *bhakti*, *pradhānī-bhūtā* and *kevalā*, are being explained. In *pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*, those who are distressed (*ārtta*), those who aspire for knowledge (*jijñāsu*) and those who seek wealth (*arthārthī*) perform *karma-miśrā bhakti*, that is, *bhakti* which is mixed with *karma*. Hence they are called *sakāma-bhaktas*. The only

result of this type of *bhakti* is the fulfilment of one's material desires. Due to the superior nature of the object of their endeavour (*bhakti*), they finally attain *mokṣa*, e.g. *sālokya*, which is characterised by a predominance of happiness and majesty (*aiśvarya*). They do not fall down, like a *karmī* who falls after enjoying in Svarga. This is stated later on: *yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām* (Gītā 9.25).

The result of the fourth type, *jñāna-miśrā bhakti*, is superior to that of *karma-miśrā bhakti*. Those who practise it attain *śānta-rati*, like the four Kumāras, headed by Sanaka. By the special mercy of Śrī Bhagavān and His *bhaktas*, this type of *bhakti* culminates in *premotkarṣa*, the excellence of *prema*, which is seen in people like Śukadeva Gosvāmi. When *karma-miśrā bhakti* is *niṣkāma* (selfless), it results in *jñāna-miśrā bhakti*, the result of which has just been explained.

Sometimes, a person who is performing *jñāna-miśrā* or *karma-miśrā bhakti* attains *prema* in the moods of *dāsyā* (servitorship) and so forth, due to his intense desire which is developed by the association of *bhaktas* who have *dāsyabhaava*, etc. That *prema*, however, is predominated by *aiśvarya*. The result of *śuddhā*, *ananyā*, *akiñcanā* and *uttama-bhakti*, etc., which is free from *jñāna* and *karma* and which has various branches, is that one attains the position of a loving associate of Kṛṣṇa in *dāsyabhaava*, *sakhya-bhāva* and so on. This has been established in many places in the commentaries of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The concept of *sādhya-bhakti* has also been briefly explained in this commentary.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Śrī Kṛṣṇa as saying, "It is generally not possible for those who are miscreants (*duṣkṛta*) to perform My *bhajana*, because they are not on the path of gradually developing their consciousness. Sometimes, however,

such people attain My service by chance. Among those with *sukṛti* who lead a regulated life, four types are qualified to perform My *bhajana*. Those who are engaged in *kāmyakarma* (fruitive activities) remember Me when they are afflicted by some misery. They are called *ārtta*, the distressed. Even those who are *duskr̥ta* sometimes remember Me when in distress.

“The foolish (*mūḍhah*), who stick to morality as described in the previous *śloka*, engage in the gradual process of inquiring about *tattva-jñāna*. By this, they feel the necessity of accepting the existence of Parameśvara. As He is the object of their inquisitiveness, they gradually remember Me. *Narādhamas*, the lowest among mankind, who take up *bhakti* and then later discard it, gradually become dissatisfied with their concept of an ethical controller, and come to realise the real controller of morality. They then become regulated *bhaktas* and, since they turn to Me to fulfil their desired goals, they are known as *arthārthī*. When the *jīva* realises that knowledge of *brahma* and Paramātmā is incomplete, he takes shelter of My *śuddha-jñāna*. At that time the covering of *māyā* is removed and, knowing himself to be My eternal servant, he accepts My full shelter.

“Those who are *ārtta* (distressed) have the defect of various desires; those who are *jijñāsu* (inquisitive) have the defect of bondage to moralistic knowledge; the *arthārthīs* (seekers of wealth) have the defect of striving to attain *Svarga*; and the *jñānīs*, who think that *bhagavat-tattva* is temporary, have the defect of wanting to merge into *brahma*. When these impurities are removed, these four types of persons become eligible to perform pure *bhakti*. As long as these impurities exist in them, their pure *bhakti* is considered to be *pradhānī-bhūtā*. They attain *bhakti* when their impurities are completely removed. This *bhakti* is called *kevalā*, *akiñcīnā* or *uttamā*

The word *sukṛti* used in this *śloka* means piety that is generated from following the principles of *varṇa* and *āśrama*. Such pious persons, whose *bhakti* is *pradhānī-bhūtā*, engage in Bhagavān's service in four ways.

Examples of *karma pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti* are included in the first three categories below:

(1) *Ārtta*: Kings who were captured by Jarāsandha; and Gajendra, who was caught by a crocodile.

(2) *Jijñāsu*: Śaunaka and other ḥsis who were inquisitive about *ātma-jñāna*.

(3) *Arthārthī*: Those such as Dhruva who sought wealth.

(4) *Jñānī*: The four Kumāras come in this category. This is *jñāna-pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*.

Pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti is defined as that *karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga* in which *bhakti* predominates, in other words, where *karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga* are subordinate to *bhakti*.

Kevala-bhakti is defined as follows:

anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyaṁ / jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛṭam

ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam bhaktir uttamā

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.11

Uttama-bhakti is performed when a person is free from all other desires except to render service to Kṛṣṇa, when his intelligence is completely free from the concept of *nirviśeṣa-brahma-jñāna*, and from affinity to *nitya* (regular) and *naimittika* (causal or occasional) *karma*, *yoga*, *tapasyā*, etc., and when he renders service to Kṛṣṇa and His *bhaktas* in a favourable way.

Guṇī-bhūtā bhakti is defined as that process in which *karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga* predominate, not *bhakti*. When *bhakti* is only practised to assist in the attainment of *mokṣa* or *Svarga*, then such *karma* is merely called *karma*, *jñāna* is called *jñāna*, and *yoga* is called *yoga*. Such *karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga* are not *śuddha-bhakti*, but *guṇī-bhūtā bhakti*. *Guṇī-*

bhūtā bhakti is not considered to be in the category of *bhakti* because *bhakti* does not predominate in it. In conclusion, therefore, *bhakti* is of two types: *kevalā* and *pradhānī-bhūtā*. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has given detailed explanations of *bhakti-tattva* in his Sārārtha-darśinī commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. For this information, one should consult the following ślokas from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam: ātmārāmaś ca munayo (1.7.10), rte 'rtham yat pratīyeta (2.9.34), muktānām api siddhānām (6.14.5), yāvan nṛ-kāya-ratham (7.15.45) and ye 'nye 'ravindākṣa (10.2.32).

SLOKA 17

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिविशिष्यते।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः॥१७॥

teṣāṁ jñānī nitya-yuktaḥ / eka-bhaktir viśiṣyate
priyo hi jñānino'ty-ar�am / aham sa ca mama priyah

jñānī—the man in knowledge; *nitya-yuktaḥ*—is always connected; *eka-bhaktih*—and exclusively devoted; *viśiṣyate*—is distinguished; *teṣām*—among these; *hi*—certainly; *aham*—I; (*am*) *ati-ar�am priyah*—exceedingly dear; *jñāninaḥ*—to the *jñānī*; *ca*—and; *sah*—he; (*is*) *priyah*—dear; *mama*—to Me.

The *tattva-vit jñānī*, My exclusive devotee whose thoughts are always fixed on Me, is the best of these, because I am very dear to him and he is very dear to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Who is the best of the four types of devotees who are eligible to perform *bhakti*?” In answer, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *teṣām*. “Those *jñānīs* who are always united with Me are the best of the four. By the practice of *jñāna*, their thoughts are completely under control and thus their

minds remain one-pointed. The other three types (*ārtta* and so on) are not like this.” Arjuna then asks, “Do all *jñānīs* worship You out of fear that they may fail in their endeavour to attain *jñāna*?” In response, Bhagavān says *eka-bhakti*. *Ekā* means prominent. This means, “Those *jñānīs* in whom *bhakti* is prominent (*pradhānī-bhūtā*) perform *bhajana* to Me, unlike other *jñānīs* in whom *jñāna* is prominent. Those who are attached only to *bhakti* are *bhakti-eka*, and they are *jñānīs* in name only.

“In this way, in My beautiful form of Śyāmasundara, I am very dear to the *jñānīs*. In the states of both *sādhana* and *sādhya*, they are unable to give up their attachment to this form. It is because of the principle of surrender (as described in *Gītā* 4.11) that they are also very dear to Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “When they have become free from impurities, the *ārtta*, *jijñāsu*, *arthārthī* and *jñānī* become devotedly surrendered to Me and become My *bhaktas*. Among them, the *jñānīs* attain *śuddha-jñāna*, having given up the impurity of *jñāna*, which is the desire for salvation. They then become endowed with *bhakti-yoga*, and attain superiority over the other three types of devotees. This means that although the process of *karma* cleanses the *jīva* of all impurities, the *svarūpa* of the *jīva*, which is conscious by nature, is not realised by the practice of *karma* to the same extent that it is realised by the cultivation of *jñāna-yoga*. Ultimately, by associating submissively with *bhaktas*, everyone realises his own *svarūpa*. During the *sādhana* stage, only *jñānī-bhaktas* who are *eka-bhakti-viśiṣyate* (specifically endowed with one-pointed pure devotion), are superior to the other three types of eligible persons described above. They are My unalloyed servants. Thus I am very dear to them and they are also very dear to Me.”

Śukadeva Goswāmi is an example of this. Previously, he was a *brahma-jñānī*, but in the association of Śrī Vyāsadeva, he realised *bhagavat-jñāna* (*prema-bhakti*). During the *sādhana* stage, the service to Kṛṣṇa of those *bhaktas* who have attained pure knowledge (*śuddha-jñāna*) is also supremely pure, without the slightest scent of materialism.

ŚLOKA 18

**उदारः सर्वः एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम्।
आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुजमां गतिम्॥१८॥**

*udārāḥ sarvāḥ evaite / jñānī tv ātmaiva me matam
āsthitaḥ sa hi yukta-ātmā / mām evānuttamāṁ gatim*

eva—certainly; *ete*—these; (*are*) *sarvāḥ*—all; *udārāḥ*—magnanimous (souls); *tu*—but; *jñānī*—the man in knowledge; *matam*—is considered; *me*—by Me; (*as*) *eva ātma*—My very self; *hi eva*—certainly; *sah*—that; *yukta-ātmā*—soul is always connected; *āsthitaḥ*—abiding; *mām*—in Me; *anuttamām*—as His unsurpassable; *gatim*—goal (of life).

Though these are all certainly great souls, I consider the *jñānī* to be as dear to Me as My own self. Since his thoughts dwell always in Me, he takes determined shelter of Me as his supreme destination.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Does that mean that the other three types of persons, the *ārtta* and so on, are not dear to You?” In response, Śrī Bhagavān says, “No, no, that is not so,” and speaks this *śloka* beginning with *udārāḥ*. “Whoever performs My *bhajana* with a desire to receive something from Me, and who accepts that benediction when I award it to him, is dear to Me. Having had their desires fulfilled by Me, they give Me the quality of being *bhakta-vatsala* (affectionate to My *bhakta*). However,

jñānī tv ātmaiva refers to the *jñānī* who is considered to be My own self and extremely dear to Me, because, while performing My *bhajana*, he does not expect anything in return from Me such as *Svarga* or *mokṣa*. As a result I always remain under his control. He is like My own self. This is My opinion. Because he knows only Me, Śyāmasundara, as the highest destination, he remains free from anxiety and he is determined to attain Me. He does not take shelter of My *nirviśeṣa-svarūpa*, *brahma-nirvāṇa*.

“I am *bhakta-vatsala* Bhagavān, and I consider such a *jñānī*, who is endowed with *niṣkāma-pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*, to be My very self. But one who is endowed with unalloyed *kevalabhakti* is even more dear than My own self.”

It is said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.14.15): “O Uddhava, as a *bhakta* you are so dear to Me; not even My own son Brahmā or Śaṅkara, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Lakṣmī-devī or My own *svarūpa* are as dear to Me as you are.” Moreover, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.4.64) says: “Without the association of My *bhakta sādhus* I do not desire even the bliss of My own *svarūpa*.”

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.29.42) says *ātmārāma* also enjoys. This means that, although *yogeśvaraśvaraḥ* Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *ātmārāma*, who delights within Himself, He receives a greater pleasure from the service of the *gopīs*. Thus He mercifully enjoys and performs pastimes with them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “When the above-described four classes of devotees accept *kevalabhakti*, they become supremely great. However, the *jñānī-bhaktas* are situated in Me because they have more *niṣṭhā* than the others to realise Me, the supreme conscious entity, and their highest destination. They are very dear to Me, and are able to control Me completely.”

People perform *bhajana* to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a result of *sukṛti* accumulated in their previous lives. Those who are averse to Kṛṣṇa remain non-devotees, engaged in the worship of various *devas* and *devīs*. Therefore, those who perform Kṛṣṇa's *bhajana* are endowed with great intelligence, whether they have material desires (*sakāma*) or are free from them (*niṣkāma*). This is also expressed in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.3.10):

akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā / mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ
tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena / yajeta puruṣam param

In his Śārārtha-darśinī commentary on this śloka, Śrila Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains the word *udāra-dhīḥ* to mean of pure and great intelligence (*su-buddhi*). "Performance of Bhagavān's *bhajana* is the symptom of pure and great intelligence regardless of whether one has material desires or is free from them. The absence of such worship is a symptom of impure and lowly intelligence."

What to speak of the devotees who are free from material desires, even those devotees who have material desires attain service to Bhagavān in His abode, by His mercy or by the mercy of His *bhaktas*, when they have enjoyed their desired objective. Therefore, they possess pure and great intelligence.

ŚLOKA 19

**बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान् मा॑ प्रपद्यते।
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः॥१९॥**

*bahūnām janmanām ante / jñānavān mām prapadyate
vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti / sa mahā-ātmā sudurlabhaḥ*

ante—at the end; *bahūnām*—of many; *janmanām*—births; *jñānavān*—one who has knowledge; *iti*—that; *vāsudevaḥ*—Vāsudeva; *sarvam*—is everything; *prapadyate*—surrenders; *mām*—to Me; *sah*—that; *mahā-ātmā*—great soul; (is) *sudurlabhaḥ*—extremely rare.

After many births of spiritual practice, the *jñānī* who is endowed with knowledge that everything both conscious and inert is related to Vāsudeva surrenders himself fully to Me, and performs *bhajana* to Me. Such a *mahātmā* is extremely rare.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The following question may be raised: “Since the *jñānīs* accept Your shelter as the supreme destination, they certainly attain You, but how long will it take for such *jñānīs* to become qualified to enter *bhakti*?” In answer to this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *bahūnām*. “*Vāsudevah sarvam* means that those *jñānīs* take shelter of Me when, after many, many births they see Vāsudeva everywhere. Such *sādhus* surrender unto Me due to the influence of good association which is arranged by My will. That is, they surrender to Me according to the *bhāva* received in such association. Among thousands and thousands of men, such a *jñānī bhakta*, whose thoughts are fixed in Me is very rare, what to speak of *aikāntika-bhaktas*, who are far more rare.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

“Of the four types of devotees (*ārtta*, etc.), the *jñānīs* who have *niṣṭhā* in Me, Kṛṣṇa, are the best.” A *jñānī* who has spiritual fortune (*sukṛti*) attains the association of śuddha Vaiṣṇavas after many, many lifetimes, and he thus becomes aware of the *svarūpa* of Śrī Vāsudeva. He sees Bhagavān Vāsudeva everywhere, which means that he sees everything as being related to Vāsudeva. Thus he obtains śuddha-bhakti to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Such *mahātmās* are extremely rare.

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣāṇa has given the following comment on this *śloka*: “The *bhaktas* who are *ārtta*, *jijñāsu* and *arthārthī* enjoy the highest type of material happiness for many lifetimes as a result of devotion unto Me. Finally, they become detached from such material pleasure, and in some

lifetime come in contact with Vaiṣṇavas who know My *svarūpa-tattva*. In that association, they attain knowledge of My *svarūpa*. Knowing only Me, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva, as the *parama-tattva*, they take shelter of Me.”

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “After performing *sādhana* for many, many lifetimes, the *jīvas* attain pure *jñāna*, and become steadfast in the transcendental consciousness of the self. In the beginning of such spiritual practice, when they are trying to give up their mundane identification, they take support of impersonal monism (*advaita-bhāva*) to some extent. During this stage, they develop disgust towards the material world, but they also remain indifferent toward spirituality, especially regarding the variegated nature of spiritual life. When they have become a little advanced in the eternal, conscious existence of the self (*caitanya-dharma*), and in understanding the special nature of spiritual life which consists of variegated activities, they become attracted to it and surrender unto Me, who am *param caitanya-rūpa* (the supreme conscious form). At that time they understand that this mundane world is not independent but a perverted reflection of the conscious reality, the transcendental realm, and that a relationship with Vāsudeva also exists in this world. Hence everything is in relationship with Vāsudeva. Those *mahātmās*, who have such a surrendered attitude towards Me, are very rare.”

ŚLOKA 20

कामैस्तैस्त्वैर्हतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्ते न्यदेवताः ।
तं तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥२०॥

*kāmais tais tair hṛta-jñānāḥ / prapadyante'nya-devatāḥ
tam tam niyamam āsthāya / prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā*

hṛta-jñānāḥ—those whose knowledge is stolen; *taiḥ taiḥ*—by their various; *kāmaih*—lusty desires; *prapadyante*—surrender;

anya-devatāḥ—to other gods; *āsthāya*—practising; *tam tam*—the various; *niyamam*—regulations; *niyatāḥ*—controlled; *svayā*—by their own; *prakṛtyā*—nature.

Those whose intelligence has been stolen by material desires, and who try to eliminate their distress, follow the rules of worship for a particular *deva*, who can fulfil their desires. Thus, being swept away by their own nature, they worship such *devas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Very well, I have understood that even those with material desires, such as the distressed, become partially successful by performing Your *bhajana*, but what is the destination of those distressed persons who worship the *devas* for relief from their miseries?” In response to this Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the words *kāmais tais*, and the next three *ślokas*. “Those who think that the *devas*, such as Sūrya, can immediately remove miseries like disease and that Śrī Viṣṇu cannot, have lost their intelligence (*hṛta-jñānāḥ*). They remain bound by their own nature and it is that ill-nature which keeps them from surrendering to Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Intelligent and fortunate persons, who are influenced by various types of desires, try to satisfy their desires by worshipping Parameśvara Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When they have fulfilled their desires, by His mercy they gradually lose interest in such enjoyment and attain His *bhajana*. In this regard, the *ślokas* from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.3.10 and 5.19.26) are worth contemplating.

As a result of being averse to Kṛṣṇa, fools and unfortunate persons remain bound by the *rājasika* and *tāmasika gunas* and think that the *devas* can fulfil their desires more quickly. They, therefore, worship various unimportant *devas* according to

their respective natures in an attempt to satisfy their various material desires, and quickly attain perishable fruits.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Those such as the distressed are averse to Me as long as their impurities remain, but when they are freed from material impurities, they perform *bhakti* to Me. Those who take shelter of My transcendental nature, however, do not become attracted to the external nature, even though they may be full of desires. I free them from all their material motivations within a short time. Conversely, those who are averse to Me lose their spiritual intelligence and, being impelled by their material desires, worship particular *devas* who can quickly award the trivial objects of their desires. They do not trust Me, the eternal, beautiful Śyāmasundara, the embodiment of *viśuddha-sattva*. Hence, they are driven away from Me by their lower *rājasika* and *tāmasika* natures, and worship particular *devatās*, following whatever obscure rules are favourable to such worship.”

ŚLOKA 21

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयार्चितुमिच्छति।
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम्॥२१॥

yo yo yāṁ yāṁ tanum bhaktah / śraddhayārcitum icchati
tasya tasyācalāṁ śraddhām / tām eva vidadhāmy aham

yāṁ yāṁ tanum—whichever form of the *devatās*; *yaḥ yaḥ bhaktah*—whichever devotee; *icchati*—desires; *arcitum*—to worship; *śraddhayā*—with faith; *eva*—certainly; *aham vidadhāmi*—I bestow; *tasya tasya*—to that particular devotee; *acalāṁ*—unshakeable; *śraddhām*—faith; *tām*—in that (*deva*).

Whichever *devatā* the fruitive devotee wants to faithfully worship, I, as the indwelling *Antaryāmī*, make his faith in that particular *devatā* unflinching.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

If Arjuna says, “For the auspiciousness of their devotees, those *devatās* will generate in them faith in Your *bhakti*, being pleased by their worship,” then Śrī Bhagavān responds by saying, “No, it is not so. The *devatās* are unable to generate faith (*śraddhā*) in devotion to themselves, so how can they generate *śraddhā* in My *bhakti*?” Hence, He speaks this śloka beginning with the words *yo yo Yam*. “Whichever *devatā* they may want to worship, such as Sūrya, who is nothing but My *vibhūti*, I, the indwelling Antaryāmī, inspire their *śraddhā* in that particular *devatā* and not in Myself. This is because they are averse to Me. Those *devatās* are also unable to generate *śraddhā* in Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Some think that, by worshipping the *devatās*, they can inspire *śraddhā* in *bhagavad-bhakti* in the hearts of their worshippers. However, Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains that it is He as Antaryāmī who gives the *deva* worshippers steady faith in whichever *deva* they desire to worship, according to their desires, although the *devas* are nothing but His *vibhūti*. He does not inspire faith in Himself in the hearts of those who are averse to Him. If the *devatās* cannot generate *śraddhā* towards themselves in their worshippers, then how can they create faith in Bhagavān?

ŚLOKA 22

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते।
लभते च ततः कामान् मयैव विहितान् हि तान्॥२२॥

*sa tayā śraddhayā yuktaḥ / tasyārādhanam īhate
labhate ca tataḥ kāmān / mayaiva vihitān hi tān*

yuktaḥ—endowed; *tayā śraddhayā*—with that faith; *sah*—he; *iḥate*—tries to perform; *arādhanam*—the worship; *tasya*—of that *deva*; *ca*—and; *tataḥ*—thereby; *labhate*—he attains; (the fulfilment of); *kāmān*—his desires; *eva*—in actuality; *tān*—those (boons); (are) *vihitān*—granted; *maya*—by Me; *hi*—alone.

Endowed with such *śraddhā*, he attempts to worship that particular *devatā* and thus attains fulfilment of his desires, which in actuality are granted by Me alone.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Iḥate means ‘he does’. They attain their desired ends by worshipping the respective *devatās*, but in actuality those *devatās* are not able to fulfil those desires. Therefore, Śrī Bhagavān says: *māyaiva vihitān*. “In reality, those desires are fulfilled by Me alone.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Some think that if they worship the *devatās*, they will obtain the fruits of their desires by that *devatā*’s mercy. But, from this *śloka* it is clear that the *devas* are unable to award the results of worship that is performed to them. Those who worship the *devas* can obtain their desired results only when it is sanctioned by Bhagavān, but such ignorant people cannot understand that it is Śrī Bhagavān, as *Antaryāmī* who has fulfilled their desires. Here it is seen that the *devatās* cannot generate *śraddhā* in themselves among their own worshippers. Similarly, they cannot independently award the results of fruitive activities unless *Antaryāmī* Śrī Bhagavān sanctions it.

ŚLOKA 23

अन्तवत् फलं तेषां तद्वत्यल्पमेधसाम्।
देवान् देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि॥२३॥

*antavat tu phalam teṣāṁ / tad bhavaty alpa-medhasām
devān deva-yajo yānti / mad-bhaktā yānti mām api*

tu—indeed; *tat phalam*—that benefit; (*obtained*) *teṣāṁ*—by those; *alpa-medhasām*—persons of meagre intelligence; *bhavati*—is; *antavat*—perishable; (*for*) *deva-yajah*—the worshippers of the gods; *yānti*—go; *devān*—to the gods; *api*—whereas; *mat-bhaktāḥ*—My *bhaktas*; *yānti*—go; *mām*—to Me.

However, the fruit attained by such men of meagre intelligence is perishable. The worshippers of *devatās* go to their planets, whereas My *bhaktas* come to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The results obtained by worshipping the *devatās* are perishable and transitory. If one raises the question, “Although equal endeavour is performed in both types of worship, why do You give perishable results to the worshippers of the *devas*, and imperishable results to Your own *bhaktas*? For You, who are Parameśvara, this is certainly unjust,” Śrī Bhagavān responds by saying, “This is not unjust. Those who worship the *devas* attain those *devas* and My *bhaktas* attain Me. One attains the object of one’s worship. This is indeed justice. If the *devatās* themselves are perishable, how will their worshippers become imperishable and why will the results of their worship not be destroyed?” For this reason, these worshippers have been called less intelligent. Bhagavān is eternal and so are His *bhaktas*, His *bhakti* and the results of His *bhakti*. They are all eternal.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

A question may be raised, “Since the *devas*, as His *vibhūtis*, are also the limbs of Śrī Bhagavān, there is no difference

between the worship of the *devas* and that of the *bhaktas* of Bhagavān. What is the harm in worshipping these *devas* if Bhagavān Himself generates the faith in the worshippers toward their worshipable deity, and also grants them the result of their fruitive activities?" In response to this Śrī Bhagavān replies, "If, being impelled by some desire, one takes shelter of the *devas*, he is called *hṛta-jñāna*, a person who has lost his intelligence." Since he attains only perishable results, he is described as having less intelligence. Someone may say that because Bhagavān bestows eternal results to His *bhaktas* and perishable results to the worshippers of the *devas*, He is not equal to both; rather He is biased. In response one can say that it is certainly just to receive the result that one desires. Because both the *devatās* and their planets are temporary, their worshippers attain perishable results on perishable planets. However, the *bhaktas* of *sac-cid-ānanda* Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa attain His eternal service in His eternal *dhāma* by worshipping Him. Therefore, those who are intelligent worship the eternal form (*nitya-svarūpa*) of Śrī Bhagavān even if they have material desires. They do not worship other *devas* and *devīs*.

ŚLOKA 24

**अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यन्ते मामबुद्धयः।
परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम्॥२४॥**

avyaktam vyaktim āpannam / manyante mām abuddhayah
param bhāvam ajānanto / mamaavyayam anuttamam

abuddhayah—the unintelligent; *manyante*—consider; *mām*—Me; *avyaktam*—the unmanifest; *āpannam*—to have taken on; *vyaktim*—a manifest form (personality); *ajānantaḥ*—they are unaware; *mama*—of My; *param*—supreme; *avyayam*—imperishable; *anuttamam*—transcendental; *bhāvam*—nature.

The unintelligent consider that I, who am unmanifest and beyond mundane existence, take birth like an ordinary human being. They do not know the supreme, excellent, immutable and transcendental nature of My form, birth, pastimes and qualities.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Even those who know śāstras such as the *Vedas* do not know My *tattva*, what to speak of less intelligent worshippers of *devas*. Brahmā spoke this to Me (in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.29): ‘O Bhagavān! O Deva! Only those who have attained a particle of compassion from Your lotus feet are able to understand Your real glories. No one else will be able to understand You, even if they search for a very long time.’ Therefore, everyone except My *bhaktas* lacks the necessary intelligence to understand My *tattva-jñāna*.” To convey this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with *avyaktam*. “Those who are unintelligent consider Me to be the unmanifested *nirviśeṣa-brahma*, which is beyond the mundane plane. They think that I have no eternal form and that My manifest human-like *svarūpa* is illusory like that of mortals because I took birth in the house of Vasudeva. This is because they do not know My *param-bhāva*, My transcendental form, birth, activities, pastimes, etc. What is the nature of that *bhāva*? It is eternal and supreme.” The dictionary named *Medinī* states that existence, nature, purpose, endeavour, birth, action, pastimes and objects are all *bhāva*. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *Laghu-bhāgavatāmrta* has established that Bhagavān’s form, qualities, birth, pastimes and so on are endless and are, therefore, all eternal. Śrīla Śridhara Svāmī quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “My *param-bhāva* that is My *svarūpa* is *avyaya* (immutable). It is eternal, supremely pure and *viśuddha-sattvam*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Men who have fruitive desires are less intelligent. It is a matter of great surprise, however, that those who are expert in śāstras such as the Veda and Vedānta also disregard the omnipotent *sac-cid-ānanda-ghana-vigraha*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *līlā-maya-svarūpa*, who takes birth and performs pastimes. Although He is the supreme objective established by the Vedas, they worship His featureless, immutable form of *brahma*, considering that to be supreme. This indicates that they lack intelligence.

ŚLOKA 25

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।
मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोके मामजमव्ययम् ॥२५॥

*nāham prakāśah sarvasya / yogamāyā-samāvṛtaḥ
mūḍho'yaṁ nābhijānāti / loko mām ajam avyayam*

aham—I (am); *na*—not; *prakāśah*—revealed; *sarvasya*—to all; *samāvṛtaḥ*—covered; *yogamāyā*—by My internal potency; *ayam mūḍhaḥ lokah*—these foolish people; *na abhijānāti*—do not comprehend; *mām*—Me; *ajam*—the unborn; *avyayam*—and imperishable.

I am not manifest to all. To the foolish I am veiled by My *yogamāyā* potency; therefore, they do not know My unborn and imperishable *svarūpa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

If Arjuna raises a question, “If it is to be accepted that You are eternal, and have an eternal form, qualities and pastimes, then why aren’t these pastimes visible at all times?” then in response to this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *nāham*. “I do not manifest Myself at all times,

in every country, and before each and every person. The sun is continuously present in the universe, yet when it is blocked by the Sumeru Mountain it is not seen by everyone all the time. Similarly, although I exist eternally with My qualities, pastimes and associates, I am covered by My *yogamāyā*, so I am only seen sometimes in some *brahmāṇḍas*. I am not seen everywhere, all the time by everyone.”

Someone may say, “The sun is always present among the luminaries in this universe, but it is not seen by everyone in all countries at the same time. Sūrya, however, can always be seen in his abode. In the same way, like the sun, You are always visible to those in Your abode. Why, then, are You not visible to those now situated in Your abodes such as Mathurā and Dvārakā?” In response, Kṛṣṇa says, “If the Sumeru Mountain is in the midst of the luminaries, the sun will be blocked by it and will not be visible. Similarly, *yogamāyā* is always present in My abodes such as Mathurā, just like Mount Sumeru in the sun’s abode.” Kṛṣṇa only becomes visible at certain periods. “That is why those who are foolish are not able to understand Me, Śyāmasundara, the son of Vasudeva, being unborn and immutable. Although I am an ocean of all auspicious qualities, they eventually give Me up, and worship My *nirviśeṣa-svarūpa-brahma*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

In Goloka Vṛndāvana, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His *līlā* are eternally manifest. Through the medium of *yogamāyā*, He sometimes descends with His eternal associates to manifest His *nitya-līlā* out of compassion for the *jīvas* of this world. Those who are unaware of this *tattva* are unable to understand this secret. They think that the unmanifest *nirviśeṣa-brahma* is the only *para-tattva*, and that Bhagavān, whose names, forms, qualities and activities are transcendental, has manifested Himself from that *nirviśeṣa-*

brahma. Such people are fools and have been described here as *mūḍhaḥ* because their intelligence is covered by *mahā-māyā*. Here, it should be understood that Bhagavān has two types of *māyā-śakti*: *yogamāyā* (internal) and *mahā-māyā* (external). *Yogamāyā* is His *svarūpa-śakti* (internal potency), which is expert in making the impossible possible, and *mahā-māyā* is the shadow of this *yogamāyā*. The first, *yogamāyā*, arranges *yoga*, the enactment of the *līlā* of Bhagavān, who is omniscient (*sarva-jñā*) and omnipotent (*sarva-śaktimān*). *Yogamāyā* does this by putting Him and His associates in transcendental illusion. She also arranges for the *yoga* (union) of Bhagavān and the *jīvas* who are practising *sādhana-bhakti*. That is why this potency is called *yogamāyā*. On the other hand, *mahāmāyā* bewitches those *jīvas* who are averse to Bhagavān, and binds them by the results of their various activities. A cloud cannot cover the sun; rather, it is only the eyes of the *jīvas* situated on earth which are covered. Similarly, *mahāmāyā* cannot cover Bhagavān, but can only cover the knowledge of the *jīvas* and thus prevent them from seeing Him.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Do not think that I was previously unmanifest and that I have now manifested this beautiful *sac-cid-ānanda* form of Śyāmasundara. My Śyāmasundara form is eternal. Although this form is like the self-effulgent spiritual sun of the transcendental realm, it remains hidden from the vision of common men because it is covered by the shadow of *yogamāyā*. The less intelligent cannot understand My *avyaya-svarūpa* (immutable nature) because of this covering.”

ŚLOKA 26

वेदाहं समतीतानि वर्त्मनानि चाजुन्।
भविष्याणि च भूतानि मा तु वेद न कश्चन॥२६॥

*vedāham samatītāni / varttamānāni cārjuna
bhaviṣyāṇi ca bhūtāni / mām tu veda na kaścana*

arjuna—O Arjuna; *aham veda*—I know; *samatītāni*—the past; *ca*—and; *varttamānāni*—present; *ca*—and; *bhaviṣyāṇi*—future; (*of*) *bhūtāni*—living beings; *tu*—but; *mām*—Me; *na kaścana*—no one; *veda*—knows.

O Arjuna, I know all the moving and non-moving beings of the past, present and future, but Me, no one knows.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“That *māyā* which cannot bewilder its foundation (Me) is called *bahiraṅgā māyā*. However, *antaraṅgā māyā* does not cover knowledge of Me.” To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *vedāham*. “No one can know Me fully, neither those in this mundane world, nor those who have transcended this world, nor even personalities such as Mahārudra, who are omniscient.” That *māyā* which makes *yoga* (union) between the *bhaktas* and Bhagavān is called *yogamāyā*. Most people’s *jñāna* is covered by *mahā-māyā*, and the knowledge of omniscient personalities such as Mahārudra remains covered by *yogamāyā*; therefore they cannot know Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

One may raise the doubt: “If Bhagavān is covered by *yogamāyā*, He must also be in illusion like the *jīva*, and have the defect of ignorance.” In response it is said, “*Māyā* is engaged in My service being subject to My prowess, and remains under My control from afar. This *māyā* cannot cause any transformation to take place in Me.” *Māyā* cannot cover the knowledge of Bhagavān. Śrī Bhagavān is again emphasising this, saying, “I know everything in the past,

present and future, but if even great, omniscient personalities such as Mahārudra do not know Me fully, because their knowledge is covered by *yogamāyā*, what then to speak of common men?" For this reason, common people do not accept that the human-like form of Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa is eternal. It is not possible to know and realise the *tattva* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His *līlā* without the mercy and shelter of *yogamāyā*, even if one has knowledge of His *nirviśeṣa-brahma*, or of His partial expansion, Paramātmā.

ŚLOKA 27

इच्छाद्वेषसमुथेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत।
सर्वभूतानि सम्मोहं सर्गं यान्ति परन्तप॥२७॥

*icchā-dveṣa-samutthena / dvandva-mohena bhārata
sarva-bhūtāni sammoham / sarge yānti parantapa*

bhārata parantapa—O scion of Bhārata, conqueror of the foe; *sarge*—at the time of creation; *sarva-bhūtāni*—all living beings; *yānti*—enter; *sammoham*—into complete illusion; *dvandva-mohena*—bewildered by duality; *icchā-dveṣa-samutthena*—born of desire and hate.

O scion of Bhārata, O Parantapa, at the time of creation all *jīvas* enter into complete illusion, bewildered by the dualities of happiness and distress which are born of desire and hate.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

"How long have the *jīvas* been bewildered by Your *māyā*?" Śrī Bhagavān anticipates this question by speaking this *śloka* beginning with *icchā*. "Sarga means creation. All *jīvas* have been bewildered since the beginning of creation. By what? By desire and hate which is born from their previ-

ous *karma*. They are deluded by the dualities which arise from the desire for sense objects which are to their liking, and from aversion to those which are not. Examples of this are honour and dishonour, cold and heat, happiness and distress, male and female. The *jīvas* are bewildered by the designations which are delusions born of ignorance, such as ‘I am honoured, therefore I am happy; I am disrespected, therefore I am miserable; this beautiful woman is my wife; this man is my husband.’ In other words, they become deeply attached to wife, children and so on. Those with such deep worldly attachment do not have the right to engage in My *bhakti*. As I have said to Uddhava in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.20.8): ‘By good fortune, a person who has developed *śraddhā* in hearing My *kathā* and who has neither repulsion nor excessive attachment to sense objects attains perfection in *bhakti-yoga*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *jīvas* remain bereft of Parameśvara *jñāna* because they are deluded by *māyā*. At that time, being further bewildered by the delusion of duality arising from desire and hate, their aversion to Kṛṣṇa becomes deeper. The reason for this is that the *jīva* in his pure state sees the eternal form of Bhagavān with his transcendental senses. However, the *baddha-jīva* in the material world is overpowered by *avidyā* and remains bewildered by duality which arises from desire and hate. At that time, he becomes bereft of *vidvat-pratīti*, access to transcendence. Bhagavān becomes visible to the material eyes of the *jīvas* by *yoga* (union) with the *cit-śakti* by which He manifests His *nitya-svarūpa*. Even then, such persons think that the *svarūpa* of Bhagavān is temporary. They do not have the proper knowledge to perceive Him, because they are covered by *māyā*. This is their great misfortune.

ŚLOKA 28

ये षान्त्वन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम्।
ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मां द्रढव्रताः॥२८॥

*yeṣāṁ tv anta-gataṁ pāpaṁ / janānāṁ puṇya-karmaṇām
te dvandva-moha-nirmuktā / bhajante mām dṛḍha-vratāḥ*

tu—but; *janānām*—those persons; *puṇya-karmaṇām*—who have performed pious activities; *yeṣām*—whose; *pāpaṁ*—sinful activities; *anta-gatam*—have come to an end; *te*—they; (become) *nirmuktāḥ*—freed; *dvandva-moha*—from the bewilderment of duality; (and) *bhajante*—worship; *mām*—Me; *dṛḍha-vratāḥ*—with determined vows.

However, those pious persons whose sins have been eradicated become free from the bewilderment of duality and engage in My *bhajana* with firm determination.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

“Who then, has the *adhikāra* to perform *bhakti*?” In answer to this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *yeṣām*. “When one’s sins are almost destroyed by pious activities, *sattva-guṇa* rises within him and reduces *tamo-guṇa* and its effect, delusion. When he associates with My *bhakta*, who is not overly attached to this world, his delusion decreases, and he engages in My *bhajana* by his own will. Only those whose sins are completely destroyed by the practice of devotional service to Me have become completely free from delusion and perform My *bhajana* with great determination.” Pious deeds alone are not the cause of *bhakti*. Śrī Bhagavān says in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.12.9): “*Bhakti* cannot be attained by a person endeavouring in *yoga*, *sāṅkhya*, *dāna*, *vrata*, *tapasyā*, *yajña*, *vairāgya* and study of the *śāstra*.” One does not attain *bhakti-yoga* simply by taking shelter of pious activities. This has been established in various ways.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

There are two ways in which the *buddha-jīvas* attain one-pointedness in *bhajana* to Bhagavān. Firstly, a *jīva* who is bound by *māyā* may by good fortune, develop *śraddhā* in hearing *hari-kathā* in the association of devotees, although he is not yet performing *bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa. Then, by continuously hearing descriptions of His name, form and qualities, he becomes free from sins (*anarthas*) and detached from worldliness. He develops *niṣṭhā* towards Kṛṣṇa and progressively enters *aikāntika-bhakti*. In the second category are the *jīvas* who have not completely renounced sense-objects, but are also not excessively attached to them. When such *jīvas*, by great fortune, attain the association of a *mahā-bhāgavata*, they engage in *bhajana*, and, as a result, all their sins, their attachment to sense enjoyment and their delusion are removed, and they also develop *niṣṭhā* in *bhajana*. Having achieved such *niṣṭhā*, they enter *aikāntika-bhakti*. The association of *mahā-puruṣas*, their mercy and one's endeavour to perform *bhajana* are the only means of attaining *bhakti*.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "Hear from Me how one can gain the *adhikāra* to realise My *nitya-svarūpa*. The *asuras* who are overpowered by a sinful nature do not have such access. One who has completely eradicated his sins by performing many pious deeds and by following a regulated *dharmika* life performs *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* in the beginning, then *jñāna-yoga*, and finally one achieves *samādhi* by *dhyāna-yoga*. Only then is he able to realise My eternal, beautiful *cit-tattva* Śyāmasundara form. That realisation which comes by virtue of *vidyā* (transcendental knowledge) is called *vidvat-pratīti*. Only those who are endowed with this realisation can gradually become free from *dvaita* (duality) and *advaita* (non-duality), and can engage in My *bhajana* with great determination."

ŚLOKA 29

जरामरणमोक्षाय मामाश्रित्य यतन्ति ये।
ते ब्रह्म तद्विदुः कृत्स्नमध्यात्मं कर्म चाखिलम्॥२९॥

*jarā-maraṇa-mokṣāya / mām āśritya yatanti ye
te brahma tad viduh kṛtsnam / adhyātmam karma cākhilam*

te ye—those who; *yatanti*—endeavour; *mokṣāya*—for deliverance; *jarā-maraṇa*—from old age and death; (by) *āśritya*—taking shelter; *mām*—of Me; *viduh*—understand; *kṛtsnam akhilam*—completely; (concerning) *brahma*—spirit; *tat*—that (the Supreme Personality); *adhyātmam*—the nature of the *jīvātma*; *ca*—and; *karma*—the process of action and reaction.

Those who strive for liberation from old age and death by taking refuge of Me attain knowledge of *brahma*, of the pure constitutional nature of the *jīva*, and an understanding of the principle of *karma*, which is the cause of their bondage to the material world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

Śrī Bhagavān said earlier that all *sakāma-bhaktas*, such as the distressed, become perfect by performing His *bhajana*. Others however, who worship the *devas*, will degrade themselves and remain in the material world. In saying this, Bhagavān is also referring to those who are unqualified to perform His *bhajana*. Here, in this *śloka* beginning with *jarā*, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking about the fourth type of *sakāma-bhakta*. “Those yogīs who endeavour to stop the cycle of old age and death, and who worship Me with a desire for *mokṣa* are, by the influence of My *bhakti*, eventually able to attain full understanding of *brahma* (that is, My eternal beautiful Śyāmasundara form), *adhyātmā* (the complete self, or the *jīva* who possesses a body and exists in it as an enjoyer) and the

principle of *karma* (that is, how the *jīvas* enter this material world)."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Bhagavān first explained the first three types of *sakāma-bhaktas*, such as the distressed. "They initially perform My *bhajana* in order to attain their desired goals. After they have attained these goals and understood that such goals are actually miserable and degrading, they become detached from them. Finally, by taking *sādhu-saṅga*, they become successful and attain My *aikāntika-bhakti*." In the present śloka, Bhagavān is explaining the fourth type of *bhakta*, namely the *sakāma-bhakta* who desires *mokṣa*. "When such *sakāma-bhaktas* achieve the association of My *śuddha-bhaktas*, they lose their desire to attain *brahma-sāyujya* and focus on becoming situated in their pure constitutional form as the servants of Bhagavān. These *sakāma-jñānī bhaktas* are real *mumukṣus*, persons who desire *mokṣa*. Only such *brahma-bhūta-jñānī bhaktas* (who have attained the nature of *brahma*) completely understand *brahma-tattva*, *adhyātma-tattva* and *karma-tattva* and attain *parā bhakti*."

ŚLOKA 30

साधिभूताधिदैवं मां साधियज्ञञ्च ये विदुः।
प्रयाणकालेऽपि च मां ते विदुर्युक्तचेतसः॥३०॥

*sādhibhūtādhidaivam mām / sādhiyajñāñca ye viduh
prayāṇa-kāle'pi ca mām / te vidur yukta-cetasah*

ye te—those who; viduh—know; mām—Me; sa-adhibhūta—underlying the gross material elements of the cosmos; adhidaivam—underlying the devatās; ca—and; sa-adhiyajñam—underlying all sacrifices; yukta-cetasah—with minds attached to Me; viduh—know; mām—Me; api—even; prayāṇa-kāle—at the time of death.

Those who know Me as the presiding deity (governing principle) of *adhibhūta*, *adhidaiva* and *adhiyajña*, and whose minds are attached to Me, remember Me even at the time of death.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“By the influence of My *bhakti*, the knowledge of those who have realised Me as the presiding Deity of *adhibhūta*, *adhidaiva* and *adhiyajña* remains intact up to the time of death. Unlike others, their intelligence is not affected by the body they will achieve in the future in accordance with their *karma* performed in this life.” To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *sādhibhūta*. The words *adhibhūta*, etc., will be explained in the next chapter. Only the *bhaktas* of Bhagavān Śrī Hari can cross over *māyā* by completely understanding His *tattva*. Six types of such devotees have been delineated in this chapter.

Thus ends the Bhāvānuvāda of the Sārārtha-Varşinī Tīkā, by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, on the Seventh Chapter of Śrimad Bhagavad-gītā, which gives pleasure to the bhaktas and is accepted by all saintly persons.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Śrī Bhagavān is saying, “Those who, by the power of My *bhakti*, know Me as the governing principle of *adhibhūta-tattva*, *adhidaiva-tattva* and *adhiyajña-tattva* can remember Me at the time of death. They are not fearful of death because they do not forget Me.”

Thus ends the Sārārtha-Varşinī Prakāśikā-vṛtti, by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, on the Seventh Chapter of Śrimad Bhagavad-gītā.

CHAPTER EIGHT



Tāraka Brahma-Yoga

Yoga with Parabrahma

ŚLOKA 1

अर्जुन उवाच—

किं तद् ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम।
अधिभूतज्ञं किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते॥१॥

arjuna uvāca

*kim tad brahma kim adhyātmañ / kiṁ karma puruṣottama
adhibhūtañ ca kiṁ proktam / adhidaivam kim ucyate*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *puruṣottama*—O Supreme Person; *kim*—what (is)?; *tad brahma*—that (known as) spirit; *kim*—what (is)?; *adhyātmañ*—the principle of the *jīvātmā*; *kim*—what (is)?; *karma*—the principle of action and reaction; *kim*—what (is)?; *adhibhūtam*—the basis of the gross material elements; *proktam*—said to be; *ca*—and; *kim*—what (is)?; *adhidaivam*—the principle underlying the celestial deities; *ucyate*—said to be.

Arjuna inquired: O Puruṣottama, what is *brahma* (Absolute Reality)? What is *adhyātma* (the pure self)? What is *karma* (the principle of action)? What

is *adhibhūta*, the basis of this material manifestation, and what is *adhidaiva*, the principle underlying the *devas*?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In the first two *ślokas* of this chapter, Arjuna raises seven questions. Six of those questions relate to the factual meanings of the six words mentioned at the end of the last chapter: *brahma*, *adhyātma*, *karma*, *adhibhūta*, *adhidaiva* and *adhiyajña*. The seventh question is, “How does a man whose senses are controlled know You at the time of death?” In this chapter, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains these topics in detail, answering all of Arjuna’s questions.

ŚLOKA 2

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन् मधुसूदन।
प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः॥२॥

*adhiyajñah katham ko ’tra / dehe ‘smiñ madhusūdana
prayāṇa-kāle ca katham / jñeyo ‘si niyatātmabhiḥ*

kaḥ—who (is)?; *adhiyajñah*—the Lord of sacrifice; *katham*—how (does He exist)?; *atra*—here; *asmin*—in this; *dehe*—body; *madhusūdana*—O killer of the demon Madhu; *ca*—and; *katham*—how?; *asi*—are You; *jñeyah*—to be known; *prayāṇa-kāle*—at the time of death; *niyatātmabhiḥ*—by those of self-disciplined mind.

Who is *adhiyajña*, the presiding deity of *yajña*, and how is He dwelling in this body, O Madhusūdana? And by what means are You to be known at the time of death by a self-controlled person?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In the Eighth Chapter, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains *yoga* in response to Pārtha's questions. Within this topic, He also explains *yoga-miśrā bhakti*, *śuddha-bhakti* and the destinations of both.

Bhagavān spoke on seven topics such as *brahma* at the end of the last chapter. Now, in this chapter, Arjuna is inquiring about those topics in this and the previous śloka, beginning with the words *kim tad*. Who is *adhiyajña* (the presiding deity of *yajna*), who resides in this body, and how can He be known?

ŚLOKA 3

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

अक्षरं परमं ब्रह्म स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते।
भूतभावोद्भवकरो विसर्गः कर्मसञ्जितः ॥३॥

śrī-bhagavān uvāca

akṣaram paramam brahma / svabhāvo 'dhyātmam ucyate
bhūta-bhāvodbhava-karo / visargah karma-saṁjñitah

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the illustrious, all-opulent Lord said; *akṣaram*—the imperishable; *paramam*—Supreme Truth; *brahma*—(is) spirit; *svabhāvah*—the nature of the *jīva*; *ucyate*—is known as; *adhyātmam*—*adhyātma*, the self; *visargah*—the creation; *udbhava-karah*—which brings about; *bhāva*—the thread of existence through successive births; *bhūta*—for the living beings; *karma-saṁjñitah*—is known as *karma*.

Śrī Bhagavān said: The eternal, imperishable *parama-tattva* is indeed *brahma*. The *jīva* in his pure state is called *adhyātma*, and the principle of *yajña* in this material world, whereby the development of the *jīvas'* material bodies and their expansions take place, is known as *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

While answering Arjuna's questions, Śrī Bhagavān says that *brahma* is that which is imperishable and eternally supreme. "O Gārgī, the learned *brāhmaṇas* call it *akṣara*" (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 3.8.8).

Svabhāvah: Those who create material bodies because they identify their *ātmā* with the body (*sva-bhāvayati*) are called *svabhāvah*, or *jīvas* (in the conditioned state). The word *svabhāvah* also means 'jīvas in their constitutional state,' and refers to those who situate themselves in their pure state by cultivating *bhakti*, and attain *svam* (Paramātmā). Here *svabhāvah* does not refer to the conditioned *jīva* but to the unalloyed entity, the *śuddha-jīva*, who is also known as *adhyātma*. *Visarga*, or the *jīva*'s *samsāra*, results in *bhūtabhāva-udbhava-karah*, the gross and subtle elements which create human and other bodies according to the consciousness of the *jīva*. *Samsāra* (the cycle of material existence) is created by the *karma* (action) of the *jīva*, so here the word *karma* indicates the material existence of the *jīva*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Brahma means that which does not perish. It is called *akṣara* because it is infallible. *Akṣara-tattva* is free from destruction and transformation and is also called *parabrahma*. Here it should be understood that only *saviṣeṣa-maya* Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Conscious Reality who possesses all transcendental attributes, is *parabrahma*, not *nirviṣeṣa-brahma*, His featureless impersonal aspect. Although the word *akṣara* refers to all three features of the Supreme, namely *brahma*, Paramātmā and Bhagavān, here it only indicates *parabrahma*, *Svayam Bhagavān*. One should deliberate on *Gītā* (15.16-18) for a detailed understanding of this subject. This is also established in the prayers of Lord Brahman.

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.32): *yan-mitram paramānandaṁ / pūrṇaṁ brahma sanātanam.* “Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the complete, eternal *brahma*, and whose form is composed of supreme bliss, is their friend.” This is also cited in Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 19.96): *aham iha nandaṁ vande / yasyālinde param brahma.* “I forever worship that Nanda Mahārāja in whose courtyard *parabrahma* is playing as Nandanandana.”

Adhyātma means *svabhāvah*, or the *śuddha-jīva* situated in his unalloyed state, free from any contact with inert matter. *Svam bhāvayati* means that one maintains the conception, ‘I am this gross body,’ due to contact and identification with the body. There is another meaning of *svabhāvah*, or *svam bhāvayati*. The *jīva* who realises Paramātma is called *svabhāvah*. Śrīpāda Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa also translates the word *svabhāvah* as the *jīvātmā*: *jīvātmānaḥ sambandhī yo bhāvo.* “*Bhāva*, or existence, in relationship with the *jīvātmā* is called *svabhāvah*.” That same *jīvātmā* who has taken shelter of the body considers himself to be the enjoyer of sense objects. Therefore, the word *adhyātma* refers to the *jīva*.

Visarga means *yajña* which is performed by offering material ingredients for the pleasure of the *devatās*. This gives rise to the gross and subtle elements, which in turn create the material world in the form of the *jīvas’* gross bodies. This should be understood as *visarga*, the material existence of the *jīva*.

ŚLOKA 4

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम्।
अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर ॥४॥

*adhibhūtam kṣaro bhāvah / puruṣaś cādhidaivatam
adhiyajño 'ham evātra / dehe deha-bhṛtām vara*

vara—O best; *deha-bhṛtāṁ*—of embodied beings; *kṣaraḥ*—the perishable; *bhāvah*—nature; (is called) *adhibhūtam*—*adhibhūta*; *ca*—and; *puruṣah*—the universal form; (is known as) *adhidaivatam*—*adhidaiva*; *eva*—indeed; *aham*—I (am); *adhiyajñah*—the Lord of sacrifice; *atra*—here; *dehe*—within the material body.

O Arjuna, best among embodied beings, that which is perishable is called *adhibhūta*, and the universal form is *adhidaiva*, the presiding Lord of all *devatās*. I alone am *adhiyajña*, situated in the body as *Antaryāmī*, and I inspire a person to perform activities, such as *yajña*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Adhibhūta refers to perishable objects such as pots and cloth which exist by taking the support of the living entities. According to the Nirukta (Vedic dictionary), *adhidaiva* refers to the *virāṭ-puruṣa*, who has authority over the *devatās* such as Sūrya. “I inspire activity such as *yajña* by My partial expansion as *Antaryāmī*; hence I am *adhiyajña*.” Anticipating the doubt, “How are You situated as *adhiyajña*?” Bhagavān speaks the words *aham eva* (only I). “Only I am to be known in My non-different expansion of *Antaryāmī*. Unlike the *jīvas* (*adhyātma*), My portion (*amṛta*) *Antaryāmī* is non-different from Me. The *jīvātmā* is My separated part (*vibhinnāmṛta*), and *Paramātmā* *Antaryāmī*, who is non-different from Me, is My *svāmṛta*. As My friend, you are *deha-bhṛtāṁ vara*, the best among the embodied beings.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Here Śrī Bhagavān is answering three of Arjuna’s questions:

Adhibhūta: Gross articles such as pots or cloth, which are perishable and which change at every moment, exist by taking support of the living entities, and are thus called *adhibhūta*.

Adhidaiva: The complete cosmic being or *virāṭ-puruṣa* is called *adhidaiva* because He has sovereignty over the *devatās*.

Adhiyajña: The word *adhiyajña* refers to the *puruṣa* who is situated in the bodies of the *jīvas* as all-pervading *Antaryāmī*, who inspires action (*karma*) such as *yajñā*, and who gives the results of *karma*. *Antaryāmī* is *svāṁśa-tattva*, a plenary portion of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is said in the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.6):

*dvā suparnā sayujā sakhāyā / samānam vṛksam pariṣasvajāte
taylor anyah pippalam svādū atty / anaśnann anyo 'bhicākaśiti*
Kṣīrodakaśayī-*puruṣa* and the *jīva* live as two friendly birds on the branch of a banyan tree, which is likened to this temporary material body. The *jīva* tastes the fruits of the tree according to his *karma*, while the other bird, *Paramātmā*, is not engaged in enjoying the fruits, but simply witnesses the *jīva*'s activities.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.2.8) Śrī Sukadeva Gosvāmī also says:

*kecit sva-dehāntar-hṛdayāvakāśe
prādeśa-mātram puruṣam vasantam*

Some yogīs remember the *prādeśa-mātra puruṣa* who is situated within the cave of their hearts.

The word *prādeśa-mātra* has been translated by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī as the distance from the thumb to the tip of the first finger. Śrīla Cakravartī Ṭhākura says, “By His *acintya-śakti*, He is situated within that area as a fifteen-year-old *kiṣora*.” Moreover, it is said in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (2.1.12): *anguṣṭha-mātrah puruṣo madhya ātmani tiṣṭhati*. “*Antaryāmī puruṣa* is the size of a thumb and is situated in the middle part of the body, the heart.”

All this evidence proves that *Antaryāmī Paramātmā* is situated within the heart of the ordinary *jīva*, and occupies a space the size of the thumb. For His special *bhaktas*,

however, Kṛṣṇa Himself is situated in their hearts in His *kiśora* form as a fifteen-year-old. For example, that Antaryāmī situated within the heart of Bilvamaṅgala is none other than the transcendental *kiśora*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. As he says in *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāṁṛta* (1): *cintāmaṇir jayati somagirir gurur me / śikṣā-guruś ca bhagavān śikh-piccha-maulih*. “All glories to Cintāmaṇi, whom I consider to be my *guru*, and who has fulfilled all desires. All glories to my *guru*, Somagiri, and to my śikṣā-guru, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who has a peacock feather in His hair and who is situated in my heart.”

The Antaryāmī situated in the heart of Arjuna is the same *kiśora* Kṛṣṇa Himself, who is situated on his chariot.

ŚLOKA 5

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन् मुक्त्वा कलेवरम्।
यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः॥५॥

*anta-kāle ca mām eva / smaran muktvā kalevaram
yah prayāti sa mad-bhāvam / yāti nāsty atra samśayah*

ca—and; *sah yah*—he who; *anta-kāle*—at the time of death; *muktvā*—giving up; *kalevaram*—the body; *smaran*—remembering; *mām*—Me; *eva*—alone; *prayāti yāti*—certainly attains; *mat-bhāvam*—My nature; *asti*—there is; *na*—no; *saṁśayah*—doubt; *atra*—on this point.

Whoever, at the time of death, leaves his body while remembering Me alone surely attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“How can one know You at the time of leaving the body?” In answer to Arjuna’s question, Śrī Bhagavān says, “By remembering Me, one is in knowledge of Me, but one can never

know Me fully in the same way that one may know material objects such as pots and cloth." How many types of *jñāna* are there by which to remember Śrī Bhagavān? This is explained in the following four *ślokas*.

ŚLOKA 6

यं यं वापि स्मरन् भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम्।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः॥६॥

*yam yam vāpi smaran bhāvam / tyajaty ante kalevaram
tam tam evaiti kaunteya / sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitah*

yam yam—whatever; *vā api*—possible; *bhāvam*—contemplation; *smaran*—one remembers; *ante*—at the last moment when; *tyajati*—one gives up; *kalevaram*—the body; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *eva*—certainly; *eti*—one attains; *tam tam*—that very same state; *sadā bhāvitah*—because he is always absorbed in; *tad-bhāva*—that contemplation.

Whatever one remembers at the time of death, O Kaunteya, he is sure to attain that same state, due to being always absorbed in such contemplation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

"Just as one attains Me by remembering Me only, similarly, one also attains the state corresponding to whatever or whoever else he remembers." To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking these words *yam yam*. People are absorbed in a particular state of existence due to remembrance and continuous meditation on it.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

By remembering Bhagavān at the time of death, one attains His nature. Similarly, one attains a nature corresponding to the other beings and objects one remembers. Bharata

Mahārāja thought of a young deer at the time of death and in his next life he received the body of a deer. For this reason, one must not think of anything except Bhagavān at the time of death. To attain such consciousness, it is imperative to endeavour in this direction from the very beginning of one's life. Although Bharata Mahārāja was a *bhakta* of high calibre and was situated on the platform of *bhāva*, he was reborn as a young deer by the will of the Lord to set an example for humanity. Because he had remembrance of his past life, he completely avoided the association of materialistic persons in his next and subsequent births, and remained engaged in the cultivation of *bhakti*. The ordinary *jīvas*, who are bound by the results of their *karma*, should take a good lesson from the example of Bharata Mahārāja, and should not commit offences at his feet, thinking that he was bound by the result of *karma* as they are. Furthermore, the story of Purañjana described in the *Bhāgavatam* shows how he attained the body of a woman in his next life, because he was thinking of a woman at the time of death. Actually, whatever we do during the course of our lives influences our consciousness at the time of death, and we take another birth accordingly. This is why *sādhakas* should perform *hari-nāma* and practise *śuddha-bhakti* in this life, so that at the time of death they will be able to remember Bhagavān intensely, and their path to eternal auspiciousness will become blessed.

ŚLOKA 7

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च।
मय्यपितमनोबुद्धिममिवैष्यस्यसंशयः ॥७॥

*tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu mām anusmara yudhya ca
mayy arpita-mano-buddhir / mām evaiṣyasy asaṁśayah*

tasmāt—therefore; *sarveṣu*—at all; *kāleṣu*—times; *anusmara*—remember; *mām*—Me; *ca*—while; *yudhya*—fighting; *manobuddhiḥ*—with mind and intelligence; *arpita*—offered; *mayi*—unto Me; *eva eṣyasi*—you shall certainly attain; *mām*—Me; *asaṁśayah*—without doubt.

Therefore, you should always remember Me, and at the same time perform your prescribed duty of fighting. With your mind and intellect devoted to Me, you will attain Me without doubt.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The mind is *sankalpātmaka*, meaning that it can concentrate on a particular motivation and can also oscillate. *Buddhi* means intelligence and *vyavasāyātmikā* means that which is resolute.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

“Thus, by constantly remembering My *parabrahma-bhāva*, My eternal beautiful form as Kṛṣṇa, act according to your own *svabhāva*, your acquired nature as a *kṣatriya*, and fight. When your mind is concentrated in this way, your intelligence is resolute and you are surrendered unto Me, you will surely attain Me.”

ŚLOKA 8

अभ्यासयोग्युक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना।
परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन्॥८॥

*abhyāsa-yoga-yuktena / cetasā nānya-gāminā
paramam puruṣam divyam / yāti pārthānucintayan*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; (one who is) *abhyāsa-yoga-yuktena*—engaged in *yoga* practice; *cetasā*—with mind; *na anya-gāminā*—undeviating; *anucintayan*—while contemplating (Him); *yāti*—

one attains; *paramam*—that supreme; *divyam*—divine; *puruṣam*—person.

O Pārtha, one who is engaged in constant *yoga* practice with undeviated attention, and who continuously thinks of *parama-puruṣa* (the Supreme Person), will surely attain Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“In this way, he who practises remembering Me during his life will naturally remember Me at the time of death, and in this way he will achieve Me. Thus, remembrance of Me alone is the supreme *yoga* of the mind.” To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the words *abhyāsa-yoga*. “*Abhyāsa* means to practise continuous remembrance of Me, and *yoga* means to fix the mind in such practice, not hankering for different sense objects. When one constantly remembers Me with such undeviated attention, he will be able to conquer the nature of the mind.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

It is necessary to engage in *abhyāsa-yoga* in order to attain unbroken continuity in *bhajana* (like the flow of a stream which cannot be checked). One will be able to engage the mind in remembering Śrī Bhagavān by the performance of *abhyāsa-yoga* and by withdrawing it from other sense objects. By continually practising remembrance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa throughout one’s life, one will be able to conquer the distracted mind, thus enabling one to remember Kṛṣṇa at the time of death. This is also stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.18): *abhyāsenātmano yogī / dhārayed acalaṁ manah*. “A *yogī* should make his mind steady by practise.” One may refer to Gītā (12.9) to study this topic further.

ŚLOKAS 9-10

कविं पुराणमनुशासितारमणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद् यः।
 सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूपमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात्॥९॥
 प्रयाणकाले मनसाऽचलेन भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव।
 भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक् स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम्॥१०॥

*kavim purāṇam anuśāsitāram
 anor aṇīyāṁsam anusmared yaḥ
 sarvasya dhātāram acintya-rūpam
 āditya-varṇam tamasah parastāt
 prayāṇa-kāle manasā'calena
 bhaktyā yukto yoga-balena caiva
 bhruvor madhye prāṇam āveśya samyak
 sa tam param puruṣam upaiti divyam*

(one) *anusmaret*—can remember; *param divyam puruṣam*—that divine person; *purāṇam*—the ancient; *kavim*—sage; *anuśāsitāram*—who is the controller; *aṇīyāṁsam*—smaller; *anoh*—than the smallest; *dhātāram*—the maintainer; *sarvasya*—of everyone; *acintya-rūpam*—whose form is inconceivable; *āditya-varṇam*—who is coloured like the sun; (and is) *parastāt*—transcendental; *tamasah*—to the darkness; *saḥ yaḥ*—he who; *prayāṇa-kāle*—at the time of death; *āveśya*—fixing; *prāṇam*—his life air; *samyak*—completely; *madhye*—between; *bhruvoh*—the eyebrows; *yoga-balena*—by the power of *yoga*; *ca*—and; *eva*—indeed; *yuktaḥ*—engaging; *acalena*—with undeviating; *manasā*—mind; (and) *bhaktyā*—with devotion; *upaiti*—attains; *tam*—(Him).

One should remember that Person who is omniscient and eternal, who is the Supreme Controller, who is smaller than the smallest, who is the maintainer of everyone, whose form is inconceivable, who is self-effulgent like the sun and who is

transcendental to this material nature. One who, at the time of death, fully fixes his life air between the eyebrows by the strength of *yoga*, and concentrates with undeviating attention and full *bhakti*, certainly attains Him.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

It is impossible to withdraw the mind from sense-objects without *yogābhyaṣa*. Without continuous practise of *yoga*, it is impossible to remember Śrī Bhagavān. *Bhakti* which is mixed with any type of *yoga* is called *yoga-miśrā bhakti*. Śrī Bhagavān is explaining this in the next four ślokas beginning here with *kavim*. *Kavim* means omniscient. Ṛṣis such as Sanaka are *sarva-jñā* (omniscient), but their omniscient nature is not unlimited. This is why Śrī Bhagavān is using the word *purāṇam*, without beginning. Although Antaryāmī is omniscient and beginningless, He does not give instructions in *bhakti*, so Bhagavān is saying *anuśāsitāram*, meaning that He mercifully gives instructions on *bhakti* through His *svarūpa-avatāras* such as Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The *tattva* of such a merciful personality is very difficult to understand.

He says that He is more subtle than the most subtle. Does this mean that He is atomic like the *jīva*? To clarify this, He says: *sarvasya dhātāram*. “I am the sustainer of everything, and because I am all-pervading, I am of unlimited size, therefore I am *acintya* (inconceivable).” Although He has a human-like form, He is explaining His manifestations who are non-different from Him. Āditya-*varṇam* means that, like Sūrya, He illuminates both Himself and others. He is beyond material nature (*tamasah*) and, although He is the master of *māyā* *śakti*, He is beyond *māyā*. At the time of death, *yogīs* remember Him with undeviated minds. They are blessed with the potency of continuous remembrance of Him that they have practised during their lives. How does one attain this stability of mind? Bhagavān says, “He attains it on the strength of

yogābhyāsa." What type of *yoga*? He answers, "The *yoga* in which the life air is fixed between the eyebrows (*ājñā-cakra*)."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the previous *śloka*, the process of remembering Śrī Bhagavān at the time of death was mentioned, and now it is explained in this *śloka*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "Please listen as I explain the process of meditation on the Supreme Person (*parama puruṣa*). He is omniscient, beginningless and inconceivable to mundane intelligence. He is the smallest, yet He is also the Supreme Controller who maintains everyone. He exists eternally in His beautiful, human-like Śyāmasundara form. His *tattva* is beyond material nature and, because He is self-illuminating like the sun, His bodily hue illuminates His form. One who leaves his body having made his mind steady by *bhakti*, and who fixes the life air between the eyebrows by the power of *yogābhyāsa*, attains that Supreme Person. This *yoga* system has been instructed to ensure that one's attention is not distracted from the *parama puruṣa* by suffering and pain at the time of death."

ŚLOKA 11

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति विशन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः।
यदिच्छन्ते ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये॥११॥

yad akṣaram veda-vido vadanti
 viśanti yad yatayo vīta-rāgāḥ
 yad icchanto brahmacaryam caranti
 tat te padam saṅgraheṇa pravakṣye

pravakṣye—I shall describe; *te*—to you; *saṅgraheṇa*—in summary; *tat*—that; *padam*—state; *yat*—which; *veda-vidah*—those conversant with the Vedas; *vadanti*—speak of; (as) *akṣaram*—

imperishable; *yat*—into which; *yatayah*—ascetics; *vīta-rāgāḥ*—who are free from attachment; *viśanti*—enter; (and) *yat*—which; *caranti*—they who practise; *brahmācaryam*—celibacy; *icchantaḥ*—desire (it).

I will now tell you in brief about that ultimate goal, which the Vedic *pāṇḍitas* describe as *akṣaram* (imperishable). Ascetics who are free from all desires enter there, as well as those who observe the principle of celibacy and have a desire to attain that goal.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

One may ask, “Can He be known simply by fixing the life air on the *ājñā-cakra*? What type of *yoga* is this? What is *japa*? What is the object of meditation? What is the ultimate goal? Please explain these in brief.” Anticipating these questions, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *yad* and the next two *ślokas*. “Om̄kāra, the sound manifestation of *brahma*, is *akṣara* (imperishable) and is identical with *brahma*. The knowers of the *Vedas* proclaim this. The ascetics enter this syllable *om̄*, the sound manifestation of *brahma*, that imperishable reality. Please listen as I explain what this goal is and how it can be achieved.”

SLOKAS 12-13

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुद्ध्य च।
 मूर्धन्याधीयात्मनः प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणाम्॥१२॥
 ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहारन्मामनुस्मरन्।
 यः प्रयाति त्वजन् देहं स याति परमां गतिम्॥१३॥

*sarva-dvārāṇi samyamya / mano hṛdi nirudhy ca
 mūrdhny ādhāyātmanah prāṇam / āsthito yoga-dhāraṇām*

*om ity ekākṣaram brahma / vyāharan mām anusmaran
yah prayāti tyajan deham / sa yāti paramām gatim*

(he) *prayāti yāti*—certainly attains; *paramām*—the supreme; *gatim*—destination; *samyamya*—disciplining; *sarva-dvārāṇi*—all the gates of the body (senses); *ca*—and; *nirudhya*—confining; *manah*—the mind; *hṛdi*—within the heart; *ādhāya*—fixing; *prāṇam*—the life air; *mūrdhni*—at the top of the head; (this is) *āsthitaḥ*—the situation; *yoga-dhāraṇām*—for the trance of self-realisation; *ātmanah*—of the soul; *vyāharan*—uttering; *om*—*om*; *iti*—thus; *eka-akṣaram*—the one complete, imperishable syllable; (which is the sound form of) *brahma*—*brahma*; *sa yāti*—he who; *tyajan*—giving up; *deham*—the body; *anusmaran mām*—remembers Me according to the guidance of *guru*.

The *yogī* attains the supreme destination by controlling all the senses, confining the mind within the heart, fixing the life-breath between the eyebrows, being deeply absorbed in *samādhi* by the practise of *yoga*, repeating the syllable *om* — which is a manifestation of *brahma* — and giving up his body while meditating on Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

While explaining this type of *yoga*, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking the above two *ślokas* beginning with *sarva-dvārāṇi*. “A person attains the supreme destination of *sālokya-mukti* and comes to My planet by restraining all his senses, such as the eyes, from their external sense objects; confining the mind to the heart, not desiring any sense object; fixing the life air between the eyebrows; performing *yoga-dhāraṇām*, taking shelter of My Deity form by meditating on the Deity from His feet to His head; chanting *omkāra* (*om*), which is identical with *brahma*; and giving up his body while continuously meditating on the meaning of *om*, Myself.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Om is the sound manifestation of *brahma*. It is also said in *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* (2.1.17): *abhyasen manasā śuddham / trivṛd-brahmākṣaram param*. “One should practise by repeating in his mind the pure form of *brahma-akṣara*, the sound manifestation of *brahma* (*praṇava*), made of three letters: ‘a’, ‘u’ and ‘m’.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

*praṇava ye mahā-vākyā-īśvarera-mūrti
praṇava haite sarva-veda, jagate-utpatti*

Madhya-līlā 6.174

and also:

*praṇava se mahā-vākyā vedera nidāna
īśvara-svarūpa praṇava sarva-viśva-dhāma*

Ādi-līlā 7.128

Praṇava is the essence of all the *Vedas* and is the *mahā-vākyā*, the greatest syllable (sound vibration). All other *mantras* have limitations. *Praṇava* is identical with the *śrī-murti* of Jagadiśa. All the *Vedas* as well as this universe are generated from *praṇava*. The essence of the *Vedas* is indeed this *mahā-vākyā* in the form of *praṇava*. It is the *svarūpa* of Bhagavān and the basis of the whole universe.

SLOKA 14

अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः।
तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः॥१४॥

*ananya-cetāḥ satataṁ / yo māṁ smarati nityaśaḥ
tasyāhaṁ sulabhaḥ pārtha / nitya-yuktasya yogināḥ*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *tasya*—for that; *nitya-yuktasya*—constantly engaged; *yogināḥ*—transcendentalist; *yah*—who; *nityaśaḥ*—regularly; (and) *satataṁ*—continuously; *smarati*—

remembers; *mām*—Me; *ananya-cetāḥ*—with an undistracted mind; *aham*—I (am); *su-labhaḥ*—easy to achieve.

O Pārtha, for one who is constantly absorbed in *bhakti-yoga* and who continuously remembers Me with an undistracted mind, I am easily attainable.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Karma-miśrā bhakti has been explained in *Gītā* (7.29), and *yoga-miśrā bhakti* and *pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*, along with their dominant factors (*karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga*), have been explained in *Gītā* (8.13). Now, in this śloka beginning with the words *ananya-cetāḥ*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining *kevala-bhakti*, which is superior to all other types of *yoga* and is *nirguṇa*. “I am easily attainable for such a *bhakta* who continuously remembers Me without considering the purity of time, place or circumstance, whose mind is not attracted to the practices of *karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga*, who does not worship the *devatās* or strive to achieve any other goal such as *Svarga* and *mukti*. That *bhakta* will not have to undergo the misery experienced while practicing *yoga*, *jñāna* and so on. The words *nitya-yuktasya* refer to he who is always hankering for union with Me.” If one doubts that Bhagavān will also be easily attainable in the future, He responds, “I am always easily attainable for him.” The word *yogināḥ* means one who is endowed with *bhakti-yoga*, that is, one who is connected to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a relationship such as *dāsyā* or *sakhyā*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “I have explained *bhakti* mixed with *karma* and *jñāna* from *Gītā* (7.16) which discusses *ārtta* (the distressed), *jijñāsu* (the inquisitive), *arthārthī* (those desirous of wealth) and *jñānī*

(men of knowledge) up to Gītā (7.29), wherein birth, death and mokṣa are explained. In other words, I have instructed you about the nature of karma-jñāna-pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti, or bhakti which predominates over karma and jñāna. From the śloka: kavīm purāṇam (Gītā 8.9), I have explained yoga-miśrā bhakti or the nature of yoga-pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti. I have given some hints about kevala-bhakti between these ślokas just to give you a taste. Now, please listen as I explain the nature of kevala-bhakti. I am easily attainable for such a bhakti-yogī who is ever united with Me, who remembers Me with his mind restrained from attraction to all other objects, and who is exclusively devoted. In other words, it is very difficult to achieve Me by performing pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti. This is to be understood.”

ŚLOKA 15

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमश्वतम्।
नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः सम्सिद्धिं परमां गताः॥११६॥

mām upetya punar janma / duḥkhālayam aśāvataṁ
nāpnuvanti mahātmānah / saṁsiddhim paramām gatāḥ

mahātmānah—the great souls; *upetya*—having attained; *mām*—Me; *na apnuvanti*—do not take; *punah janma*—rebirth (in *samsāra*); *duḥkha-alayam*—which is the abode of misery; (and is) *aśāvataṁ*—transitory; *gatāḥ*—having attained; *paramām*—the highest; *saṁsiddhim*—perfection.

The *mahātmas*, having attained Me, do not take birth again in this temporary world which is the abode of misery, for they have attained the highest perfection.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“What becomes of those who attain You?” In response, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *mām*. “They do not have to take another birth which is temporary and full of misery. Instead, they attain a birth like Mine which is eternal and full of bliss.” According to the *Amara-koṣa* dictionary, the words *sāsvata*, *dhruva*, *nitya*, *sadātana* and *sanātana* are all synonymous. “When I take My blissful, eternal and transcendental birth in the house of Vasudeva, My eternal associates (My *bhaktas*) also take birth. They do not take birth at any other time.” The word *paramām* has special significance. “Other types of *bhaktas* attain *sāṃsiddhi* (perfection), but those who are *ananya-cetāḥ*, who have fixed their minds solely on Me, attain *paramām sāṃsiddhim*, that is, they become associates in My *līlā*.” Hence, it has been established that the *bhaktas* who are *ananya-cetāḥ* are superior to the *bhaktas* who were described previously.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Those who have become indifferent to *karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga* and so forth, and who have not taken shelter of the various *devas*, but who worship only Kṛṣṇa with *ananya-bhakti*, surely attain only Him. They do not have to take another miserable, temporary birth, but become eternally absorbed in Kṛṣṇa’s service, being freed from the bondage of birth and activities (*karma*). As it is said in the *Padma-Purāṇa* (quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 10.113): *na karma-bandhanam janma vaiṣṇavānāñ ca vidyate viṣṇor anucaratvam hi mokṣam āhur manīṣināḥ*. “For the Vaiṣṇavas, the bondage of *karma* does not exist. Since the Vaiṣṇavas have become the associates of Viṣṇu, they are called *mukti-bhājana* (qualified for *mukti*) by those who know *tattva*.”

By performing *kevalā* or *rāgānugā bhakti*, the *ananya-bhaktas* of Bhagavān attain supreme perfection. That is, by attaining *svarūpa-siddhi* and *vastu-siddhi*, they are counted among the associates of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His pastimes and engage in His service. When it is time for His appearance they, like Him, also appear in order to nourish and enhance His manifest *līlā*.

ŚLOKA 16

आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः पुनरावर्त्तिनोऽजून्।
मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते॥१६॥

ā-brahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ / punar āvarttino 'rjuna
mām upetya tu kaunteya / punar janma na vidyate

arjuna—O Arjuna; *kaunteya*—son of Kuntī; *lokāḥ*—the planets; *ā-brahma-bhuvanāt*—up to Brahma-loka; *punaḥ āvarttinah*—are places of repeated birth and death; *tu*—but; *upetya*—having attained; *mām*—Me; *vidyate*—there is; *na*—no; *punaḥ*—further; *janma*—rebirth.

O Arjuna, all planets in this universe up to Brahma-loka are places of repeated birth and death, but one who attains Me, O Kaunteya, never takes birth again.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

"Indeed, all *jīvas*, even those who have great *sukṛti*, take birth, but My *bhaktas* do not." To explain this, this *śloka* beginning with *ā-brahma* is spoken. The *jīvas* who live on all of the planets up to Satya-loka, the planet of Lord Brahmā, must take birth again.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “From Brahma-loka or Satya-loka down to the lowest planet, all are temporary. The jīvas from those planets may take another birth, but one who takes shelter of Me as the object of *kevala-bhakti* does not take birth again.” It is not said that there is no rebirth for *karma-yogīs*, *aśṭāṅga-yogīs* and those who take shelter of *pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*. This implies that *kevala-bhakti* is the ultimate fruit or the perfection of all these processes and one can become free from the cycle of rebirth by gradually attaining this stage of *kevala-bhakti*.

ŚLOKA 17

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्यद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।
रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः ॥१७॥

sahasra-yuga-paryantam / ahar yad brahmaṇo viduḥ
rātrim yuga-sahasrāntām / te 'ho-rātra-vido janāḥ

te—those; *janāḥ*—persons; *ahaḥ-rātra-vidāḥ*—who know his day and night; *viduḥ*—understand; (that period) *yat*—which; *paryantam*—comprises; *sahasra-yuga*—a thousand ages (one age equals 4,320,000 years); (is) *ahaḥ*—one day; *brahmaṇāḥ*—of Brahmā; *rātrim*—his night; (also) *yuga-sahasra-antām*—lasts a thousand ages.

Those who know the truth about Brahmā’s day and night understand that his day lasts for one thousand cycles of the four *yugas*, and that his night is also of the same duration.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

One may doubt what is said in the Second Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.6.19), “Above the three planetary systems (*bhūr*, *bhuvaḥ* and *svaḥ*) is Maha-loka and above Maha-loka

are the three planets Jana, Tapa and Satya. These three are immortal, contain all the requirements for one's maintenance, and are free from fear." Some say that Brahma-loka is free from fear, and that even *sannyāsīs* desire to dwell there. Does this mean that those residing on that planet will never die?" Anticipating this question, Śrī Bhagavān states, "No, it is not true. Brahmā, the master of that planet, himself dies, so what to speak of others." To clarify this further, He speaks this *śloka* beginning with *sahasra*, which says that those who know *śāstra* understand that Brahmā's one day equals one thousand cycles of the four *yugas* (totalling 4,320,000,000 years) and his night is of the same duration. After Brahmā's great life span of one hundred years of these days and nights, fortnights and months, he falls and dies, but that Brahmā who is a Vaiṣṇava attains *mukti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "According to the calculation of human beings, one day of Brahmā is equal to one thousand cycles of four *yugas*, and his night is of the same period. In this way, Brahmā falls or dies after living for one hundred such years. However, those Brahmās' who are devoted to Śrī Bhagavān achieve *mukti*. If this is Brahma's situation, then how can the fearlessness of *sannyāsīs* who have attained his planet be eternal? It cannot be. They are also bound to take birth again."

ŚLOKA 18

अव्यक्तादव्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे।
रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसञ्जके॥१८॥

*avyaktād vyaktayah sarvāḥ / prabhavanty ahar-āgame
rātry-āgame pralīyante / tatraivāvyakta-saṁjñake*

sarvāḥ—all; *vyaktayah*—the individual embodied *jīvātmās*; *prabhavanti*—become manifest; *avyaktāt*—from the unmanifest; *ahāḥ-āgame*—when the day comes; (and) *pralīyante*—they merge; *avyakta-samjñake*—into that (state) known as the unmanifest; *tatra eva*—at that very time; *rātri-āgame*—when the night comes.

All *jīvas* manifest from the unmanifest cause at the beginning of Brahmā's day, and become merged into the same unmanifest cause upon the arrival of his night.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Those who are residents of the lower three planets, *bhūr*, *bhuvaḥ* and *svaḥ*, must die in every day of Brahmā. For this reason, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *avyaktād*. Śrīpada Madhusūdana Sarasvatī says, "In the cycle of the creation and annihilation of Brahmā's day, the element sky exists daily." Therefore, the word *avyakta* in this *śloka* does not refer to the *pradhāna* but indicates Brahmā's night.

From that unmanifest cause, namely Brahmā's night, comes his day, which manifests the field for enjoyment in the form of the body, sense objects and so forth. The whole world becomes actively manifest in this way. Then, at the approach of his night, it is again dissolved into the unmanifest cause while he sleeps.

ŚLOKA 19

भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते।
रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे॥१९॥

*bhūta-grāmaḥ sa evāyam / bhūtvā bhūtvā pralīyate
rātry-āgame 'vaśaḥ pārtha / prabhavaty ahar-āgame*

pārtha—O son of Pr̥thā; *sah ayam*—that very; *eva*—same; *bhūta-grāmaḥ*—host of beings; *bhūtvā bhūtvā*—having repeatedly taken birth; *pralīyate*—is dissolved; *rātri-āgame*—on the arrival of his

night; (and) *avaśah*—helplessly; *prabhavati*—springs up; *aḥaḥ-āgame*—on the arrival of his day.

O Pārtha, that very host of *jīvas*, both moving and non-moving, who come into being at the approach of Brahmā's day are again helplessly dissolved on the arrival of his night. They repeatedly manifest at the approach of Brahmā's day, under the strict law of *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

In this way, all moving and non-moving *jīvas* come into being and are again annihilated.

ŚLOKA 20

परस्तस्मात् भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः।
यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति॥२०॥

*paras tasmāt tu bhāvo 'nyo / 'vyakto 'vyaktāt sanātanaḥ
yah sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu / naśyatsu na vinaśyati*

tu—but; *paraḥ*—superior; *tasmāt*—to that; *avyaktāt*—unmanifest state; (*there is*) *anyah*—another; *avyaktah*—unmanifest; *bhāvah*—nature; (*which is*) *sanātanaḥ*—eternal; *sah*—that (nature); *yah*—which; *na vinaśyati*—is not destroyed; *sarveṣu*—when all *bhūteṣu*—living beings; *naśyatsu*—are destroyed.

Yet, superior to that unmanifest state, there exists another unmanifest nature, which is eternal and wonderful and which is not destroyed, even at the time of the great dissolution, when all of this world is annihilated.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Superior to the unmanifest principle of the *prajāpati* Hiranyaśarba Brahmā, there is another unmanifest nature,

which is eternal and without beginning, and is the cause of this Hiranyaśagarbha.

ŚLOKA 21

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहः परमां गतिम्।
यं प्राप्य न निवर्त्तन्ते तद्वाम परमं मम॥२१॥

*avyakto 'kṣara ity uktas / tam āhuḥ paramām gatim
yat pṛāpya na nivarttante / tad dhāma paramām mama*

avyaktaḥ—the unmanifest (nature); *uktah*—is described; *iti*—as; *akṣarāḥ*—imperishable; (sages) *āhuḥ*—call; *tam*—that; *paramām*—the supreme; *gatim*—destination; *pṛāpya*—having attained; *yam*—which; *na nivarttante*—they (the *jīvātmās*) do not return; *tat*—that; (is) *mama*—My; *paramam*—supreme; *dhāma*—abode.

That eternal unmanifest nature is known as *akṣara* and is the supreme destination. Having attained that *dhāma*, they never return to this world. It is My eternal abode and My eternal nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *avyakta*, mentioned in the previous śloka, is being explained in this śloka beginning with *avyaktaḥ*. That which is imperishable or indestructible is called *akṣara*. The *Nārāyaṇa-śruti* says: *eko nārāyaṇa āśin na brahmā na ca saṅkaraḥ*. “In the beginning there was only Śrī Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa; neither Brahmā nor Śiva existed.”

“My supreme abode is eternal. *Akṣara-parama-dhāma* means that My abode is *brahma*, and it possesses an effulgent form.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Having described the temporary existence of all moving and non-moving beings, Śrī Bhagavān now explains the eternity

of *parameśvara-tattva* (the supreme controlling principle). In the present two *ślokas*, He explains the *sanātana-puruṣa*, who is superior to the unmanifest Hiranyaagarbha, and who is inaccessible to the mind and senses. This unmanifest reality is also called *akṣara-brahma*, and is alone the supreme destination of the *jīvas*. Upon attaining that *parama-dhāma*, there is no possibility of ever again returning to this material world.

ŚLOKA 22

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया।
यस्यान्तःस्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम्॥२२॥

*puruṣah sa parah pārtha / bhaktyā labhyas tv ananyayā
yasyāntah-sthāni bhūtāni / yena sarvam idam tatam*

pārtha—O son of Pr̥thā; (*it is I*) *sah*—that; *paraḥ*—supreme; *puruṣah*—person; *yasya*—whose (expansion); (*is*) *antaḥ-sthāni*—situated in the heart; *bhūtāni*—of all living beings; (*and*) *yena*—by whom; *idam*—this; *sarvam*—entire (universe); *tatam*—is pervaded; *labhyah*—is attained; *tu*—indeed; *ananyayā*—through unalloyed; *bhaktyā*—devotion.

O Pārtha, I am that Supreme Person in whom all beings are situated, and by whom, as Antaryāmī, this whole world is pervaded. I am attained only by *ananya-bhakti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

“That *parama-puruṣa* (Supreme Person), who is My *amṛta* (Antaryāmī Paramātmā), is attained only by *ananya-bhakti*. *Ananyā* means that *bhakti* in which there is no trace of *karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga*, worldly desire and so on. This is the meaning of My earlier statement in Gītā (8.14): *ananya-cetāḥ satatam*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

That *puruṣa* described in the previous *śloka*, who is situated in the unmanifest stage, is the *sva-aṁśa* (plenary portion) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All *jīvas* are situated in Him and, because He is also situated within all *jīvas*, He is Antaryāmī. He can be attained only by *ananya-bhakti* which is devoid of *karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga*, etc.

ŚLOKA 23

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिज्ञैव योगिनः।
प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ॥२३॥

*yatra kāle tv anāvṛttim / āvṛttiñ caiva yoginah
prayatā yānti tam kālam / vakṣyāmi bharatarṣabha*

bharatarṣabha—O best of Bharata's line; *vakṣyāmi*—I shall describe; *tam*—that; *kālam*—time; *yatra*—at which; *kāle*—according to dictates of the deity of time; (*there is*) *eva*—certainly; *anāvṛttim*—no return; *ca*—and; *āvṛttim*—return; (*thus*) *yoginah*—yogīs; *prayatāḥ*—having passed from the body; *tu*—indeed; *yānti*—attain (their desired destination).

O best of the Bharatas, I shall now explain the different paths protected by the presiding *devas* of time, by which *yogīs* who pass away from this world either come back again or do not return.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Previously You said, ‘After attaining My *parama-dhāma*, the *jīva* never returns.’ By this statement, You established that, after attaining Your abode, Your *bhaktas* never return. Yet, You have not given any instruction about that special path and how to attain it. The path of Arci (the *deva* of the sunrays) is in *sattva-guṇa*, but that special path of which You

now speak must be beyond the *guṇas*, since Your *bhaktas* are also beyond the *guṇas*. For now, however, I am inquiring about the path which is followed by *karmīs*, *jñānīs* and *yogīs*."

Anticipating Arjuna's question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *yatra*. "A person returns or does not return to this world depending on the path that is indicated by the exact time at which he leaves his body. I will now explain that time or path."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *ananya-bhaktas* of Bhagavān easily attain His abode, unlike the *karmīs*, *jñānīs* and *yogīs*, and they do not have to undergo the miserable path which is in *sattva-guṇa*. Since the *bhaktas* who follow *nirguṇa-bhakti* are also *nirguṇa*, their paths and the time of their passing are also *nirguṇa*. The *bhaktas* do not have to depend on time, considering whether or not the sun is in the northern hemisphere. The time at which they enter Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *aprākṛta-līlā* is always *nirguṇa*.

ŚLOKA 24

अग्निज्योतिरहः शुक्लः षष्मासा उत्तरायणम्।
तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः॥२४॥

agnir jyotir ahaḥ śuklah / ṣaṭ-māsā uttarāyaṇam
tatra prayātā gacchanti / brahma brahma-vido janāḥ

janāḥ—persons; *brahma-vidāḥ*—conversant with *brahma*; *prayātāḥ*—who depart from the body; (by the path of the gods of) *agnih*—fire; *jyotiḥ*—light; *ahaḥ*—the day; (of) *śuklah*—the moon's waxing fortnight; *ṣaṭ-māsāḥ*—the six months; *uttarāyaṇam*—of the sun's northern course; *tatra*—then; *gacchanti*—they enter; *brahma*—the Absolute.

Those who know *brahma* and who depart from this world during the influence of the presiding *devas* of fire, the light, auspicious days, the fortnight of the waxing moon and the six months of the sun's northern course, attain *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining how to follow the path from which there is no return. It is said in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*: *te 'rciṣam abhisambhavanti*. “They attain the presiding *deva* of *arci* (the sunrays).” Therefore, the words *agnih* and *jyotiḥ* indicate the presiding *deva* of *arci*. The word *ahah* refers to the presiding *deva* of the day, and the word *uttarāyaṇam* refers to its presiding *deva* of the six months of the northern course of the sun. The *jñānis*, or those who are *brahma-vid* (who know *brahma*), attain *brahma* by following this path. In this regard, the *śrutis* say that they attain the *deva* presiding over *arci*, and then the *devas* of the day, the fortnight and month in that order. From the *deva* of the month, they attain the *deva* of the year, and then Āditya, the sun-god.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “Those who are *brahma-vid*, who give up their bodies at the times of the presiding *devas* of fire and light, on an auspicious day, and when the sun is in the northern course, attain *brahma*. The words *agnih* and *jyotiḥ* refer to the presiding *deva* of *arci* (light), and the word *ahah* refers to the presiding *deva* of the day. The word *śukla* refers to the presiding *deva* of the bright fortnight, and *uttarāyaṇa* refers to the *deva* presiding over the six months of the sun's northern course. The only course for a *yogī* desiring to attain *brahma* is to successively pass through the presiding *devas* of *arci*, the day, the bright fortnight and so forth, at a particular time when the mind and the senses are satis-

fied and joyful. Yogīs who die at these times never return.”

ŚLOKA 25

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम्।
तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्त्तते॥२५॥

*dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇah / ṣaṭ-māsā dakṣiṇāyanam
tatra cāndramasam jyotir / yogī prāpya nivarttate*

yogī—the mystic; (who departs by the path of the devas of) *dhūmaḥ*—smoke; *rātriḥ*—night; *tathā*—and; *kṛṣṇah*—the moon’s dark fortnight; *ṣaṭ-māsāḥ*—the six months; *dakṣiṇāyanam*—of the sun’s southern course; *prāpya*—after attaining; *cāndramasam*—the moon; (and) *jyotiḥ*—celestial delights; *tatra*—then; *nivarttate*—he returns.

The *karma-yogī*, who departs by the path of the devas who preside over the times of smoke, the night, *kṛṣṇa-pakṣa* (the dark half of the month) and the six months of the sun’s southern course, attains Svarga. After enjoying celestial pleasures there, he again returns to this material world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the return path of the *karmīs*. As before, the words smoke, night and so on refer to the presiding devas of those times. A *karma-yogī*, who passes through the paths of these devas, attains Svarga (the moon) and enjoys the result of his *karma* there. He returns to this material world when the results of his *karma* are exhausted.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRITTI

Karmīs who pass through the path of smoke, night, the dark fortnight, the sun’s six-month course in the southern hemisphere and the light of the moon, or who engage in

fruitive acts with their senses, return to this material world upon attaining the particular presiding *devas* of these times.

ŚLOKA 26

शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते।
एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययावर्तते पुनः ॥२६॥

*śukla-kṛṣṇe gatī hy ete / jagataḥ śāśvate mate
ekayā yāti anāvṛttim / anyayāvarttate punah*

śāśvate—in the eternal; *mate*—opinion (of the sages); *hi*—certainly; *ete*—these two; *gatī*—paths; (*exist*) *jagataḥ*—throughout the cosmic manifestation; *śukla*—by light; *kṛṣṇe*—and by darkness; *ekayā*—by one; *yāti*—one enters; *anāvṛttim*—the state of no return; *anyayā*—by the other; *āvarttate*—one returns; *punah*—again.

In departing from this world, only two paths, *śukla* and *kṛṣṇa*, are considered to be eternal. Passing through *śukla-pakṣa* (the bright path) one attains *mokṣa*, and by passing through *kṛṣṇa-pakṣa* (the dark path), one returns to this world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now Śrī Bhagavān is concluding the topic of the above-mentioned two paths in this *śloka* beginning with the words *śukla-kṛṣṇa*. *Śāśvat* means that there are two eternal paths in this world of beginningless *samsāra*. One is *śukla-pakṣa*, by which one attains *mokṣa*, and the other is *kṛṣṇa-pakṣa*, by which one returns to the material world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The above mentioned paths of *arcī*, etc., or *deva-yāna* (voyage through the paths of the *devas*) are the illuminators of knowledge, and are well known by the name *śukla-gati* (the

bright path). The path of smoke, etc., or *pitr-yāna* (voyage through the path of the forefathers), is full of darkness and ignorance, and is called *kṛṣṇa-gati* (the dark path). From time immemorial, these two paths have functioned in this world. Those *yogīs* who are *brahma-vid* take shelter of the bright path, and passing through the planets of *arci* and so forth in the paths of the *devas*, they gradually attain *mokṣa*. On the other hand, those *yogīs* who engage in *karma* to satisfy their own desires take shelter of *kṛṣṇa-gati* through *pitr-yāna* (the path of the forefathers). They enjoy the heavenly pleasures of *Svarga*, having passed through the paths of the presiding *devas* of darkness and so on, and finally return to this material *samsāra*. A detailed description of *deva-yāna* and *pitr-yāna* is given in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*.

ŚLOKA 27

नैते सृती पाथ जानन् योगी मुह्यति कश्चन।
तस्मात् सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन॥२७॥

naite sṛtī pārtha jānan / yogī muhyati kaścana
tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu / yoga-yukto bhavārjuna

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *yogī*—the transcendentalist; *jānan*—knowing; *ete*—these; *sṛtī*—paths; *na kaścana muhyati*—is never bewildered; *tasmāt*—therefore; *arjuna*—O Arjuna; *sarveṣu*—at all; *kāleṣu*—times; *bhava*—be; *yoga-yuktah*—connected in *yoga*.

O Pārtha, the *bhakti-yogīs* who have perfect knowledge of these two paths are never bewildered. Therefore, O Arjuna, be always fixed in *yoga*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

Knowledge of these two paths gives rise to discrimination; thus in this śloka beginning with *naite*, such a *jñānī* is glorified. Śrī Bhagavān says to Arjuna, “Become a *bhakti-yogī*.” In other words,

“Become a person of composed mind.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Bhaktas are never deluded, because they remain fixed in *bhakti-yoga* with knowledge based on *tattva*. Therefore, they know the real distinction between these two paths, and they take shelter of the path of *bhakti*, which transcends both. That is, they take shelter of *ananya-bhakti-yoga*, knowing both paths to be miserable. Therefore, O Arjuna, you should take shelter of that *yoga* only.”

ŚLOKA 28

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव दानेषु यत्पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम्।
अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ॥२८॥

vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu caiva
 dāneṣu yat puṇya-phalam pradiṣṭam
 atyeti tat sarvam idam viditvā
 yogī param sthānam upaiti cādyam

yogī—a *yogī*; *eva atyeti*—certainly surpasses; *tat*—that; *puṇya-phalam*—pious benefit; *yat*—which; *pradiṣṭam*—is allotted; *vedeṣu*—for Vedic studies; *yajñeṣu*—sacrificial performances; *tapaḥsu*—austerities; *ca*—and; *dāneṣu*—charitable deeds; *ca*—and; *viditvā*—becoming aware; *sarvam*—of all; *upaiti*—attains; *idam*—this; *param*—the supreme; *ādyam*—original and superexcellent; *sthānam*—realm of the Lord.

A *bhakti-yogī* surpasses all the pious results of studying the *Vedas* and of performing *yajña*, *tapasyā*, *dāna*, *karma* and so on. Acquiring the knowledge which I have spoken to you, he attains the supreme, transcendental abode.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The benefit attained by acquiring *jñāna* as described in this chapter is explained in this śloka beginning with *vedeṣu*. *Tat sarvam atyeti* means that, by surpassing the results of all these activities, the *bhakti-yogī* attains a superior place which is eternal and *aprākṛta*, transcendental.

The superiority of a *bhakti-yogī* was also described earlier, but here it is clarified further. In this chapter, the supremacy of the *ananya-bhaktas* has been established.

Thus ends the Bhāvānuvāda of the Sārārtha-Varśinī Tīkā, by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravarti Ṭhākura, on the Eighth Chapter of Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, which gives pleasure to the bhaktas and is accepted by all saintly persons.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “If you follow *bhakti-yoga*, you will not be denied the results of any other activity. You will attain whatever results may come from *yajña*, *tapasyā*, *dāna*, or any type of *jñāna* or from studying the *Vedas*, and you will reach My supremely transcendental and eternal realm.” In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.32-33) it is stated:

yat karmabhir yan tapasā / jñāna-vairāgyataś ca yan
 yogena dāna-dharmena / śreyobhir itarair api
 sarvam mad-bhakti-yogena / mad-bhakto labhate 'ñjasā
 svargāpavargam mad-dhāma / kathañcid yadi vāñchati

Through *bhakti-yoga* My devotee can easily attain whatever a *sādhaka* achieves by performing *karma*, *tapasyā*, *jñāna*, *vairāgya* and so on.

In the *Mahābhārata* there is a statement pertaining to *mokṣa*: *yā vai sādhana-sampattiḥ puruṣārtha-catuṣṭaye / tayā vinā tadāpnoti naro nārāyaṇāśrayaḥ*. “A bhakta who has taken shelter of Śrī Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa, attains all the opulence

one attains from the four goals of human life (*dharma, artha, kāma* and *mokṣa*) without undergoing any misery."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura also says that one attains all auspiciousness by performing *kevala-bhakti*, and without *bhakti* one cannot attain anything. Thus, *bhakti* is established as the supreme auspicious process in both ways, by the direct and indirect statements of *śāstra*. This is also stated in *Nārada-pañcarātra*: *hari-bhakti-mahā-devyāḥ sarvā muktyādi sidhyāḥ bhuktayaś cādbhutāś tasyaś cetakavad anuvratāḥ.*" *Brahma-vidyā* and the eight types of perfection, such as *anīmā*, appear in their personified form like devoted servants before an *ananya-bhakta*, even when they are not desired."

In his *Vidvat-rañjana-bhāṣya*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes, "Faith turns into *niṣṭhā*, or exclusive absorption in My service, when the *anarthas* of a devotee who has single one-pointed faith are removed by *bhajana*, in the association of My *bhaktas*. All sins are removed by *bhajana* in saintly association (*sādhu-saṅga*), even though *śraddhā* may not have fully developed yet, an understanding of *tattva* may be lacking, and doubts about the worshipable Deity may still linger as impurities."

Moods of devotion that are mixed with *jñāna* (*jñāna-miśrā-bhāva*) and *yoga* (*yoga-miśrā-bhāva*), and polluted by *bhukti* and *mukti* are *anarthas* that prevent one from understanding *bhajana-tattva*. One's *bhajana* becomes purified of these *anarthas*, to the extent that the tendency of one's *bhakti* becomes *kevalā* (one-pointed) and he takes shelter of *viśuddha-tattva*, the pure, Absolute Reality of Śrī Bhagavān. This is the essence of the Eighth Chapter.

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

CHAPTER NINE



Rāja-Guhya-Yoga

Yoga Through the Most Confidential Knowledge

ŚLOKA 1

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

इदन्तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ञात्वा मोक्षसेऽशुभात्॥१॥

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
idam tu te guhyatamam / pravakṣyāmy anasūyave
jñānam vijñāna-sahitam / yaj jñātvā mokṣyase 'śubhāt

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Lord said; *pravakṣyāmi*—I shall explain; *te*—to you; *anasūyave*—who are non-envious; *idam*—this; *guhyatamam*—most confidential; *jñānam vijñāna-sahitam tu*—knowledge together with realised knowledge, i.e. which has the symptoms of exclusive and pure devotion; *jñātvā*—knowing; *yat*—which; *mokṣyase*—you shall be released; *aśubhāt*—from inauspiciousness, i.e. from this miserable cycle of *samsāra*.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O Arjuna, because you are non-envious, I will impart to you this most confidential knowledge, which is endowed with the

characteristics of *śuddha-bhakti* and which bestows direct realisation of Me. Such knowledge will liberate you from the miseries of the material world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The Ninth Chapter gives knowledge of Śrī Bhagavān's *aiśvarya*. Such *jñāna* is desired by His *bhaktas* so that they can favourably execute their service to Him. This chapter clearly describes the supremacy of *śuddha-bhakti*.

In comparison to *karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga*, we find that *bhakti* is supreme. *Bhakti* is of two types: *pradhānī-bhūtā* and *kevalā*, both of which have been explained in the Seventh and Eighth Chapters. Of these two, *kevala-bhakti* is extremely powerful and unlike *jñāna* does not depend upon purity of heart. This in itself substantiates the supremacy of *kevala-bhakti*. Knowledge of Bhagavān's *aiśvarya* is necessary to perform *kevala-bhakti*. Details of that *aiśvarya* are given in this Ninth Chapter. The middle eight chapters (Six to Thirteen), are the essence of *Bhagavad-gītā* and of all Vedic literature, and the Ninth and Tenth Chapters are the essence of these middle chapters. Śrī Bhagavān is glorifying the subject matter that will be defined in three consecutive *ślokas*, the first of which begins with the words *idam tu*. "Jñāna, which is favourable for liberation, as described in the Second and Third Chapters, is called *guhyam*, confidential. The Seventh and Eighth Chapters explain knowledge of *bhagavat-tattva*, which is essential for one who wishes to attain Me. Such knowledge of *bhakti-tattva* is called *guhyatara*, more confidential. Now in this chapter I shall explain that *jñāna* along with the characteristics of *śuddha-bhakti*, which is *guhyatama*, most confidential."

Here the word *jñāna* should only be understood to mean *bhakti*. It does not refer to the regular *jñāna* delineated in the first six chapters. In the next *śloka*, the word *jñāna* indi-

cates only *bhakti* since the word *avyaya*, eternal, has been used as an adjective for *jñāna*. This is because it refers to a transcendental nature in this context and it does not indicate the *jñāna* previously mentioned, which is *sāttvika*, but not *nirguṇa* or *guṇatīta*.

In the śloka: *aśraddadhānāḥ puruṣā dharmasyāsyaparantapa* (Gītā 9.3), the word *dharma* only means *bhakti*. Here the word *anāsūyave* means that this instruction is for those who are non-envious. It is not meant for others. *Vijñāna-sahitam* means, “I shall impart this instruction to you which leads to direct realisation of Me. This will free you from an inauspicious life, which is unfavourable to *bhakti*. With this *jñāna*, you will become free from all obstacles.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

In the Seventh and Eighth Chapters, Śrī Kṛṣṇa explained *pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti* and *kevala-bhakti*, and the difference between the two. In the present chapter He is clarifying the supremacy of *kevala-bhakti*. *Kevala-bhakti* does not depend on purification of the heart. Bhakti Devi can even mercifully enter the hearts of extremely abominable persons who are gripped by all types of *anarthas*, and turn those persons into supremely pure, highly exalted *mahā-bhāgavatas* who are worshipable for the whole world. She is very powerful in her own right.

Spiritual *jñāna*, as explained in the Second and Third Chapters, is helpful to attain *mokṣa* and it is *guhya*, confidential. *Bhagavat-tattva-jñāna*, as described in the Seventh and Eighth Chapters, causes *bhakti* to appear and is *guhyatara*, more confidential. The present chapter describes *jñāna* related to *kevala-bhakti*, as instructed by Bhagavān. This *jñāna* is *guhyatama*, most confidential. Only with the help of this *guhyatama-jñāna* can one attain freedom from the inauspiciousness of this world. “This *guhyatama-jñāna* related to *śuddha-bhakti* is *parama-vijñāna-maya*, that is,

it can bestow direct realisation of Me.” *Vijñāna* means to comprehend that *jñāna* which is related to Śrī Bhagavān, specifically with realisation. Bhagavān said to Brahmā:

*jñānam parama-guhyam me / yad vijñāna-samanvitam
sarahasyam tad-aṅgañ ca / gṛhāṇa gaditam mayā*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.9.31

Knowledge of Me is non-dual, absolute and highly confidential. Although non-dual, it has four eternal divisions: *jñāna* (My *svarūpa*), *vijñāna* (realisation of Me), *rahasya* (*prema-bhakti* unto Me) and *tad-aṅga-pradhāna* (*sādhana-bhakti*, the means to attain Me). The *jīva* cannot understand this with his limited intelligence. He can only realise it by My mercy. *Jñāna* is My *svarūpa* and *vijñāna* is one’s relationship with Me through *bhakti*. The *jīva* is My *rahasya* and the *pradhāna* is My *jñāna-aṅga* (all that is accessory to My *svarūpa*). The eternal non-duality and the eternal confidential difference between these four principles is due to My *acintya-śakti*.

Bhagavān also spoke this to Uddhava:

*athaitat paramam guhyam / śṛṇvato yadu-nandana
su-gopyam api vakṣyāmi / tvam me bhṛtyah suhṛt sakhā*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.11.49

O Yadu-nandana (Uddhava), please hear this most confidential knowledge. Although it is extremely confidential, I will speak it to you because you are My servant and well-wishing friend.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.8), Śrī Śaunaka and other ṛṣis requested Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī to explain such realised confidential truths:

*vettham tvam saumya tat sarvam
tattvatas tad-anugrahāt
brūyuh snigdhasya śiṣyasya
guravo guhyam apy uta*

The *guru-varga* also explains these extremely confidential se-

crets to disciples of an affectionate nature.

Here also, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is imparting this *guhyatama-jñāna* to Arjuna knowing him to be free from envy and hatred, and possessing an affectionate heart. The meaning is that this *guhyatama-jñāna* is instructed by a genuine *tattva-jñāna-guru*, only to the type of disciple previously mentioned.

A similar instruction is given in *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (6.22–23):

vedānte paramāṁ guhyam purākalpe pracoditam
nāprāśāntāya dātavyam nāputrāya siṣyāya vā punah
yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmāḥ

Bhagavad-upāsanā-tattva, the principle of worshipping Bhagavān, is the essence of *Vedānta* and is highly confidential. In ancient times, Śrī Bhagavān illuminated the heart of Śvetāśvatara Ṛṣi with this *tattva*, being pleased by his worship. Therefore, although this instruction is not for one who is not a *śuddha-bhakta*, it can be bestowed to a sober son or disciple who is a *bhakta* of Bhagavān. This instruction should not be imparted to anyone else, even if one is moved by affection for that person.

All the confidential meanings of the *śrutis* fully illuminate the heart of that *sādhaka*, that *mahātmā* who has *parā bhakti* for Bhagavān and equally for his *gurudeva*. In this context, it is worth contemplating *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.54-58).

ŚLOKA 2

**राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम्।
प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम्॥२॥**

*rāja-vidyā rāja-guhyam / pavitram idam uttamam
pratyakṣāvagamam dharmyam / su-sukham karttum avyayam*

idam—this (knowledge); (is) *rāja-vidyā*—the king of all knowledge; *rāja-guhyam*—the king of all confidential topics; *uttamam pavitram*—the most pure knowledge; (it is) *pratyakṣa-avagamam*—directly realised; (it is) *dharma*—conducive to virtue; (it is) *karttum su-sukham*—performed joyfully (without difficulty); (it is) *avyayam*—imperishable.

This *jñāna* is the king of all knowledge and the monarch of all confidential subjects. It is extremely pure and, since it directly reveals the nature of the self, it is the perfection of *dharma*. It is joyfully performed, bestowing transcendental and imperishable results.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

Moreover, this knowledge is the king of all knowledge. There are various types of *jñāna* and worship, but their only *rājā* (king) is *bhakti*. This *bhakti* is the *rājā* of confidential subjects. In other words, *bhakti* herself is very confidential. Although knowledge is of many varieties, this particular *jñāna* (*bhakti*), along with *vijñāna* (realisation of that knowledge), is the *rājā* of them all, as it is the most confidential. All sinful activities are atoned for by this *bhakti* (*jñāna* along with *vijñāna*), which shows that this *bhakti* is pure. It is more purifying than *tvāṁ-padārtha-jñāna*, knowledge of the self. Śrīpāda Madhusūdana Sarasvatī says that this *bhakti* can destroy, within the blink of an eye, the gross and subtle stages of all types of sinful activities accumulated over thousands of lifetimes, as well as their cause, which is ignorance. Thus it is supremely purifying. *Pratyakṣa avagamam* means that which can be perceived or realised directly.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.42) states:

*bhaktih pareśānubhavo viraktir
anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālah
prapadyamānasya yathāśnataḥ syus
tuṣṭih puṣṭih kṣud-apāyo 'nu-ghāsam*

A person who is absorbed in eating achieves happiness from tasting every mouthful of food, nourishment as his stomach is filled and relief as his hunger is removed. These three results come to him simultaneously. In the same way, a person who is engaged in *bhajana* of Śrī Hari simultaneously attains *prema*, realisation of Parameśvara and detachment from sense objects.

According to this statement from the Eleventh Canto, a person attains realisation of Bhagavān in proportion to the intensity of his *bhajana*. This *jñāna* (*bhakti*) is *dharma*, meaning that it is not beyond the boundaries of *dharma* laws (i.e. not *adharma*). A person can attain the perfection of all occupational duties simply by *bhakti*, even if he does not perform any other *dharma* duties. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.31.14), Devarṣi Nārada also says, “Just as by watering the root of a tree, its trunk, branches and leaves become nourished, similarly, by worshipping Bhagavān Acyuta alone, everyone else is automatically worshipped.”

Karttum su-sukham means that one does not have to undergo too much physical, mental or verbal misery on the path of *bhakti*, unlike the processes of *karma*, *jñāna*, etc. In the practice of *bhakti*, characterised by *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam* and so on, only the senses such as the ears and tongue are engaged. Since *bhakti* is beyond the modes (*nirguna*), it is not perishable like *karma*, *jñāna* and so forth.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

This Ninth Chapter describes *kevala-bhakti*, which is *nirguna*. This *jñāna* in the form of *kevala-bhakti* is the crest-jewel of all *vidyā*. It is supremely confidential, most purifying and experienced by direct perception. It bestows the fruits of all other *dharma* processes, is joyfully performed and bestows imperishable results.

Here, the word *vidyā* means worship (*upāsanā*), hence *kevala-bhakti* is the best of all *vidyās*. For this reason, it is called *rāja-vidyā* and, because it is the most confidential among all confidential subjects, it is called *rāja-guhya*.

Pavitram idam uttamam: Sins are not completely destroyed by performing atonements such as *dāna* (charity), *yajña* (offering oblations) and *tapas* (*cāndrāyaṇa-vrata* etc.). Furthermore, even by once removing the results of sins through such processes as *tapasyā* and *brahmaccarya*, there is the possibility that the tendency to sin will again sprout. However, according to *śāstras* such as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, sins are completely destroyed by the performance of *kevala-bhakti*. This is true to such an extent that all sins are destroyed at the root simply by the concomitant results of *kevala-bhakti*. In other words, even the very desire to perform sin is destroyed. This is not possible by processes other than *bhakti*, such as *prāyaścitta* (atonement), *brahmaccarya* and *tapasyā*. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.1.15) this is confirmed: *kecit kevalayā bhaktyā / vāsudeva-parāyaṇāḥ*. “Only by *kevala-bhakti* can all one’s sins be eradicated at the root.” And also in 6.1.16, *na tathā hy aghavān rājan / pūyeta tapa-ādibhiḥ*. “All one’s sins can be removed only by service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pure representative and not by any other process.”

In *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, the first characteristic of *kevala-bhakti* is described as *kleśa-ghnī*. *Kleśa-ghnī* means that this *bhakti* completely destroys all sin (*pāpa*), the seed of sin (*pāpa-bija*), ignorance (*avidyā*), fructified reaction (*prārabdha-karma*) and unfructified reaction (*aprārabdha-karma*).

*aprārabdham-phalam pāpam / kūṭam bijam phalonmukham
kramenaiva pralīyate / viṣṇu-bhakti-ratātmanām
Padma Purāṇa*

Kevala-bhakti not only purifies the gross and subtle designations of the *jīva*, but it also purifies and satisfies the *ātmā*:

yayātmā suprasīdati (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.6). According to the śloka: *ātmārāmāś ca munayo* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.7.10), *bhakti*'s attraction is the bliss one derives from serving Kṛṣṇa, by which even those who are *ātmārāma* (satisfied within the self) and *āptakāma* (who have no desires left to fulfil) are attracted and give up such natures.

Pratyakṣa anubhava-svarūpa: Just as a person feels satisfaction, nourishment and the removal of hunger with every mouthful of food that he eats, similarly *prema*, direct experience of Bhagavān, as well as aversion to sense enjoyment, appear simultaneously within a *sādhaka-bhakta*, even during *sādhana-daśā* (the practice stage).

*bhaktih pareśānubhavo viraktir
anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālāḥ
prapadyamānasya yathāśnataḥ syus
tuṣṭih puṣṭih kṣud-apāyo 'nu-ghāsam*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.2.42

The processes of *karma*, *yoga*, *jñāna*, etc., cannot bestow direct realisation upon the *sādhaka* in the way that *bhakti* can. *Brahma-sūtra* also states: *prakāśaś ca karmaṇy abhyāsāt*. “*Bhakti* is so powerful that she bestows an experience of herself even in the initial stages.”

Sarva-dharma-phala-prada: By performing *bhakti* one receives the complete result of all types of *dharma* and also attains *bhagavat-prema*, which is the objective established in the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads* and other *śruti*s. According to the śloka: *sarva-dharmāṇ parityajya māṁ ekāṁ śaraṇāṁ vraja* (*Gītā* 18.66), having given up all types of *dharma*, such as *varṇāśrama-dharma*, *karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga* and all other paths that are followed for the purpose of satisfying the body and mind, and taking exclusive shelter of *kevala-bhakti* by performing *bhajana* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one can easily and naturally attain the result of all the previously mentioned processes.

As it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.13): *samsiddhir hari-toṣṇam*, “The highest perfection in life is to please Śrī Hari.” And (11.20.33): *sarvam mad-bhakti-yogena / mad-bhakto labhate ’ñjasā*, “By pure devotional service My bhakta can very easily achieve such benedictions as Svarga, liberation or My supreme abode.”

Although the performance of different dharmika processes does not exist in the practice of *kevala-bhakti*, the real dharma of the *jīva*, which is to serve *guru* and so forth, remains present within him. The śruti also confirms this opinion in mantras such as: *ācāryavān puruṣo veda*. Devaṛṣi Nārada also establishes this in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.31.14):

*yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena
tr̥pyanti tat-skandha-bhujopasākhāḥ
prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyāṇāṁ
tathaiva sarvārhaṇam acyutejyā*

Just as by properly watering the root of a tree, it’s trunk, branches, twigs, leaves and flowers are nourished, and just as by eating food the *prāṇa* (life air) is satisfied and all the senses nourished, in the same way only by worshipping Śrī Bhagavān is everyone worshipped.

Sukha-sādhyā (su-sukham): The *sādhana* of *kevala-bhakti* involves no difficulty as the paths of *jñāna*, *yoga* and so on do; instead one experiences happiness. It is therefore called *sukha-sādhyā*, meaning that the final result, *sādhyā*, is joyfully performed. The *sādhana* of *bhakti* can be performed simply by engaging the senses such as the tongue and ear in chanting the sweet holy names of Kṛṣṇa and by hearing about His *līlā*, or merely by using *tulasī* leaves and a little water. Prahlāda Mahārāja also gave this instruction to the sons of the *asuras*: *na hy acyutam prīṇayato bahv-āyāsaḥ*. “To please Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is Acyuta, one does not have to work laboriously,” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.6.19).

While commenting on this *sloka*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says, “Although one has to endure great troubles to maintain the family and make them happy, one need not undergo such trouble to please Śrī Hari. Because He is ever situated within the heart of everyone as Antaryāmī, one need not undergo any trouble searching for Him. One can please Him at all times, in all circumstances and in all respects, even by performing *mānasa sevā* or by following any one of the processes of *bhakti* such as *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam*, or just by desiring to perform service. Thus, there is no pain involved in performing *bhakti*.” One experiences joy even while performing *bhakti* in the stage of *sādhana*.

taṁ sukhārādhyam ḍubhir / ananya-śaranair nṛbhīḥ
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.19.36

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is easily pleased by a person who has completely surrendered and who is simple-hearted.

It is also said in *Gautamiya-Tantra*:

*tulasī-dala-mātreṇa / jalasya culukena vā
vikṛiṇīte svam ātmānam / bhaktebhyo bhakta-vatsalah*

Bhagavān, who is *bhakta-vatsala*, completely sells Himself to those *bhaktas* who, with love and devotion, offer Him a *tulasī* leaf and a palmful of water.

Akṣaya-phala-prada (avyayam): The processes of *karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga* are impermanent. After yielding perfection (the goal), such processes become futile and are then abandoned. However, *bhakti* exists in the stages of both *sādhana* and *siddha*, because *bhakti* herself is not only the *sādhana* but is also the *sādhya* (goal to be achieved). Even in the liberated stage *bhakti* is not lost, but rather it is performed purely and perfectly. Therefore, it is permanent and unchanging.

ŚLOKA 3

अश्रद्धानाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परन्तप।
अप्राप्य मां निवर्त्तन्ते मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि॥३॥

aśraddadadhānāḥ puruṣā / dharmasyāsyā parantapa
aprāpya mām nivarttante / mr̥tyu-saṁsāra-vartmani

parantapa—O conqueror of the foe; *puruṣāḥ*—persons; *aśraddadadhānāḥ*—who are faithless; *asya*—in this; *dharmasya*—practice of devotional service; *aprāpya*—without attaining; *mām*—Me; *nivarttante*—they return; *vartmani*—on the path; *saṁsāra*—of material existence; *mr̥tyu*—and death.

O Parantapa, those who have no faith in this *dharma* in the form of My *bhakti* do not attain Me. They wander on the path of material existence, which is full of death.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna may raise the following doubt: “If this *dharma* is so easily perfected, why do people remain in material existence?” In response to this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *aśraddadadhānāḥ*. The word *asya* means *dharma* in the form of *bhakti*. *Aśraddadadhānāḥ puruṣāḥ* means people who lack faith in this.

“The superiority of *bhakti* is established by the statements of *sāstra*, but those who are faithless consider such glorification to be an exaggeration. They reject this *dharma* due to atheistic intelligence. Even if someone renounces the path of *bhakti* and practises severe alternative measures to attain Me, still he will not be successful. Instead, he will continuously wander on this path of material existence which is pervaded by death.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Even after hearing and being acquainted with the glories of *bhakti* as described here, some consider these glories to be an exaggeration and they do not develop faith in *bhakti*. Such faithless persons who do not adopt *bhagavad-bhakti* are forced to take repeated births in this material world. Śraddhā (faith) is the root cause of *bhakti*. One can only attain Bhagavān, who is *bhakta-vatsala*, by *bhakti*. This is also confirmed in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya-līlā 22.64): śraddhāvān jana haya bhakti-adhikārī. “Those who are faithful are eligible for *bhakti*.” Furthermore, it is said:

brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja

Madhya-līlā 19.151

In the course of wandering throughout this universe, a rare *jīva* who is extremely fortunate, obtains the seed of the creeper of *bhakti* by the mercy of Śrī Gurudeva.

Śrī Gurudeva infuses the desire to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa into the heart of the *jīvas*. This desire is known as *kṛṣṇa-sevā-vāsanā*, and by it one attains *pāramārthika-śraddhā*, transcendental faith, which is the root cause of *bhakti*. Those who are faithless and unfortunate do not take shelter of this path of *bhakti* which has been established in all *śāstra*. They try to attain Śrī Bhagavān by adopting other processes such as the performance of pious activities, *jñāna*, *yoga* and *tapasyā*, but their whimsical attempts go in vain. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.12.9) states:

yam na yogena sāṅkhyena / dāna-vrata-tapo-'dhvaraiḥ
vyākhyā-svādhyāya-sannyāsaiḥ / prāpnuyād yatnavān api

Even though one engages with great endeavour in mystic *yoga*, philosophical speculation, charity, vows, penances, ritualistic sacrifices, teaching Vedic *mantras* to others, personal study of the *Vedas*, or the renounced order of life, still one cannot achieve Me.

Furthermore, the essence of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.87.33) is as follows: "Those who abandon service to the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva, which is their primary support on the path of *bhakti*, and who desire to subdue their minds by *yoga* or other methods, are pursuing futile hopes. They fall down into the ocean of material existence, which is full of obstacles and various types of calamities." Śrī Bhagavān has also explained this topic in great detail in *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.31 and 12.20).

ŚLOKA 4

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिनाम्
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्वस्थितः ॥४॥

mayā tatam idam sarvam / jagad avyakta-mūrttinā
mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni / na cāham teṣv avasthitah

idam—this; *sarvam*—entire; *jagat*—cosmic manifestation; *tatam*—is pervaded; *mayā*—by Me; *avyakta-mūrttinā*—by My form which is unmanifest (to the senses); *sarva-bhūtāni*—all living beings; *mat-sthāni*—are situated in Me; *ca*—yet; *aham*—I; *na avasthitah*—am not situated; *teṣu*—in them.

This whole universe is pervaded by Me in My *svarūpa* which is unmanifest to the material senses. All living beings and elements are situated in Me, but I am not in them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān says, “Only when *bhakti* is in the mood of *dāsyā* (servitorship) do My *bhaktas* desire knowledge of My *aiśvarya*.” To explain this knowledge, Bhagavān is speaking seven *ślokas* starting here beginning with the word *maya*. “I am the cause of this world, and I pervade it through My *svarūpa* which is *avyakta*, unmanifest and beyond the senses. Thus all moving and non-moving beings are situated in Me, who am the cause of everything and the complete conscious entity. Even so, because I am *asanga*, aloof and unattached, I am not situated in the created beings, unlike earth which is present in its effects (i.e. earthen objects such as pots).”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Pariṇāma: Milk is a pure substance. By contact with acid, it turns to curd. This is called a transformation. Thus curd is a *pariṇāma* (effect or product) of milk when milk is transformed.

Vivartta: To mistake one object for another is called *vivartta*. Examples of *vivartta* are mistaking a rope for a snake, and thinking that there is silver in an oyster.

The essence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s instruction lies herein. “This universe is not a *pariṇāma* (transformation) of Me, nor is it a *vivartta* (illusion). I am the Absolute Self-effulgent Reality. The *jīvas* and the universe are also real; both are the *pariṇāma* of My *śakti*. The *jīvas* are eternal and have come into existence from the *tatastha-śakti*, but the material world, which is born from My *bahirāṅga-śakti*, is temporary and subject to destruction even though it is real. The *jīvas* and the universe are transformations of My *śakti*, which is non-different from Me; hence they are simultaneously one with and different from Me. This conception is *acintya* (inconceivable), because it can be understood only by *śāstra* and can not be experienced by ordinary intelligence. Wherever

one experiences both difference and oneness at the same time, the perception of difference is indeed stronger than the perception of oneness. Therefore, I am the Absolute Conscious Entity, different from both the *jīva* as well as the universe.”

ŚLOKA 5

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम्।
भूतभृत्य च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः॥५॥

*na ca mat-sthāni bhūtāni / paśya me yogam aiśvaram
bhūta-bhṛty na ca bhūta-stho / mamātmā bhūta-bhāvanah*

ca—and; *bhūtāni*—the living beings and the elements; (*are*) *na*—not; *mat-sthāni*—situated in Me; *paśya*—behold; *me*—My; *yogam*—mystic; *aiśvaram*—opulence; *mama*—My; *ātmā*—self; *bhūta-bhṛty*—is the support; *bhūta-bhāvanah*—and the maintainer of all beings and elements; *ca*—yet; *na bhūta-sthah*—I am not situated in those entities and elements.

All that is created does not actually exist in My *svarūpa*. Behold My mystic opulence! As Paramātmā I support and maintain all living beings and elements, yet I Myself am not situated in them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Therefore, although all living beings and elements are situated within Me, they are not situated in My *svarūpa* because I am *asaṅga*, aloof from them. If you raise the doubt, ‘This is contrary to Your previous statement (Gītā 9.4) that You are all-pervading and the support of the whole universe,’ then in response I say, “Behold My extraordinary *yoga-aiśvaryā* (opulence), which can make the impossible possible. This is simply the effect of My *aiśvaryā* only. Behold another wonderful quality of Mine! One who supports the living beings and the elements is *bhūta-bhṛty*, and one who maintains the

living beings and the elements is *bhūta-bhāvana*. Although I possess these qualities, I am not *bhūta-stha*, situated in the created beings and elements. There is no difference between My body and Me. The *jīva* remains within his body because he becomes attached to it in the course of supporting and maintaining it. Similarly, although I support and maintain the material manifestation, and although I am situated in the illusory cosmic form, I am not in it because I am not attached to it; rather, I am detached.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

“I pervade the whole material universe. All beings and elements are situated within Me, yet they do not exist in My *svarūpa*.” To clarify this subject further, Śrī Bhagavān tells Arjuna, “Although I am the supporter and maintainer of all beings and elements, I am not situated within them.” This principle has also been confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.11.38):

*etad iśanam iśasya / prakṛti-stho 'pi tad-guṇaiḥ
na yuyjyate sadātma-sthair / yathā buddhis tad-āśrayā*

Īśvara, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is not affected by the modes of nature although He presides over the material nature. This is a most wonderful characteristic of His.

This act of making the impossible possible is achieved through My *yoga-aiśvarya*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “All beings and elements exist in Me alone. Do not conclude from this that all beings exist in My *śuddha-svarūpa* (actual self). Rather, they exist under the influence of My *māyā-śakti*. You, the *jīva*, will not be able to comprehend this fact by your own limited intelligence. Therefore, understand it to be My *yoga-aiśvarya*, and know Me as *bhūta-bhṛt* (the supporter), *bhūta-*

sthā (all-pervading), and *bhūta-bhavāna* (the maintainer of all manifestations). Consider My activities to be the functions of My energy. Fix yourself in the conception that there is no difference between Myself and My body, as I am absolute spirit. For this reason, I am actually completely aloof, although I am the cause and basis of the material manifestation.”

ŚLOKA 6

यथाकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगो महान्।
तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय॥६॥

*yathākāśa-sthito nityam / vāyuh sarvatra-go mahān
tathā sarvāṇi bhūtāni / mat-sthānīty upadhāraya*

upadhāraya—understand; *iti*—that; *yathā*—as; *sarvatra-gaḥ*—travelling everywhere; *mahān*—the mighty; *vāyuh*—wind; *nityam*—always; *ākāśa-sthitāḥ*—rests within space; *tathā*—similarly; *sarvāṇi*—all; *bhūtāni*—beings; *mat-sthānī*—are situated in Me.

Just as the all-pervasive and limitless wind rests always in the sky, which is separate from it, in the same way all beings are situated in Me, but I am not in them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Asaṅga means that, “Although all beings and the elements are situated in Me, they are not actually in Me, and although I am in all beings and elements, I am not actually in them.” Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *yathā* to give an example of this. “It is the nature of the wind to be always moving, thus it is said to be *sarva-ga*, moving everywhere. It is described as mighty (*mahān*), because its capacity is unlimited. Just as

the wind is situated in the sky which is by nature *asaṅga* (aloof or unmixed), it is simultaneously not situated in the sky. Also because of the sky's *asaṅga* nature, it is not situated in the wind, although it is situated in the wind. Similarly, the *pañca-mahābhūta* (five great elements) such as the sky and air, which exist everywhere, are not in Me, because My nature is *asaṅga*. They are not in Me although they are situated in Me. Deliberate on this and try to understand it."

Arjuna may raise the following question: "You said, 'Behold My extraordinary *yoga-aiśvaryā*!' How is the inconceivable nature of Your *yoga-aiśvaryā* proved by this example? In other words, if it can be explained by an example, how is it inconceivable?" In response to this question, Bhagavān says, "The sky, which is inert, is *asaṅga*, but among conscious beings it is not possible for anyone other than Myself to be *asaṅga* even if they have presided over the manifested creation." How can one who creates remain untouched or aloof from creation? If it is so, it is indeed extraordinary. This proves that He is inconceivable. Here the example of the sky is given so that common people may easily understand the *siddhānta*. Actually, there is no scope for comparison regarding the Inconceivable Entity.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

The statement: *paśya me yogam aiśvaram*, "Behold My *yoga-aiśvaryā*," has a deep meaning. One can only realise *bhagavat-tattva* by the mercy of Bhagavān. Without His mercy one cannot have His *darśana*. One can see Bhagavān only by *bhakti*, which is the favourable propensity to render service to Him. This has been confirmed in *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.38):

premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena
 santah sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti
 yam Śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpaṁ
 govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam aham bhajāmi

With the eye of devotion which is anointed with the salve of love, *bhaktas* always see Śrī Govinda within their hearts.

Although Śrī Bhagavān is all-pervading, He always exists in His human-like feature of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Just as the sun, though always existing in his individual personal form, pervades the whole universe by its light, in the same way Bhagavān, by His *yogamāyā*, remains situated in His own personal form and at the same time pervades all moving and non-moving entities throughout the universe.

“O Arjuna, realisation or *darśana* of Me is never possible by one’s gross senses. I am revealing Myself to you only out of mercy. My *yogamāyā-śakti*, which is expert at making the impossible possible, is most wonderful. It is only by the help of this *śakti* that I remain aloof from all beings, even while sustaining them.” Kṛṣṇa gives this clear explanation to Arjuna out of His mercy.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “*Buddha-jīvas* cannot really understand this *tattva*, so to explain it with a mundane example is not very satisfactory. Yet, in an attempt to make it clearly understandable, I will give you an example. Although you will be unable to understand it fully even after serious contemplation, you will be able to comprehend something. Sky is an all-pervading element and in it the movement of air is multi-directional. The sky is the substructure of everything, yet it is *asaṅga*, always aloof from the activities of the wind. In the same way, by My external energy, the entire cosmic manifestation emanates and functions, but like the sky I remain untouched by it.”

ŚLOKA 7

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम्।
कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम्॥७॥

*sarva-bhūtāni kaunteya / prakṛtim yānti māmikām
kalpa-kṣaye punas tāni / kalpādau visṛjāmy aham*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *kalpa-kṣaye*—when devastation occurs at the end of a *kalpa* (a millennium, the life-span of Lord Brahmā); *sarva-bhūtāni*—all living beings and elements; *yānti*—enter; *māmikām*—My; *prakṛti*—nature; *kalpa-ādau*—at the beginning of a new *kalpa*; *aham*—I; *punah*—again; *visṛjāmi*—create; *tāni*—them.

O Kaunteya, when the universal devastation occurs, all beings enter My *prakṛti*, and at the beginning of the next *kalpa*, by My potency, I again create them all with their specific natures.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The following doubt may be raised: “At present it is known that all visible beings and elements are situated in You, but where do they go during the *mahā-pralaya* (great annihilation)?” Anticipating this question from Arjuna, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with *sarva*. “They enter My *māyā-sakti* which consists of three *guṇas*. Then, after the annihilation, or in other words at the beginning of creation, I again create all of them with their specific natures.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

Creation, maintenance and annihilation of this material world are carried out entirely by the will of Śrī Bhagavān. Here the word *kalpa-kṣaye* means the end of Brahmā’s life span. This subject was explained earlier. There is a *mahā-pralaya*, great annihilation, at the end of Brahmā’s life span. At that

time, all the *jīvas* along with their *karma-vāsanā* (desires for action) enter Śrī Bhagavān's *bahiraṅga-śakti* and by His will they are again created by His material nature at the beginning of the next *kalpa*. They receive bodies in various types of species according to their previous desires. One can refer to Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (12.4.5-6) for further information.

ŚLOKA 8

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः।
भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेवशात्॥८॥

*prakṛtim svām avaṣṭabhy / visṛjāmi punah punah
bhūta-grāmam imam kṛtsnam / avaśam prakṛter vaśat*

avaṣṭabhy—through the medium; *svām*—of My own; *prakṛtim*—material nature (consisting of three qualities); *visṛjāmi*—I create; *punah punah*—repeatedly; *imam*—this; *kṛtsnam*—entire; *avaśam*—helpless; *bhūta-grāmam*—host of beings; *vaśat*—by the influence; *prakṛteḥ*—of their individual natures.

Through My *prakṛti*, which consists of the three *guṇas*, I repeatedly create this host of living beings who are bound by their *karma* according to their individual natures.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

Arjuna may raise the following question: "If you are *asaṅga* (completely aloof) and *nirvikāra* (free from any transformation), how do You create?" Anticipating this question, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *prakṛtim*. "Being situated in My *prakṛti*, and presiding over it, I create a host of *jīvas* who are bound by their past *karma* according to their nature (*svabhāva*)."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚIṄI PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

This material world is a manifestation or transformation of Bhagavān's *aparā śakti* (inferior energy). As far as the *jīvas* are concerned, they are His *taṭastha-śakti*, or a transformation of the *jīva-śakti*, and are eternal, unlike the material world, which is being constantly recreated. They are simply put into the womb of material nature from where they enter the various species of life according to their previous *karma* and undergo the result of that *karma*. Incidentally, it is necessary to say at this point that all species of life such as animals, birds and humans are created at the same time. The modern principle of evolution, introduced by Darwin, has no foundation whatsoever, and is a completely mistaken belief. This is proven by the fact that, even after millions of years no superior form of human being has evolved, nor has any other living entity evolved to surpass the human species. Even after performing His act of creation, Śrī Bhagavān remains completely *asaṅga* (aloof from all these activities) and *nirvikāra* (without any transformation). The *jīvas* and the material world become manifest only when His energy is transformed.

ŚLOKA 9

न च मां तानि कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय।
उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं तेषु कर्मसु॥९॥

*na ca māṁ tāni karmāṇi / nibadhnanti dhanañjaya
udāsīna-vat āśinam / asaktam teṣu karmasu*

dhanañjaya—O Arjuna; *ca*—since; *āśinam*—I am situated; *udāsīna-vat*—neutrally; *asaktam*—detached; *teṣu karmasu*—from these actions; *tāni*—these; *karmāṇi*—activities; *na nibadhnanti*—do not bind; *mām*—Me.

O Dhanañjaya, since I remain detached like a neutral observer, from acts such as creation, these actions cannot bind Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The following question may be raised: “If You, like the *jīva*, perform *karma* (action), why do You not become bound by it?” Śrī Bhagavān responds to this question with the present *śloka* beginning with the words *na ca*. “It is only attachment to acts, such as creation, which causes bondage, but I am not attached. Being *āptakāma*, My every desire is satisfied.” This is why Śrī Bhagavān says *udāśīna-vat*, “I remain indifferent to all acts such as creation, just as a person who is indifferent to others does not become involved in their miseries and lamentations.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Dhanañjaya, all these actions cannot bind Me. I always remain detached from such actions, like one who is indifferent, although I am not actually indifferent. Rather, I am always absorbed in My own blissful spiritual activities. Only My external potency, *māyā*, and the *taṭastha-śakti*, both of which indirectly nourish My transcendental bliss, create various kinds of beings. My *svarūpa* is not disturbed by these *śaktis*. Whatever actions the *jīvas* perform under the influence of My *māyā* indirectly help to enliven My purely divine blissful pastimes. Thus, My attitude toward mundane activities is like that of an unconcerned observer.”

ŚLOKA 10

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम्।
हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्त्तते॥१०॥

*mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ / sūyate sa-carācaram
hetunānena kaunteya / jagad viparivarttate*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *mayā*—by My; *adhyakṣeṇa*—superintendence; *prakṛtiḥ*—nature; *sūyate*—creates; *sa-carācaram*—the universe with moving and non-moving beings; (it is) *anena*—by this; *hetunā*—cause; (that) *jagat*—the universe; *viparivarttate*—turns (in its cycles).

O Kaunteya, it is under My direction that the entire cosmic manifestation and all moving and non-moving beings are brought forth by *māyā-śakti*. For this reason, the material world is created again and again.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

If Arjuna raises the doubt, “I cannot believe that You, being the creator of this cosmic manifestation, are so indifferent.”

Then Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *mayādhyakṣeṇa* to remove his doubt. *Adhyakṣeṇa mayā* means, “I am just the instrumental cause. It is the material nature which creates the entire moving and non-moving material world. My function is only to preside over it, just as the *prakṛti* (energy or administration) of kings like Ambarīṣa perform their royal duties. There the king is indifferent, and simply represents the kingdom. Just as subjects will not be able to act without the existence of the royal throne, in the same way the material nature will not be able to perform any function without the elements that are symptomatic of My existence, that is, without My presiding over it.”

Hetunānena means “This material world is repeatedly created only because I preside over it.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Bhagavān is the master of the material modes and the superintendent of *māyā*. He is the instrumental cause of material nature and He also presides over it in acts such as creation. It is only by the inspiration of His glance that material nature can repeatedly create this world of moving and non-moving beings. Material nature receives the power to create from Him alone because it is under His control. Inert matter cannot perform the function of creation by itself. Similarly, iron can burn by contact with fire, but is not independently capable of burning without the potency of fire. Kṛṣṇa is therefore the root cause of the material world. Inert nature can be compared to the nipple-like bags hanging from the neck of a goat; they are only for external show, there is no milk to be had from them.

ŚLOKA 11

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम्।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम्॥११॥

*avajānanti mām mūḍhā / mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritam
param bhāvam ajānanto / mama bhūta-maheśvaram*

mūḍhāḥ—fools; *avajānanti*—show disrespect; *mām*—to Me; *ajānantaḥ*—not knowing that; *mama*—My; *param*—supreme; *bhāvam*—nature; *āśritam*—which has taken shelter; *mānuṣīm*—in a human-like; *tanum*—form; (as) *bhūta-mahā-īśvaram*—the Supreme Lord of all beings.

When I appear in My human-like form, foolish people with mundane intelligence disrespect Me, because they cannot comprehend My nature as the Supreme Lord of all beings.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Arjuna may raise the following doubt: “It is true that You are none other than Kāraṇodakaśāyī Mahāpuruṣa whose form is *sac-cid-ānanda*, who pervades unlimited universes and who is famous for creating each universe by Your own nature. Some persons however, upon having *darśana* of Your human form as the son of Vasudeva, do not accept Your supreme position.” To remove Arjuna’s doubt, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with *avajānanti mām*. “They deride Me only because they do not know the supreme nature of My visible human-like form, whose *svarūpa* is even superior to that of great personalities like Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu.”

“What type of *svarūpa*?” Bhagavān answers, “I am *bhūta-maheśvaram*, the great controller of *bhūta* (*brahma*), which is *satya-svarūpa*, the embodiment of truth. In other words, I am *parama-satya-svarūpa*, the embodiment of the highest truth.” The Amara-koṣa dictionary defines *bhūta* as a substance which is covered by earth (*mukto kṣmād āvṛte bhūtam*).

The Gopāla-tāpanī śruti says, “Śrī Govinda in His *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha* is sporting in the *kuñjas* of immortal trees in Śrī Vṛndāvana, and I and the Marut devas (devas of the air) satisfy Him with great eulogies.” In this connection, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (9.23.20) says: *paramātmā narākṛtiḥ*. “The *sac-cid-ānanda* nature of My human form is glorified only by My pure *bhaktas* who are well versed in My *tattva*, and who know that I pervade the entire universe in this body alone. This was observed by Mother Yaśodā in My childhood.”

The words *param bhāvam* also mean supreme existence or the pure transcendental *sac-cid-ānanda* form. In the Amara-koṣa dictionary the words *bhāva*, *svabhāva* and *abhiprāya* are

defined as synonymous. The word *parama-bhāva* (supreme nature) is also described in a more specific way as *mama bhūta-maheśvaram*. “I am the Supreme Controller and the creator of a host of beings such as Lord Brahmā. Unlike the *jīvas*, My body is non-different from Me, Parameśvara. That is, I am indeed that very same *brahma*. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who knows My *tattva*, states: ‘He displayed a body that can only be known by the Vedas.’ (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.21.8). Therefore, persons like you, Arjuna, who know My *tattva*, have faith in this statement.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the origin of all *viṣṇu-tattva*. *Nirviśeṣa-brahma* is described in the *Upaniṣads* as the bodily effulgence of Kṛṣṇa. Paramātmā, who pervades the entire universe, is His partial expansion. Śrī Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of Vaikuṇṭha, is His pastime potency (*svāṁśa-vilāsa*). Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is the origin of all *avatāras*, the Controller of all controllers and the ultimate Transcendental Reality. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the master of all beings, and the only Lord of all the universes. He is omniscient (*sarva-jñā*), omnipotent (*sarva-śaktimān*) and very compassionate (*mahā-kāruṇika*), and He can do anything simply by willing. Foolish people, however, are disrespectful to Him when they have *darśana* of His beautiful human-like form. Such foolish people consider the *svarūpa* of Vasudeva-nandana or Yaśodā-nandana Kṛṣṇa to be mundane and mortal, like that of an ordinary human being. Some think that Kṛṣṇa’s body is material and perishable. They imagine an *ātmā* to be within His body, and that *ātmā* to be Paramātmā. Those who think like this are foolish, because *śāstra* declares that Kṛṣṇa’s body is *sac-cid-ānanda*, and that there is no difference between His body and Himself. This is evident from the following quotations from different *śāstras*:

1) *oṁ sac-cid-ānanda-rūpāya kṛṣṇāya (Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad 1.1)*

Yes, let us contemplate Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose form is imbued with eternality, cognisance and bliss.

2) *tam ekaṁ govindam sac-cid-ānanda-vigraham (śruti)*

It is He alone, Govinda, who has an eternal, cognisant and blissful form.

3) *dvi-bhujam mauna-mudrādhyam vana-mālinam iśvaram (śruti)*

The Lord, while wearing a garland of forest flowers, plays His flute, enchantingly forming the *mauna-mudra* with His hands.

4) *iśvarah paramah kṛṣṇah sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ (Brahma-saṁhita 5.1)*

The Supreme Lord, Īśvara, is Kṛṣṇa; His form is eternal, all-knowing and blissful.

5) *apaśyam gopām anipadyamānamā (Rg-Veda 1.22, 1.66.31)*

I saw a boy who appeared in the dynasty of cowherds, and who is never annihilated.

6) *gūḍham param brahma manusya-liṅgam (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.15.75)*

The Supreme Lord is hidden by His accepting a human-like form.

7) *sākṣād gūḍham param brahma manusya-liṅgam (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.15.15)*

He is directly the supreme *brahma*, yet He is hidden because He has a human form.

8) *yatrāvatīrṇo bhagavān paramātmā narākṛtiḥ (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 9.23.20)*

...whereupon the all-opulent Lord descended in the form of a man.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructed a resident *brāhmaṇa* of Kāśī that Kṛṣṇa's form and Kṛṣṇa's name are non-different. His name, form and nature are all *sac-cid-ānanda* and are one in *tattva*. There is no difference between His body and His self, His name (*nāma*) and the possessor of His name (*nāmī*). Those who think that the *sac-cid-ānanda* form of Kṛṣṇa is material are offensive. Caitanya-caritāmṛta explains that amongst all of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, His *nara-līlā* is topmost. His form in which He dresses as a cowherd boy, carries a flute in His hand, and is a young boy dressed like a dancer, is the most supreme and sweetest form of all.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "The essence of My statements is that My *svarūpa* is *sac-cid-ānanda*, and that My *śakti* performs all actions by My mercy, although I am independent from them. It is only by My mercy that I am visible in this mundane world, and this is just an effect of My *yogamāya-śakti*. I am the complete transcendental reality beyond all mundane rules and, even though I am the personification of the conscious reality (*caitanya-svarūpa*), I become visible in this material world by manifesting that very same *svarūpa*. But human beings, who are atomic in size, have a tendency to be overawed by something that is immense in size. Such is their conception of the unmanifest state of *brahma*. This is due to their conditioned intelligence, but that form is not My *param bhāva* (supreme nature). My *param bhāva* is that I am completely *alaukika* (transcendental). Although My human-like form is of a medium size, by My *śakti* I am simultaneously all-pervading and smaller than the atom. My *svarūpa* is manifested by My *acintya-śakti* (*yogamāyā*). Those who are foolish consider that My transcendental *sac-cid-ānanda-mūrti* to be human, and that I have been forced to accept this material body

by the laws of material nature. They are unable to understand that I am the controller of all beings in this very *svarūpa*, this beautiful transcendental human-like form. “Therefore, because they have a misconception about transcendental reality (*avidvat-pratīti*), they superimpose their limited understanding on Me. However, those who have developed *vidvat-pratīti* and who have proper access to transcendence can realise My *svarūpa* as the ever-existing *sac-cid-ānanda-tattva*.”

ŚLOKA 12

**मोघाशा मोघकर्मणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः।
राक्षसीमासुरीज्वैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः॥१२॥**

*moghāśā mogha-karmāṇo / mogha-jñānā vicetasah
rākṣasīm āsurīn caiva / prakṛtim mohinīm śritāḥ*

eva mogha-āśāḥ—certainly their hopes go in vain; *mogha-karmāṇaḥ*—their fruitive work is fruitless; *mogha-jñānāḥ*—their culture of knowledge is fruitless; *vicetasah*—those bewildered persons; *śritāḥ*—take shelter; *mohinīm*—of the illusory; *prakṛtim*—nature; *ca*—and; *rākṣasīm*—ignorant; (and) *āsurīm*—demonic views.

The hopes of such foolish people for liberation, fruitful gain and the culture of *jñāna* all go in vain. Thus, with their minds distracted, they adopt the deluded nature of atheists and *asuras*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“What is the destination of those who deride Śrī Bhagavān, thinking that He has a human body made of *māyā*?” Anticipating this question from Arjuna, Śrī Bhagavān says that even though they are *bhaktas*, their hopes go in vain. That is, their desires to attain one of the four types of *mukti*, such

as *sālokya*, bear no fruit. If they are *karmīs*, they cannot attain the result of their *karma* such as Svarga. If they are *jñānīs*, they cannot attain *mokṣa* as a result of their *jñāna*. So what do they achieve? In answer to this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks the third line of this śloka beginning with *rākṣasīm*. “They attain an *āsurika* nature.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

This śloka describes the destination of those who deride the supramundane *sac-cid-ānanda* human-like body of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as described in the previous śloka. Their minds become distracted and they remain attracted to an *āsurika* and atheistic nature which destroys their discrimination, what to speak of their desires, activities and knowledge which all become useless. Thus they fall from the path leading to the supreme goal. This is explained in the *Bṛhad-vaiṣṇava Tantra*:

yo vetti bhautikam deham kṛṣṇasya paramātmanah
sa sarvasmād bahiṣ-kāryah śrauta-smārta-vidhānataḥ

Those who consider the body of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be made of the five material elements are disqualified from performing all types of *karma* according to the rules of *śruti* and *smṛti*. It is recommended that if one sees the faces of such sinful people, one should immediately take bath with his clothes on. It is *āsurika* to remain attached to that bewildering nature, full of the characteristics of ignorance such as violence. It destroys their discrimination; thus they go to the hellish planets.

ŚLOKA 13

महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थं दैर्वीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः।
भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम्॥१३॥

mahātmānas tu māṁ pārtha / daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ
bhajanty ananya-manaso / jñātvā bhūtādīm avyayam

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *mahā-ātmānah*—the great souls; *tu*—however; *āśritāḥ*—taking shelter; *daivīm*—of the divine; *prakṛtim*—nature; *jñātvā*—knowing Me; (to be) *avyayam*—the imperishable; *bhūta-ādim*—cause of all beings; *ananya-manasāḥ*—with undeviating minds; *bhajanti*—worship; *mām*—Me.

O Pārtha, the *mahātmās*, however, having taken shelter of My divine nature, know Me to be the original and imperishable cause of all beings. They constantly engage in My *bhajana* with their minds fixed exclusively on Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Those great souls who have attained greatness by the mercy of My *bhakti*, even though they are only human beings, and who have taken shelter of *daivīm prakṛtim* (the transcendental nature), only engage in *bhajana* to serve Me in My human-like form. Their minds are not attracted by *karma*, *jñāna* and other desires; therefore, they are *ananyaā manāḥ* (exclusively absorbed in Me) and, having received knowledge of My *aiśvarya* such as *mayā tatam idam sarvam* (*Gītā* 9.4), they know Me to be the cause of all beings from lord Brahmā down to a blade of grass. They know Me to be *avyaya*, (eternal and immutable), and My form to be *sac-cid-ānanda*. My *bhaktas* need this type of knowledge to worship Me and only this much. Following their mood, one should regard *ananya-bhakti*, which is free from the *jñāna* of *tvaṁ padārtha*, *karma* and so on, as topmost, as the king of all confidential secrets (*rāja-guhyam*).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

One may raise the question, “Then who is that person who engages in *bhajana* to Him, respecting Kṛṣṇa’s *sac-cid-ānanda* form?” Bhagavān answers this with the present *śloka*. Those who have attained the causeless mercy of a *bhakta* and Śrī

Bhagavān take shelter of *śuddha-bhakti*. Only such *mahātmās* engage in *bhajana* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the embodiment of *sac-cid-ānanda*. Such great personalities are very rare. This principle has been confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.19). Such great personalities are endowed with divine natures. Contrary to this, there are others with *āsurika* natures. It is said in the *Padma Purāṇa*: *viṣṇu-bhaktah smṛto daiva āsurāś tad-viparyayah*. “According to *smṛti* *śāstra*, the *bhaktas* of Viṣṇu are called *devas* and those who are averse to Him are called *asuras*.”

ŚLOKA 14

सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः।
नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते॥१४॥

*satatam kīrttayanto mām / yatantaś ca dṛḍha-vratāḥ
namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā / nitya-yuktā upāsate*

satatam—constantly; *kīrttayantaḥ*—glorifying; *mām*—Me; *ca*—and; *yatantaḥ*—endeavouring; (*with*) *dṛḍha-vratāḥ*—determined vows; *ca*—and; *namasyantāḥ*—bowing down; *bhaktyā*—with devotion; *mām*—before Me; *nitya-yuktāḥ*—they who are always united (*with* Me); *upāsate*—worship (Me).

Constantly chanting the glories of My names, qualities, form and pastimes, endeavouring with determined vows, and offering *prāṇāmas* with devotion, they engage in My worship, remaining always united with Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

“You said that they engage in Your *bhajana*, but what is that *bhajana*?” In answer to this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *satatam*. “They constantly perform My *kīrtana* in which, unlike *karma-yoga*, there is no consideration of the purity or impurity of time,

place or person. Smṛti (*Viṣṇu-dharmottara*) says, ‘For a person who is attached to chanting the name of Śrī Hari, there is no rule regarding time or place. What to speak of chanting with a contaminated mouth, there is no restriction to chanting in any impure state.’ These great souls are *yatantah*, which means that they endeavour with steadfast vows. A poor householder, in order to maintain his family with hopes of gaining wealth, may endeavour to do so near a wealthy person. Similarly, My *bhaktas* develop an attachment to *kīrtana*, etc., in order to obtain *bhakti*, and endeavour in the assembly of *sādhus*. And even after attaining *bhakti*, they practise it again and again, just as one may revise the *śāstra* many times. Those who are steadfast and never break their vow to chant a fixed number of names, who bow down a set number of times, who perform other such services regularly and who fast on *ekādaśī* are called *yatnavān* or persons of endeavour. They think, ‘This practice is imperative for me.’ In the phrase *namasyantaś ca*, the word *ca* means that all other limbs of *bhakti*, such as *śravaṇam* and *pāda-sevanam*, are also included in this. These great *bhaktas* are called *nityayuktāḥ*, meaning that they desire to obtain My eternal association. The import of the two phrases *kīrtayanto mām* and *mām upāsate* in this *śloka* is that only My *kīrtana* and other *aṅgas* (limbs) comprise My *upāsanā* (*bhakti*). Therefore repetition of the word *mām* is not a defect.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

This *śloka* explains how the great personalities who were described in the previous *śloka* worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.3.22) states: *bhakti-yogo bhagavati / tan-nāma-grahaṇādibhiḥ*. “They incessantly engage in the *kīrtana* of My *nāma*, *rūpa*, *guṇa* and *līlā*.” It is stated in the Vaiṣṇava-cintāmaṇi:

*na deśa-niyamo rājan / na kāla-niyamas tathā
vidyate nātra sandeho / viṣṇor nāmānu kīrtane*

This *bhakti*, in the form of *kīrtana*, does not depend on the purity of time, place, or person.

The *Skanda Purāṇa* states: *cakrāyudhasya nāmāni sadā sarvatra kīrtayet*. “The name of Śrī Hari, who carries a disc in His hand, is to be chanted everywhere at all times.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu confirms this in *Śikṣāṣṭakam*: *kīrtanīyah sadā hariḥ*.

An ordinary person cannot become a *mahātmā* simply by advertising himself or collecting votes. No one can become a *mahātmā* by these processes. In this *śloka*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has given the *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa* (intrinsic characteristic) of a *mahātmā*. Those who are constantly engaged in hearing, chanting and remembering the supremely pure name, form and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the *ātmā* of all *ātmās*, are called *mahātmās*. Others, such as *jñānīs*, *yogīs* and *tapasvīs* who engage in pious activities and those who consider Bhagavān to be *nirviṣeṣa* (featureless), *nirākāra* (impersonal) and *niḥsaktika* (devoid of potency), are not addressed as *mahātmā* in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Any person in any *āśrama*, be he a *brahmacārī*, a *gṛhastha* or a *sannyāsī*, can become a real *mahātmā* by taking shelter of a bona fide *guru* and by cultivating *bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “*Mahātmās* who understand Me properly always glorify (perform *kīrtana* of) My *nāma*, *rūpa*, *guṇa* and *līlā*. That is, they follow the nine types of *bhakti* (*navadhā bhakti*), such as hearing and chanting with determined vows in order to attain eternal service to My *sac-cid-ānanda* Śyāmasundara form. They become steady in all activities, whether bodily, mental, social or spiritual, solely to please Me. They surrender to Me by the process of *bhakti-yoga* even while living in

this material world. This ensures that their minds do not become disturbed by materialistic activities.”

SLOKA 15

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम्॥१५॥

*jñāna-yajñena cāpy anye / yajanto mām upāsate
ekatvena pṛthaktvena / bahudhā viśvato-mukham*

anye—others; *api*—however; *yajantah*—worship; *jñāna-yajñena*—through the culture of knowledge; *ca*—and; *anye*—others; *upāsate*—worship; *mām*—Me; *ekatvena*—through the monistic conception; *pṛthaktvena*—with a conception of duality; *anye*—others; *bahudhā*—with the conception of many gods; *anye*—others; *viśvataḥ-mukham*—with the concept of the universal form.

Among those who engage in *yajña* by the cultivation of knowledge, some worship Me with the knowledge of oneness, some with the knowledge of duality, some through the forms of various *devatās*, and some worship Me as the universal form.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this Chapter and in previous chapters only *ananya-bhaktas* have been referred to as *mahātmās*. It has been shown that such *bhaktas* are superior to all other types of devotees such as *ārtta* (the distressed). Now Śrī Bhagavān is speaking about the other three types of *bhaktas* who were not described earlier, and who fall into a different category. They are *ahaṅgraha upāsakas*, those who identify themselves with the object of worship; that is, they consider the *jīvas* and Bhagavān to be one. The *pratīka upāsakās* worship the *devas* considering them to be supreme, but in fact those *devas* are simply

vibhūtis of the Lord. The *viśvarūpa upāsakas* worship the universal or cosmic form of the Lord. None of them are *mahātmās* because they are unable to perform the *sādhana* described previously (*Gītā* 9.14).

The three meanings of *jñāna-yajña* are described in the *śrutis*.

1) “O Deva-puruṣa, Master of all *aiśvarya*! Whatever You are, I am the same as that, and whatever I am, You are also the same.” This is *ahaṅ-graha upāsanā* and some *jñānīs* engage in the worship of Parameśvara by this type of *yajña*. Here, the word *ca* has been used to mean *evam* (also) and the word *api* has been used in the sense of giving up all other processes. The word *ekatvena* (oneness) means thinking that the worshipper is one with the worshipable. In the *Tantra* it is said: *nā devo devam arcayet*. “One who is not a *devatā* himself cannot worship a *devatā*.” *Ahaṅ-graha upāsanā* means to worship Gopāla with the feeling, “I am Gopāla.”

2) Inferior to this type of worship is *pṛthaktvena* (worship in duality), in which the worshippers engage in *yajña* in the form of *pratīka upāsanā*. Following the statements in the *śrutis*, they think, ‘The sun is *brahma*; this alone is the instruction.’ “Those who have even less intelligence than these worship My universal form in various ways, considering Me to be the *ātmā* of everything.” This is the explanation of Śrīpāda Madhusūdana Sarasvatī. Some worshippers think that the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu is the sun, and that there is no sun other than Him; that He Himself is Indra, and there is no other Indra; and that He is Soma, and there is no other Soma. This type of worship, in which the *vibhūtis* are seen as being Bhagavān in different forms, is called *pratīka upāsanā*.

3) To worship all the *vibhūtis* with the knowledge that Viṣṇu is everything is called *viśvarūpa-upāsanā*.

Jñāna-yajña, therefore, has three divisions. Sometimes, *ekatvena* (the oneness of the worshipper with the object of worship) and *prthaktvena* (the worship of Śrī Bhagavān's *vibhūtis* as being different from Bhagavān) are placed in one category because they are almost the same. For example, in *ahaṅ-graha upāsanā* is the mentality that "I am Gopāla," and on the other hand the feeling that, "I am the servant of Gopāla." These two types of feelings are likened to a river that is approaching the ocean. The river is different from the ocean, yet also non-different. The second category is *viśvarūpa upāsanā*. *Jñāna-yajña* is, therefore, of two types when categorised in this way.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The superior and exalted position of the *ananya-bhaktas* is apparent when they are compared to those *bhaktas* such as *ārtta* (the distressed). *Ananya-bhaktas* can be addressed as *mahātmā*. Having stated this, Śrī Bhagavān explains three other types of worshippers who are inferior to them. These three types of worshippers are unable to perform the *sādhana* of the *ananya-bhaktas* so they worship Śrī Bhagavān by the *yajña* of knowledge endowed with *guṇī-bhūtā bhakti* (*bhakti* which is predominated by *karma*, etc.), and they deliberate on the reality of *ekātvena* (oneness), *prthaktvena* (difference, duality) and *bahudhā* or *viśvato mukham* (the universal form).

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "O Arjuna, superior to those such as the *ārtta-bhaktas* are the *ananya-bhaktas* who are known as *mahātmās*. I have explained the *ārtta-bhaktas* in various ways. Now I will explain the three types of *bhaktas* who are inferior to them, and whom I have not yet mentioned. Learned scholars call these three types of worshippers *ahaṅ-graha upāsaka*, *pratīka upāsaka*, and *viśvarūpa upāsaka*. *Ahaṅ-graha upāsakas* are superior to

the other two. They identify themselves as being one with Bhagavān. This mentality, or egoism is one type of *yajña* for worshipping Parameśvara. The *ahañ-graha upāsakas* worship *brahma* while performing this *yajña* with a conception of oneness. *Pratīka upāsakas* are inferior to them. They think of themselves as separate from Bhagavān and they worship the sun and Indra, etc., but without understanding that they are only Śrī Bhagavān's *vibhūtis*. Those who are even less intelligent worship Śrī Bhagavān in the form of *viśvarūpa* (the universal form). Thus, *jñāna-yajña* is of three types."

ŚLOKAS 16-19

अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञः स्वधाहमौषधम्।
 मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम्॥१६॥
 पिताहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः।
 वेद्यं पवित्रमोङ्कार ऋक् साम यजुरेव च॥१७॥
 गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत्।
 प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम्॥१८॥
 तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च।
 अमृतञ्चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन॥१९॥

*aham kratur aham yajñah / svadhāham aham auṣadham
 mantra 'ham aham evājyam / aham agnir aham hutam*

*pitāham asya jagato / mātā dhātā pitāmahaḥ
 vedyam pavitram omkāra / ṛk sāma yajur eva ca
 gatir bharttā prabhuḥ sākṣī / nivāsaḥ śaraṇam suhṛt
 prabhavaḥ pralayaḥ sthānaṁ / nidhānaṁ bijam avyayam
 tapāmy aham aham varṣam / nigṛhṇāmy utsṛjāmi ca
 amṛtañ caiva mr̄tyuś ca / sad asac cāham arjuna*

aham kratuḥ—I am the agniṣṭoma ritual; aham yajñah—I am the smārta-yajña (such as vaiśva-deva); aham svadhā—I am the

śrāddha (offering) to the forefathers; *aham auṣadham*—I am the medicinal herbs; *aham mantraḥ*—I am the *mantra*; *aham eva*—I am certainly; *ājyam*—the ghee; *aham agniḥ*—I am the fire; *aham hutam*—I am the offering in the fire; *aham pitā*—I am the father; *mātā*—the mother; *dhātā*—supporter; *pitā-mahāḥ*—and the grandfather; *asya*—of this; *jagataḥ*—universe; *vedyam*—I am worthy to be known; *pavitram*—the purifier; *om̄-kāraḥ*—I am the syllable *om̄*; *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *ṛk sāma yajuh*—the *Rg*, *Sāma* and *Yajur Vedas*; (I am) *gatiḥ*—the goal of life; *bhartā*—the sustainer; *prabhuḥ*—the master; *sākṣī*—the witness; *nivāsaḥ*—the abode; *śaraṇam*—the shelter; *suhṛt*—the dear friend; *prabhavaḥ*—the creation; *pralayaḥ*—the dissolution; *sthānam*—the basis; *nidhānam*—the place of rest; (and) *avyayam bijam*—the imperishable seed; *aham tapāmi*—I cause heat; *aham nigrhṇāmi*—I withhold; *ca*—and; *utsṛjāmi*—release; *varṣam*—rain; *arjuna*—O Arjuna; *aham*—I am; *eva*—certainly; *amṛtam*—immortality; *ca*—and; *mṛtyuḥ*—death; *ca*—as well as; *sat*—eternal, subtle spirit; (and) *asat*—temporary, gross matter.

O Arjuna, I am the Vedic rituals such as *agniṣṭoma*, the *smārta-yajñas* such as *vaiśva-deva*, and I am *śrāddha*, the oblation to the forefathers. I am the potency of the healing herb, the *mantra*, the ghee, the fire and I am *homa* or *yajña*. I am the mother, the father, the maintainer and the grandsire of the universe. I am the object of knowledge and the purifier. I am the syllable *om̄* and I am also the *Rg*, *Yajur* and *Sāma Vedas*. I am destiny in the form of the fruit of *karma*, the sustainer, the Lord, the witness, the abode, the refuge and the dearest well-wishing friend. I am the creation, the dissolution, the basis, the resting place and the eternal seed. I give heat and I withhold and release the rain. I am immortality and I am death personified. I am the cause of everything and also the effect; spirit and matter are both in Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

“Why do people worship You in various ways?” Anticipating this question, in this and the next three *ślokas*, Śrī Bhagavān is giving a detailed explanation of His nature by which He is everything within the universe. In other words, He is describing His cosmic form. The word *kratuh* means *yajñas* such as *agniṣṭoma* which are prescribed in the *Vedas*, as well as *yajñas* such as *vaiśva-deva* which are described in the *smṛti-śāstra* of the *smārtas*. The word *auṣadham* means the potency produced from the *auṣadhi*, herbs which have medicinal benefit. The word *pitā* signifies that because He is the efficient material cause of the universe either individually or collectively, He is therefore the father. The word *mātā* means that, because He holds the universe in His womb, He is the mother. He maintains the universe and nourishes it, therefore He is *dhātā*, the sustainer, and since He is the father of Brahmā, who is the creator of this universe, He is the grandfather. The word *vedyam* means the object of knowledge and *pavitram* means that which purifies. The word *gati* means fruit in the sense of result or destiny, either good or bad, of our past and present actions. *Bhartā* means the husband or protector, *prabhuḥ* means the controller, *sākṣī* means the witness of auspicious and inauspicious activities, and *nivāsaḥ* means the abode. *Śaraṇam* means one who delivers others from calamities and *suhṛt* means one who does welfare work without any motive. *Prabhavaḥ* means, “Only I perform the actions of creation, destruction and maintenance.” *Nidhānam* means, “I am the treasure, being endowed with *padma*, *śaṅkha*, *gadā* and *cakra*.” The word *bīja* means the cause or seed. However, *avyayam* means “I am not perishable like seeds of rice. I am imperishable, eternal and unchanging. I provide heat in the summer season in the form of the sun. I award the rains in the rainy season. I am āmṛta

(immortality), *mṛtyu* (the cycle of birth and death), *sat* (subtle substance, or spirit) and *asat* (gross matter). Knowing Me in this way, they worship Me in My universal form.” This is how this *śloka* relates to the previous one.

ŚLOKA 20

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते।
ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोकमशनन्ति दिव्यान् दिवि देवभोगान्॥२०॥

*trai-vidyā mām soma-pāḥ pūta-pāpā
yajñair iṣṭvā svar-gatim prārthayante
te puṇyam āśādya surendra-lokam
aśnanti divyān divi deva-bhogān*

trai-vidyāḥ—those conversant with (the *karma-kāṇḍa* portions of) the three Vedas; *iṣṭvā*—having worshipped; *mām*—Me; *yajñaiḥ*—through sacrifices; *soma-pāḥ*—and drinking *soma-rasa*; *pūta-pāpāḥ*—being freed from sinful reaction; *prārthayante*—they pray; *svaḥ-gatim*—for the destination of Svarga; *āśādya*—upon achieving; *puṇyam*—merit; *sura-indra-lokam*—and the planet of Indra; *te*—they; *aśnanti*—enjoy; *divyān*—divine; *deva-bhogān*—godly delights; *divi*—in heaven.

Those who are devoted to fruitive activity as described in the three *Vedas* worship Me by performing *yajña*. Having become free from sins by drinking the *soma* juice, which is the remnant of the *yajña*, they pray for entrance into Svarga. When they attain the planet of Indra by virtue of their pious deeds, they enjoy the celestial pleasures of the *devas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“In this way, these three types of *bhaktas* who perform worship attain *mukti*, knowing only Me to be Parameśvara,

but those who are *karmīs* do not attain *mukti*.” To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks two consecutive *ślokas* beginning with the word *trai-vidyā*. “Those who know the science of the three *Vedas*—*Rg*, *Yajur* and *Sāma*—and are devoted to the *karma* prescribed in them worship Me only indirectly by the performance of *yajñā*. They do not know that *devas* such as Indra are My form in the absolute sense. Therefore, they worship Me in the form of Indra only, and drink the *soma* juice, the remnants of the *yajñā*. Those who take this *soma* juice attain piety and enjoy celestial pleasures.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Only when there is some scent of *bhakti* in these three types of worship will the *jīva* begin worshipping Me as Parameśvara. He will gradually give up the impurities of mixed worship and attain *mokṣa* in the form of My *śuddha-bhakti*. If the worshipper abandons the false conception of oneness with Bhagavān as in the *ahaṅ-graḥa upāsanā* process, he can gradually attain *śuddha-bhakti* by properly deliberating on *bhakti*. The idea in the *pratīka upāsanā* process that other *devas* are Bhagavān can also gradually culminate in realisation of My *sac-cid-ānanda svarūpa* of Śyāmasundara, by deliberating on *tattva* in the association of *sādhus*. The unsteady knowledge (worship) of Paramātmā in the process of *viśvarūpa upāsanā* can also be removed by gradually realising that the worship of My *svarūpa* is the most elevated. The worshipper can then concentrate on My human-like *sac-cid-ānanda* feature.

But if a person who performs one of these three types of worship persists in his attraction for *karma* and *jñāna*, which is a symptom of his aversion to Me, he cannot attain the all-auspicious *bhakti*. Because of their aversion to Me, those who worship oneness (*ahaṅ-graḥa upāsaka*)

gradually fall into the network of illusory *māyāvāda* reasoning. The *pratīka upāsakas* become bound by the laws of *karma* prescribed in the *Rg*, *Sāma*, and *Yajur* *Vedas*. Having studied these three types of Vedic knowledge, which give instruction on *karma*, they become freed from sin by drinking the *soma* juice. They worship Me by *yajña* and pray to attain *Svarga* in the planets of the *devas* as a result of their pious deeds. Thus they attain the divine pleasures of the *devas*."

ŚLOKA 21

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।
एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपत्ना गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥२१॥

te tam bhuktvā svarga-lokam viśālam
kṣīṇe puṇye martya-lokam viśanti
evam trayī-dharmam anuprapannā
gatāgataṁ kāma-kāmā labhante

puṇye—when (their) pious merit; *kṣīṇe*—is exhausted; *te*—they; *viśanti*—enter; *martya-lokam*—the region of mortals; *bhuktvā*—having enjoyed; *tam*—that; *viśālam*—vast; *svarga-lokam*—planet of heaven; *evam*—thus; *kāma-kāmāḥ*—those desiring sense pleasures; *anuprapannāḥ*—following; *trayī-dharmam*—the *karma-kāṇḍa* portions of the three *Vedas*; *labhante*—achieve; *gata-āgatam*—repeated going and coming (from earth to heaven).

When their pious merit is exhausted, they again return to the mortal world, having enjoyed immense celestial pleasures. In this way, those who desire sense pleasures and who perform fruitive activities as described in the three *Vedas* receive only repeated birth and death within this material world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Gatā-āgatam means going and coming, or repeated birth and death.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Those who desire material pleasures, as described in the previous *śloka*, and who are averse to Bhagavān again fall into this material world after enjoying celestial pleasures and receive the result of taking birth repeatedly. This is also confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.32.2):

*sa cāpi bhagavad-dharmāt / kāma-mūḍhah parāṇi-mukhah
yajate kratubhir devān / pitṛīnś ca śraddhayānvitah*

With their faith in the path of fruitive activity and being averse to the *dharma* of the soul, which is *bhagavad-ārādhanā* (worship of Bhagavān), such persons are bewildered by material desires and perform various types of *yajñas* to worship mortal *devas* and the forefathers.

*karma-vallīm avalambya tata āpadah
kathañcin narakād vimuktaḥ punar apy
evam saṁsārādhvani vartamāno nara-loka-
sārtham upayāti evam upari gato ’pi*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.14.41

In this way, living beings achieve Svarga by taking refuge in the creeper of fruitive activity. Thus they attain temporary relief from the miseries of hell. When their piety is exhausted, however, they again enter the world of birth and death.

*tāvat sa modate svarge / yāvat puṇyaṁ samāpyate
kṣīṇa-puṇyah pataty arvāg / anicchan kāla-cālitah*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.10.26

They enjoy the pleasures of Svarga until their piety has been exhausted. They then reluctantly fall back down being impelled by the power of time.

ŚLOKA 22

अनन्याशिचन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥२२॥

*ananyāś cintayanto mām / ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣāṁ nityābhīyuktānām / yoga-kṣemam vahāmy aham*

janāḥ—persons; *ye*—who; *ananyāḥ*—exclusively; *cintayantah*—contemplate; *paryupāsate mām*—and worship Me by every means; *teṣāṁ*—for them; *nityā-abhiyuktānām*—who are constantly engaged; *aham*—I; *vahāmi*—carry; (*their*) *yoga*—necessities; *kṣemam*—for their well-being.

However, for those who are always absorbed in thoughts of Me, and who worship Me with one-pointed devotion by every means, I Myself carry their necessities and preserve what they have.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“The happiness of My *bhaktas* is not due to receiving the fruit of *karma*, rather it is because it is granted by Me. *Nityābhīyuktānām* refers to those who are always united with Me. The happiness of such *pañḍitas* who are linked with Me by *bhakti* is bestowed by Me. Those who are not *pañḍitas* are bereft of this knowledge of *bhakti*. *Nityābhīyuktānām* also means that I grant success in *yoga*, *dhyāna* and so on to those who always desire union with Me. *Kṣemam* means that even if they are not expecting it, I Myself maintain them and carry their burden.” Here Śrī Bhagavān has not used the word *karomi* which means ‘I do’, but He has used the word *vahāmi* which means ‘I carry’. This implies, “I personally carry the burden of maintaining their bodies, just as a householder carries the burden of maintaining his wife, son and other family members. Their *yoga* (progress) and *kṣema* (maintenance) are not a result of the fruit of their *karma*, unlike others.”

“What is the purpose behind You, Parameśvara, who are always indifferent and self-satisfied, carrying their burden?” (This appears to be contradictory because it is the *bhakta*’s duty to serve Parameśvara). As it is said in *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (Eastern Division 15), “*Bhakti* means devotional service to Him, in which one gives up all kinds of designations, be they material or transcendental, and absorbs the mind only in Bhagavān.” This is called *naiṣkarmya*, freedom from *karma* and its reactions. “My *ananya-bhaktas* are *niṣkāma* (selfless), and because of this selfless nature I bestow bliss upon them. I am neutral but I give this bliss to My *bhaktas* because of My affection for them, thus I am called *bhakta-vatsala*. Therefore, it is incorrect to say that those *bhaktas* are lacking in love for Me because they give Me the responsibility of their maintenance and nourishment. I willingly accept this responsibility even if they do not completely give it to Me. This responsibility is not a burden for Me, who am capable of creating all the universes merely by My will. Furthermore, because I am attached to My *bhaktas*, it is a great pleasure to carry their burden, just as it is a pleasure for a man to carry the burden of maintaining a pleasing wife.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

How does Śrī Bhagavān carry the *yoga-kṣema* (progress and maintenance) of His *bhaktas*? In this regard a true story is told.

Once, there was a poor *brāhmaṇa* whose name was Arjuna Miśra. He was a *parama-bhakta* of Śrī Bhagavān. Every morning after performing his *bhajana*, he spent two hours writing a commentary on Śrī Bhagavad-gītā and then he would go out to beg for alms. Whatever he received by begging he would give to his wife, who would prepare, cook and offer the food to Śrī Bhagavān with great love. She then gave

the *mahāprasāda* to her husband. Whatever was left over she would eat with great satisfaction. They were very poor and all their clothes were torn. They only had one *dhotī* that was suitable to wear whenever they left the house. When the *brāhmaṇa* wore that *dhotī* to go for alms, his wife covered her body with some torn cloth, and when he returned, she put on that same *dhotī* to go outside or perform other household duties. They both considered their poverty to be a gift from Śrī Bhagavān and were fully satisfied. They always offered whatever alms were collected by Bhagavān's mercy to their *iṣṭa-deva*, Śrī Gopinātha, and later accepted His *mahāprasāda*. This was their constant *bhāvanā* (mood). Thus their time passed blissfully and they were not the least disturbed by their situation.

In this way, the *brāhmaṇa* regularly wrote his commentary on *Bhagavad-gītā*. One day, after performing his morning *bhajana* he sat down to write a commentary on the śloka:

*ananyāś cintayanto māṁ / ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣāṁ nityābhivyuktānāṁ / yoga-kṣemāṁ vahāmy aham*
Gītā 9.22

Upon reading this, his mind became perplexed with a grave doubt that he was unable to resolve in any way. "Will that Person, Svayam-Bhagavān, who is the only master of the whole universe, Himself carry the *yoga-kṣema* (progress and maintenance) of those who are engaged in His *ananyā bhajana*? No, this cannot be true. If this were so, then why is my situation as it is? I am completely dependent on Him, and with exclusive devotion, have offered everything unto His lotus feet. Why then, do I have to undergo the misery of poverty? Therefore, this statement, *nityābhivyuktānāṁ yogakṣemāṁ vahāmy aham*, could not have been spoken by Bhagavān Himself; it must have been interpolated." He tried

to resolve this difficulty on the strength of his own intelligence but instead he became more and more perplexed and his doubt gradually increased. Finally, he put three slash marks on this line with his red pen, stopped writing and went out to beg alms.

Now, the most compassionate Bhagavān, who protects the surrendered souls, saw that a doubt had appeared in the mind of His *bhakta* regarding His words. Taking the form of an extremely beautiful, tender, black-coloured boy, He filled two baskets with ample rice, *dāl*, vegetables, ghee and so on and putting them on either ends of a bamboo stick, He personally carried them on His shoulders to the house of this *brāhmaṇa*.

The door was locked from inside. First He knocked on the door, and then loudly called, “O mother, O mother!” But the poor *brāhmaṇī* was only wearing torn cloth, so how could she come out? Out of shyness, she sat quietly but the knocking and calling out continued. Finding no other alternative, she shyly came out keeping her head lowered and finally opened the door. Carrying that weight, the boy entered the courtyard, placed His load on the floor and stood to one side. Śrī Bhagavān, in the guise of that boy, spoke to her as follows, “Mother, Paṇḍitjī (the *brāhmaṇa*) has sent these supplies. Please take them inside.”

Until now, the *brāhmaṇī* had been standing with her face lowered. Upon hearing the sweet words of the boy, she looked up and saw in the courtyard two big baskets filled with food-stuffs. She had never seen so many vegetables and food grains. Being repeatedly requested by the boy to take them, she carried them to the inner part of the house. While doing so, she constantly gazed upon His beautiful face, and became completely satisfied. “Aho, how beautiful His face is! How can a person of such dark colour have such transcendental beauty?”

She had never even imagined such beauty. Awestruck, she stood transfixed. Her eyes then noticed that on the chest of the boy were three bleeding slash marks as if someone had cut it with a sharp weapon. Her heart disturbed, she cried, “O son! Which merciless person has made these cuts on Your chest? Alas! Alas! Even a stone-hearted person would melt at the thought of making cuts on such soft limbs!”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in the guise of the boy, said, “Mother, while bringing you these foodstuffs, I was delayed, so your husband himself made these cuts on My chest.”

Her eyes full of tears, the *brāhmaṇī* cried, “What! He made these cuts on your chest? Just let him come home and I will ask him how he could have done such a merciless thing! My son, don’t feel distressed. Stay for some time. I will prepare this food and You also can accept the *prasāda* of Ṭhākurjī.”

Seating the boy in the courtyard, the *brāhmaṇī* went to the kitchen and started to prepare an offering. Kṛṣṇa then thought, “The purpose for which I Myself carried these foodstuffs has been completed. Now, when the *brāhmaṇa* returns to his house, he will immediately discover the authenticity of My words, and he will never doubt them again.” In this way, having made arrangements to dispel the doubts of His *bhakta*, Kṛṣṇa disappeared.

That day, despite great effort, the *brāhmaṇa* was unable to collect any alms. Losing all hope, he returned home, thinking that his inability to collect anything was the will of Ṭhākurjī. He knocked on the back door and his wife opened it. When he saw that she was busy cooking, he inquired, “How is it that you are cooking when I received no alms today? What can you cook with?”

“Why? Some time back you sent so much foodstuff in the hands of that boy that it will take six months for both of us to finish it. Why are you asking me, ‘What will you cook?’”

She was a little surprised. “And your heart is like stone. This I did not know before. That boy had three red marks on His chest. How could you slash the tender body of that boy? Have you no mercy?”

The *brāhmaṇa*, completely amazed, asked her to explain. “I didn’t send anything home nor did I beat a boy. I do not understand what you are talking about.”

After hearing the statements of her husband, she showed him the rice, *dāl*, flour and other things, but when she entered the courtyard to show him the boy and His cuts, the boy was not there. She began to search for Him everywhere. Where had He gone? The outside gate was closed as before. They both looked at each other in surprise. The *brāhmaṇa* now began to understand the whole situation and tears flowed continuously from his eyes. After washing his hands and feet he entered the Deity room and, to completely dispel his doubt, he opened his *Bhagavad-gītā*. That morning he had made three slash marks with his red ink on the line: *nityābhīyuktānāṁ yoga-kṣemāṁ vahāmy aham*, but now these three marks were gone. Overwhelmed with happiness, he came out of the Deity room crying. “My dear, you are so fortunate! Today you have directly seen Śrī Gopinātha! And all these foodstuffs were brought personally by Him! How could I possibly have brought so much stock? This morning, while writing my commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, I doubted the statements of Bhagavān and slashed those words with three lines of red ink. That is why the tender chest of our Thākurjī, Gopinātha, was marked with cuts. He is supremely compassionate. He has taken so much trouble to prove the authenticity of His statements and to remove the doubts of an atheist like me.”

Then, his throat choked up and he was unable to speak. Overwhelmed with love, he cried out, “Hā Gopinātha! Hā Gopinātha!” and fell to the ground. Standing in front of Śrī

Gopīnātha, the eyes of his wife, who was struck dumb, filled with tears. After some time the *brāhmaṇa* returned to consciousness and, after taking his bath, performed his daily duties. He offered the preparations to Śrī Gopīnātha that his wife had prepared and, with great love, they both accepted His remnants. He continued writing the commentary on *Gītā* every day, and his life became full of love.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “You should not think that these three types of *upāsakas* (worshippers) who have fruitive desires attain happiness and that My *bhaktas* suffer. My *bhaktas* think of Me only, without deviation. For the maintenance of their bodies they accept anything that is favourable to My *bhakti* and reject all that is unfavourable. In this way, they are *nitya-abhiyukta*, or ever-united with Me by devotional love. Free from selfish desires, they offer everything to Me only. I alone provide all their wealth and any of their other requirements, and thus I maintain them. The meaning is that, from an external point of view, there may appear to be a similarity between materially-motivated *pratīka upāsakas* and My *bhaktas* who only accept that which is favourable to My service. However, there is a big difference between the two. I carry the *yoga* (progress) and *kṣema* (maintenance) of My *bhaktas* even if they have no mundane desires. The special benefit My *bhaktas* receive is that by My mercy they enjoy all sense objects in a dispassionate manner and finally they attain eternal bliss. However, the *pratīka upāsakas* again return to the field of *karma* after enjoying sense pleasure. They do not attain eternal bliss. I am indifferent to all mundane occurrences, but out of affection for My *bhaktas*, I feel delight to help them in every respect. In My doing this, there is no offence at all on the part of My *bhaktas*, because they do not pray to Me for anything except My favour. I Myself personally supply their requirements.”

ŚLOKA 23

येऽप्यन्यदेवताभक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः।
तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम्॥२३॥

*ye 'py anya-devatā-bhaktā / yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya / yajanty avidhi-pūrvakam*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *api*—although; *te bhaktāḥ*—those *bhakta*s; *ye*—who; *yajante*—worship; *anya-devatā*—other *devatā*s; *anvitāḥ śraddhayā*—with faith; *eva*—certainly; *api*—also; *yajanti*—worship; *mām*—Me; (but) *avidhi-pūrvakam*—in a way contrary to the injunctions of *śāstra*

O Kaunteya, those who worship other *devatā*s with faith actually worship Me alone, but in a way that is unauthorised.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

The following doubt may be raised: “In accordance with the *śloka* of *Bhagavad-gītā* 9.15, *jñāna-yajñena cāpy anye*, You said that worship of You is of three types. The statement, *bahudhā viśvato-mukham*, explains the third type, worship of Your universal form. You revealed the nature of that form by statements such as, ‘I am *yajña*, I am the Vedic ritual, etc.’ (*Gītā* 9.16-19). No *devatā* exists independently from You; such is the nature of the universal form. It can be concluded from this that those who worship *devatā*s such as Indra are, in fact, worshipping You, so why will they not be liberated? Furthermore, You have said that those who have material desires become entangled in the cycle of birth and death (*Gītā* 9.21) and attain perishable results. Why is this so?”

In response, Śrī Bhagavān says, “It is true that they worship Me, but they do so without following the prescribed rules to attain Me. They therefore remain in the material world.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

The following point may be raised: “The *devatās* are Bhagavān’s *vibhūti-svarūpa* (forms of opulence) and the limbs of His body. It does not matter how those who worship the *devatās* perform their worship, ultimately it reaches Bhagavān. Those who worship the *devas* attain the planets of those particular *devas* and, after enjoying the perishable fruits there, they return to this earthly plane. The unalloyed worshippers of Śrī Bhagavān, however, do not return to this material world after attaining *sevā* to Śrī Bhagavān in His *dhāma*, so if both types of worship are meant for Bhagavān, why do their end results differ?”

In response to this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is explaining to Arjuna, “The *devatās* are not separate from Me nor are they controllers independent of Me. The worship of those who consider them as such is unauthorised.”

This subject is also clearly explained in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.31.14):

yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena
tr̄pyanti tat-skandha-bhujopasākhāḥ
prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyāṇām
tathaiva sarvārhaṇam acyutejyā

By properly watering the root of a tree, its trunk, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers and so forth all become nourished, just as by eating food the life air and the senses become nourished. In the same way, by worshipping Bhagavān Acyuta everyone, including all the *devas*, are worshipped.

The essence of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura’s commentary on this *śloka* is that, by pouring water on the root of a tree, its branches and sub-branches become nourished, but the same result is not achieved by pouring water on its leaves, branches, fruits and flowers. Somebody may

say that there is no harm in giving water to the branches as well as to the root of a tree; rather there is some benefit. Therefore, if one worships the *devatās* along with worshiping Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then what is the harm? In response to this another example is given. The life air is sustained by supplying food to the stomach; thus all the body's organs and senses become nourished. However, if one gives food separately to the ears, eyes and nose, then one will become deaf and blind and ultimately one will die. In the same way, by worshiping the various *devatās*, considering them independent gods, one will only attain adverse results. The authorised process, therefore, is to exclusively worship Śrī Bhagavān. Moreover, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.40.9-10) says:

sarva eva yajanti tvāṁ / sarva-deva-mayeśvaram
 ye 'py anya-devatā-bhaktā / yady apy anya-dhiyah prabho
 yathādri-prabhavā nadyah / parjanyāpūritāḥ prabho
 viśanti sarvataḥ sindhum / tadvat tvāṁ gatayo 'ntataḥ

When reading these *ślokas*, most people will understand them to mean, "Just as rivers flowing from the mountains become filled with rain water, divide into various branches and enter the one ocean from various directions, in the same way, the worship performed by those on various paths ultimately culminates in worship of Śrī Bhagavān alone. Subsequently, by worshipping other *devas* one will also receive the result of worshipping Śrī Kṛṣṇa." However this understanding is not correct. The essence of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on the above two *ślokas* is as follows: "Karmīs, yogīs and others actually worship Me only because I alone am the embodiment of all the *devas* and the Supreme Controller of all controllers. A person who thinks, 'I am worshipping Śiva, I am worshipping Sūrya, I am worshipping Ganeśa,' considering himself to be devoted to them, actually only worships Me. However, if it is said that in this way they

worship Me alone and as a result will surely attain Me, it is not so. The worship performed by them certainly comes to Me, but the worshippers do not. The rivers flowing from the mountains become full of rain water. The clouds pour forth water all over the mountains and eventually this water takes the form of rivers. All the rivers, flowing their independent courses through different places, finally enter the ocean. The rivers coming from the mountains enter the ocean, but their source, the mountain, does not. In the same way, worship performed by persons practising various processes comes to Me alone. However, their source, the worshipper, does not."

Here, Śrī Bhagavān is compared to the ocean, the Vedas to the clouds, the various types of processes of worship to the water, the worshippers to the mountain and the various *devatās* to the different places. Just as rivers pass through various lands and enter the ocean, the worship of various *devatās* comes to Śrī Viṣṇu and, just as the mountain does not reach the ocean, the worshipper of the *devas* does not reach Viṣṇu.

Ocean water evaporates to form rainclouds over the mountains. Upon falling, that same water gathers as a river and passes through different lands. It is known by different names and finally it reaches the ocean. In the same way, the different types of worship as described in the *śrutis* originally came from Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They are performed by various qualified persons to different *devas* and they are known by the names of those various types of worship. Their worship finally comes to Śrī Viṣṇu through the medium of the *devas*. Through his worship a person only attains his own worshipable *deva*, a temporary position. He does not attain eternal *sevā* in the eternal *dhāma* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "In reality, I, the embodiment of *sac-cid-ānanda*, am the only

Parameśvara, Supreme Controller. There is no *deva* independent of Me. In My own *svarūpa*, I am the transcendental *sac-cid-ānanda* reality, eternally beyond the material creation. Many persons worship *devas*, such as Sūrya. In other words, conditioned human beings in the material world give honour to the majestic feature of My *māyā-śakti* in the form of various *devatās* and worship them. But by proper deliberation it can be understood that My *vibhūtis*, the *devas*, are simply My *guṇa-avatāras*. Those who worship these *devas* knowing their actual position and the reality of My *svarūpa*, consider them to be My *guṇa-avatāras*. In this way, their worship is authorised and approved of as the progressive path. But those who worship the *devas*, thinking them to be eternal and independent of Me, worship in an unauthorised way which does not follow the prescribed rules, and so they do not achieve eternal results.”

ŚLOKA 24

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च।
न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्च्यवन्ति ते॥२४॥

aham hi sarva-yajñānām / bhoktā ca prabhur eva ca
na tu mām abhijānanti / tattvenātāś cyavanti te

aham—I (am); *hi*—certainly; *bhoktā*—the enjoyer; *ca*—and; *eva*—indeed; *prabhuh*—the master; *sarva-yajñānām*—of all sacrifices; *tu*—but; *te*—they; *na abhijānanti*—do not recognise; *mām*—Me; *tattvena*—as I am, in My *svarūpa*; *ataḥ*—therefore; *cyavanti*—they fall down (they wander in *samsāra*).

I am the only master and enjoyer of all *yajñas*, but those who do not recognise My *svarūpa* repeatedly wander in the cycle of birth and death.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“What is meant by the phrase ‘without the prescribed rules?’” In response to this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *aham hi*. “In the form of various *devas* I am the only enjoyer; I am the Lord and master and I am the giver of results. Those who are *pratika upāsakas*, however, do not know My *tattva*. For example, they think that by worshipping Sūrya, whom they see as Parameśvara, the Supreme Controller, Sūrya will be pleased with them and fulfil their desired results. They cannot understand with their intelligence that Parameśvara, Śrī Nārāyaṇa, has become Sūrya, and it is Śrī Nārāyaṇa Himself who gives them such faith. Indeed, it is He who bestows the results of Sūrya worship. Hence, it is because of a lack of *tattva-jñāna* of Me that they fall down. Those who understand that it is Śrī Nārāyaṇa only who is worshipped in the form of Sūrya and the other *devas*, and who worship Me being conscious of My universal existence, become liberated. Therefore, it is imperative for those who worship My *vibhūtis*, such as Sūrya deva, to know that they are actually My *vibhūtis*. They are not to be worshipped independently of Me.” This is explained here.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

“Why is the worship of various *devas* improper? What is the result of that unauthorised worship?” This is being explained in the present *śloka*. “In the form of *devas* such as Indra, I alone am the enjoyer of all *yajñas*. I am the master, maintainer, controller and bestower of the results of them all. Worshippers of the *devas* do not know that the *devas* are My *vibhūtis*; hence, they worship them with faith considering them to be independent of Me and the bestowers of the results of their activities. Because they are unaware of My *tattva*, they do not have faith in Me; therefore, this type of worship is unauthorised. As a result of such unauthorised

worship, they fall away from the truth and remain entangled in the cycle of birth and death.

“However, by worshipping *devas* such as Sūrya, considering them to be My *vibhūti*, they gradually ascend the progressive path and, by the mercy of My *bhaktas* who know My *tattva*, they come to understand the science of My *svarūpa*. Thus, their intelligence becomes exclusively fixed on Me, Kṛṣṇa, whose *svarūpa* is *sac-cid-ānanda*.”

This *siddhānta* is also verified in the *śrutis*:

*nārāyaṇād brahmā jāyate
nārāyaṇād indro jāyate
nārāyaṇād dvādaśādityā rudrā
sarva-devatā sarva ṛṣāyah
sarvāṇi bhutāni nārāyaṇad eva
samutpadyate nārāyaṇe pratīyante*

Brahmā is born from Śrī Nārāyaṇa, Indra is born from Śrī Nārāyaṇa, Śiva is born from Śrī Nārāyaṇa, all the *devatās* and all living entities are also born from Śrī Nārāyaṇa. When their universal duties are complete and they die, all will again merge into Śrī Nārāyaṇa.

The *smṛtis* have also established the same conclusion:

*brahmā śambhus tathaivārkah candramāś ca śatakratuḥ
evam ādyās tathaivānye yuktā vaiṣṇava-tejasā
jagat tu viyujyante ca tejasā kāryāvasāne
vitejasaś ca te sarve pañcatvam upyānti te*

Brahmā, Śiva, as well as the sun god, the moon god, Indradeva and other powerful personalities empowered by Śrī Viṣṇu, are forced to give up all those powers when they die.

This conclusion is also seen in other *Upaniṣads*. The above statements from *śruti* and *smṛti* indicate a difference between the *devas* and Śrī Viṣṇu, who is the Supreme Controller

(*sarveśvareśvara*). The supremacy of Śrī Viṣṇu over other devas is established in śṛuti and smṛti, yet somewhere in them it is said that a particular *deva* is equal to Śrī Viṣṇu. This statement is made either because the influence of a particular *deva* is under the control of Śrī Viṣṇu, or because the *deva* is very dear to Him.

If one concludes from this that it is proper to worship all devas, considering them to be Nārāyaṇa, then it is to be understood that everyone is generated from Nārāyaṇa, by Him they exist and in Him they are annihilated or dissolved. None of them are Nārāyaṇa, nor can they ever become Nārāyaṇa. It has been stated in śāstra that it is a grievous offence to equate the devas or *jīvas* with Śrī Bhagavān. Such offenders are called *pāṣandīs* (atheists).

yas tu nārāyaṇam devam / brahma-rudrādi-daivataih
samatvenaiva vīkṣeta / sa pāṣandī bhaved dhruvam
Padma Purāṇa

Just as it is improper to worship the *devatās* with the understanding that they are independent lords, it is also atheistic to equate the devas (*jīvas*) with Lord Nārāyaṇa.

Therefore, it is prescribed that the *viśvarūpa upāsakas* (worshippers of the universal form) should worship the devas as the *vibhūti* of Śrī Nārāyaṇa. In this regard, śāstra makes two types of statements. It is said in *Nārada-pañcarātra*: *antaryāmi-bhagavad-dṛṣṭyaiva sarv-ārādhanaṁ vihitam*. “All are to be worshipped with the vision that Antaryāmī, the all-pervading Lord, is dwelling within them.”

And the Viṣṇu-yāmala states:

viṣṇu-pādodakenaiva pitṛṇām tarpana kriyā
viṣṇor niveditānnena yaṣṭavyam
devātāntaram ādi-prakāreṇa vihitam iti

It is with the foot water of Śrī Viṣṇu that one should perform activities such as offering oblations to the forefathers, and it is with the remnants of Śrī Viṣṇu's foodstuffs that one should please the *devas*.

ŚLOKA 25

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान् पितृन् यान्ति पितृव्रताः।
भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम्॥२५॥

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

deva-vratāḥ—those devoted to the *devas*; *yānti*—go; *devān*—to the *devas*; *pitṛ-vratāḥ*—those devoted to the forefathers; *yānti*—go; *pitṛn*—to the forefathers; *bhūta-ijyāḥ*—the worshippers of the spirits; *yānti*—go; *bhūtāni*—to the spirits; *api*—and; *matyājinaḥ*—My worshippers; *yānti*—go; *mām*—to Me.

Those who worship the *devatās* go to the planets of the *devatās*, those who worship the forefathers go to the planets of the forefathers, those who worship the spirits go to the planets of the spirits, but those who worship Me will surely come to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Various rules and regulations have been prescribed for the worship of the different *devatās*, and the Vaiṣṇavas worship Viṣṇu by a similar process, according to the injunctions of *śāstra*. One may question, “What is the defect in this *deva* worship?” To clear up this doubt, Śrī Bhagavān says, “It is true; they worship the *devas* according to the rules for their worship. As a result, such *devatā-bhaktas* achieve those *devatās*. This is the principle.” To explain this point, Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *yānti deva*. “If those *devas* themselves are perishable, how can their *bhaktas*

become imperishable? But I am imperishable and eternal, therefore, My *bhaktas* are also imperishable and eternal.” Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.3.25) also verifies this point: *bhavān ekaḥ śisyate ’śeṣa-saṃjñah*. “After the devastation only You remain, therefore You are called Ananta.” Moreover, the śrutis state: *eko nārāyaṇa evāśin na brahmā na ca ṣaṅkarah*. “In the beginning there was only Nārāyaṇa, not Brahmā or Śiva.”

Also in the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said: *parārddhānte so ‘budhyata gopa-rūpā me purastād avirbabhūva*. “At the end of the first half of Brahmā’s life, he understood that I had appeared before him in the form of a cowherd boy.”

The śrutis also state: *na cyavante ca mad-bhaktā mahatyāṁ pralayād api*. “My *bhaktas* continue to exist even at the time of the great dissolution, that is, they do not take birth again.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here, Śrī Bhagavān is showing the difference between those who worship the *devatās* and those who worship Him (His *bhaktas*). He is also showing the difference in the results attained by both. Some may say, “Just as the Vaiṣṇavas worship Viṣṇu according to the process described in *śāstra*, we are worshipping the *devatās* according to the rules of *śāstra*. How, then, is our worship considered incorrect?”

In answer to this Bhagavān says, “According to *śāstra*, a person will only have realisation to the extent that the personality whom he worships has realisation. This is just. The worshippers of the *devas* therefore, attain the planets of the *devas*. Because both the *devas* and their planets are perishable, their worshippers achieve perishable results. On the contrary, both My *dhāma* and I Myself are *sac-cid-ānanda*, eternal, cognisant and blissful; therefore, those who worship Me achieve blissful service to Me in My eternal *dhāma*. It is

also said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.27): *sama-sīlā bhajanti*, that those who worship the *devas* (such as Indra) perform *yajñas* such as *darśa-paurṇamāsyā-yajña* that are in *sattva-guṇa*. Those who worship the forefathers do so by *śrāddha* and other ceremonies, which are in *rāgo-guṇa*, and those who worship spirits, *yakṣas* (ghosts), *rākṣasas* and *vināyakas* (elements which create obstacles for others) worship by the process of *bali* or offerings, which is in *tamo-guṇa*. My *bhaktas*, who are *nirguṇa*, worship Me with devotion using natural and easily available objects.”

Someone may say, “Those who worship the *devas* also have faith in You, because the *sarva-deva-pūjā* (worship of all the *devas*) also includes the worship of Nārāyaṇa.” Bhagavān says in response, “The purpose of worshipping Nārāyaṇa in *sarva-deva-pūjā*, is simply so that the worshippers can perfect their worship. Factually, they have no faith in Nārāyaṇa. Those who worship the *devas* think as follows: ‘I am a worshipper of Indra and other *devas*. They are my worshipable gods and they themselves will fulfil my desires, being satisfied with my worship.’ Contrary to this, My *bhaktas* think, ‘I am a worshipper of Śrī Vāsudeva who is the omnipotent Supreme Controller. He alone is my worshipable Lord, and only for His pleasure am I worshipping Him with various offerings according to His liking. Being pleased, He will fulfil my desires.’ Externally, both types of worship appear to be equal, but, because those who worship the *devas* are averse to My *bhakti*, they attain only limited enjoyment on the planets of those *devas*. After enjoying there, they again fall to this earthly plane of existence. My *ananya-bhaktas*, however, attain service to My *sac-cid-ānanda* form in My eternal *dhāma* and do not return to this material world again. They remain absorbed in My loving pastimes, experiencing unlimited happiness in My association.”

ŚLOKA 26

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥२६॥

*patram puṣpam phalam toyam / yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tad aham bhakty-upahṛtam / aśnāmi prayatātmanah*

yah—whoever; *prayata-ātmanah*—having a devoted nature; *prayacchati*—freely offers (without a desire for personal reward); *me*—to Me; *patram*—a leaf; *puṣpam*—a flower; *phalam*—a fruit; *toyam*—or water; *bhaktyā*—with devotion; *tat*—that very thing; *bhakti-upahṛtam*—served with devotion; *aham*—I; *aśnāmi*—accept.

If any pure-hearted *bhakta* offers Me a leaf, a flower, fruit or water with love and devotion, I will surely accept that gift.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“There is often much misery in *deva* worship, but such pain does not exist in the performance of *bhakti* to Me, and it can also be performed with ease.” Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *patram* to explain this point. It is described here that it is the *bhakti* of the devotee which causes Bhagavān to accept his offerings. The word *bhaktyā* has been used in the second line and also again in the third line in the word *bhakty-upahṛtam*. Thus there is repetition. According to the rules of Sanskrit grammar, the word *bhaktyā* in the third case implies those who are endowed with *bhakti*, that is, ‘My *bhaktas*’. So it emphasises, “If someone other than My *bhakta* offers Me fruits or flowers with superficial devotion, I do not accept it, but I accept (*aśnāmi*) whatever My *bhaktas* give Me, be it even a leaf. In other words, I fully enjoy that which is offered to Me with *bhakti*, but I do not enjoy the offering of someone who has been forced to do it. But if

the body of My *bhakta* is impure, I do not accept his offering.” Therefore, Bhagavān says *prayatātmanah*, meaning he whose body is pure. From this statement it is concluded that a woman is forbidden to make an offering during her monthly menstrual cycle. Another meaning of the word *prayatātmanah* is, “I accept the offerings of those whose hearts are pure. Other than My *bhaktas*, no one’s heart is pure.”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.8.6) Parīkṣit Mahārāja says, “Those who are pure-hearted never give up the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.” The symptom of a person who has a pure heart is that he is unable to give up service to the lotus feet of Bhagavān. Therefore, if such a *bhakta* is sometimes seen to possess lust or anger, it should be understood that he cannot do any harm to others. He is likened to a snake whose poisonous fangs have been removed.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Having explained the imperishable and unlimited nature of the result of *bhagavad-bhajana*, Bhagavān is now explaining the quality of *bhagavad-bhajana*, which is easy to perform. When some easily attainable object such as a leaf, flower, fruit, or water is offered to Bhagavān with *bhakti*, then He accepts it thoroughly, although He is endowed with unlimited opulence and is perfectly satisfied. He becomes hungry and thirsty because of His *bhakta*’s love for Him and, absorbed in a mood of *bhakti*, He eats that offering out of *prema*. At the house of *bhakta* Vidura, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with great *prema*, even ate banana peels from the hands of Vidura’s wife. While eating the dry rice that His dear friend Sudāmā Vipra brought and offered with *prema*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

patram puṣpam phalam toyam / yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tad aham bhakty-upahṛtam / aśnāmi prayatātmanah
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.81.4

The preparation may be delicious or not, but if it is offered with love and a feeling that it is very delicious, it becomes most delicious to Me. At that time, I give up all other thoughts and relish it. Even if such a fruit or flower has no taste or fragrance, I accept it, being captivated by My *bhakta's prema*.

One may ask if Kṛṣṇa accepts that article which is offered to Him with *bhakti* by those who worship the *devas*. In response, He says, “No. I only accept whatever My *bhaktas* give Me, not items offered by others.”

The ṛtvik priests in the sacrifice of King Nābhi spoke to Śrī Bhagavān, who appeared there:

parijanānurāga-viracita-śabala-samśabda-salila-
sita-kisalaya-tulasikā-dūrvāṅkurair api sambhṛtayā
saparyayā kila parama parituṣyasi
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.3.6

You certainly become especially pleased by the worship offered by Your *bhaktas* who are full of *anurāga* for You, who offer prayers with choked voices and who perform *pūjā* to You with water, *tulasī* leaves and sprouting *durvā* grass.

A similar statement from *Gautamīya-tantra* in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* states:

tulasī-dala-mātreṇa jalasya culukena vā
vikṛīṇite svam ātmānam bhaktebhyo bhakta-vatsalah

Bhagavān, who is *bhakta-vatsala*, completely sells Himself to those *bhaktas* who, with love and devotion, offer Him a *tulasī* leaf and a palmful of water.

While eating a morsel of dry rice from the begging bag of the *bhakta*, Śuklāmbara Brahmācārī, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said:

prabhu bale tora khūḍkaṇa mui khāūṁ
abhakterā amṛta ulaṭi nā cāūṁ

O Śuklāmbara, I am accepting this dry rice from you, but I do not even look at ambrosial food that is offered by a non-devotee.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.31.21), Devarṣi Nārada also told the Pracetās: *na bhajati kumanīṣīṇāṁ sa ījya*. “Śrī Hari never accepts the service of ill-minded people who, intoxicated by their scholarship, wealth or high birth, disrespect His *bhaktas* who perform *ananyā sevā* to Him.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa personally gave a similar instruction to Uddhava: “Even the gifts given to Me in profusion by non-devotees do not satisfy Me.” Furthermore, to clarify this *siddhānta*, the Lord told Sudāmā:

*anv apy upāhṛtam bhaktaiḥ / premṇā bhūry eva me bhavet
bhūry apy abhaktopahṛtam / na me toṣāya kalpate*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.8.13

If My *bhakta* gives Me the smallest offering, I consider it extremely great, but if non-devotees give Me elaborate offerings, they cannot satisfy Me.

Here, the word *prayatātmā* means one who has purified his heart by *bhakti*. Śrī Bhagavān eats the foodstuffs offered with *prīti* by such pure-hearted *bhaktas*, but He does not eat foodstuffs given by others. Prahlāda Mahārāja has also made a similar statement: *iti pūṁsārpitā viṣṇor arpitaiva satī yadi kriyate*. “The performance of hearing, chanting and so on is *śuddha-bhakti* only if a person has fully surrendered himself at the lotus feet of Bhagavān, not otherwise.”

The purport is that only when the limbs of *bhakti* are performed with complete surrender can the heart become purified. Śrī Bhagavān lovingly accepts only the offerings of such *bhaktas*.

ŚLOKA 27

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत्।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम्॥२७॥

*yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi / yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya / tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *yat*—whatever; *karoṣi*—undertakings you make; *yat*—whatever; *aśnāsi*—you eat; *yat*—whatever; *juhoṣi*—you sacrifice; *yat*—whatever; *dadāsi*—you give in charity; *yat*—whatever; *tapasyasi*—austerities you perform; *kuruṣva*—you must do; *tat*—that; *mat-arpaṇam*—as an offering to Me.

O Kaunteya, whatever activities you perform, whatever you eat, whatever you sacrifice and give in charity and whatever austerities you perform, offer them all to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna may ask the following question: “Up until now, You have explained various types of *bhakti* from the *śloka*: *ārtto jijñāsur arthārthī jñānī* (*Gītā* 7.16). Which one of them should I follow?”

To remove Arjuna’s doubt, Śrī Bhagavān says, “O Arjuna, at present you are unable to give up *karma*, *jñāna* and so on, and therefore you do not have the *adhikāra* to perform the topmost *bhakti*, namely *kevalā* or *ananya-bhakti*. And you do not need to perform the inferior *sakāma-bhakti* because your *adhikāra* is higher than that. Therefore, you should perform *niṣkāma-karma-jñāna-miśrā pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*, or *bhakti* (which is predominating) mixed with *niṣkāma-karma* and *jñāna*.” For this reason, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the words *yat karoṣi* and also the next *śloka*. “Whatever mundane or Vedic activities you perform as normal routine, whatever food or water you take daily, and what-

ever austerities you may perform, you should maintain the understanding that all of them can be offered to Me.” This, however, is neither *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* nor *bhakti-yoga*. Those who are devoted to *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* offer to Bhagavān only those actions prescribed in *śāstra*, not the normal activities of day-to-day life. This is more common. But *bhaktas* offer every function of the senses along with their soul, mind and life air unto their worshipable Lord. As it is said in a description of *bhakti* in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.36): “Whatever activities a *bhakta* performs with his body, speech, mind, senses, intelligence and *ātmā*, or by dint of his own nature, are all offered to the transcendental Śrī Nārāyaṇa.” The following question may be raised: If *juhoṣi* (the performance of *yajña*) is the same as *arcana* (a limb of *bhakti*), which is performed for the purpose of satisfying Śrī Viṣṇu, and if *tapasyā* is to perform the *ekādaśi* fast, then why are they not considered *ananya-bhakti*? In response Bhagavān says, “This is all right, but actions in *ananya-bhakti* are not offered to Bhagavān after they have been performed; rather, a person first offers them to Him and then performs the act.” As Prahlāda Mahārāja said:

śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoh / smaraṇam pāda-sevanam
 arcanam vandanam dāsyam / sakhyam ātma-nivedanam
 iti puṁsārpitā viṣṇau / bhaktiś cen nava-lakṣaṇā
 kriyeta bhagavaty addhā / tan manye ’dhītam uttamam
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.5.23-24

Here it is evident that *bhakti* is performed while first offering these activities to Him, not that the activities are offered after they are performed. In his explanation of this *śloka*, Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmipāda says that *bhakti* to Viṣṇu is performed while offering these activities to Him, not that the acts are offered after they have been performed. Therefore, the present *Gītā* *śloka* does not culminate in *kevala-bhakti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

For those who are unable to take shelter of the most superior *ananya-bhakti*, as described by Bhagavān, and also for those who do not have a taste for performing a lower class of *bhakti*, Śrī Bhagavān is instructing His dear friend Arjuna, whom He is using as an instrument to teach humanity, to adopt *niṣkāma-karma-jñāna-miśrā pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*, in which all actions are offered to Him.

When Kṛṣṇa says, “Whatever actions you perform, be they *laukika* (mundane) or Vedic, offer them to Me,” a person should not wrongly think that he can perform any activity and eat and drink whatever he likes without there being any defect, as long as it is offered to Bhagavān. Just because he feels obliged to offer all actions unto the lotus feet of Bhagavān, does not mean that they will be successful. Nor does it mean that an act prescribed in the Vedas, to whichever *deva* or with whatever desire, will in the end be offered merely by saying the *mantra*, *śrī kṛṣṇāya samarpaṇam astu*, like the *smārtas* who are engaged in mundane activities. For this reason, all commentators on this *śloka* like Śrīla Śridhara Svāmī have explained the deep meaning: one should act in such a way that all of his activities are offered directly to Śrī Bhagavān. In other words, only those actions which are performed for His pleasure should be offered. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.36) Devaṛṣi Nārada also says: *kurvāṇā yatra karmāṇi bhagavac-chikṣayā*. “The *śaranāgata-bhaktas*, who perform pleasing acts for Bhagavān, offer those acts solely to Him.”

While commenting on this *śloka*, Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura shows the difference between the activities of a *karmī* and those of a *bhakta*. “A *karmī* only offers Bhagavān the activities that are in accordance with Vedic injunction so that his *karma* will not be fruitless. *Bhaktas*,

however, perform all their activities, whether *laukika*, Vedic, or related to the body, with the feeling that ‘Bhagavān is my master, and it is for His pleasure that I am offering everything unto His feet.’ This is the great difference between the two.”

This conclusion has also been confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.2.36) in the dialogue of the *Navayogendras*:

kāyena vācā manasendriyair vā
buddhyātmanā vānusṛta-svabhāvāt
karoti yad yat sakalam parasmai
nārāyaṇāyeti samarpayet tat

In accordance with the particular nature that one has acquired in conditioned life, whatever one does with body, words, mind, senses, intelligence or purified consciousness, one should offer to the Supreme, thinking that this is for the pleasure of Śrī Nārāyaṇa.

While commenting on this *śloka*, Śrila Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda writes: “The activities of a *bhakta* are performed with body, mind, speech, intelligence, false ego, heart and all the senses, but they should not be compared to the *dharmika* acts of *karmīs* which are performed for their own enjoyment. As a result of offering one’s actions to Kṛṣṇa as described above, one’s aversion towards Him is gradually removed. *Jīvas* who are situated in their *svarūpa* perform all their actions only for the purpose of serving Kṛṣṇa. If some pious *karmīs* who have spiritual good-fortune follow the ideals of *bhaktas* in a bona fide *sampradāya* and offer all their activities unto the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān, they quickly rise above *karma-miśrā bhakti* and are counted among the *bhaktas*. ”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Arjuna, now ascertain your own qualification. You are engaged in assisting Me in My pastimes, having descended with Me as a *dharma-vīra* (righteous hero); therefore, you can neither be counted among the *nirapekṣa* (indifferent, *sānta*) *bhaktas* nor the *sakāma-bhaktas*. You will only perform that *bhakti* which is mixed with *niṣkāma-karma* and *jñāna*. It is, therefore, your duty to offer Me whatever austerities and other activities you perform. The conception of the materialists is to perform an act with material desires and then offer the activity to Me simply as a remnant. This conception is empty and useless. You should offer the action in the right way at its inception and thus perform *niṣkāma-karma-jñāna-miṣrā bhakti*.”

ŚLOKA 28

शुभाशुभफलैवं मोक्ष्यसे कर्मबन्धनैः।
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि॥२८॥

*śubhāśubha-phalair evam / mokṣyase karma-bandhanaiḥ
sannyāsa-yoga-yuktātmā / vimukto mām upaiṣyasi*

evam—thus; *mokṣyase*—you shall be freed; *śubha-aśubha-phalaiḥ*—from the auspicious and inauspicious results; *karma-bandhanaiḥ*—by which there is bondage through fruitive reaction; (*being*) *yukta-ātmā*—a soul linked up; *sannyāsa-yoga*—in the *yoga* of renunciation; *vimuktah*—fully liberated; *upaiṣyasi*—you will attain; *mām*—Me.

In this way, you will be freed from the bondage of the auspicious and inauspicious results of *karma*. Being thus blessed with the *yoga* of renunciation by offering Me all the results of your actions, you will become distinguished even among liberated souls and you will attain Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“In this way, you will become free from the bondage of *karma* and its unlimited good and bad results.” Śrī Gopālatāpanī *Upaniṣad* states: “*Kṛṣṇa-bhajana* is *bhakti*.” By this *bhakti* one becomes free from worldly (*laukika*) as well as higher celestial (*pāralaukika*) designations. In other words, one becomes free from desiring the fruits of one’s activities and fixes one’s mind only in *bhajana* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is called *naiṣkarmya*, and, therefore, to give up the result of *karma* is certainly *sannyāsa*. Those whose *ātmā* (mind) is fixed in such *yoga* are *yoga-yuktātma*. “When gifted with this *yoga*, you will not merely be liberated, *mukta*, but you will be *vimukta*, a distinguished person even among the liberated souls and you will come to Me to engage in My direct service.”

“O mahāmuni, among millions of liberated and perfected beings, a peaceful devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa is most rare” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.14.5). And furthermore, “The Lord can give *mukti* but He rarely gives *bhakti*” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.6.18). From this statement of Śukadeva Gosvāmī, it is understood that direct service to Bhagavān with *prema* is superior to *mukti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

One’s heart is purified by taking shelter of *pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*, as described above, and offering all actions to Bhagavān. Thus becoming free from the bondage of all good and bad *karma*, such persons can attain a special position amongst liberated souls and finally they can attain Bhagavān. Here it should be specifically understood that they attain the *prema-mayī sevā* of Śrī Bhagavān, which is far superior to *mukti*.

ŚLOKA 29

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः।
ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम्॥२९॥

samo 'ham sarva-bhūteṣu / na me dveṣyo 'sti na priyah
ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā / mayi te teṣu cāpy aham

aham—I am; *samah*—equal; *sarva-bhūteṣu*—to all living beings; *me*—for Me; *na asti*—there is no-one; *dveṣyah*—hated; *na priyah*—or dear; *tu*—however; *te*—they; *ye*—who; *bhajanti*—worship; *mām*—Me; *bhaktyā*—with devotion; (are) *mayi*—in Me; *ca*—and; *aham*—I (am); *api*—also; *teṣu*—in them.

I am equally disposed to all living beings and am neither inimical nor partial to anyone. But as those who serve Me with *bhakti* are attached to Me, so too am I bound by affection for them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna may say, “O Kṛṣṇa, You bring only Your *bhaktas* near You by liberating them, but You do not bring the non-devotees. This means that You are also partial, since this is an expression of attachment and envy.” In response, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *samo 'ham*, in which He says, “No, no, I am equal to all. The *bhaktas* live in Me and I also live in them.” According to this explanation, the whole universe is in Bhagavān and Bhagavān is also in the whole universe. He shows no partiality by doing this. The statement (*Gītā* 4.11), *ye yathā mām prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham* means, “I reciprocate with the consciousness with which one surrenders to Me and also worship him accordingly; and in whichever way the *bhaktas* are attached to Me, I, who exist in them, am similarly attached to them.” This should be understood. In this regard, the example

of a wish-fulfilling tree can be given. Those who desire the tree's fruit take shelter of it, but in reality they are not attached to the tree at all; they are only attached to its fruit. Moreover, the wish-fulfilling tree does not become attached to those who take its shelter, nor does it hate those who have enmity towards it. Yet Bhagavān kills the enemies of His *bhaktas* with His own hands. As Bhagavān said while speaking about Prahlāda, "When Hiraṇyakaśipu acts inimically towards Prahlāda, I will certainly destroy him even though he has become powerful by the boons of Brahmā." Some commentators give a different explanation of the word *tu* in this *śloka*. "This partiality in the form of *bhakta-vātsalya* is always an ornament, not a defect." In this way, Kṛṣṇa's *bhakta-vātsalya* is well known, not His *vātsalya* for a *jñānī* or *yogī*. Just as it is natural for a person to be affectionately inclined to his own servant and not to the servants of others, Bhagavān has affection for His *bhaktas* and not for the devotees of Rudra or Durgā Devī.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

The following objection may be raised: "By giving special liberation to His *bhaktas*, Bhagavān bestows upon them the *prema-mayī sevā* of His lotus feet, but He does not behave like this with the non-devotees. Is this not symptomatic of the defect of partiality, which arises from attachment and envy?" In response to this, it is stated that He has equal vision. He does not hate anybody nor is anyone dear to Him. He creates and maintains humans and other living beings according to their *karma*. Somebody may say that while maintaining the *jīvas* according to their *karma*, He gives happiness to one, misery to someone else and *mokṣa* to another, so does this not indicate the defect of partiality arising from attachment and envy? The answer to this is found in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.17.22) wherein it is said:

na tasya kaścid dayitaḥ pratīpo
 na jñāti-bandhur na paro na ca svah
 samasya sarvatra nirañjanasya
 sukhe na rāgah kuta eva roṣah

He is equal to all living beings. There is nobody who is dear or not dear to Him. Since a detached person has no attraction to sense pleasure, how can he become angry when his sense pleasure is disturbed?

This is also seen in the next *śloka* of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.17.23):

tathāpi tac-chakti-visarga eṣāṁ
 sukhāya duḥkhāya hitāhitāya
 bandhāya mokṣāya ca mṛtyu-janmanoh
 sarīriṇāṁ saṁsṛtaye 'vakalpate

Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original performer of action, He Himself is not the cause of the *jīva*'s happiness, distress, bondage and liberation. It is only *guṇa-māyā* which governs the *karmic* results of the *jīva*'s sin and piety and becomes the cause of the *jīva*'s birth and death, happiness and distress.

Because there is no difference between the energy and the energetic, it is true that the activities of His *māyā-śakti* will also be seen as His own work. Yet one cannot attribute the defect of partiality to Him, because the results a *jīva* receives for his actions are in accordance with his own *karma*. While commenting on this *śloka*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives the example of the sun and the owl. The sun-light is miserable for the owl, the *kumuda* flower and certain other entities, but it is pleasing for the *cakravāka* bird and the lotus flower. One cannot accuse the sun of having the defect of partiality. In the same way, Bhagavān's *māyā* awards results according to the *jīva*'s actions. One cannot attribute to Him the defect of partiality because of this. In

this context, one should also deliberate upon the following *śloka* from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (8.5.22):

na yasya vadhyo na ca rakṣaṇīyo
nopekṣaṇīyādaraṇīya-pakṣah
athāpi sarga-sthiti-samyamārtham
dhatte rajah-sattva-tamāṁsi kāle

For Śrī Bhagavān, there is no one to be killed, no one to be protected, no one to be neglected and no one to be worshiped. Nonetheless, for the sake of creation, maintenance and annihilation according to a specific time, He accepts different forms in either *sattva*, *rajo* or *tamo guṇa*.

This is Bhagavān's general principle for all *jīvas*, but in the present *Gītā* *śloka* He explains a special principle by the word *tu*. "Those who follow the limbs of *bhakti* such as *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam* and engage in My *bhajana* are extremely attached to Me and become situated in Me. And I, who am the Supreme Controller, also become situated in them with devotion." According to the principle of a gem and gold, the gem produces the gold. Similarly, by the grace of Bhagavān, *bhakti* appears in one's heart. Bhagavān also has devotion to His *bhaktas*. As Śukadeva Gosvāmī says in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.86.59): *bhagavān bhakta-bhaktimān*. "The Supreme Lord is devoted to His *bhaktas*." It is also stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (8.16.14): *tathāpi bhaktam bhajate maheśvaraḥ*. "In the same way that *bhaktas* are attached to Maheśvara Kṛṣṇa, He is also attached to His *bhaktas*." This is the special quality of mutual love. It is written in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.55): *visṛjati hṛdayam na yasya sākṣād*. "Such premī-bhaktas who have tied Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet with the ropes of love are never given up by Him." This *śloka* describes that, just as their relationship of the heart is mentioned, their external relationship is also established. This relationship is confirmed in Ādi Purāṇa:

asmākam guravo bhaktā bhaktānām guravo vayam mad-bhaktā yatra gacchanti tatra gacchāmi pārthiva. Bhagavān says, “Bhaktas are My *guru*; and I am the *guru* for the *bhaktas*. Wherever the *bhaktas* go, I also go there.”

A wish-fulfilling tree gives results according to the mood of those who have taken its shelter and does not give results to those who have not taken its shelter. In the same way, although He is impartial, Bhagavān differentiates between those who take His shelter and those who do not by giving them different results. The speciality of Śrī Kṛṣṇa over and beyond the wish-fulfilling tree is that the wish-fulfilling tree does not become subordinate to those who take its shelter, whereas Kṛṣṇa becomes subordinate to His *bhaktas*. Therefore, one can only see the qualities of friendship, hatred and indifference in Him in relationship to *bhakti*. Well-known examples are His friendly relationship with Ambarīṣa Mahārāja and His indifference toward Durvāsā and others who were envious. It is a fact that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is equal to all, but what is more important is that He favours His *bhaktas*. Of all His qualities, this particular quality is a special ornament. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Bhagavad-gītā and other śāstras give evidence of this.

ŚLOKA 30

अपि चेत् सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक्।
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥३०॥

*api cet su-durācāro / bhajate mām ananya-bhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ / samyag vyavasito hi saḥ*

cet—if; *api*—even; *su-durācārah*—a person of very bad character; (*becomes*) *ananya-bhāk*—exclusively devoted; (and) *bhajate*—worships; *mām*—Me; *sah*—he; *eva*—certainly; *hi mantavyaḥ*—should indeed be considered; *sādhuḥ*—a virtuous person; (for) *sah*—he; (*has become*) *samyak*—rightly; *vyavasitah*—situated.

If even a man of abominable character engages in My *ananya-bhajana*, he is still to be considered a *sādhu*, due to being rightly situated in *bhakti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“My attachment for My *bhakta* is natural and, even if his behaviour is degraded, My attachment for him is not lost and I make him supremely righteous.” For this reason, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *api cet*. *Sudurācāraḥ* means that even if he is addicted to killing others, having illicit relations with women, and being attached to others’ wealth, if he engages in My *bhajana*, he is surely saintly. What type of *bhajana* must he perform? In answer to this Bhagavān says: *ananya-bhāk*. “He is a *sādhu* who does not worship any *devatā* but only worships Me, who does not engage in any *karma* and *jñāna* but only engages in *bhakti* to Me, and who does not desire any happiness such as the attainment of a kingdom but only desires to attain Me.” But where is the question of his being a *sādhu* if some type of bad behaviour is visible in him? In response, Bhagavān says: *mantavyaḥ*. “He must be considered a *sādhu*. From the word *mantavyaḥ*, the following injunction is indicated: There is a flaw in that person who does not consider him to be a *sādhu*. In this regard, My order alone is authoritative.”

If a person who engages in Your *bhajana* is also poorly behaved, can he be considered a partial *sādhu*? In response, Śrī Bhagavān says: *eva*. “He is to be considered a complete *sādhu*. One should not see that he lacks any saintly qualities because he has made a staunch resolve (*samyag vyavasitah*). His resolve is as follows: ‘Due to my sins, whether I go to hell or degrade to a bird or animal species, I will never give up *aikāntika-bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.’”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In the present *śloka*, Bhagavān, who is *bhakta-vatsala*, is explaining the inconceivable power of His *bhakti* by making a declaration. “Even if My *bhakta* is seen to be engaged in an abominable act, I will very quickly make him an exalted person whose behaviour is good. There is no possibility of bad behaviour in such perfect persons who take shelter of My *ananya-bhakti*. Even if they appear to be badly behaved in the eyes of the ignorant, in reality they are not. In fact, they are definitely saintly. What to speak of the ignorant, even big scholars cannot understand the actions and moods of the Vaiṣṇavas. It is said in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*: *vaiṣṇavera kriyā mudrā vijñe nā bujhaya*. ‘It is not possible to understand the behaviour of *uttama-adhikārī bhaktas* with one’s material senses.’”

While warning a *brāhmaṇa* resident of Navadvīpa not to disrespect Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said: *śuna vipra mahādhikārī yevā haya / tabe tāna doṣa-guṇa kichu nā janmaya* (*Caitanya-Bhāgavata*, Ādi-lilā 6.26). “There is no possibility of good or bad material qualities even touching an *uttama-bhāgavata mahā-adhikārī* of *bhakti*. Those who continue to view him as lowly will go to hell.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa similarly instructed Uddhava:

*na mayy ekānta-bhaktānāṁ / guṇa-doṣodbhavā guṇāḥ
sādhūnāṁ sama-cittānāṁ / buddheḥ param upeyuṣām*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.20.36

There is no possibility of the piety or sin resulting from the performance of prescribed or forbidden activities coming to My *aikāntika-bhaktas* who are free from attachment and envy, who have equal vision towards everyone and who have attained Bhagavān, who is beyond mundane intelligence.

Yet one should always remember that the apparently poor behaviour of such *ananya-bhaktas* is not to be imitated. One

should neither criticise them nor associate with them. As it is said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.33.29): *tejīyasāṁ na doṣāya vahneḥ sarva-bhujo yathā*. Destruction is certain for those who criticise the behaviour of *mahā-bhāgavatas* who externally may appear to behave improperly. Fire burns all substances, pure or impure, although it remains pure itself. Similarly, although externally the behaviour of powerful *mahā-puruṣas* may appear improper, they always remain pure. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes that the sons of Marīci, who were the grandsons of *jagad-guru* Brahmā, had to take birth among the *asuras* as a result of ridiculing Brahmā's inconceivable behaviour.

What to speak of perfected devotees, even if the *sādhaka* of *ananya-bhakti* is seen to sometimes act improperly due to previous habits, he should still be considered saintly because his action is accidental. This is the deep meaning of this *śloka*. While commenting on the above *śloka* of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.20.36), Śrīla Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives the same conclusion.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is saying, “A *bhakta* who performs *ananya-bhajana*, who does not worship any other god or goddess, who does not take shelter of any process other than My *bhakti*, such as *karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga*, who does not desire anything besides My pleasure and, what is more, who knows Me as the only Master and as the Supreme, engages in My *bhajana*. Such a *bhakta* naturally has no taste for improper behaviour. But if accidentally, or by the will of fate, there is a discrepancy in his behaviour, he should still be considered saintly. This is My special order. If a person disobeys it, he will incur sin. The reason such persons are to be considered *sādhus* is explained herein. It is because their resolve is proper. In other words, they have *aikāntika-niṣṭhā*, exclusive faith, in Me.”

In this regard, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has commented on the following *śloka* from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.20.27-28):

jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu / nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu
 veda duḥkhātmakān kāmān / parityāge 'py anīśvarah
 tato bhajeta mām prītah / śraddhālur dṛḍha-niścayah
 juṣamānaś ca tān kāmān / duḥkhodarkāṁś ca garhayan

He writes that the word *dṛḍha-niścayah* in the phrase *śraddhālur dṛḍha-niścayah* means, “Whether I am attached to home, etc., or not, or whether that attachment increases, if millions of obstacles enter my *bhajana*, if due to offenses I have to go to hell, or even if I am overpowered by lust, I will not accept the processes of *jñāna*, *karma* and *yoga* under any circumstance, even if Brahmā himself orders me.” Those who have such determination are called *dṛḍha-niścayah*.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Even if those who engage in My *bhajana* with their minds completely fixed on Me, are badly behaved, still they should be considered saintly because the resolve they take in their engagement is righteous in every respect and all-beautiful.” The meaning of the word *su-durācāraḥ* must be understood properly. The behaviour of a *buddha-jīva* is of two types: *sāmbandhika* (conditional) and *svarūpa-gata* (constitutional). Activities such as keeping clean, performing pious acts and nourishing or satisfying the needs of the body, society and progress of mind are called *sāmbandhika* (conditional). *Bhajana* which is a fully conscious activity performed for Me by the *jīva* in his pure state is his *svarūpa-gata* (constitutional function). This function is also called *amiśra-bhakti* or *kevala-bhakti*. In the bound state the *jīva*’s performance of *kevala-bhakti* has an irrevocable relationship with his *sāmbandhika* behaviour. *Sāmbandhika* behaviour will certainly continue as long as one has this body, even when *ananya-bhakti* appears. Only when *bhakti* appears does the *jīva* lose his taste in everything that is unfavourable to devotion. One becomes detached from sense objects to the extent

that one's taste increases in *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. Until the taste for sense objects is completely removed, it sometimes forces one to behave improperly, but it is very quickly subdued by acquiring a loving tendency towards Kṛṣṇa. The behaviour of a person who is situated in the higher levels of *bhakti* is all-beautiful and righteous. If sometimes, accidentally, a person is seen to be engaging not only in bad, but evil behaviour, performing activities for which a *bhakta* does not have a natural taste such as killing others, taking away others' wealth and having illicit relationships with others' wives, he will be very quickly purified of such behaviour nonetheless. My *bhakti*, which is very powerful and purifying, is not polluted by this behaviour. This should be understood. A *parama-bhakta* should not be considered degraded because of his past indulgence in activities such as eating fish or having illicit relationships with women."

ŚLOKA 31

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति।
कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति॥३१॥

*kṣipram bhavati dharmātmā / śaśvac chāntim nigacchatī
kaunteya pratijānīhi / na me bhaktah praṇasyati*

bhavati—he becomes; *kṣipram*—quickly; *dharma-ātmā*—a virtuous person; *nigacchatī*—and attains; *śaśvat*—lasting; *śāntim*—peace; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *pratijānīhi*—you should proclaim (that); *me*—My; *bhaktah*—bhakta; *na*—never; *praṇasyati*—perishes.

He quickly becomes virtuous and attains eternal peace. O Kaunteya, declare it boldly that My *bhakta* never perishes.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The following questions may be raised: "How can You accept the service of such an *adharmika* and unrighteous person? How can You eat the foodstuffs offered by a person whose heart is polluted by defects such as lust and anger?" Śrī Bhagavān answers by speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *kṣipram*. "He very quickly becomes righteous." Here the word *kṣipram* means that, he quickly becomes righteous and achieves eternal peace. The words *bhavati* and *nigacchati* are used in the present tense instead of the future. This proves that right after engaging in irreligious or abominable activity, he laments and remembers Kṛṣṇa again and again, thus he quickly becomes righteous. "Alas, alas! There is nobody fallen like me who has brought such infamy to *bhakti*. Fie on me!" Repeatedly lamenting in this way, he attains eternal peace. Or if he eventually becomes *dharma* and righteous, irreligiosity and contamination may remain in him in a subtle form. The deadly heat of fever or poison may remain for some time even after taking the best medicine. Similarly, as soon as *bhakti* enters such a person's mind, his evil conduct ceases, though it may remain in a subtle form for some time. Later, in a higher state, indications of poor behaviour such as lust and anger may exist but they will have no influence, just like a snake whose poisonous fangs have been removed and whose poison is thus ineffective. This should be understood. Thus, his lust and anger are eternally quelled (*sāntim*) in a way that is unparalleled. He should be considered to have a pure heart even while he is still in the condition where he behaves inappropriately.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī says that if they become religious or righteous then there is no argument, but what can be said of a *bhakta* who is unable to give up such bad behaviour even until the time of death? In response to this, Bhagavān

strongly and angrily says: *kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ pranaśyati.* “Even when he dies, he does not fall. But those who speak harshly against him due to poor logic will not accept this.” Thinking like this, Kṛṣṇa spoke words of encouragement to Arjuna who was overwhelmed with grief and doubt. “O Kaunteya, while making a great sound with kettle drums, go to the assembly of those who dispute this, and raising both your arms in the air, and being free from any doubt, declare that a *bhakta* of Mine is never destroyed, even if he is poorly behaved. Rather, he becomes successful. In this way all their illogical words will be destroyed by your eloquence and they will definitely take shelter of you, accepting you as their *guru*.”

Here, the following objection may be raised: Why is Bhagavān asking Arjuna to make this declaration instead of making it Himself? As Bhagavān says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.65): “You will surely attain Me. In truth, I am taking this vow because you are very dear to Me.” So why does Bhagavān not say: “O Kaunteya, I declare that My *bhakta* is never lost”? In response it is said that at that time Bhagavān pondered, “I cannot tolerate even the slightest insult to My *bhaktas* and therefore, in many instances, I Myself sometimes break My own vow, even though I have to accept insults as a result. In this way, I protect the words of My *bhakta*, just as I will protect the words of Bhīṣma in this battle by breaking My own vow. Those who are non-devotees and cynics will laugh at My vow, but the words of Arjuna will be like marks etched on stone.” For this reason, Kṛṣṇa made Arjuna take this vow.

Having heard about the *ananya-bhakti* of such an ill-behaved person, some will understand this to mean that an *ananya-bhakta* is only one who has no *adharma* qualities such as lamentation, delusion and anger which all arise from attachment to wife, children and so forth. But such an explanation by so-called scholars should be rejected.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Sādhakas of *ananya-bhakti* have a natural distaste for improper or evil behaviour and always will have. Yet, if by accident the *ananya-bhakta* is poorly behaved, due to the will of providence that tendency is only temporary. The inconceivable influence of *ananya-bhakti* is not lost by it. The tendency to misbehave is quickly removed by the inconceivable influence of *ananya-bhakti* situated in the heart, and such persons become free from piety and sin and attain supreme peace born of *bhakti*. “*Ananya-bhaktas are never lost.*” In the present śloka, Kṛṣṇa, who is very affectionate to His *bhaktas*, is making His dearest friend Arjuna take this oath. This statement is also in the *Nṛsiṁha Purāṇa*:

bhagavati ca harāv ananya-cetā
bhr̥ṣa-malino 'pi virājate manusyāḥ
na hi ṣaṣṭa-kala-cchaviḥ kadācit
timira-parābhavatām upaiti candraḥ

Those *bhaktas* whose thoughts are exclusively absorbed in Śrī Hari are always situated in their own glory, even if externally they are seen to engage in abominable behaviour. This is because of the influence of *bhakti* situated within their hearts. This is likened to the full moon that has dark spots on it, even though it is never covered by darkness.

Śrī Bhagavān has also said:

bādhyamāno 'pi mad-bhakto / viṣayair ajitendriyaḥ
prāyah pragalbhayā bhaktyā / viṣayair nābhibhūyate
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.14.18

My dear Uddhava, if My *bhakta* has not fully conquered his senses, he may be afflicted by material desires, but because of his unflinching *bhajana* to Me, he will not be defeated by sense gratification.

While commenting on this *śloka*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes: “Even those who are just in the preliminary stage of *sādhana-bhakti* become successful and blessed, not to mention those who are gradually attaining the stages of *niṣṭhā* and *bhāva*, what to speak of *śuddha-bhaktas* in whose hearts *bhāva* has already manifested.”

In literature dealing with *jñāna-mārga* (the path of *jñāna*), both a *jñānī* who behaves improperly, and his *jñāna* are criticised, but even if a *bhakta* behaves improperly he and his *bhakti* are not criticised in the *bhakti-śāstras*. In this regard, one of the best *Nava-yogendras*, Karabhājana Ṛṣi, says:

sva-pāda-mūlam bhajataḥ priyasya
tyaktānya-bhāvasya hariḥ pareśah
vikarma yac cotpatitam kathañcid
dhunoti sarvam hṛdi sanniviṣṭah
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.5.42

It is not possible for those *premī-bhaktas* who engage in *bhajana* to the lotus feet of their most dear Śrī Kṛṣṇa with *ananya-bhāva*, having given up all other thoughts, faiths and activities, to engage in sinful activities. However, if somehow or other they do, then by sitting in their heart, Śrī Hari cleans everything and makes their hearts pure.

Someone may say that a *bhakta* who engages in sinful activity must atone for it, but Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.25) states:

yadi kuryāt pramādena / yogī karma vigarhitam
yogenāiva dahed amho / nānyat tatra kadācana

A *bhakti-yogī* never engages in an abominable act, but if at some time, he commits an offense inadvertently then he should destroy this sin by the process of *bhakti-yoga* only; he should not take to other difficult atonements such as *cāndrāyaṇa*.

This same conclusion is also given in Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu:

*nīśiddhācārato daivāt / prayāścittān tu nocitam
iti vaiṣṇava-śāstrāṇāṁ / rahasyāṇ tad-vidāṇ matam*

If by the will of fate a sādhaka engages in a forbidden act, then it is not proper for him to atone for it separately because the influence of *bhakti* performs the function of atonement. Separate atonement is not necessary. This is the secret of the Vaiṣṇava literature.

Somebody may raise the following objection: “Why did Bhagavān Himself not make the statement, ‘My *bhaktas* are not lost.’ Why did He ask Arjuna to do it?” The answer is that *bhakta-vatsala* Śrī Kṛṣṇa protects the words of His *bhaktas* even at the expense of breaking His own word. An example of this took place in the battle of Kurukṣetra, where He protected the vow of Bhiṣma by breaking His own.

ŚLOKA 32

**मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥३२॥**

*mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya / ye 'pi syuḥ pāpa-yonayah
striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrāḥ / te 'pi yānti parām gatim*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *vyapāśritya*—by taking shelter; *mām*—of Me; *hi*—certainly; *api*—even; *te*—those; *ye*—who; *syuḥ*—may be; *pāpa-yonayah*—born of sinful parentage; *striyah*—women; *vaiśyāḥ*—merchants; *tathā*—and; *api*—even; *śūdrāḥ*—manual labourers; *yānti*—attain; *parām*—the supreme; *gatim*—destination.

O Pārtha, by taking shelter of Me, even the low-born, such as women, merchants, śūdras, or whoever, are certain to attain the supreme destination.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“In this way, *bhakti* to Me does not consider the incidental discrepancies of a person who behaves improperly due to *karma*. What is the wonder in this? My *bhakti* does not consider the natural, inherent defects in those who are badly behaved because of their caste.” *Antyaja, mlecchas*, etc., are called *pāpa-yonayah* (those of sinful birth). As it is said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.4.18), “I pay my obeisances to that omnipotent Bhagavān, who is so merciful that, by taking shelter of the lotus feet of a *sad-guru* who is His representative and who has taken shelter of Him, one can become free from the defects born of caste or action, be he a *Kirāta, Hūna, Āndhra, Pulinda, Pulkaśa, Abhīra, Śumbha, Yavana, Khasa*, etc. All of these are miscreants because of their caste, and sinful due to their actions.”

Moreover, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.33.7) says: “Any person whose tongue has chanted Your name even once is most worshipable, even though he may be born in a *cāṇḍāla* family. Those who chant Your name have already performed all types of *tapasyā* and *yajña*, bathed in all the holy places, studied the *Vedas* and performed all other prescribed actions.” This also refers to women, prostitutes, *vaiśyas* and so on who take shelter of Śrī Bhagavān even if they are impure and not truthful.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In the previous *śloka*, Bhagavān explained that a *sādhaka* who devoutly engages in the practice of *ananya-bhakti* should be considered saintly, even if externally some incidental poor behaviour is seen in him. Now, in the present *śloka*, Bhagavān is explaining that those who take shelter of Him by engaging in *ananya-bhakti*, even if born in sinful *cāṇḍāla* or *mleccha* families, in low-class *śūdra* families, or even women such as prostitutes who are naturally

engaged in illicit activities, all very quickly attain the supreme destination by the influence of *bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is rare even for yogīs.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.4.18), Śrī Sukadeva Gosvāmī says: *kirāta-hūṇāndhra-pulinda-pulkaśa...* “Kirāta, Hūṇa, Āndhra, Pulinda, Pulkaśa, Abhīra, Śumbha, Yavana, Khasa, etc., and all others addicted to sinful activities can be purified by taking shelter of the *bhaktas* of Śrī Hari, due to His being the supreme power. I offer my obeisances to Him.”

While commenting on this *śloka*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura writes: “Just by becoming endowed with a scent of *kevala-bhakti*, even the most sinful attain perfection. Those who are low by caste or birth, such as the Kirātas and those who perform sinful actions, become purified by *bhakti* only when they accept a *śuddha-vaiṣṇava* as their *guru*. A person becomes supremely pure and free from the defects coming from his birth as well as his actions, merely by accepting the shelter of the lotus feet of a *sad-guru*. In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says that *bhakti* destroys both *prārabdha* and *aprārabdha* sins at their very root. The Kirātas, for example, are impure because of their birth in a low caste. Sin in the form of a low caste birth is *prārabdha-karma* and is removed by just a scent of *bhakti*.” In this regard, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura further says: “In practical life ignorant persons identify those who have accepted *vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā* by their dynasty or caste. From the spiritual perspective, none of the defects of caste and birth remain in a person who has taken *dīkṣā*. This is the reality. Such persons themselves become fallen who place undue emphasis on the birth and caste of one who has taken *dīkṣā* from a *sad-guru*. Such condemnation, however, brings no harm to the person who has taken initiation. A person who criticises Vaiṣṇavas is required to atone for it himself. Devahūti also said:

yan-nāmadheya-śravaṇānukīrtanād
 yat-prahvaṇād yat-smaraṇād api kvacit
 śvādo 'pi sadyaḥ savanāya kalpate
 kutah punas te bhagavan nu darśanāt

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.33.6

Simply by hearing and chanting Your name, paying obeisances to You and remembering You, even a *caṇḍāla* immediately becomes qualified to perform *soma-yajña*, without waiting for another birth to be able to do so. O Bhagavān! What, then, can be said about the incomparable influence of Your *darśana*?

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda writes: “This *śloka* is not spoken for common *caṇḍālas* (dog-eaters) who have taken birth in a fallen family according to their *prārabdha-karma*, and remain engaged for the rest of their lives in abominable acts fit for their caste. Rather, it is spoken for Vaiṣṇavas who, after taking birth in a family of dog eaters, become disinterested in the abominable activities of their family tradition and, after taking *dīkṣā* from a *sad-guru*, remain engaged in the service of Śrī Bhagavān.”

It is certain that those who are gifted with a saintly nature have followed with staunch faith all the behaviour of a *brāhmaṇical* tradition in their past life. In their previous birth, these people have completed austerities and sacrifices, bathed in the holy places, studied the *Vedas* and so forth. They have just acted out taking birth in an *āsurika* family to bewilder the foolish and teach the ideal among the Vedic *pāṇḍitas*. Bhagavān has also said in *Itihāsa samuccaya*:

na me 'bhaktaś caturvedī / mad-bhaktah śva-pacah priyah
 tasmai deyam tato grāhyam / sa ca pūjyo yathā hy aham

It is not that a *brāhmaṇa* who knows all the four *Vedas* will necessarily be a *bhakta*, but My *bhakta*, even if born in a *cāṇḍāla* family, is dear to Me and is the proper recipient of charity and the proper person from whom charity should be accepted. Even if born in a *cāṇḍāla* family, My *bhakta*, like Me, is respected by all, even by the *brāhmaṇas*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that, in this way, the reason a person who has taken shelter of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa has taken birth in the house of a *cāṇḍāla* is to perfect the quality of humility which is favourable for *bhakti*. From this *śloka*, we can also understand more about the deliverance of the hunter by the mercy of Nārada Muni, of Jagāī and Madhāī by the mercy of Śrī Śrī Gaurā-Nityānanda, and of the prostitute by the mercy of Ṭhākura Haridāsa.

ŚLOKA 33

किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा।
अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम्॥३३॥

kim punar brāhmaṇāḥ puṇyāḥ / bhaktā rājarṣayas tathā
anityam asukham lokam / imam prāpya bhajasva mām
kim punah—how much more?; puṇyāḥ—the pious; brāhmaṇāḥ—*brāhmaṇas*; tathā—and; rājā-ṛṣayah—saintly kings; (can become) *bhaktāḥ*—devotees; prāpya—therefore having come; (to) *imam*—this; *anityam*—temporary; (and) *asukham*—unhappy; *lokam*—world; *bhajasva*—worship; *mām*—Me.

What doubt, then, can there be that pious *brāhmaṇas* and saintly kings can become *bhaktas*? Therefore, having come to this temporary and miserable world, engage yourself in performing My *bhajana*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“If this is their destination, what to speak of the *bhaktas* who are *brāhmaṇas*, born in good families and who are of pure conduct. Therefore, O Arjuna, render loving service unto Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

If those who are born in a low family and who behave badly can very quickly develop good conduct by taking shelter of *ananya-bhakti*, and can thus attain the supreme destination, what is the wonder if those who are born in a good family and whose conduct is pure also achieve the supreme destination by taking exclusive shelter of Śrī Bhagavān? Making Arjuna the object of His teachings, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is instructing all *jīvas* to perform *bhajana* to His eternal blissful *svarūpa* as long as they remain in this temporary and miserable world.

In this *śloka* it is declared that the material world is mutable, perishable and miserable, but it does not describe it as false. Some philosophers imagine that the world is false but this idea is against the principle of *Bhagavad-gītā*. The *dhāma* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is called *aprakṛta* or transcendental, and it is eternal and blissful. *Jīvas* who attain to that abode never fall from there.

ŚLOKA 34

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु।
मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः॥३४॥

*man-manā bhava mad-bhakto / mad-yājī mām namaskuru
mām evaiṣyasi yuktvaivam / ātmānam mat-parāyaṇah*

bhava—be; *mat-manāḥ*—absorbed in thoughts of Me; *bhava*—become; *mat-bhaktaḥ*—My devotee; *bhava*—be engaged; *mad-yājī*—as My worshipper; *namaskuru*—bow down; *mām*—before

Me; *eva*—certainly; *evam*—in this way; *yuktvā*—having engaged; *ātmānam*—your body and mind; *mat-parāyaṇah*—and surrendered to Me; *eṣyasi*—you will come; *mām*—to Me.

Always absorb your mind in Me, become My *bhakta*, worship Me and offer obeisances unto Me. In this way, with mind and body fully surrendered in My service, you will certainly achieve Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

By the words *man-manāḥ*, Śrī Bhagavān is concluding this chapter by explaining the process of *bhajana*. *Ātmānam*, ‘engage your mind and body in Me and perform *bhajana* to Me.’ The mere contact of *bhakti* purifies everyone, whether they are qualified or not. This is described in this Ninth Chapter which is entitled *rāja-guhyah*.

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

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The supreme purpose for every *jīva* is to attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Performing *ananya-bhakti* is the only means to achieve this purpose. Only *śuddha-jīvas* are qualified to perform *bhajana* of Śrī Bhagavān, the *para-tattva*. The *svarūpa* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the highest object of worship for *śuddha-jīvas*. Unless one understands this *siddhānta* perfectly, his endeavour for the supreme goal (*paramārtha*) cannot be executed purely. *Śuddha-bhakti*, completely free from *jñāna*, *karma* and *yoga*, has been explained in Chapters Seven and Eight. In the Ninth Chapter, the most supreme worshipable *tattva* has been described. In order to establish this *tattva*, it is necessary to

describe the defects coming from the worship of other *devīs* and *devatās* who also appear to be the worshipable reality. Therefore, the eternally perfect nature of the supremely pure and conscious *svarūpa* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa has been established scientifically. The *jñānī*, *yogī* and the performers of *yajñas* worship only manifestations, such as *brahma* and *Paramātmā*, of this very Bhagavān, who has an eternal *svarūpa*. A *śuddha-bhakta*, however, does not worship these partial manifestations of the Absolute; he only worships the eternal form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is due to extreme ignorance that a person worships *devas* and *devīs* separately from the eternal form of Kṛṣṇa because by the worship of these *devatās* he can only partially attain his destination. One should completely give up the worship of other *devas* and *devīs* in the *bhakti-yoga* process and, with no ulterior motive and with staunch faith, one should maintain one's body while engaging in *navadha-bhakti* such as *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam* and *smaraṇam* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa only. Such *ananya-bhaktas* are superior to *karmīs*, *jñānīs* and *yogīs*, even if those *ananya-bhaktas* are badly behaved in the preliminary stage. Hence, they are indeed saintly because in a matter of a few days they become fixed in their *aikāntika-bhāva* and their character becomes pure in all respects.

Only *śuddha-bhakti* to Bhagavān will produce the above-described fruit of *prema*. The *śuddha-bhakta* of Bhagavān is never destroyed, nor can he fall because Bhagavān personally maintains and protects him. Hence, those who are intelligent maintain their body simply to perform *śuddha-bhakti* to Śrī Bhagavān.

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

CHAPTER TEN



Vibhūti-Yoga

Yoga Through Appreciating
the Opulences of Śrī Bhagavān

ŚLOKA 1

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परमं वचः।
यत्तेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया॥१॥

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
bhūya eva mahā-bāho / śṛṇu me paramam vacaḥ
yat te 'ham prīyamāṇāya / vakṣyāmi hita-kāmyayā

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Lord said; mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed warrior; bhūyah—again; śṛṇu—hear; me—My; eva—even; paramam—higher; vacaḥ—instruction; yat—which; aham vakṣyāmi—I shall speak; te—to you ; prīyamāṇāya—who have love (for Me); hita-kāmyayā—because I desire your welfare.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O Mahā-bāho, again hear My instructions, which are superior to what I have spoken previously. Desiring your ultimate welfare, I shall reveal this knowledge to you because of the love you have for Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The Seventh Chapter onwards explains *bhakti-tattva* along with Bhagavān's *aiśvarya* feature. That same *bhakti-tattva*, also known as *bhagavad-vibhūti*, is being described in this Tenth Chapter along with its confidential meaning.

It has been explained from the Seventh Chapter onwards that Śrī Bhagavān's *aiśvarya* feature causes knowledge to arise in the heart of the *sādhaka* that clearly reveals Him to be the supreme worshipable object. Knowledge of this same *aiśvarya* is now being given in detail for the pleasure of persons blessed with devotion to Him. Kṛṣṇa says in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.21.35): *parokṣa-vādā ṛṣayāḥ parokṣam ca mama priyam*. “The statements of the ḫsis are indirect (*parokṣa*) and I also enjoy speaking in this way.” According to this statement, Kṛṣṇa's indirect manner of speaking makes these topics a little difficult to understand. For this reason, He is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *bhūya* (again) which means that He is repeating *rāja-vidyā rājaguhyam idam*, the most confidential knowledge, for Arjuna's better understanding. “O Mahā-bāho! Just as you have manifested the superior strength of your arms, you are also able to express the superior power of your intelligence. For you who are prepared to listen, the word *śṛṇu* (hear) is used to ensure that you fully retain what is being said to you.” The word *paramam* means that this knowledge is even superior to what was previously spoken.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Chapters, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains the *aiśvarya* of the highest worshipable reality (*bhajaniya parameśvara-tattva*). In the Tenth Chapter, He describes His *vibhūtis* (majestic opulences). According to the *Sandarbhas*, *parokṣa-vāda* means to keep secret

that knowledge which is most exalted and rare, and which is not to be given to all, and then to explain it in an indirect way. *Parokṣa-vāda* is the nature of the Vedas. It is also Śrī Bhagavān's nature (to keep Himself hidden). Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-lilā 3.88) states: *tathāpi tāñhāra bhakta jānaye tāñhāre*. "That which is described in *parokṣa-vāda* is difficult for an ordinary person to comprehend. Kṛṣṇa tries to hide Himself in various ways but He reveals Himself to His *bhaktas*." It is therefore necessary to carefully deliberate upon *vibhūti-yoga* as described in this chapter by taking shelter of *bhakti*.

ŚLOKA 2

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः।
अहमादिर्हि देवानां महर्षीणाऽच्च सर्वशः॥२॥

*na me viduḥ sura-gaṇāḥ / prabhavam na maharṣayāḥ
aham ādir hi devānām / maharṣīnāñ ca sarvaśāḥ*

aham—I (am); *hi*—certainly; *ādih*—the origin; *sarvaśāḥ*—in every respect; *devānām*—of the gods; *ca*—and; *mahā-ṛṣīnām*—of the great sages; *na*—neither; *sura-gaṇāḥ*—the hosts of gods; *na*—nor; *mahā-ṛṣayah*—the great sages; *viduḥ*—realise; *me*—My; *prabhavam*—glorious appearance in truth.

I am the original cause, in every respect, of all the *devas* and *maharṣis*, even though they do not know the *tattva* of My glorious appearance in this mundane world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

"This *tattva* can be only understood by My special mercy, not by any other means." Śrī Bhagavān, therefore, speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *na me*. *Mama-prabhāvam* means, "Even the *devas* do not know the most extraordinary *tattva* concerning My birth from Devakī." If one raises the

question that perhaps the *devas* cannot understand this *tattva* because they are absorbed in sense enjoyment but surely the ṛṣis know it, the response is, “No, not even the ṛṣis have knowledge of this *tattva*, because I am their original cause in every respect. In the material world, the son does not know the facts of his father’s birth and, similarly, the ṛṣis do not know the *tattva* concerning My transcendental appearance and *līlā* in this world.” *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.14) states: “O Bhagavān, neither the *devas*, the *asuras*, nor anyone else can understand the *tattva* of Your birth and Your appearance in this world.” Thus, the word *prabhava* means Your birth and appearance in this world. There is no need to imagine any other meaning.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Kṛṣṇa’s mercy cannot be attained by any means other than *bhakti*. Without His mercy, a person cannot understand the *tattva* of Bhagavān on the strength of his own endeavour, even if he tries in hundreds of ways. It is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.29.42–44):

prajāpati-patiḥ sākṣād / bhagavān giriśo manuh
 dakṣādayaḥ prajādhyakṣā / naiṣṭhikāḥ sanakādayaḥ
 marīcir atry-aṅgirasaḥ / pulastyah pulahaḥ kratuḥ
 bhṛgur vasiṣṭha ity ete / mad-antā brahma-vādināḥ
 adyāpi vācas-patayas / tapo-vidyā-samādhībhīḥ
 paśyanto ’pi na paśyanti / paśyantam paramēśvaraṁ

Although Brahmā, Śiva, the four Kumāras beginning with Sanaka, Bhṛgu and famous *brahma-vādīs* (*jñānīs*) such as Vasiṣṭha desire to have *darśana* of Parameśvara and endeavour for this by the processes of *tapasyā*, *jñāna* and *saṁ�i*, they have been unable to attain My *darśana* to this day.

Moreover Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.29) states:

*athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya-
prasāda-leśānugṛhīta eva hi
jānāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno
na cānya eko 'pi ciram vicinvan*

O Bhagavān, You are unfathomable. Who in the three worlds can understand where, why, when and how You perform Your *lilā*? Still, O Bhagavān, You manifest Yourself in the hearts of Your *bhaktas*, who have received even a slight trace of the mercy of Your lotus feet. Thus they become blessed and are the only ones who can understand the *tattva* of the glory of Your *sac-cid-ānanda svarūpa*. Even after long-term enthusiastic endeavour, in *sādhanas* such as *jñāna* and *vairāgya* a person can never actually know Your glories.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “I am the original cause of the *devatās* and the *rṣis*. That is why, on the strength of their own endeavours, they can never understand My *lilā-prabhava*, the reality of My appearance in the material world in a human-like form. Everyone, including the *devas* and *mahaṛṣis*, searches for My *tattva* by the strength of their intelligence. They can only partially realise Me despite diligently endeavouring with their material intelligence. That part is *nirviṣeṣa-brahma*, the impersonal aspect of the mundane world. It is unmanifest, unvariegated and devoid of qualities. They consider *nirviṣeṣa-brahma* to be the *parama-tattva*, but it is not. I am *parama-tattva* and the embodiment of *sac-cid-ānanda*, which is the speciality of My eternal *svarūpa*. I always manifest Myself through My *acintya-śakti* (inconceivable potency). I am completely devoid of any material contamination and possess all transcendental qualities. My *aparā śakti* (external potency) manifests a partial aspect of My *svarūpa* called Īśvara or Paramātmā, who dwells within all *jīvas*. Brahma is one of My indistinct forms and is without attributes, is impersonal and is the negative

aspect of My personality, beyond the conception of the *buddha-jivas* who are deluded by My *aparā śakti*. Therefore, only two of My manifestations, Īśvara (or Paramātmā) and *brahma*, are indicated by these direct and indirect relationships with the created world. Sometimes, by My *acintya-śakti*, I manifest My own *svarūpa* in this material world. At that time, the aforementioned *devas* and *maharṣis*, who cannot understand the glory of My *acintya-śakti* on the strength of their own intelligence, think the appearance of My eternal, transcendental *svarūpa* (the above-mentioned *īśvara-tattva*) to be mortal. This is because they are bewildered by *māyā*. Thinking the dry *brahma-bhāva* to be superior, they attempt to merge into it. My *bhaktas*, however, understand that My *acintya-śakti* is beyond the grasp of their limited human comprehension, and simply engage in My *bhajana*. Upon seeing their attitude, I become compassionate and bestow pure intelligence upon them by which they can easily experience My *svarūpa*."

ŚLOKA 3

यो मामजमनादिन्च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम्।
असमूढः स मत्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते॥३॥

*yo mām ajam anādiñ ca / vetti loka-maheśvaram
asammūḍhaḥ sa marttyeṣu / sarva-pāpaiḥ pramucyate
sah yaḥ—he who; vetti—knows; mām—Me; ajam—as the un-
born; ca—and; anādim—without beginning; mahā-īśvaram—the
great controller; loka—of the worlds; asammūḍhaḥ—
unbewildered; marttyeṣu—among mortals; pramucyate—he is
fully freed; sarva-pāpaiḥ—from all sins.*

He alone who knows Me as unborn, beginningless, and as Maheśvara, the Supreme Controller of all the worlds, is free from illusion among mortals and freed from all sins.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

"The following question may be raised. "Do the *devatās* and *maharṣis* know the facts about the birth of Your body, which is *parabrahma*, beyond the bounds of all time and space?" Touching His chest with His forefinger, Śrī Kṛṣṇa responds by speaking this *śloka* beginning with the words *yo mām*. "He who knows Me to be unborn alone knows Me in truth." Does this mean that only You are the beginningless truth and the great Grandsire Brahmā is not? If Brahmā is without beginning, then he must know You to be Paramātmā without birth or cause. In response, to this, Śrī Bhagavān says, *yo mām vetti*, etc. "Only he who knows Me to be without beginning or cause, unborn and born from Vasudeva, is the actual knower of the truth (*tattva-jñā*)."
Here, the word *mām* refers to Śrī Bhagavān who is born from Vasudeva. "According to My statement (in *Gītā* 4.9), My birth and activities are divine. Because I am Paramātmā, My taking birth and remaining unborn are performed by My *acintya-śakti* and are absolutely true." As it is said in *Gītā* (4.6), "Though I am unborn, I, who am eternal and unchanging, take birth." Uddhava has also said:

*karmāṇy anīhasya bhavo 'bhavasya te
 durgāśrayo 'thāri-bhayāt palāyanam
 kālātmano yat pramadā-yutāśramah
 svātman-rateḥ khidyati dhīr vidām iha*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.4.16

O Prabhu! Although You are desireless, You engage in action, although unborn You take birth, and although You are death personified, You run in fear of the enemy and hide in the Dvārakā fort. Although You are self-satisfied, You enjoy with sixteen thousand women. Seeing these wonderful activities, the intelligence of even great scholars becomes bewildered.

In this regard, there is a *śloka* by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, the author of *Śrī Laghu Bhāgavatāmrta*: “The bewilderment of the scholars in this case is not factual because it is not due to material illusion. However, it would be better if it were absent. In other words, even that which is unintelligible for scholars is created by My *acintya-śakti*. Hence, the *acintya-śakti* is the cause of My variegated or contradictory nature which causes their bewilderment. In My Dāmodara-lilā, I appeared to be limited, My belly bound by a small thread of jingling bells, and simultaneously I appeared to be unlimited, because My belly could not be bound by the long ropes of Yaśodā-maiyā. This is beyond reasoning. In the same way, My taking birth and at the same time not being born is also beyond reasoning.”

By use of the word *loka-maheśvaram* which means the Supreme Lord of the universe, Bhagavān explains His *aiśvarya* which is very difficult to understand. “O Arjuna, among human beings, only those who know your chariot driver to be *loka-maheśvara* are *asammūḍhāḥ*, freed from all sins or obstacles to *bhakti*. Those who think that I am unborn, without beginning and have the nature of a supreme controller, etc., but who think that I only imitate birth, are *sammūḍhāḥ* (bewildered) and are not liberated from sin.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Here it is stated that Śrī Bhagavān is *ajah*, unborn. In the Second Chapter the *jīvas* are also described as *ajah*, even though they are *vibhinnāṁśa*, separated parts of Bhagavān (also Gītā 15.7, *mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke*). The *jīva* is *anucit*, an atomic conscious entity, but Bhagavān is *pūrṇacit*, the complete conscious entity. The *jīvas* are under the control of Bhagavān’s *māyā* whereas He is the master of *māyā*. The gross body of the shackled *jīvas* is mutable but Kṛṣṇa’s body is *sac-cid-ānanda*, immutable and eternal. When He descends into the material

world, He comes in His own eternal *svarūpa* through the medium of His *yogamāyā-śakti*. He existed before the creation, He is still existing now and He will continue to exist in the future. The following mantras from the Vedas also establish this conclusion: *aham evāsam evāgre*, “Only I was existing before creation, when there was nothing but Myself” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.9.33); *bhagavān eka āsedam*, “Śrī Bhagavān existed prior to the creation as one without a second” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.5.23); *anādir ādir govindah*, “That original Person is Lord Govinda, who is without beginning” (*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.1); *eko ha vai nārāyaṇa āśit*, “In the beginning only Nārāyaṇa existed” (*Mahā Upaniṣad* 1).

The present *śloka* describes that although Bhagavān is unborn, by the influence of His *acintya-śakti* He is simultaneously the eternal son of Vasudeva-Devakī and Nanda-Yaśodā. His *svarūpa* can only be understood by *kevala-bhakti* and not by any other *sādhana*.

One should not consider Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be an ordinary person. But if it is said that He is famous as the son of Devakī or Yaśodā, then how can He be without birth? The answer to this is given in *śāstras* such as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, as follows: “Śrī Kṛṣṇa did not take birth like an ordinary baby. In the prison house of Kamṣa, He appeared before Vasudeva and Devakī in His *svarūpa* as a young boy carrying *śankha*, *cakra*, *gadā* and *padma* (conch, disc, club and lotus flower), decorated with various types of ornaments and with beautiful hair on His head. Later, at the request of Vasudeva and Devakī, He became a small baby.” Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa did not openly exhibit His *līlā* of being born in His two-handed form from the womb of Yaśodā-maiyā as Yaśodā-nandana in Gokula, still, while only an infant, He killed very fearsome and powerful *asuras* such as Pūtanā and Śakaṭasura thus liberating them. He displayed the whole universe within His child-like mouth and performed many other

amazing activities not possible for an ordinary baby. Therefore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān, the Īśvara of all īśvaras, the source of everyone and without cause.

ŚLOKAS 4-5

बुद्धिज्ञानमसमोहः क्षमा सत्यं दमः शमः ।
सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयञ्चाभयमेव च ॥४॥

अहिंसा समता तुष्टिस्तपो दानं यशोऽयशः ।
भवन्ति भावा भूतानां मत्त एव पृथग्विधाः ॥५॥

buddhir jñānam asammohaḥ / kṣamā satyam damah śamah
sukham duḥkham bhavo 'bhāvo / bhayam cābhayam eva ca
ahimsā samatā tuṣṭih / tapo dānam yaśo 'yaśah
bhavanti bhāvā bhūtānām / matta eva pṛthag-vidhāḥ

buddhiḥ—the ability to discern subtle meanings; *jñānam*—the capacity to distinguish between matter and spirit; *asammohaḥ*—absence of perturbation; *kṣamā*—tolerance; *satyam*—speaking the truth; *damah*—control over the external organs; *śamah*—control over the mind; *sukham*—happiness; *duḥkham*—unhappiness; *bhavaḥ*—birth; *abhaवāḥ*—death; *bhayam*—fear; *ca abhayam*—fearlessness; *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *ahimsā*—non-violence; *samatā*—equanimity; *tuṣṭih*—satisfaction; *tapaḥ*—accepting bodily austerities as directed in the *śāstra*; *dānam*—charity; *yaśah*—fame; *ayaśah*—infamy; (all these) *pṛthag-vidhāḥ*—various; *bhāvāḥ*—states of being; *bhavanti*—exist; *bhūtānām*—among the living beings; (and they) *eva*—solely; *mattah*—originate from Me.

Intelligence, knowledge, freedom from anxiety, tolerance, truthfulness, control of the senses, control of the mind, happiness, distress, birth, death, fear, fearlessness, non-violence, equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, fame and criticism—all these diverse qualities of the living beings originate from Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Those with knowledge of *śāstra* are unable to comprehend My *tattva* simply on the strength of their own intelligence. Intelligence comes from Me alone, and is produced from *sattva-guṇa* which is within My *māyā-śakti*. It has no independent qualification to penetrate and understand My *tattva* which is *guṇatīta*, beyond the modes.” Therefore, Bhagavān says, “There are three qualities which could indirectly cause one to acquire *tattva-jñāna* of Me: *buddhi* (the ability to ascertain subtle meanings), *jñānam* (discrimination of conscious and unconscious objects) and *asammohaḥ* (the absence of anxiety). But these qualities are not the direct cause. None of the various qualities that are seen in people at different times are created independently.” Therefore, Śrī Bhagavān further states: “*Kṣamā* (tolerance), *satya* (truthfulness), *dama* (control of the external senses) and *śama* (controlling the mind) are all *sāttvika*. *Sukha* is *sāttvika*, *duḥkha* is *tāmasika*, *bhavo* ‘*bhāvo* (birth and death) are a special type of misery and fear is *tāmasika*. Fearlessness arising from knowledge is *sāttvika* but, if it is born from *rajo-guṇa* then it is *rājasika*. *Samatā* means to see equally the happiness and distress of others as one’s own. *Samatā* (equanimity) and *ahimsā* (non-violence) are *sāttvika*. *Tuṣṭi* (satisfaction) is *sāttvika* if it is free from illusion. If not, then it is *rājasika*. When a person is free from illusion, or the feeling that he is the doer, his performance of *tapa* (austerity) and *dāna* (charity) are *sāttvika*. If performed by one who is under illusion, they are *rājasika*. *Yaśah* (fame) and *ayaśah* (infamy) should be understood in the same manner. They have all originated from My *māyā*, but since *śakti* (the energy) and *śaktimān* (the energetic) are non-different, it should be understood that they are created by Me alone.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here it is being established that Bhagavān alone is the primeval, original cause and the controller of everyone. Everything inert or conscious is related to Him by His *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Even those people of fine intelligence who know the śāstra cannot comprehend My *tattva*. The reason why is as follows: The characteristics of the living entities includes intelligence which has the ability to grasp subtle subjects, the ability to discriminate between that which is conscious and that which is not, freedom from anxiety, tolerance, truthfulness, control of the senses and the mind, happiness, distress, birth, death, non-violence, equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, fame and infamy. I am aloof from them all although I am their original cause. After knowing My *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, nothing remains to be known. Śakti (energy) and śaktimān (the energetic) are both non-different and different. Similarly I, śaktimān, along with everything in this ever-changing world, have emanated from My energy, and although different are eternally the same.”

ŚLOKA 6

**महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथा।
मद्रावा मानसा जाता येषां लोक इमाः प्रजाः ॥६॥**

*maharṣayaḥ sapta pūrve / catvāro manavas tathā
mad-bhāvā mānasā jātā / yeṣāṁ loka imāḥ prajāḥ*

sapta—the seven; *mahāṛṣayaḥ*—great sages; *tathā*—and; *pūrve*—before (them); *catvāraḥ*—the four Kumāras headed by Sanaka; *mad-bhāvāḥ*—are born from Me; *manavaḥ*—the *manvantara* avatāras headed by Svāyambhuva Manu; *jātāḥ*—born; *mānasāḥ*—from My mind; *yeṣām*—from whom are generated; *imāḥ*—all the; *prajāḥ*—living beings; *loke*—within this world.

The seven *maharṣis*, such as Marīci; before them the four *brahmaṛṣis*, such as Sanaka; and the fourteen Manus, such as Svāyambhuva are all born from My form of Hiraṇyagarbha, through My mind. This human race has been populated with their progeny or disciples, such as *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

After explaining that those with attributes such as intelligence, knowledge and freedom from anxiety are incapable of comprehending His *tattva-jñāna*, Śrī Bhagavān again explains the reality of their deficiencies. In other words, these qualities come from Kṛṣṇa alone. Kṛṣṇa is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *maharṣayah*. “The seven *maharṣis* such as Marīci and, before them, the four Kumāras and the fourteen Manus such as Svāyambhuva are all born from Me, that is, from My form of Hiraṇyagarbha. They are born from My mind. The earth is populated with *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas* who are the sons, grandsons, disciples and grand-disciples of Marīci, Sanaka and so on.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here, Śrī Bhagavān is giving the genealogical synopsis of the universe which is born from Him. Brahmā, who was born from the energy of Mahāviṣṇu known as Hiraṇyagarbha, was the first *jīva* in this universe. The four Kumāras—Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana and Sanat-kumāra—were the first to come from Brahmā. Then came the seven sages Bhṛgu, Marīci, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasiṣṭha, and after them the fourteen Manus—Svāyambhuva, Svārocīṣa, Uttama, Tāmasa, Raivata, Cākṣuṣa, Vaivasvata, Sāvarṇi, Dakṣasāvarṇi, Brahmaśāvarṇi, Dharmasāvarṇi, Rudra-putra (Sāvarṇi), Rocya (Devasāvarṇi) and Bhautyaka (Indrasāvarṇi). They were all born from Hiraṇyagarbha, who is endowed with Kṛṣṇa’s energy. Their progeny, a chain of

disciples and grand-disciples such as *brāhmaṇas*, populated the entire world.

ŚLOKA 7

एतां विभूतिं योगञ्च मम यो वेति तत्त्वतः।
सोऽविकल्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः॥७॥

*etām vibhūtim yogam ca / mama yo vetti tattvataḥ
so 'vikalpena yogena / yujyate nātra samśayah*

sah—he; *yah*—who; *vetti*—knows; *tattvataḥ*—factually; *etām*—of this; *vibhūtim*—opulence; *mama*—of Mine; *ca*—and; *yogam*—the process of *bhakti-yoga*; *yujyate*—engages in that *yoga*; *avikalpena*—undeviatingly; *yogena*—with *jñāna-yoga*, knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's *tattvas*; *atra*—on this point; (there is) *na samśayah*—no doubt.

He who knows in truth all My *vibhūtis* and the principle of *bhakti-yoga* is endowed with unwavering *tattva-jñāna* of Me. Of this there is no doubt.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“I am achieved only by *aikāntika-bhakti*.” Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.21) states: *bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyah*. “Only My *aikāntika-bhaktas* who, by My mercy, have strong theistic faith in My statements become aware of My *tattva*.” For this reason, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *etām*. Those who know the *tattva* of the *vibhūtis* described earlier and the principles of *bhakti-yoga* are fixed in the understanding that these are the words of their Prabhu, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and are indeed the Supreme Reality. “They become endowed with *yoga* characterised by fixed knowledge of My *tattva*.” There is no doubt about this.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

There are many devatās on different planets who are appointed to maintain this universe. Among them, Brahmā, the four Kumāras, the seven sages and the progenitors are prominent. Since they were all originally born from Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, He is the grandfather of all grandfathers. With knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's *aiśvarya*, one should engage in *bhajana* to Him with fixed faith and without any doubt. Without proper knowledge of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's greatness, it is not possible to perform *ananya-bhakti* to Him.

ŚLOKA 8

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते।
इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विताः॥८॥

*aham sarvasya prabhavo / mattaḥ sarvam pravarttate
iti matvā bhajante mām / budhā bhāva-samanvitāḥ*

aham—I (am); *prabhavah*—the source; *sarvasya*—of all creation; *sarvam*—everything; *pravarttate*—emanates; *mattaḥ*—from Me; *budhāḥ*—learned persons; *matvā*—having comprehended; *iti*—thus; *bhāva-samanvitāḥ*—filled with ecstasy; *bhajante*—worship; *mām*—Me.

I am the source of both mundane and spiritual worlds. Everything emanates from Me. The wise who know this well engage in My *bhajana* with *bhāva* in their hearts.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

While explaining His *vibhūtis* (majestic features), which are characterised by supreme *aiśvarya*, Śrī Bhagavān says, "I am the original cause and the source of everything material and spiritual. Inspired by My *Antaryāmī svarūpa*, the whole universe engages in work, and by the inspiration coming from

My avatāras such as Nārada, all become engaged in the sādhana (practice) of *bhakti*, *jñāna*, *tapasyā* and *karma*, etc., and the sādhyā (attainment of the respective goals).” In defining *aikāntika bhakti-yoga*, Śrī Bhagavān says: *iti matvā*. “Being fixed in this type of theistic knowledge and endowed with *bhāvas* such as *dāsyā* and *sakhya* (servitorship and friendship), those who perform My *bhajana* are *pañditas* (those who know the essence of the *Vedas*).”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the origin of both mundane and spiritual creations. Such *tattva-jñāna* is undoubtedly attainable from the instructions and mercy of the *tattva-vit* Vaiṣṇavas. Only with the help of such transcendental knowledge (*tattva-jñāna*), can the thoughts of *sādhus* become fixed in *śuddha-bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. One cannot acquire pure *tattva-jñāna* by receiving the instruction that has come from modern concocted commentaries which are devoid of *bhakti*, by hearing from bewildered so-called *gurus* who are bereft of *tattva-jñāna*, or by receiving the instructions of so-called *bhaktas*. This is also confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.7.50):

*aham brahmā ca śarvaś ca / jagataḥ kāraṇam param
ātmeśvara upadraṣṭā / svayam-dṛg aviśeṣanah*

Lord Viṣṇu replied: Brahmā, Śiva and I are the supreme cause of the material manifestation. I am the Supersoul and the self-sufficient witness. But in one sense we are non-different because everything rests in Me.

The *Varāha Purāṇa* also states:

*nārāyaṇah paro devas / tasmāj jātaś caturmukhah
tasmād rudro 'bhavad devah / sa ca sarva-jñatāṁ gataḥ*

Śrī Nārāyaṇa is the Supreme Lord and from Him alone Brahmā, Rudra, etc., are born. Nārāyaṇa is omniscient.

This Nārāyaṇa is the *vaibhāva-vilāsa* of Kṛṣṇa. Elsewhere in the Vedas, Kṛṣṇa is also described as the son of Devakī: *brahmaṇyo devakī-putrāḥ* (*Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* 4).

ŚLOKA 9

मच्चित्ता मदगतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम्।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च॥१९॥

*mac-cittā mad-gata-prāṇā / bodhayantah parasparam
kathayantaś ca mām nityam / tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca*

mat-cittāḥ—those whose thoughts are about Me; *mat-gata-prāṇāḥ*—whose every life-breath is dedicated to Me; *nityam tuṣyanti*—they always experience satisfaction; *ca*—and; *ramanti*—take delight; (from) *bodhayantah*—enlightening; *parasparam*—each other; *ca*—and; *kathayantah*—conversing; *mām*—about Me.

Those whose minds are absorbed in Me and whose lives are wholeheartedly devoted to My service derive great satisfaction and bliss from constantly enlightening one another about My *tattva* and performing *kīrtana* of My *nāma*, *rūpa*, *guṇa* and *līlā*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“By My mercy, only *ananya-bhaktas* attain *buddhi-yoga* and, although *tattva-jñāna*, which is enriched by the above-mentioned characteristics is difficult to conceive, they attain it. *Mac-cittāḥ* refers to those whose minds are attracted to tasting the sweetness of My *nāma*, *rūpa*, *guṇa* and *līlā*. *Mad-gata-prāṇāḥ* refers to those who cannot maintain their lives without Me, just as a person cannot maintain his life without food. *Bodhayantah* means that such people enlighten each other about the *svarūpa* and *tattva* of *bhakti* and with great affection contribute to one another’s spiritual progress. *Mām* means ‘I am a great ocean of the sweetest *rūpa*, *guṇa* and

līlā.’ They attain bliss while describing and loudly chanting about My sweet *rūpa*, *guṇa* and so on.” In this way, *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam* and *smaraṇam* are superior to all other processes of *bhakti*. *Ananya-bhaktas* only attain satisfaction and bliss by performing this type of *bhakti*. This is the secret. In other words, they also attain satisfaction during *sādhana-daśā*, as they perform unobstructed *bhajana*. During *sādhyā-daśā*, they enjoy with Kṛṣṇa within their mind by remembering their perfect state. Śrī Bhagavān’s statements here describe *rāgānuga-bhakti* only.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In the present *śloka*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is explaining the nature of His *ananya-bhaktas* and their practice of *bhakti*. Here the word *mad-gata-prāṇāḥ* means, “My *bhaktas* are unable to maintain their lives without Me, just as fish cannot remain alive without water.” If a fish comes out of the water on to the beach with a desire to achieve happiness, it will certainly die immediately. In the same way, the *jīvas* who are averse to Śrī Hari are as good as dead, even while in these bodies.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “The character of those whose minds are exclusively devoted is as follows: By completely offering their minds and lives unto Me, they mutually exchange their *bhāvas* and remain engaged in glorifying My *līlās* and so forth. In this way, by *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam* they attain the happiness of *bhakti*. In their *sādhyā* stage, that is, after attaining pure *prema*, which is accessible only through *rāga-mārga*, they experience the pleasure of enjoying with Me within *vraja-rasa*, culminating in the *bhāva* of *madhura-rasa*.”

ŚLOKA 10

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम्।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते॥१०॥

*teṣām satata-yuktānām / bhajatām prīti-pūrvakam
dadāmi buddhi-yogam tam / yena mām upayānti te*

teṣām—for those; *bhajatām*—who worship Me; *prīti-pūrvakam*—with love; (and) *satata-yuktānām*—who desire My eternal connection; *dadāmi*—I bestow; *tam*—that; *buddhi-yogam*—transcendental knowledge; *yena*—whereby; *te*—they; *upayānti*—approach; *mām*—Me.

Upon those who perform *bhajana* to Me with love, yearning for My eternal association, I bestow the transcendental knowledge by which they can come to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“So, they attain satisfaction and bliss. According to Your statement, Your *bhaktas* attain supreme bliss only by performing *bhakti* to You. It is therefore clear that they are beyond the *guṇas*. But how do they get direct realisation of You and from whom do they learn the process to achieve it?” Anticipating this question from Arjuna, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *teṣām*. “I Myself inspire all of the natural tendencies within the hearts of those who desire My eternal association so that they achieve this. This *buddhi-yoga* cannot be achieved by individual effort or obtained from someone. It is bestowed by Me alone and only such loving *bhaktas* are qualified to receive it. After being blessed with this *buddhi-yoga*, they achieve Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

This *śloka* explains how *ananya-bhaktas* attain direct realisation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa says, “To those who continuously perform My *bhajana* with love, I Myself grant *buddhi-yoga* by which they easily attain direct realisation of Me.” It is also said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.28.41):

*sākṣād bhagavatoktena / guruṇā hariṇā nṛpa
viśuddha-jñāna-dīpena / sphuratā viśvato-mukham*

O King, as the *guru* of Malayadhwaja, Bhagavān Himself illuminated his heart with the light of knowledge.

This is also explained in *Vedānta-sūtra* (3.8.48): *viśeṣānugrhaḥ ca*. “One can only see Kṛṣṇa by His mercy.”

SŁOKA 11

तेषाम् एवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानं तमः ।
नाशयास्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥११॥

*teṣām evānukampārtham / aham ajñāna-jam tamah
nāśayāmy ātma-bhāva-stho / jñāna-dīpena bhāsvatā*

eva—only; *anukampa-artha*—out of compassion; *teṣām*—for them; *aham*—I; *ātma-bhāva-sthah*—situated within the intelligence of the *jīvātmā*; *nāśayāmi*—destroy; *bhāsvatā*—with the blazing; *jñāna-dīpena*—lamp of transcendental knowledge; *tamah*—the darkness; *ajñāna-jam*—born of ignorance.

Only out of compassion for these *ananya-bhaktas* do I, dwelling within the core of their hearts, destroy, with the blazing lamp of transcendental knowledge, the darkness of *samsāra*, born of ignorance.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna may ask, “Surely, You cannot be achieved by a person who has not acquired real knowledge (*vidyā-vṛtti*). That

is why one will endeavour for *vidyā*.” In response, Śrī Bhagavān says, “No, No. I am explaining how I bless only My *ananya-bhaktas*, not *yogīs* or others. I Myself am always enthusiastic to give My mercy to them so they need not undergo any anxiety to achieve it. Entering the core of their intelligence (*ātma-bhāva-sthāḥ*), I dispel the darkness of their hearts with the lamp of knowledge (*jñāna-dipena*). That *jñāna* which enlightens one about Me is not *sāttvika*; it is *nirguṇa*. And because this *jñāna* is born from *bhakti*, it is special, even within the category of *nirguṇa-jñāna*. Only with the lamp of this particular *jñāna* do I destroy the darkness in their hearts. Therefore, why should they endeavour for this? For those who are exclusively devoted to Me, I carry their maintenance and their requirements.” In accordance with this statement of *Gītā* (9.22), Śrī Bhagavān accepts the burden of satisfying all of the material and spiritual needs of his *ananya-bhaktas*.

The above four *ślokas* of *Gītā* are famous as the essence of *Bhagavad-gītā*. They are all-auspicious and dispel the *jīva*’s misery, which is born of ignorance.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Although *jñānīs* and *yogīs* try to attain knowledge by the power of their own intelligence, they remain unsuccessful. Only the *ananya-bhaktas* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa who take exclusive shelter of Him can easily attain knowledge of Him by His mercy. And since the *bhaktas* cannot maintain their lives without Kṛṣṇa, they are the supreme object of His mercy. Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying: “Being pleased by their *aikāntika bhāva*, I bestow upon them complete mercy and also inspire their intelligence, just as I care for their *yoga* and *kṣema*. The full responsibility for their maintenance is solely Mine. They do not need to endeavour for anything.”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “In this way, ignorance cannot remain within those who engage in the process of *bhakti-yoga*. Some think that only those who try to search after *tad-vastu* (the Absolute Reality) by sequentially eliminating that which is *atāt* (non-real), according to the principle of negation (*neti-neti*), attain true knowledge, and that those who simply cultivate the process of *bhakti* are unable to attain such rare *jñāna*. O Arjuna, the basic idea is that the insignificant *jīva* can never attain real *tattva-jñāna* merely on the strength of his own intelligence. No matter how much he deliberates, he can never achieve even a particle of pure *jñāna*. But if I bless him, then even an insignificant *jīva* can easily acquire complete and thorough transcendental knowledge by the influence of My *acintya-sakti*. Simply by dwelling within the hearts of My *ananya-bhaktas*, I easily enlighten them with the lamp of transcendental knowledge. By special mercy, I become situated in their hearts and completely destroy the darkness born of ignorance which arises from mundane association. It is the right of the *jīva* to acquire that pure knowledge which appears only by the process of *bhakti-yoga*, not by reasoning.”

Just as the essence of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is contained within four *slokas* (2.9.31-34) spoken directly by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Brahmā, in the same way, the above four *slokas* (10.8-11) are the essence of Bhagavad-gītā. Hence, they are popularly known as *catuh-slokī Gītā*. The essence of Gītā as described in these four *slokas* is *bhakti*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is personally explaining the nature of *ananya-bhakti* to Arjuna. When the *sādhaka* takes shelter of *ananya-bhakti*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa bestows His mercy upon him so that he can easily cross the ocean of material existence and become eligible to enter His *rasamayī bhakti* (*bhakti* characterised by five primary mellites) in the land of Vraja.

ŚLOKAS 12-13

अर्जुन उवाच—

परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान्।
पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादिदेवमजं विभुम्॥१२॥
आहुस्त्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिनर्दस्तथा।
असितो देवलो व्यासः स्वयञ्चैव ब्रवीषि मे॥१३॥

arjuna uvāca

*param brahma param dhāma / pavitram paramam bhavān
puruṣam śāśvatam divyam / ādi-devam ajam vibhum
āhus tvām ṛṣayah sarve / devarṣir nāradas tathā
asito devalo vyāsaḥ / svayam caiva braviṣi me*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *bhavān*—Your Lordship; (*is*) *param brahma*—the supreme spirit; *param dhāma*—the supreme abode; *paramam pavitram*—the supremely pure; *śāśvatam*—the eternal; *divyam*—divine; *puruṣam*—person; *ādi-devam*—the original God; *ajam*—unborn; *vibhum*—all-pervasive; *sarve*—all; *ṛṣayah*—the sages; *āhuḥ*—speak; *tathā*—in this way; *tvām*—of You; *tathā*—also; *deva-ṛṣih*—sage among the gods; *nāradah*—Nārada, the giver of Nāra (Bhagavān); *asitah*—Asita; *devalah*—Devala; *vyāsaḥ*—Veda-vyāsa; *ca*—and; *eva*—indeed; *svayam*—You yourself; *braviṣi*—are speaking it; *me*—to me.

Arjuna said: I know that You are the Supreme Absolute Truth and the Supreme Abode. You are supremely pure and the destroyer of the impurity of ignorance. The great ṛsis such as Devarṣi Nārada, Asita, Devala and Vyāsa also glorify You as the eternal Personality, transcendental and primeval Lord who is unborn and omnipresent. Now You Yourself are saying this to me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna now speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *param* with a desire to hear in detail the meaning of what was previously described in brief. *Param* means the highest and *dhāma* means ‘You are *parama-brahma*, having the beautiful form of Śyāmasundara.’ According to the *Amara-koṣa* dictionary, *gṛha* (home), *deha* (body), *tviṭ* (complexion), *prabhāva* (glory) and *dhāma* (abode) are all synonymous. “You are that very *dhāma*. Unlike the *jīvas*, there is no difference between You and Your body.” What is the *svarūpa* of that *dhāma*? In response Śrī Bhagavān says: *pavitram-paramam*. “Whoever sees the *svarūpa* of this form becomes free from the impurity of ignorance.” Therefore, the sages call You *śāsvatam puruṣam āhuḥ* (the eternal person) and glorify the eternal nature of Your human form.

ŚLOKA 14

सर्वमेतदृतं मन्ये यन्मा वदसि केशव।
न हि ते भगवन् व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवाः॥१४॥

*sarvam etad ṛtam manye / yan mām vadasi keśava
na hi te bhagavan vyaktim / vidur devā na dānavāḥ*

keśava—O Keśava; *manyē*—I consider; *sarvam*—all; *etat*—that; *yat*—which; *vadasi*—You are saying; *mām*—to me; (to be) *ṛtam*—truth; *bhagavān*—O all-opulent Lord; *hi*—certainly; *na*—neither; *devāḥ*—the gods; *na*—nor; *dānavāḥ*—the demons; *viduḥ*—comprehend; *te*—Your; *vyaktim*—personality.

O Keśava, I accept all that You have told me to be true. Neither the *devas* nor the *dānavas* comprehend the *tattva* of Your birth.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Arjuna says, “I have no doubt about this. Other ḥyāsi consider You who are the Supreme Absolute Truth, possessor of the eternal, beautiful form of Śyāmasundara (*parabrahma-dhāma*) to be unborn, but they do not know about Your *vyaktim* (birth). They do not know how it is possible for You, *parabrahma*, to simultaneously take birth and not take birth. You say, ‘The *devas* and the *maharśis* do not know about My appearance’ (*Gītā* 10.12), but I accept everything You tell me as truth. O Keśava! *Ka* refers to Brahmā and *iśa* refers to Rudra. Since You have even bound these two personalities with ignorance regarding Your *tattva* and appearance, it is not surprising that the other *devas* and the *dānavas* also cannot know You.”

ŚLOKA 15

स्वयमेवात्मनात्मानं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तमा।
भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते॥१५॥

*svayam evātmanātma-nām / vettha tvam puruṣottama
bhūta-bhāvana bhūteśa / deva-deva jagat-pate*

puruṣa-uttama—O Supreme Person; *bhūta-bhāvana*—controller of all; *bhūta-iśa*—Lord of all created beings; *deva-deva*—God of gods; *jagat-pate*—Master of the cosmic manifestation; *eva*—only; *tvam svayam*—You, Yourself; *vettha*—know; *ātmānam*—Yourself; *ātmanā*—through Your own potency.

O Puruṣottama, Supreme Person! O Bhūta-bhāvana, Creator of beings! O Bhūteśa, Lord of all created beings! O Deva-deva, God of gods! O Jagat-pate, Master of the universe! You alone know Yourself by Your own potency.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Thus You alone know Yourself. The word *eva* establishes that Your *bhaktas* know the *tattva* of Your being unborn yet taking birth. This is inconceivable. But why is it that even they are not in full knowledge of this? Only You know Yourself by Your *cit-śakti* and not by any other means. Therefore, *tvaṁ puruṣottama*, You are the best of persons, superior even to the creator of the *mahā-tattva*, Mahāviṣṇu. You are not only the best but You are *bhūta-bhāvana*, the controller of everyone up to the great Grandsire Brahmā. You are not only the controller but also the *Deva* amongst the *devas* as You sport with the *devas* such as Brahmā and Śiva, who are like Your pastime instruments. Furthermore, You are Jagat-pate, the Master of the universe. Out of Your unlimited compassion, You are the Master of all *jīvas* like me, who are living in this material world.”

The four invocations in this *śloka* are merely an explanation of the word *puruṣottama*. For example, ‘O Bhūtabhāvana, You are the father of all living beings.’ Sometimes, someone may be a father but he does not control his offspring. But, O Bhūteśa, You are the controller of all living beings. Someone may be the controller of living entities and not be worshipable, but You, Deva-deva, are worshipable even for the *devas*. And someone may possess all of these qualities and still fail to maintain other living entities, but, O Jagat-pate, You alone maintain the universe.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Desiring to hear in detail the *vibhūtis* of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna speaks in support of His statements by saying, “Only You know the glory of Your *acintya-tattva* (inconceivable reality). Nobody, including *devas*, *dānavas* or humans, can know even a particle of Your glories by their

independent endeavour. Only *ananya-bhaktas* can know something of it by Your mercy. For this reason, I beg You to please be merciful to me.”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Arjuna as saying, “O Bhūta-bhāvana! O Bhūteśa! O Deva-deva! O Jagat-pate! O Puruṣottama! Only You, by Your own *cit-śakti* know about Your own personality and the *tattva* of Your birth. Devas and humans can never understand by their own intelligence how Your eternal form, which exists even before creation, becomes manifest in this inert world while at the same time remaining independent from the laws of this world. Only those upon whom You bestow Your mercy can understand this.”

ŚLOKA 16

वक्तुमहर्स्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः।
याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि॥१६॥

vaktum arhasy ašeṣeṇa / divyā hy ātma-vibhūtayah
yābhīr vibhūtibhir lokān / imāṁs tvam vyāpya tiṣṭhasi

hi—certainly; *arhasi*—You ought; *vaktum*—to explain; *ašeṣeṇa*—fully; *divyāḥ ātma-vibhūtayah*—Your own divine opulences; *yābhīḥ*—with which; *vibhūtibhiḥ*—opulences; *vyāpya*—by (Your) all-pervasive quality; *tvam tiṣṭhasi*—You reside; *imān*—in these; *lokān*—worlds.

Please describe to me in full Your majestic opulences, by which You pervade and reside in all of these worlds.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Your *tattva* is very difficult to understand. I am now inquisitive to know about Your *vibhūtis*. If you say that those divine opulences cannot be explained in full, at least please tell me about Your superior *vibhūtis*.”

ŚLOKA 17

कथं विद्यामहं योगिंस्त्वा॑ं सदा॒ परिचिन्तयन्।
केषु॑ केषु॑ च भावेषु॑ चिन्त्योऽसि॑ भगवन्मया॥१७॥

*katham vidyām aham yogīṁs / tvām sadā paricintayan
keṣu keṣu ca bhāveṣu / cintyo 'si bhagavan mayā*

yogin—O person possessing supernatural powers; *katham*—how?; *aham* *vidyām*—may I know; (and) *sadā*—always; *paricintayan*—contemplate; *tvām*—You; *bhagavan*—O all-opulent Personality; *ca*—and; *keṣu keṣu*—in what various?; *bhāveṣu*—states of existence; *asi*—are You; *cintyah*—to be contemplated; *maya*—by me.

O Supreme Mystic, possessor of the *yogamāyā-śakti*, how shall I know You and constantly think of You? O Bhagavān, upon which of Your forms and in what mood am I to meditate?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna says, “O Yogin, by which means can I constantly know You while fully meditating on You? In *Gītā* (18.55), You say, ‘Only by *bhakti* can one know the truth of My supremacy and My *svarūpa*.’ So now I would like to know upon which of Your forms I should devotedly meditate and with what vision?” [The word *yogin* (the abode of *yogamāyā*) is likened to the word *vanamālī* (He who wears a forest garland), which can refer only to Kṛṣṇa. It is a qualifying adjective used only for a special person. It is not that each and every person who wears a forest garland can be called *vanamālī*. Similarly, one who possesses the *yogamāyā-śakti* is called *yogin*. This exclusively refers to Kṛṣṇa.]

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Having requested Śrī Bhagavān in the previous *śloka* to describe His *vibhūtis*, Arjuna specifically prays in this *śloka* to understand in which objects and forms His *vibhūtis* exist. *Yogamāyā*, who can make the impossible possible, is always residing with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. For this reason, Arjuna addresses Him as *yogin*, the abode of *yogamāyā*. Only Kṛṣṇa is able to describe His *vibhūtis*. This is being indicated here.

ŚLOKA 18

विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिञ्च जनार्दनं।
भूयः कथय तृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति मेऽमृतम्॥१८॥

*vistareṇātmano yogam / vibhūtiñ ca janārdana
bhūyah kathaya trptir hi / śṛṇvato nāsti me 'mṛtam*

janārdana—O inspirer of the people; *kathaya*—speak; *bhūyah*—further; *vistareṇa*—in detail; *ātmanah*—of Your personal; *yogam*—mystic powers; *ca*—and; *vibhūtim*—opulences; *hi*—certainly; *me*—for me; *na asti*—there is no; *trptih*—satiation point; *śṛṇvataḥ*—while hearing; (this) *amṛtam*—nectar.

O Janārdana, please tell me again in detail about Your mystic powers and *vibhūtis*, for I am not satisfied by hearing Your nectar-filled words.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

"In *Gītā* (10.8), You say: *aham sarvasya prabhavo mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate*, 'I am the source of all worlds, both mundane and spiritual. Everything emanates from Me,' and: *iti matvā bhajante mām*, 'Knowing Me in this way, *paṇḍitas* who know the essence of the *Vedas*, render loving service unto Me.' You say that all aspects of being are produced by Your divine and splendid energies and that *paṇḍitas* engage in Your

bhajana through *bhakti-yoga*. O Janārdana, the sweetness of Your beneficial instructions has created a greed in me and now I yearn for a more detailed description (*vistareṇa*). In this regard, what can I do? Having tasted the nectar of Your instructions through my ears, I am not feeling satisfied. Therefore, please explain Your *vibhūtis* again in detail.”

ŚLOKA 19

श्रीभगवानुवाच—
 हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः।
 प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे॥१९॥

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
 hanta te kathayiṣyāmi / divyā hy ātma-vibhūtayah
 prādhānyataḥ kuru-śreṣṭha / nāsty anto vistarasya me

śrī-bhagavān—the resplendent and all-opulent Personality of Godhead; *uvāca*—said; *kuru-śreṣṭha*—O best of the Kurus; *hanta*—yes; *hi kathayiṣyāmi*—I shall certainly describe; *te*—to you; *divyāḥ*—My divine; *ātma-vibhūtayah*—personal opulences; *prādhānyataḥ*—selecting the chief opulences; (for) *na asti*—there is no; *antah*—limit; *me*—to My; *vistarasya*—extensive (glories).

Śrī Bhagavān said: O best of the Kurus, yes, I shall certainly describe My divine opulences to you, but only those which are prominent, there being no limit to My glories.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

The word *hanta* in this *śloka* indicates compassion. Śrī Bhagavān says, “I will only explain My prominent glories because there is no end to their variety.” *Vibhūtayah* means the host of *vibhūtis*. The word *divyā* signifies, “I will only speak of My superior glories, not insignificant ones such as blades

of grass.” Here, the word *vibhūti* implies both material as well as spiritual objects. They are all generated from Bhagavān’s energy and should be meditated upon in relation to Him according to the various degrees of their respective states of being.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Having heard Arjuna’s request for a description of *vibhūti-yoga*, Bhagavān answers with the word *hanta*, thus showing great compassion to him. Indicating that it is impossible to describe His unlimited *vibhūtis*, He says that He will explain the most prominent among them for Arjuna’s sake. Because these *vibhūtis* directly originate from His *sakti*, they should be understood in relation to Bhagavān. He is eternally present in His two-handed Śyāmasundara form as the source of all these *vibhūtis*, although He is distinct from them. After describing these *vibhūtis*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa concludes by saying, “Only by one of My portions (*amṛta*) do I pervade this whole universe of moving and non-moving beings. I do not pervade it by My complete Self.” Whatever exists in this world that is glorious emanates from His *sakti*. One should understand this topic in this way.

It is clear from the above statements of Kṛṣṇa that the *svarūpa* of Bhagavān exists independently of these *vibhūtis*, and that this *svarūpa* is indeed Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

ŚLOKA 20

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।
अहमादिश्च मध्यञ्च भूतानामन्त एव च॥२०॥

*aham ātmā guḍākeśa / sarva-bhūtāśaya-sthitah
aham ādiś ca madhyam ca / bhūtānām anta eva ca*

guḍāka-iśa—O controller of sleep; *aham*—I (am); *ātmā*—the Supersoul; *sthitah*—seated; *āśaya*—in the hearts; *sarva-bhūta*—of all beings; *eva*—certainly; *aham*—I (am); *ca*—also; *ādiḥ*—the beginning; *madhyam*—the middle; *ca*—and; *antah*—the end; *bhūtānām*—of all beings.

O Guḍākeśa, I am Antaryāmī who resides within the heart of every *jīva*, and I alone am the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of all beings.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

Śrī Bhagavān says, “O Arjuna, you should understand that it is only by one of My portions that I am the cause of all *vibhūtis*.” Here the word *ātmā* means the Antaryāmī of the original *prakṛti*, the *puruṣa-avatāra* Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, who creates the *mahat-tattva*. Guḍākeśa means one who has control over sleep. By using this word, Śrī Bhagavān indicates that Arjuna is capable of meditating. “I am also the Supersoul of the complete creation, *sarva-bhūtāśaya-sthitah*.” *Sarva-bhūta* means Vairāja or Brahmā. “I am Antaryāmī situated within the heart of Vairāja or Brahmā; in other words, I am the Supersoul of the complete creation, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. Because I am also situated within the heart of every *jīva*, I am also the individual Supersoul, Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. I alone am the beginning (birth), middle (existence) and end (the cause of annihilation) of the *jīvas* and the elements.”

ŚLOKA 21

आदित्यानामहं विष्णुज्योतिषां रविरंशुमान्।
मरीचिर्मरुतामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी॥२१॥

ādityānām aham viṣṇur / jyotiṣām ravir aṁśumān
marīcir marutām asmi / nakṣatrāṇām aham śaśī

ādityānām—of the Ādityas; *aham*—I (am); *viṣṇu*—Viṣṇu, the all pervasive one; *jyotiṣām*—of luminaries; (I am) *amśumān*—the radiant; *ravih*—sun; *marutām*—of the Maruts (wind gods); *asmi*—I am; *marīciḥ*—Marīci; *nakṣatrāṇām*—of the stars; *aham*—I (am); *śaśī*—the moon.

Of the twelve Ādityas I am Viṣṇu, who is My *vibhūti*. Among luminaries I am the radiant sun, of the Maruts I am Marīci, and among stars I am the moon.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“Among the twelve Ādityas I am Viṣṇu. Among the luminaries everywhere I am *amśu-mān*, the radiant sun, also known as Viṣṇu. This is My *vibhūti*. And I am Marīci, a special variety of wind.”

ŚLOKA 22

**वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासवः।
इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतना॥२२॥**

*vedānām sāma-vedo 'smi / devānām asmi vāsavah
indriyāṇām manaś cāsmi / bhūtānām asmi cetanā*

vedānām—of the Vedas; *asmi*—I am; *sāma-vedah*—the Sāma-veda; *devānām*—of gods; *asmi*—I am; *vāsavah*—Indra; *ca*—and; *indriyāṇām*—of the senses; *asmi*—I am; *manah*—the mind; (and) *bhūtānām*—in living beings; *asmi*—I am; *cetanā*—consciousness.

Of the Vedas I am the *Sāma-veda*, among the *devatās* I am Indra, of the senses I am the mind, and I am consciousness in the *jīvas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

The word *vāsavaḥ* means Indra, *bhūtānām* means that which is related to the *jīvas* and *cetanā* means consciousness or knowledge potency.

ŚLOKA 23

**रुद्राणां शङ्करश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम्।
वसूनां पावकश्चास्मि मेरुः शिखरिणामहम्॥२३॥**

*rudrāṇām ūñkaraś cāsmi / vitteśo yakṣa-rakṣasām
vasūnām pāvakaś cāsmi / meruh śikhariṇām aham*

rudrāṇām—of Rudras; *asmi*—I am; *ūñkaraḥ*—Śaṅkara; *ca*—and; *yakṣa-rakṣasām*—of yakṣas and rakṣasas; *vitta-īśah*—the lord of wealth, Kuvera; *vasūnām*—of the Vasus; *asmi*—I am; *pāvakaḥ*—fire; *ca*—and; *śikhariṇām*—of peaked mountains; *aham*—I (am); *meruh*—Mount Meru.

Of all the Rudras I am Śaṅkara, of the Yakṣas and Rakṣasas I am Kuvera, of the eight Vasus I am Agni, and among mountains I am Sumeru.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

The word *vitta-īśah* means Kuvera, the lord of wealth.

ŚLOKA 24

**पुरोधसाज्ज्व मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ बृहस्पतिम्।
सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः सरसामस्मि सागरः॥२४॥**

*purodhasāñ ca mukhyam mām / viddhi pārtha bṛhaspatim
senānīnām ahaṁ skandah / sarasām asmi sāgarah*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *purodhasām*—of priests; *viddhi*—know; *mām*—Me; (*to be*) *mukhyam*—the chief; *bṛhaspatim*—Bṛhaspati; *ca*—and; *senānīnām*—of generals; *aham*—I (am); *skandah*—

Kārtikeya; *sarasām*—of reservoirs of water; *asmi*—I am; *sāgarah*—the ocean.

O Pārtha, of priests know Me to be Bṛhaspati, the chief. Of generals I am Kārtikeya, and among reservoirs of water I am the ocean.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

The word *skandah* refers to Kārtikeya.

ŚLOKA 25

महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्येकमक्षरम्।
यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालयः॥२५॥

*maharṣīṇāṁ bhṛgur aham / girām asmy ekam akṣaram
yajñānāṁ japa-yajño 'smi / sthāvarāṇāṁ himālayah*

mahā-ṛṣīṇām—of great sages; *aham asmi*—I am; *bhṛguḥ*—Bṛgu; *girām*—of utterances; (*I am*) *ekam-akṣaram*—the one (all-pervasive) syllable *om̄*; *yajñānām*—of sacrifices; *asmi*—I am; *japa-yajñah*—the sacrifice of *japa*; *sthāvarāṇām*—of non-moving things; (*I am*) *himālayah*—the Himalayan mountains.

Among *mahaṛsis* I am Bṛgu, of utterances I am the syllable *om̄*, of sacrifices I am *japa-yajña*, and among non-moving objects I am the Himalayan mountains.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

The words *ekam akṣaram* mean *praṇava om̄*.

ŚLOKA 26

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणाज्य नारदः।
गन्धवर्णाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः॥२६॥

aśvatthah sarva-vṛkṣāṇāṁ / devarśīṇāñ ca nāradah
gandharvāṇāṁ citrarathah / siddhānāṁ kapilo munih

sarva-vṛkṣāṇām—of all trees; (I am) *aśvatthah*—the banyan; *ca*—and; *deva-ṛṣīṇām*—of celestial sages; (I am) *nāradah*—Nārada Ṛṣi; *gandharvāṇām*—of Gandharvas; (I am) *citrarathah*—Citraratha; *siddhānām*—of perfected beings; (I am) *munih*—the ascetic; *kapilah*—Kapila.

Of trees I am the banyan, of *devarśis* I am Nārada, of Gandharvas I am Citraratha, and among perfected beings I am Kapila Muni.

SLOKA 27

उच्चैःश्रवसमश्वानां विद्धि माममृतोद्घवम्।
ऐरावतं गजेन्द्राणां नराणाञ्च नराधिपम्॥२७॥

uccaiḥśravasam aśvānām / viddhi mām amṛtodbhavam
airāvataṁ gajendrāṇām / narāṇāñ ca narādhipam

aśvānām—of horses; *viddhi*—know; *mām*—Me; *uccaiḥśravasa*—as Uccaiḥśravā; *amṛta-udbhavam*—born of the ocean of nectar; *gajendrāṇām*—of elephants; (I am) *airāvatam*—Airāvata; *ca*—and; *narāṇām*—of men; (I am) *nara-adhipam*—the lord of men (the king).

Of horses know Me to be Uccaiḥśravā, born from the churning of nectar, among elephants I am Airāvata, and among men I am the king.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Amṛtodbhavam means born from the churning of nectar.

SLOKA 28

आयुधानामहं वज्रं धैर्यनामस्मि कामधुक्।
प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दपः सर्पणामस्मि वासुकिः॥२८॥

āyudhānām aham vajram / dhenūnām asmi kāmadhuk
prajanaś cāsmi kandarpaḥ / sarpaṇām asmi vāsukih

āyudhānām—of weapons; *aham*—I; *asmi*—am; *vajram*—the thunderbolt; *ca*—and; *dhenūnām*—of cows; (*I am*) *kāmadhuk*—the wish-fulfilling cow; *asmi*—I am; *prajanaḥ*—the (famed) procreator; *kandarpaḥ*—Cupid; *sarpaṇām*—of snakes; *asmi*—I am; *vāsukiḥ*—Vāsuki.

Among weapons I am the thunderbolt, and of cows I am Kāmadhenu, the wish-fulfilling cow. I am the god of love, Kandarpa, who causes procreation, and among snakes I am Vāsuki.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *kāmadhuk* means *kāmadhenu*. Among procreators I am indeed, Kandarpa (Cupid), who causes the birth of living beings.

ŚLOKA 29

अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम्।
पितॄणामर्यमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम्॥२९॥

*anantaś cāsmi nāgānām / varuṇo yādasām aham
pitṛṇām aryamā cāsmi / yamaḥ saṃyamatām aham*

ca—and; *nāgānām*—of divine serpents; *asmi*—I am; *anantah*—Ananta; *yādasām*—of aquatics; (*I am*) *varuṇaḥ*—Varuṇa, lord of the waters; *ca*—and; *pitṛṇām*—of ancestors; *aham asmi*—I am; *aryamā*—Aryamā; *saṃyamatām*—of chastisers; *aham*—I (am); *yamaḥ*—Yamarāja.

Of Nāgas I am the divine serpent Ananta, among aquatics I am Varuṇa, lord of the waters, of the ancestors I am Aryamā, and of chastisers I am Yamarāja.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Here *yādasām*, means of the aquatics. *Samyamatām* means of those who give punishment.

ŚLOKA 30

**प्रह्लादश्चास्मि दैत्यानां कालः कलयतामहम्।
मृगाणांच्च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं वैनेतेयश्च पक्षिणाम्॥३०॥**

*prahlādaś cāsmi daityānām / kālah kalayatām aham
mṛgāṇāñ ca mṛgendro 'ham / vainateyaś ca pakṣiṇām*

daityānām—of *daityas* (the demonic descendants of Diti); *aham asmi*—I am; *prahlādah*—Prahlāda; *ca*—and; *kalayatām*—of controllers; (*I am*) *kālah*—time; *ca*—and; *mṛgāṇām*—of beasts; (*I am*) *mṛga-indrah*—the chief of beasts, the lion; *pakṣiṇām*—of birds; *aham*—I (am); *vainateyah*—the son of Vinatā, Garuḍa.

Among the *daityas* I am Prahlāda, and of controllers I am time. Of beasts I am the lion, and among birds I am Garuḍa.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

The word *kalayatām* means among the controllers, *mṛga-indrah* means lion, and *vainateyah* means Garuḍa.

ŚLOKA 31

**पवनः पवतामस्मि रामः शस्त्रभृतामहम्।
झाषाणं मकरश्चास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी॥३१॥**

*pavanaḥ pavatām asmi / rāmaḥ śastra-bhṛtām aham
jhaṣāṇāṁ makaraś cāsmi / srotasām asmi jāhnavī*

pavatām—of purifiers; *aham asmi*—I am; *pavanaḥ*—the wind; *śastra-bhṛtām*—of wielders of weapons; (*I am*) *rāmaḥ*—Paraśurāma; *jhaṣāṇām*—of aquatic creatures; *asmī*—I am;

makaraḥ—the *makara* (a fabulous marine creature); *ca*—and; *srotasām*—of rivers; *asmi*—I am; *jāhnavī*—the Gaṅgā (born from the ear of sage Jahnu).

Among that which is swift and purifying I am the wind, of wielders of weapons I am the āveśa-avatāra Paraśurāma. Among the aquatics I am the *makara*, and among all the rivers, I am Gaṅgā.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Pavatām means ‘Among the fast-moving and purifying, I am the wind.’ Here, the word *rāmaḥ* refers to Lord Paraśurāma. Because he is an āveśa-avatāra, a special *jīva* empowered by Śrī Bhagavān and endowed with His *śakti*, he is included among the *vibhūtis* of Bhagavān. In *Bhāgavatāmṛtam*, the following statement from the *Padma Purāṇa* has been cited: “O Devī, I have explained to you the entire history of the *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*, Jāmadagnya (Paraśurāma, the son of Jamadagni), the carrier of the axe.” Furthermore, Śrī Bhagavān entered Paraśurāma. *Bhāgavatāmṛtam* describes the characteristic of an āveśa-avatāra: “When Śrī Janārdana empowers an exalted *jīva* with one of His potencies such as *jñāna*, that *jīva* is counted as an āveśa-avatāra.” “Among aquatics (*jhaṣāṇām*) I am the exalted *makara*, and of rivers (*srotasām*) I am Gaṅgā.”

ŚLOKA 32

सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यञ्चैवाहमजुन्।
अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां वादः प्रवदतामहम्॥३२॥

*sargāṇām ādir antaś ca / madhyañ caivāham arjuna
adhyātma-vidyā vidyānām / vādaḥ pravadatām aham*

arjuna—O Arjuna; *sargāṇām*—of creations; *aham*—I (am); *ādiḥ*—the beginning; *antaḥ*—the end; *ca*—and; *madhyam*—the

middle; *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *vidyānām*—of processes of knowledge; (I am) *adhyātma-vidyā*—spiritual knowledge; *pravadatām*—of logical arguments; *aham*—I (am); *vādah*—the conclusion.

O Arjuna, I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all creation. Of all knowledge I am *ātma-jñāna*, and in logical debate I am *vāda*, the principle that asserts a conclusion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“That which is created, such as the sky, is called *sarga*. I am the creator (*ādi*), annihilator (*anta*) and maintainer (*madhya*) of these. Therefore, creation, maintenance and annihilation, being My *vibhūtis*, are to be meditated upon.” The statement, “I am the beginning, middle and end,” establishes that Śrī Bhagavān is the original doer (*kārttā*) behind all creation. “Of Vedic knowledge, I am *ātma-jñāna*, knowledge of the self. Within logical debate (*pravadatām*), consisting of *jalpa*, *vitaṇḍā* and *vāda* which establish one’s own point and refute the opponent’s assertion, I am *vāda*, by which the correct *siddhānta* and *tattva* are established.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In this *śloka*, Bhagavān has explained that, of the various aspects of knowledge, His *vibhūti* is *adhyātma-vidyā*, spiritual knowledge. *Vidyā* is the education which a person acquires in relation to knowable subjects by the use of his own intelligence. *Śāstra* describes eighteen types of *vidyās*. Among them, fourteen are prominent:

*aṅgāni vedaś catvāro mīmāṁsā nyāya-vistaraḥ
 dharma-śāstram purāṇaḥ ca vidyā hy etāṁ caturdaśāḥ
 āyur-vedo dhanur-vedo gāndharvāś ceti te trayah
 artha-śāstram caturthaḥ ca vidyā hy aṣṭādaśaiva tāḥ
 Viṣṇu Purāṇa*

Śikṣā, kalpa, vyākaraṇa, nirukta, jyotiṣa and chanda are the six types of knowledge known as *vedāṅga* (the limbs of the Vedas). Rg, Sāma, Yajuh and Atharva are the four Vedas. All these combined with mīmāṃsā, nyāya, dharma-śāstra and the Purāṇas comprise the fourteen chief *vidyās*.

Practice of these *vidyās* sharpens a person's intelligence and increases his various fields of knowledge. This *jñāna* not only helps a person to maintain his livelihood, but it also guides him on the path of *dharma*. However, *adhyātma-vidyā* (transcendental knowledge) gives human beings immortality, liberating them from their bondage to the material world. It gives them complete knowledge of *parabrahma*, which allows them to realise the supreme eternal reality; Thus it is superior to all the above-mentioned *vidyās*. This *adhyātma-vidyā* is Kṛṣṇa's *vibhūti*. *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Upaniṣads* are included within the category of *adhyātma-vidyā*. The *rasamayī bhakti* (*bhakti* which is filled with *rasa*) of the residents of Vraja, as described in the Tenth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, is millions of times superior to the *adhyātma-vidyā* of Uddhava. Since this *rasamayī bhakti* is the essence of the *hlādinī* and *saṁvit-śaktis* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *svarūpa*, it is truly the *svarūpa* of Kṛṣṇa, whereas *adhyātma-vidyā* is a partial *vibhūti* of *prema-bhakti*. This is also confirmed in the dialogue between Rāya Rāmānanda and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-lilā 8.245):

prabhu kahe,—”kon *vidyā* *vidyā-madhye sāra*?”
rāya kahe,—”kṛṣṇa-bhakti *vinā* *vidyā nāhi āra”*

Mahāprabhu inquired, 'Among all *vidyās*, which is the best?'

Rāya Rāmānanda replied, 'Besides kṛṣṇa-bhakti there is no other *vidyā*.'

A similar statement is made in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.29.49): *sā* *vidyā* *tan-matir yayā*. "That by which one's

intelligence becomes fixed on the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān is the only real *vidyā*."

Moreover, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.3) states:

*jñāne prayāsam udapāsy namanta eva
jīvanti san-mukharitāṁ bhavadīya-vārtām
sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatāṁ tanu-vān-manobhir
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has explained the confidential meaning of the statement *jñāne prayāsam udapāsy* in this sloka. "There are three types of knowledge that are opposed to *bhakti*, which concern the oneness of the *jīva* and *brahma*; *nirviśeṣa*, *nirākāra* and *jīva-brahma-aikyavāda jñāna*. What is more, Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is replete with six opulences: *jñāna-tvadīya-svarūpa-aiśvaryamahimā-vicāre*. From a portion of a portion of His plenary portion, this material world is created, maintained and annihilated. Even if one does not try to understand all these subject matters, or does not even make the effort to travel to the holy places, merely by listening with love to Kṛṣṇa's beautiful pastimes, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who cannot be conquered by anybody, becomes controlled."

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has also said (in regard to those who debate) that He is the *vāda*, the conclusion (*tattva*) ascertained by proper deliberation, logic and argument. In the field of argument and logic, *vāda*, *jalpa* and *vitaṇḍā* are quite well known. When, for the sake of establishing one's own opinion, one continuously finds faults with the opponent's statements, it is called *jalpa*. Keeping the truth aside and avoiding proper deliberation and logic while finding fault in an opponent's statement, is called *vitaṇḍā*. The purpose of such arguments is not to ascertain reality but only to display one's scholarship, and the desire to defeat the opponent is very strong. That deliberation which ascertains the Absolute Reality is called *vāda*. This *vāda* is superior to all other forms of discussion.

When a self-realised *guru* and a disciple who is hankering for transcendental knowledge have a positive dialogue about the Absolute Truth, the conclusion they reach is called *vāda*. The pride of scholarship does not exist within such exchanges, as neither has the desire to defeat the other.

ŚLOKA 33

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वः सामासिकस्य च।
अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताहं विश्वतोमुखः ॥३३॥

*akṣarāṇām a-kāro 'smi / dvandvah sāmāsikasya ca
aham evākṣayah kālo / dhātāham viśvato-mukhah*

akṣarāṇām—of letters; *asmi*—I am; *a-kārah*—the letter A; *ca*—and; *sāmāsikasya*—of compound words in Sanskrit verse; (I am) *dvandvah*—the dual compound; *eva*—certainly; *aham*—I (am); *akṣayah*—unchanging; *kālah*—time; *aham*—I (am); *dhātā*—the creator, Brahmā; *mukhah*—whose faces (see); *viśvatah*—on all sides.

Of letters I am the letter A, and of compound words I am *dvandvah*, the dual compound. Among annihilators I am Mahākāla Rudra, and of creators I am the four-headed Brahmā.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Among compound words I am *dvandvah* or the dual compound. Because in the *dvandvah* compound both elements are prominent, it is the best. Among the annihilators, I am Mahākāla Rudra (*akṣayah kālah*), inexhaustible time. Among creators, I am *viśvato-mukhah*, the four-headed Brahmā.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Among letters, I am the *a-kāra*. *A-kāra* is the first letter and, because it is part of all other Sanskrit letters, it is the

best. This is also stated in the śruti: *akṣarāṇām a-kāro 'smi* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.16.12). Bhagavān says that among compound words, He is *dvandvah*, the dual compound. When, in the process of making one word, two or more other words give up their case endings and are combined together, it is called *samāsa*, and the resulting word is called *samāsa-pada*, or the compound word. Primarily, there are six types of *samāsa*: 1) *dvandva*, 2) *bahubrihi*, 3) *karma dhāraya*, 4) *tat-puruṣa*, 5) *dvigu* and 6) *avyayī bhāva*. Among them *dvandva* is the best because in other compounds either the first or the second part is prominent, or both words combined together give the meaning of another (third) object, but in the *dvandva-samāsa* both words remain prominent, such as Rāma-Kṛṣṇa or Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, therefore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said that the *dvandva-samāsa* (dual compound) is His *vibhūti*.

ŚLOKA 34

मृत्युः सर्वहरश्चाहमद्ववश्च भविष्यताम्।
कीर्तिः श्रीवार्कं च नारीणां सृतिर्मधा धृतिः क्षमा॥३४॥

mṛtyuḥ sarva-haraś cāham / udbhavaś ca bhaviṣyatām
 kīrttiḥ śrīr vāk ca nārīṇām / smṛtir medhā dhṛtiḥ kṣamā
 ca—and; aham—I (am); sarva-haraḥ—all-devouring; mṛtyuḥ—death; ca—and; bhaviṣyatām—of the progressive saṃskāras; (I am) udbhavaḥ—birth; nārīṇām—among women; (I am) kīrttiḥ—fame; śrīḥ—fortune; vāk—speech; smṛtiḥ—memory; medhā—intelligence; dhṛtiḥ—fortitude; ca—and; kṣamā—forgiveness.

I am all-devouring death, and of the six progressive transformations experienced by all living beings, I am birth. Among women I am fame, beauty, fine speech, memory, intelligence, forbearance and forgiveness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

"For those who are dying at every moment, I am *sarva-harah*, death, which takes away all memories." Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.22.39) states: *mṛtyur atyanta-vismṛtiḥ*. "Complete forgetfulness is death." "The word *bhaviṣyatām* means that of the future transformations of the living entities, I am *janma*, the first. Of women I am the three qualities of *kīrtih* (fame), *śrī* (beauty) and *vāk* (cultured speech); as well as the four qualities of *smṛtiḥ* (memory), *medhā* (intelligence), *dhṛtiḥ* (forbearance) and *kṣamā* (forgiveness)." The word *ca* indicates that the wives of Dharma such as Mūrtti, etc., are also Him.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here Śrī Bhagavān says that among women He is *kīrtih* (fame), *śrī* (beauty or fortune), *vāk* (fine speech), *smṛtiḥ* (memory), *medhā* (intelligence), *dhṛtiḥ* (fortitude or patience) and *kṣamā* (forgiveness). This can be understood in two ways:

(1) "The qualities which are found in women such as fame, beauty, sweet speech, memory, sharp intelligence, fortitude and forgiveness are indeed Me." The qualities such as fame, beauty, sweet speech, memory, subtle thinking and forgiveness, to be found in Sītā Devī, Umā, Rukmiṇī, Draupadī and specifically in the Vraja-gopīs, are all *vibhūtis* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

(2) Among the twenty-four daughters of Prajāpati Dakṣa, Kīrti, Medhā, Dhṛti, Smṛti and Kṣamā are ideal women in all respects. Kīrti, Medhā and Dhṛti were married to Dharma, Smṛti was married to Aṅgirā and Kṣamā to the great sage Pulaha. Śrī is the name of the daughter of the great sage Bhṛgu, and she was born from the womb of Khyāti, the daughter of Dakṣa. Śrī Viṣṇu accepted her as His wife. Vāk is the daughter of Brahmā. According to their respective names, these seven women are the presiding deities of the seven qualities mentioned above. They have been included among the most blessed women, therefore Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that they are His *vibhūtis*.

ŚLOKA 35

बृहत्साम तथा साम्नां गायत्रीच्छन्दसामहम्।
मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहमृतूनां कुसुमाकरः ॥३५॥

bṛhat-sāma tathā sāmnām / gāyatrī chandasām aham
māsānām mārga-śirṣo 'ham / ṛtūnām kusumākaraḥ

sāmnām—of the hymns of the Sāma-veda; aham—I (am); bṛhat-sāma—the Bṛhat-sāma; tathā—and; chandasām—of Sanskrit metres; (I am) gāyatrī—gāyatrī; māsānām—of months; aham—I (am); mārga-śirṣaḥ—November-December (agrāhāyaṇa); ṛtūnām—of seasons; (I am) kusumākaraḥ—flower-bearing spring.

Among the hymns of the Sāma-veda I am *Bṛhat-sāma*, the prayer to Indra. Of metres I am *gāyatrī*, of months I am *Mārga-śirṣa*, and of seasons I am *vasanta*, the flower-bearing spring.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Śrī Bhagavān earlier said that of the Vedas He is the Sāma-veda. Now He also says that within the Sāma-veda He is Bṛhat-sāma. The Rg-mantra, which is sung as *tvāṁ ṛddhim havāmahe*, indicates the Bṛhat-sāma. Among metres He is the metre called *gāyatrī*. Among seasons He is also *kusumākaraḥ*, the flower-bearing *vasanta*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Bhagavān is non-different from His *nāma*, *guṇa*, *lilā* and *stutis* (prayers). The Sāma-veda contains prayers which are Bhagavān personified. It is, therefore, accepted as the best of the Vedas and is known as His *vibhūti*. Gāyatrī illuminates the *svarūpa* of Kṛṣṇa and is, therefore, called the mother of the Vedas. Bhagavān has thus counted *gāyatrī* amongst His *vibhūtis*. Among the twelve months He says that *Mārga-śirṣa* is His *vibhūti*. That month is neither too hot nor too cold,

and various Vedic activities are performed at that time. Just before it begins, Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-lilā* is performed, which is the topmost of all His pastimes. In this month nature flourishes in full bloom and in the householders' fields new crops are planted. *Agrāhāyaṇa* means the beginning of the year and, therefore, Bhagavān says that it is His *vibhūti*. Of seasons *vasanta* (spring) is best. It is also known by the name *ṛtu-rāja*, the king of seasons. In this season, nature gives up her old ornaments and becomes adorned with fresh decorative coverings. Both inert and conscious beings are infused with new life. In this season Kṛṣṇa's swing pastime and other *vasanta* pastimes are performed. This season is especially supreme because Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared at this time, having accepted the *bhāva* and *kānti* (complexion) of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the personification of *mahābhāva*. Thus Bhagavān has counted it among His *vibhūtis*.

ŚLOKA 36

द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम्।
जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्ववतामहम्॥३६॥

*dyūtam chalayatām asmi / tejas tejasvinām aham
jayo 'smi vyavasāyo 'smi / sattvam sattvavatām aham*

chalayatām—of those who cheat; *asmi*—I am; *dyūtam*—gambling; *tejasvinām*—of the splendid; *aham*—I (am); *tejah*—the splendour; *asmi*—I am; *jayah*—victory; *asmi*—I am; *vyavasāyah*—determination; *sattvavatām*—of the strong; *aham*—I (am); *sattvam*—the strength.

I am the gambling of the cheats, and the splendour of the splendid. I am victory among the victorious, the endeavour of the industrious, and the strength of the mighty.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Among those who are trying to deceive each other (*chalayatām*), I am gambling. Of those who become victorious, I am victory. Of industrious people, I am effort, and of those who are strong (*sattva-vatām*), I am strength.”

ŚLOKA 37

वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनञ्जयः।
मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशनाः कविः॥३७॥

vṛṣṇināṁ vāsudevo 'smi / pāṇḍavānāṁ dhanañjayaḥ
munīnāṁ apy aham vyāsaḥ / kavīnāṁ uśanā kaviḥ

vṛṣṇināṁ—of the Vṛṣnis; *asmi*—I am; *vāsudevah*—Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa; *pāṇḍavānāṁ*—of the Pāṇḍavas; *dhanañjayaḥ*—Arjuna; *api*—and; *munīnāṁ*—of sages; *aham*—I (am); *vyāsaḥ*—Veda-vyāsa; *kavīnāṁ*—of poets; (I am) *kaviḥ*—the poet; *uśanā*—Śukrācārya.

Of the Vṛṣnis I am Vāsudeva, of the Pāṇḍavas I am Arjuna, of the *munīs* I am Vyāsa, and among *kavis* I am the poet Śukrācārya.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Of the Vṛṣnis I am Vāsudeva. This means that My father, Vasudeva, is My *vibhūti*.” Therefore, here the word Vāsudeva is formed by putting the suffix *aṇ* on the word Vasudeva. ‘Of the Vṛṣnis I am Vāsudeva,’ is not acceptable because Śrī Bhagavān is describing His *vibhūtis*, not His own *svarūpa*. Vāsudeva is one of the aspects of His *svarūpa*, and not His *vibhūti*.

ŚLOKA 38

दण्डे दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम्।
मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम्॥३८॥

*daṇḍo damayatām asmi / nītir asmi jigīṣatām
maunam caivāsmi guhyānām / jñānam jñānavatām aham*

damayatām—of subduers; *asmi*—I am; *daṇḍah*—the rod of chastisement; *jigīṣatām*—of those desiring victory; *asmi*—I am; *nītiḥ*—morality; *guhyānām*—of secrets; *asmi*—I am; *maunam*—silence; *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *jñānavatām*—of the wise; *aham*—I (am); *jñānam*—wisdom.

Among those who dispense justice, I am the rod of chastisement, and among seekers of victory, I am morality. Of secrets I am silence, and I am the wisdom of the wise.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“I am the lawful ruler’s rod of punishment.”

ŚLOKA 39

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन।
न तदस्ति विना यत्स्यान्मया भूतं चराचरम्॥३९॥

*yac cāpi sarva-bhūtānām / bijam tad aham arjuna
na tad asti vinā yat syān / mayā bhūtam carācaram*

ca—and; *arjuna*—O Arjuna; *yat*—whatever; *bijam*—seed of generation; *api*—there may be; *sarva-bhūtānām*—among all living beings; *tat*—that (seed); (*is*) *aham*—Myself; *yat*—whatever; *bhūtam*—being; *syāt*—may exist; *cara-acaram*—either moving or non-moving; *tat*—that; *na asti*—does not exist; *vinā*—without; *mayā*—Me.

O Arjuna, I am the original cause, the generating seed of all existence. No entity, either moving or non-moving, can exist separately from Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *bīja* implies *paroha*, the cause of origin. Śrī Bhagavān says that He is the cause of the birth of all beings. “Without Me, who am the cause of appearance, the birth of any moving or non-moving body cannot take place.”

ŚLOKA 40

**नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परन्तप।
एष तृदेशतः प्रोक्तो विभूतेविस्तरो मया॥४०॥**

*nānto 'sti mama divyānām / vibhūtinām parantapa
eṣa tūddeśataḥ prokto / vibhūter vistaro mayā*

parantapa—O chastiser of the foe; *asti*—there is; *na*—no; *antaḥ*—end; *mama divyānām*—to My divine; *vibhūtinām*—opulences; *tu*—but; *eṣaḥ*—this; *vistarāḥ*—elaborate description; *proktāḥ*—spoken; *mayā*—by Me; *vibhūteḥ*—about My opulence; *uddeśataḥ*—is done just as an indication.

O Parantapa, My divine *vibhūtis* are endless. What I have described to you is a mere indication of My opulences.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In concluding this chapter on His *vibhūtis*, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *nānto 'sti*. “The description of My *vibhūtis* is spoken in brief (*uddeśataḥ*).”

ŚLOKA 41

**यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमद्विजितमेव वा।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोऽशसंभवम्॥४१॥**

*yad yad vibhūtimat sattvam / śrīmad ūrjitam eva vā
tat tad evāvagaccha tvam / mama tejo 'ṁśa-sambhavam*

eva—indeed; *yat yat*—whatever; *sattvam*—existence (there is); *vibhūtimat*—having opulence; *śrīmat*—beauty; *vā*—or; *ūrjitam*—power; *eva*—certainly; *tvam*—you; *avagaccha*—should understand; *tat tat*—all those; (to be); *aṁśa-sambhavam*—generated from a part; *mama*—of My; *tejah*—power.

Know for certain that everything in existence which is opulent, majestic and endowed with power springs from but a part of My *sakti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

To simultaneously describe all the unmentioned *vibhūtis* of the past, present and future, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with *yad yad*. The word *vibhūtimat* means majestic, *śrīmat* means opulence (riches or fortune), *ūrji* means endowed with excessive power and influence, and *sattva* means anything which exists.

ŚLOKA 42

अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन।
विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत्॥४२॥

*atha vā bahunaitena / kim jñātena tavārjuna
viṣṭabhyāham idam kṛtsnam / ekāṁśena sthito jagat*

atha vā—however; *ārjuna*—O Arjuna; *kim*—what?; *tava jñātena*—can be understood by you; *etena*—by this; *bahunā*—multi-faceted description; (merely) *eka-aṁśena*—by My single expansion; *aham*—I; *sthitah*—repose; (and) *viṣṭabhya*—pervade; *idam*—this; *kṛtsnam*—whole; *jagat*—cosmic manifestation.

Of what use to you, Arjuna, is all this detailed knowledge? Just know that by one partial aspect of Myself I pervade and support this entire universe.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“What need is there for you to know all this in detail? You should just understand the essence. I, by the partial aspect of Myself as the Antaryāmī *puruṣa* of material nature, support the entire universe. As the substratum, I support it. As the presiding authority I preside over it, and as the controller I control it. Being all-pervasive, I pervade it and as the creator I am its cause.”

After understanding with the pure intelligence bestowed by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa that He Himself supports the entire universe, one should render service to Him exclusively and relish His *mādhurya* (sweetness). This is stated in the Tenth Canto.

Thus ends the Bhāvānuvāda of the Sārārtha-Varśinī Tīkā, by Śrila Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, on the Tenth Chapter of Śrimad Bhagavad-gītā, which gives pleasure to the bhaktas and is accepted by all saintly persons.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “In the previous chapter, pure *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* was instructed. A person deliberating on that may understand that service to Kṛṣṇa can be rendered by worshipping other *devatās*. To remove this misconception, Kṛṣṇa says in this chapter that *devatās* such as Brahmā and Rudra are nothing but His *vibhūtis*. ‘I am the cause of everything. I am birthless, beginningless and the Supreme Controller. When one understands My *vibhūti-tattva* by properly deliberating upon it, there remains no other impediment to *ananya-bhakti*. I pervade this entire universe by My partial aspect of Paramātmā and have manifested all these *vibhūtis*. After understanding My *vibhūti-tattva*, bhaktas attain knowledge of *bhagavat-tattva*, and with śuddha-bhakti

they engage in *bhajana* to My Śrī Kṛṣṇa *svarūpa*.' In the eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh *ślokas* of this chapter, *śuddha-bhakti* and its result have been described. Only *bhajana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the origin of all these *vibhūtis*, can lead to *prema* which is the eternal *dharma* of the *jīva*. This is the essence of this chapter."

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

CHAPTER ELEVEN



Viśvarūpa Darśana-Yoga

Yoga Through Beholding the Lord's Universal Form

ŚLOKA 1

अर्जुन उवाच—

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसञ्जितम्।
यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम॥१॥

arjuna uvāca

*mad-anugrahāya paramam / guhyam adhyātma-saṁjñitam
yat tvayoktaṁ vacas tena / moho 'yam vigato mama*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *vacah*—the words; *paramam*—of supreme; *guhyam*—confidential knowledge; *adhyātma-saṁjñitam*—concerning Your opulences; *yat*—which; *uktam*—were spoken; *tvayā*—by You; *mat-anugrahāya*—out of mercy for me; *tena*—by those words; *ayam*—this; *mohah*—delusion; *mama*—of mine; *vigataḥ*—has been dispelled.

Arjuna said: Having heard the supremely confidential knowledge of Your *vibhūtis*, which You revealed out of compassion for me, my delusion has now been dispelled.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In the Eleventh Chapter, Arjuna becomes fearful upon seeing the *viśvarūpa* (universal form) of Śrī Bhagavān, and with perplexed intelligence he begins praying to Him. Thereafter, Śrī Hari gives bliss to Arjuna by again showing him His eternal two-handed form.

At the end of the last chapter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “I pervade and support the whole universe merely by one of My *amṛtas* (portions).” After hearing of the *vibhūtis* of his dear friend who is the primeval person and the abode of all *vibhūtis*, Arjuna became immersed in supreme bliss. He rejoiced upon hearing Śrī Bhagavān’s descriptions of His *vibhūtis*. With a desire to see that form, Arjuna now speaks three *ślokas*, the first beginning with the words *mad-anugrahāya*.

Arjuna’s *moha* (ignorance) of the *aiśvarya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa was dispelled upon hearing the statements of Śrī Bhagavān, from whom all these *vibhūtis* originate.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the previous chapter, when Arjuna heard Śrī Bhagavān speak the most confidential and supremely secret instructions on *ātma-tattva*, his delusion was removed to a certain extent. He understood clearly that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān, the limit of *para-tattva*. By His *amṛta* of Paramātmā, He enters and pervades this entire universe, manifesting unlimited opulences. Although He is the fountainhead of all *vibhūtis*, He remains distinct from them in His eternal, two-handed Śyāmasundara *svarūpa*. Arjuna rejoices upon hearing Bhagavān’s statements and wants to realise this *jñāna* (and thus possess it as *vijñāna*). He therefore says, “Previously I doubted whether or not Your *vibhūtis* are independent from You. But now this doubt, which was born from ignorance, has been dispelled.” On a deeper level, this statement indicates that he now wants to see Kṛṣṇa’s *viśvarūpa*.

ŚLOKA 2

**भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया।
त्वत्तः कमलपत्राक्षं माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम्॥२॥**

*bhavāpyayau hi bhūtānām / śrutau vistaraśo mayā
tvattah kamala-patrākṣa / māhātmyam api cāvyayam*

kamala-patra-akṣa—O lotus-eyed Lord; *hi*—indeed; *śrutau*—have been heard; *mayā*—by me; *tvattah*—from You; *vistaraśah*—extensively; *bhava-apayayau*—the origin and dissolution; *bhūtānām*—of the living beings; *ca*—and; *api*—also; *avyayam*—Your immortal; *māhātmyam*—glories.

O lotus-eyed Lord, I have heard from You in detail about the origin and dissolution of the living entities, as well as Your unlimited glories.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

These middle six chapters explain that the root cause of everything, including creation and annihilation, is Śrī Bhagavān. As it is said in Gītā (7.6), “I alone am the cause of the creation and destruction of the entire universe.” Śrī Bhagavān is unchangeable and eternal (*avyaya*). That is, although He manifests the creation, He remains free from any transformations and attachments. This is shown in ślokas such as Gītā (9.4): “By Me this whole universe is pervaded,” and Gītā (9.9): “All these works cannot bind Me.”

ŚLOKA 3

**एवमेतद् यथात्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर।
द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमैश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम॥३॥**

*evam etad yathāttha tvam / ātmānam parameśvara
draṣṭum icchāmi te rūpam / aiśvaram puruṣottama*

parameśvara—O Supreme Controller; *evam*—I accept; *etat*—this; *yathā*—as; *tvam*—You; *āttha*—have spoken; *ātmānam*—of Yourself (concerning Your opulences); *puruṣa-uttama*—O Supreme Person; *icchāmi*—I wish; *draṣṭum*—to see; *te*—Your; *rūpam*—form; *aiśvaram*—of opulence.

O Parameśvara, I accept all that You have spoken about Yourself as true. O Puruṣottama, now I wish to see that great form, replete with Your *aiśvarya*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Ātmānam tvam yathāttha. “You said, ‘I am situated in this world by pervading it with one of My *amṛtas*’ (*Gītā* 10.42). This is, indeed, true. I have not a trace of doubt about this. Yet I desire the satisfaction of seeing Your *aiśvarya* form. That is, I want to see with my own eyes the form of that *amṛta*, Your *iśvara* form, in which You exist upon entering this world.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

With a desire to see that form of Bhagavān which is full of *aiśvarya*, Arjuna is saying, “O Parameśvara, I have heard about Your wonderful, unlimited *vibhūtis* and I have no doubt that You are the source of them. Now, however, I am becoming eager to actually see that *aiśvarya* form of Yours. You are *Antaryāmī*, who exist within everyone’s heart (*sarva-antaryāmī*). Therefore, You also know my inner desire and You are capable of fulfilling it.”

Someone may raise the following doubt: If Arjuna is an eternal friend of Kṛṣṇa, who is the *mādhurya-maya-vigraha* (embodiment of sweetness), why is he desiring to see the *viśvarūpa* which expresses Bhagavān’s *aiśvarya*? The answer is that, just as a person who is very fond of sweets also sometimes desires to eat bitter and sour food (such as neem leaves or pickle), in the same way, Arjuna, who is always tasting Śrī

Kṛṣṇa's sweetness (*mādhurya*) also developed a desire to see His *viśvarūpa* which is an expression of His *aiśvarya*.

This has another meaning. Although Arjuna has no doubt about the *aiśvarya* and super-excellence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he is desiring to see this *aiśvarya* form simply for his own personal satisfaction.

ŚLOKA 4

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो।
योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम्॥४॥

*manyase yadi tac chakyam / mayā draṣṭum iti prabho
yogeśvara tato me tvam / darśayātmānam avyayam*

prabho—O master; *yadi*—if; *tvam manyase*—You think; *iti*—that; *tat*—it; *sākyam*—is possible; *draṣṭum*—to be seen; *maya*—by me; *tataḥ*—then; *yoga-iśvara*—O controller of all mystic power; *darśaya*—show me; *avyayam*—Your unchanging; *ātmānam*—self.

O Prabhu! If You think that it is possible for me to behold Your imperishable *aiśvarya* form, then please, O Yogeśvara, reveal that form to me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna says, “Although I am not qualified to see that form of Yours, it is possible for me to see it by the influence of Your mystic power, because You are Yogeśvara, the Supreme Mystic.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the previous *śloka*, Arjuna expressed his desire to see the *aiśvarya* form of Śrī Bhagavān. In the present *śloka*, he is seeking His approval. “O Prabhu! O master of all! O Yogeśvara! I have expressed my internal desires to You. Although I am unqualified, if You consider me an object of Your mercy, then kindly reveal that *viśvarūpa* to me.”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “The *jīva* is an atomic conscious entity (*aṇu-caitanya*), therefore he cannot properly understand the activities of Śrī Bhagavān who is supreme infinite consciousness (*vibhu-caitanya*). ‘I am a *jīva* but even after You have mercifully bestowed upon me the *adhikāra* to understand and behold Your *svarūpa-tattva*, the universal form, I am unable to comprehend Your infinite *aiśvarya* features. This is because they are beyond the conception of the *jīva*. You are Yogeśvara and my Prabhu. Therefore, please show me Your *yoga-aiśvarya* which is by nature imperishable and conscious.””

SLOKA 5

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

**पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रः।
नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च॥५॥**

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
paśya me pārtha rūpāṇi / śataśo 'tha sahasraśah
nānā-vidhāni divyāni / nānā-varṇākṛtīni ca

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Lord said; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *paśya*—behold; *me*—My; *rūpāṇi*—forms; *śataśah*—by the hundreds; *atha*—and; *sahasraśah*—thousands; (they are) *nānā-vidhāni*—variegated; *divyāni*—divine; *ca*—and; *nānā-varṇa*—have many colours; *ākṛtīni*—and shapes.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O Pārtha, behold My hundreds and thousands of various multi-coloured divine forms.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Initially, I will reveal to him (Arjuna) the first *puruṣa* (Kāraṇodakaśāyī), who is My *amṛta* and the Antaryāmī of material nature. He is described in the *Puruṣa-sūkta* as having

thousands of heads, eyes and feet. I will then make him understand My *svāṁśa*, My own expansion whose feature of *kāla*, all devouring time, is relevant to the present context.” Thinking like this, Śrī Bhagavān instructs Arjuna, “Be attentive.” In saying this, He draws Arjuna’s attention towards Himself. By using the two words *paśya* and *rūpāṇi*, Śrī Bhagavān is saying, “In My one *svarūpa* only, there are hundreds of forms (hosts of *vibhūtis*). Behold them.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Understanding Arjuna’s internal desire, Śrī Bhagavān is making Arjuna attentive. He does this in order to show Arjuna His form as the Antaryāmī of material nature. This form has hundreds of heads, eyes and forms as described in the *Puruṣa-sūkta*, and it is His *svāṁśa-rūpa* (the form of His own expansion). He also wants Arjuna’s attention so that He can show him the unlimited *vibhūtis* existing in just one of His *amṛtas*. In other words, on the pretext of making him attentive, Bhagavān is blessing Arjuna to have the qualification to see this form. By addressing him as Pārtha, Kṛṣṇa also indicates His relationship with him.

ŚLOKA 6

पश्यादित्यान् वसून् रुद्रानश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा।
बहून्यदृष्टपूर्वाणि पश्याश्चयाणि भारत॥६॥

*paśyādityān vasūn rudrān / aśvinau marutas tathā
bahūny adṛṣṭa-pūrvāṇi / paśyāścaryāṇi bhārata*

bhārata—O descendant of Bhārata; *paśya*—see; *ādityān*—the Ādityas; *vasūn*—Vasus; *rudrān*—Rudras; *aśvinau*—Aśvinīs; *tathā*—and; *marutāḥ*—the Maruts; *paśya*—behold; *bahūni*—many; *āścaryāṇi*—astonishing (sights); *adṛṣṭa-pūrvāṇi*—which you have never seen before.

O Bhārata, behold the twelve Ādityas, the eight Vasus, the two Aśvinī-kumāras, the forty-nine Maruts and so many other wondrous and astonishing forms that you have never seen before.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Here Śrī Bhagavān's addressing Arjuna as Bhārata is significant. Arjuna was born in the dynasty of rājarṣi Bharata, the greatly pious and pure *bhakta*. For this reason, he is also greatly *dharmika* and an *aikāntika bhakta* of Bhagavān. Therefore, he is qualified to see the form of Bhagavān which had not been seen before.

ŚLOKA 7

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृतनं पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।
मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद् द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥७॥

*ihaika-stham jagat kṛtsnam / paśyādy sa-carācaram
mama dehe guḍākeśa / yac cānyad draṣṭum icchasi*

guḍākeśa—O conqueror of sleep; *adya*—now; *paśya*—behold; *mama dehe*—in My body; *kṛtsnam*—the entire; *jagat*—universe; *sa-cara-acaram*—together with all moving and non-moving beings; *iha*—here; *eka-stham*—in one place; *ca*—and; *yat*—whatever; *anyat*—else; *icchasi*—you desire; *draṣṭum*—to see.

O Guḍākeśa, now behold the entire universe, including all moving and non-moving beings, assembled together in one place within this body of Mine. Whatever else you may wish to see is also visible within this universal form.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“That whole universe which you will not be able to see, even by wandering for millions of years, is situated in just

one part of My body.” To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the words *ihaika-stham jagat*. “The cause of your victory or defeat, whatever it may be, is existing in this body, which is the shelter of the universe.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Bhagavān is again saying, “Within this universal form of Mine, you will behold the entire world of moving and non-moving entities. This universal form cannot be seen by the performance of hard labour for millions of years. It can only be seen by My mercy. In this *viśvarūpa*, you will see Me and the entire world, as well as your victory or defeat in this battle of Kurukṣetra. Moreover, you can also see whatever else you want to see.” Here, the word *Guḍākeśa* is used. *Guḍākā* means sleep or ignorance, and *īśa* means master. In this way, Bhagavān indicates that Arjuna should behold this form with great attention. Thus his doubts about victory or defeat will be dispelled, and Arjuna will be able to understand that in this universe the performance of every activity is prearranged by Kṛṣṇa. Neither Arjuna nor anyone else is able to change this arrangement in any way.

ŚLOKA 8

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा।
दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम्॥८॥

*na tu mām śakyase draṣṭum / anenaiva sva-cakṣuṣā
divyam dadāmi te cakṣuh / paśya me yogam aiśvaram*

tu—but; *eva*—certainly; *na śakyase*—you are unable; *draṣṭum*—to see; *mām*—Me; *anena*—with these; *sva-cakṣuṣā*—eyes of yours; *dadāmi*—I am giving; *te*—to you; *divyam*—divine; *cakṣuh*—eyes; *paśya*—now see; *me*—My; *yogam*—mystic; *aiśvaram*—opulence.

However, you are unable to see Me with the eyes you have now. Therefore, I confer upon you divine eyes with which to behold My *yoga-aiśvarya*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is saying, “Arjuna, do not consider this form to be illusory and composed of *māyā*, but know it to be *sac-cid-ānanda*. My *svarūpa*, in which the whole universe exists, is beyond the perception of the material senses.” To make him understand this, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *na tu*. He says, “You will not be able to see Me, the embodiment of concentrated *cit*, with your material eyes. Therefore, I am granting you *divyam* (divine) eyes by which you will see Me.” The purpose of the above statement is just to astonish Arjuna who identifies himself as being an ordinary mortal human being. But Arjuna is a chief associate of Śrī Bhagavān and only appears to be a human, so his eyes are not actually material like those of an ordinary human. Arjuna, who directly experiences the *mādhurya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, will not be able to see His *amṛta* (the universal form) with those same eyes and, therefore, he has to accept divine eyes. What kind of logic is this? Some say that the supremely fortunate eyes of an *ananya-bhakta* see the great sweetness, *mahā-mādhurya*, of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s human-like pastimes and do not see the *aiśvarya* feature of His divine pastimes. This is compared to the tongue which is used to tasting *miśri* (rock sugar) and does not appreciate the taste of *guḍa* (*gur*, unprocessed sugar). Therefore, on the request of Arjuna, and to give him the special, wondrous sight of the *aiśvarya* feature of His divine form, Śrī Bhagavān gives him *divya-cakṣu*, superhuman eyes appropriate for savouring this particular loving exchange. Another purpose in giving him *divya-cakṣu* will become clear at the end of this chapter.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Arjuna is a *nitya-siddha parikara*, an eternally perfect associate of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. With eyes full of *prema*, he always sees and relishes the ever-sweet form of Kṛṣṇa. However, because he has a desire to see the universal form, Bhagavān's giving him *divya-cakṣu* is discussed herein. Transcendental eyes are superior to gross material eyes. Yet, these divine eyes are quite insignificant and inferior to the unalloyed loving eyes of Arjuna. The *viśvarūpa* of Śrī Bhagavān cannot be seen with gross material eyes; it can only be seen by divine vision attained by His mercy. Still, the *mādhurya* of Śrī Bhagavān is neither visible to ordinary eyes nor to divine eyes.

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa clarifies this point in his commentary. “Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave Arjuna divine eyes which were needed to see His divine *viśvarūpa*, but He did not give him a corresponding divine mind. If He had given him a divine mind, Arjuna would have developed interest in actually relishing the *viśvarūpa*, but upon seeing it, Arjuna became disinterested. This is evident in Arjuna’s words after his astonishment upon seeing the universal form. He prayed that Śrī Kṛṣṇa only show him His natural, *sac-cid-ānanda*, two-handed form.” This sentiment is also found in Śrimad-Bhāgavatam (10.7.34-37):

ekadārbhakam ādāya / svāṅkam āropya bhāminī
 prasnutam pāyayām āsa / stanam sneha-pariplutā
 pīta-prāyasya jananī / sutasya rucira-smitam
 mukham lālayatī rājan / jṛmbhato dadṛṣe idam
 khān rodasī jyotir-anīkam āśāḥ /
 sūryendu-vahni-śvasanāmbudhīṁś ca
 dvīpān nagāṁś tad-duhitṛ vanāni /
 bhūtāni yāni sthira-jāṅgamāni

*sā vīkṣya viśvam sahasā / rājan sañjāta-vepathuh
sammilya mṛgaśāvākṣī / netre āsīt suvismītā*

One day, Kṛṣṇa was on Yaśodā-maiyā's lap. She was breast-feeding Him and kissing His captivating cheeks which were enhanced by His mild smile. The child then yawned and showed Yaśodā-maiyā His universal form within His mouth. The sudden sight of this universal form in the mouth of her baby greatly astonished her. Her body started to tremble and she closed her eyes. She thought, 'Alas! What is this I have seen?' Fearful that somebody may have cast an evil-eye or spell on Kṛṣṇa, she called the family priest and had him chant *mantras* for Kṛṣṇa's protection. She felt relief only after she had given Kṛṣṇa a purifying bath.

In his commentary on this *śloka*, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī explains a deep secret. "How is it that Yaśodā-maiyā was able to see the *viśvarūpa* of Kṛṣṇa if she didn't have *divya-cakṣu*? For the nourishment of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes (*līlā-puṣṭi*), the maidservant of Lakṣmi-devī (the pleasure potency), is making Yaśodā's love ever-new and ever-fresh by allowing her to taste *vismaya-rasa* (the nectar of astonishment) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *aiśvarya-śakti*."

The purport of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on this *Bhāgavatam* story is as follows. "This *aiśvarya-śakti* could not slacken the *vātsalya-jñāna* of Yaśodā-maiyā. This *śakti* of Śrī Hari appeared in order to test Prema devī, the goddess of love, but upon seeing Prema devī's immeasurable power, she accepted the position as Prema devī's servant. Here Yaśodā-maiyā's *vātsalya-prema* is Prema devī."

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.8.32-39) describes the following pastime:

*ekadā krīdamānās te / rāmādyā gopa-dārakāḥ
krīṣṇo mṛḍam bhakṣitavān / iti mātre nyavedayan...*

...etad vicitram saha-jīva-kāla-
svabhāva-karmāśaya-linga-bhedam
sunos tanau vikṣya vidāritāsyे /
vrajan sahātmānam avāpa śankām

One day, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was playing at Brahmāṇḍa-ghaṭa with Śrīdāma, Subala, Balarāma and some other cowherd boys. Child Kṛṣṇa secretly ate some mud, but somehow the cowherd boys saw Him doing this and complained to Yaśodā-maiyā. Yaśodā-maiyā came running, and, catching hold of Kṛṣṇa's hand, she began to chastise Him. Trembling with fear, Kṛṣṇa said, 'Mother, I have not eaten any mud. All these boys are liars. If you don't believe Me, then you can look in My mouth and see for yourself.' Saying this, Kṛṣṇa opened His mouth and showed her the whole universe containing all moving and non-moving entities, the sky, etc., as well as His own *dhāma*.

Although the *aiśvarya* feature is not acknowledged in *mādhurya-lilā*, it manifests itself at the appropriate time. That is, although Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *aiśvarya* remains unmanifest in His *mādhurya-lilā*, *mādhurya-lilā* is not devoid of it. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the fountainhead of all *aiśvarya* and *mādhurya*. In some specific pastimes when both are needed, the *aiśvarya* manifests itself. Being inspired by the potency called *satya-saṅkalpa* (when one's words are always truthful), the *aiśvarya* *sakti* manifested and drowned Yaśodā-maiyā in *vismaya-rasa* by showing her Kṛṣṇa's *viśvarūpa*. This made her forget her anger towards Him. In this way, the *aiśvarya-sakti* rendered service to Prema devī. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is sporting as a human boy and therefore, for the nourishment of His *lilā* and to increase the *prema* of His *bhaktas*, He sometimes manifests His *aiśvarya*.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta describes how Advaita Ācārya requested Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to show Him that *viśvarūpa* which is described in *Bhagavad-gītā*. On His request,

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu showed Him all the incidents that took place in the battle of Mahabhārata along with His viśvarūpa. Seeing the viśvarūpa, Advaita Ācārya closed His eyes. Then Caitanya Mahāprabhu, making that form unmanifest, showed His natural form thereby restoring Advaita Ācārya to His normal state.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “You are My bhakta. With the eyes of unalloyed prema, you can see My Kṛṣṇa svarūpa. My aiśvarya is related to the phenomenal world, so it has no purpose for those with eyes of unalloyed prema and it cannot be seen by them. Gross material eyes also cannot behold My aiśvarya form. But those eyes which are not filled with pure love, having some relationship with this world, but at the same time are not material, are called divya-cakṣu. I am bestowing upon you divya-cakṣu by which you will be able to see My aiśvarya form. Those who are endowed with divine eyes and the ability to reason naturally become attached to My aiśvarya svarūpa which has a connection with this cosmic world, unlike My transcendental Kṛṣṇa svarūpa. This is because their eyes of unalloyed prema remain closed.”

SLOKA 9

सञ्जय उवाच—

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन् महायोगेश्वरो हरिः।

दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम्॥११॥

sañjaya uvāca

*evam uktvā tato rājan / mahā-yogeśvaro hariḥ
darśayām āsa pārthāya / paramam rūpam aiśvaram*

sañjaya uvāca—Sañjaya said; *rājan*—O king; *tataḥ*—then; *uktvā*—having spoken; *evam*—thus; *mahā-yogeśvaraḥ*—the great

Master of all mystic power; *hariḥ*—Śrī Hari; *darśayām āsa*—displayed; *pārthāya*—to Pārtha; *rūpam*—His form; *paramam*—of supreme; *aiśvaram*—opulence.

Sañjaya said: O King, after saying this, Mahā Yogeśvara Śrī Hari revealed to Arjuna His supreme *aiśvarya* form.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

After saying this, Śrī Bhagavān showed Arjuna His *viśvarūpa*. Sañjaya is describing this subject to the blind king Dhṛtarāṣṭra in six *ślokas*, while saying that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not only great, but that He is the greatest mystic, Yogeśvara. In order to show His universal form to Arjuna, He has given him divine eyes, which means that Arjuna is very dear to Him. The purport here is that victory for Arjuna in this battle appears to be a simple matter of course. Now there is no doubt that by the mercy of Bhagavān, both material and spiritual auspiciousness will come to Arjuna. By this, Sañjaya also indicates to Dhṛtarāṣṭra that his desire for his sons' victory has been completely thwarted.

ŚLOKAS 10-11

अनेकवक्त्रनयनमनेकाद्वृतदर्शनम् ।
अनेकदिव्याभरणं दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम्॥१०॥
दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधरं दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम्।
सर्वश्चर्यमयं देवमनन्तं विश्वतोमुखम्॥११॥

*aneka-vaktra-nayanam / anekādbhuta-darśanam
aneka-divyābharaṇam / divyānekodyatāyudham*

*divya-mālyāmbara-dharanam / divya-gandhānulepanam
sarvāścarya-mayaṁ devam / anantaṁ viśvato-mukham*

(that form had) *aneka*—many; *vaktra-nayanam*—mouths and eyes; *aneka*—many; *adbhuta-darśanam*—wonderful aspects; *aneka*—many; *divya-abhaṇam*—divine ornaments; *aneka*—many; *divya*—divine; *udyata-ayudham*—raised weapons; *dharam*—it wore; *divya-mālyā*—divine garlands; *ambara*—and garments; (it was) *anulepanam*—smeared; *divya-gandha*—with divine scents; (it was) *aścarya-mayam*—astonishing; *sarva*—in every way; *devam*—brilliant; *anantam*—limitless; (and had) *mukham*—faces; *viśvataḥ*—on all sides.

Arjuna saw the *viśvarūpa* of Śrī Bhagavān, who possessed unlimited mouths and eyes and all varieties of astonishing features. Countless exquisite ornaments and heavenly garlands bedecked that form, in whose hands numerous celestial weapons were raised. He was dressed in lavish garments, anointed with divine fragrances and He was full of wonders, unlimited and resplendent, with faces on all sides.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Viśvato-mukham means whose face is everywhere.

ŚLOKA 12

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद् युगपदुत्थिता।
यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद्बासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥१२॥

*divi sūrya-sahasrasya / bhaved yugapad utthitā
yadi bhāḥ sadṛśī sā syād / bhāsas tasya mahātmanah*

yadi—if; *bhavet*—there could be; *sāḥ bhāḥ*—the light; *sūrya-sahasrasya*—of a thousand suns; *utthitā*—arising; *yugapat*—simultaneously; *divi*—into the sky; *sadṛśī*—such; *syāt*—would be; *bhāsah*—the splendour; *tasya*—of that; *mahā-ātmanah*—great personality.

If a thousand suns rose all at once in the sky, such splendour might approach the effulgence of that Supreme Person in His radiant universal form.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

If the splendour of a thousand suns were to appear simultaneously, then to some extent it could be compared to the effulgence of this viśvarūpa puruṣa.

ŚLOKA 13

तत्रैकस्थं जगल्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा।
अपश्यदेवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा॥१३॥

tatraika-stham jagat kṛtsnam / pravibhaktam anekadhā
apaśyat deva-devasya / śarīre pāṇḍavas tadā

tadā—at that time; *pāṇḍavah*—the son of Pāṇḍu; *apaśyat*—saw; *tatra*—there; *kṛtsnam*—the entire; *jagat*—universe; *pravibhaktam*—divided; *anekadhā*—into many; *eka-stham*—in one place; *śarīre*—within the body; *deva-devasya*—of the God of gods.

At that time, Arjuna could see the totality of the entire universe situated in one place in that gigantic body of Viśvarūpa, the God of gods.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

On that very battlefield, Arjuna saw unlimited universes in the body of *deva-devasya*, the God of gods. With their various distinctive features, they were situated in one part of His body, in every pore and in each belly. The word *anekadhā* means that some of these forms were made of earth, some were golden and some were made of gems. Some were fifty *yojanas* in measurement (one *yojana* equals eight miles), some a hundred, some *lākhs* of *yojanas* and some were millions of *yojanas* in size.

ŚLOKA 14

**ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनञ्जयः।
प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृताञ्जलिरभाषत॥१४॥**

tataḥ sa vismayāviṣṭo / hṛṣṭa-romā dhanañjayah
pranamya śirasā devam / kṛtāñjalir abhāṣata

tataḥ—then; saḥ dhanañjayah—he, the winner of wealth, Arjuna; vismaya-āviṣṭah—(became) overwhelmed by wonder; hṛṣṭa-romāḥ—his hairs stood erect; pranamya—bowing down; śirasā—his head; kṛta-añjalih—and folding his hands; abhāṣata—he addressed; devam—the Lord.

Struck by wonder, his hair standing on end, Arjuna bowed his head to offer *prāṇama* and, with folded hands, he spoke the following words to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the originator of that universal form.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

The universal form which Mahā-Yogeśvara Kṛṣṇa showed to Arjuna was most astonishing, supremely resplendent, wonderful to behold and decorated with various types of celestial ornaments. It was unlimited and all-pervading. In the body of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna saw the entire universe situated in one place and divided into various forms. To remove Dhṛtarāṣṭra's doubt that Arjuna may have run away in fear after seeing that terrifying form, Sañjaya said, "Arjuna is a great *bhakta* who knows *kṛṣṇa-tattva* and is endowed with *sattva-guṇa*. He did not become fearful upon seeing that thousand-headed form of Kṛṣṇa, but instead experienced *adbhuta-rasa* (astonishment). Arjuna was endowed with natural fortitude, but because he was absorbed in *adbhuta-bhāva*, he became ecstatic; his hairs stood on end and his body trembled. Paying obeisances by bowing his head and folding his hands, he began to speak."

Arjuna's eyes were not closed out of fear, but due to his experiencing *abdhuta-rasa*. The *viśvarūpa* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the *viśaya-ālambana* (object) of this *rasa*, and Arjuna is the *āśraya-ālambana* (receptacle). To see that form again and again is an *uddipana* (stimulus for remembrance). Paying obeisances and folding his hands are *anubhāvas*, and his hairs standing on end, etc., are *sāttvika-bhāvas*. Agitation of mind, fortitude, exhilaration and so forth are *sañcārī-bhāvas*. Here the *sthāyī-bhāva* is *vismaya* (wonder). All the above-mentioned ingredients combined with Arjuna's *sthāyī-bhāva* to manifest *vismaya-rasa*. Regarding *adbhuta-rasa*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (4.2.1):

ātmocitair vibhāvādyaiḥ / svādyatvam bhakta-cetasi
sā vismaya-ratiḥ nītād- / bhuto-bhakti-raso bhavet

When *vismaya-rati* becomes relishable within the heart of a *bhakta* by mixing with the appropriate elements of *vibhāva* and so forth, which are proper and favourable to one's own *bhāva*, it is called *adbhuta-rasa*.

ŚLOKA 15

पश्यामि देवांस्तव देव देहे सर्वांस्तथा भूतविशेषसङ्घान्।
ब्रह्माणमीशं कमलासनस्थमृषीश्च सर्वनुरगांश्च दिव्यान्॥१५

arjuna uvāca
paśyāmi devāṁs tava deva dehe
sarvāṁs tathā bhūta-viśeṣa-saṅghān
brahmāṇam iśam kamalāsana-stham
ṛṣīṁś ca sarvān uragāṁś ca divyān

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *deva*—O Lord; *paśyāmi*—I perceive; *tava dehe*—within Your body; *devān*—the gods; *tathā*—as well as; *sarvān*—all; *saṅghān*—the assemblies; *bhūta-viśeṣa*—of different living beings; *brahmāṇam*—Brahmā; (who is) *kamala-āsana-stham*—seated on the lotus; *iśam*—Śiva; *ṛṣīn*—the sages; *ca*—and; *sarvān*—all; *divyān*—divine; *uragān*—snakes.

Arjuna said: O My Lord, within Your divine body I see the *devatās* and all the hosts of living beings. I see Lord Brahmā upon his lotus-flower seat, Lord Śiva and all the divine *r̄ṣis* and serpents.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The phrase *bhūta-viṣeṣa-nāma* means all those living entities who are born from the womb, from eggs and from perspiration. The word *kamalāsana-stham* means Lord Brahmā, who is situated on the Sumeru mountain, which is like the lotus-whorl of the universe.

ŚLOKA 16

अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं पश्यामि त्वां सर्वतोऽनन्तरूपम्।
नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादिं पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप।१६।

*aneka-bāhūdara-vaktra-netram
paśyāmi tvāṁ sarvato 'nanta-rūpam
nāntam na madhyam na punas tavādim
paśyāmi viśveśvara viśva-rūpa*

viśveśvara—O Lord of the universe; *viśva-rūpa*—O form of the universe; *paśyāmi*—I see; *tvāṁ*—You; (with) *ananta-rūpam*—Your limitless forms; (which have) *aneka*—limitless; *bāhu*—arms; *udara*—bellies; *vaktra*—mouths; (and) *netram*—eyes; *sarvataḥ*—on all sides; *paśyāmi*—I see; *na*—no; *antam*—end; *na*—no; *madhyam*—middle; (and) *punah*—furthermore; *na*—no; *ādim*—beginning; *tava*—to Your form.

O Viśveśvara, Lord of the universe! O Viśvarūpa! I see Your innumerable forms with unlimited hands, bellies, mouths and eyes on all sides. Moreover, I cannot see in You any beginning, middle or end.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *viśveśvara* means the Primeval Person.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Arjuna says, “O Viśvarūpa! I see in Your body all-pervading, unlimited forms with unlimited hands, bellies, mouths and eyes, but I am unable to understand Your body’s beginning, middle or end.”

ŚLOKA 17

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणञ्च तेजोराशिं सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम्।
पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष्यं समन्ताद्वीप्तानलाकर्द्युतिमप्रमेयम्॥१७॥

*kirītinam gadinam cakriṇāñ ca
tejo-rāśim sarvato dīptimantam
paśyāmi tvām durnirīkṣyam samantād
dīptānalārka-dyutim aprameyam*

paśyāmi—I see; *tvām*—You; (*like an*) *aprameyam*—immeasurable; *dīptimantam*—brilliant; *tejo-rāśim*—mass of splendour; *sarvataḥ*—on every side; *kirītinam*—wearing crowns; *gadinam*—bearing clubs; *ca*—and; *cakriṇām*—discs; *dur-nirīkṣyam*—difficult to behold; *dīpta*—with a blazing radiance; *anala*—like fire; (*and*) *arka-dyutim*—an effulgence like the sun; *samantāt*—everywhere.

I see Your form as the supremely brilliant, all-pervading abode of splendour, adorned with crowns and bearing clubs and discs on all sides. It is very difficult to look upon You in the blazing fire of Your effulgence, which is radiating like the sun in all directions.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

After seeing the *viśvarūpa*, Arjuna says, “O Viśveśvara, I am seeing Your bodily limbs, heads, crowns, clubs, discs and

so forth to be like the effulgence of millions of suns. It is difficult for me to look at them. I am seeing them on all sides and am unable to ascertain their beginning or end." If one asks how Arjuna was easily able to see this form, the answer is that Bhagavān mercifully gave him *divya-cakṣu*.

ŚLOKA 18

**त्वमक्षरं परमं वेदितव्यं त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निः
गानम्।**

**त्वमव्ययः शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता सनातनस्त्वं पुरुषो मतो
मे॥१८॥**

*tvam akṣaram paramam veditavyam
tvam asya viśvasya param nidhānam
tvam avyayah sāśvata-dharma-goptā
sanātanaḥ tvam puruṣo mato me*

tvam—You (are); *paramam*—the supreme; *akṣaram*—brahma (Viṣṇu); *veditavyam*—worthy to be known (by liberated souls); *tvam*—You (are); *param*—the supreme; *nidhānam*—resting place; *asya*—of this; *viśvasya*—universe; *tvam*—You (are); *avyayah*—the immutable; *goptā*—protector; *sāśvata-dharma*—of eternal dharma; *tvam*—You (are); *sanātanaḥ*—the primeval; *puruṣah*—person; (this is) *me*—my; *mataḥ*—opinion.

You are *parabrahma*, the supreme knowable object for all liberated persons. You are the supreme resting place of this universe. You are inexhaustible, the protector of *sanātana-dharma* and the primeval *puruṣa*. This is my opinion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

The word *veditavyam* means worthy to be known by liberated persons. *Yad akṣaram* means *brahma-tattva*, and *nidhānam* means the place of dissolution.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Upon seeing the inconceivable *aiśvarya* form of Bhagavān, Arjuna concluded that He is indeed the supreme object of knowledge, *akṣara-tattva* (the imperishable reality), and can be known only by transcendental knowledge. He is the resting place of everyone, immutable, and the imperishable person. He is also the source of eternal *dharma*, and He is its protector.

sa kāraṇam karaṇādhipādhipo
na cāsyā kaścijanitā na cādhipaḥ
Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.9

The eternal, primeval person and cause of all causes, as described in this *mantra*, is also Him.

ŚLOKA 19

अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्यमनन्तबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेत्रम्।
पश्यामि त्वां दीप्तहुताशवक्त्रं स्वतेजसा विश्वमिदं
तपन्तम् ॥१९॥

anādi-madhyāntam ananta-vīryam
ananta-bāhum ūśi-sūrya-netram
paśyāmi tvām dīpta-hutāśa-vaktram
sva-tejasā viśvam idam tapantam

tvām—You; (are) *anādi-madhyāntam*—without beginning, middle or end; *ananta-vīryam*—having infinite prowess; *ananta-bāhum*—infinite arms; *ūśi-sūrya-netram*—eyes like the sun and moon; *paśyāmi*—I see; *dīpta-hutāśa*—the blazing fire of the *agni-hotra yajña* emanating from; *vaktram*—Your mouths; *idam*—this; *viśvam*—universe; *tapantam*—is scorched; *sva-tejasā*—by Your radiance.

You are without beginning, middle or end. You possess infinite prowess, innumerable arms, and eyes like the sun and the moon. I see fire blazing from Your mouths and the whole universe being scorched by Your radiance.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Since Arjuna is absorbed in an ocean of great wonder, repetition of this statement beginning with the word *anādi* is not a defect. It is said that if one repeats a subject twice or thrice inadvertently out of surprise or happiness, it is not incorrect.

ŚLOKA 20

द्यावाप थिव्योरिदिमन्तरं हि
व्याप्तं त्वयैकेन दि । च सर्वः ।
द ट्वाद्गुतं रूपमिदं तवोग्रं
लोकत्रयं प्रव्यथितं महात्मन् ॥२०॥

*dyāv ā-pṛthivyo idam antaram hi
vyāptam tvayaikena diśaś ca sarvāḥ
dṛṣṭvādbhutam rūpam idam tavogram
loka-trayam pravyathitam mahātman*

tvayā—You; *ekena*—alone; *vyāptam*—pervade; *sarvāḥ*—all; *diśaḥ*—directions; *idam antaram*—the space; *dyāv-pṛthivyoḥ*—between heaven and earth; *ca*—and; *mahā-ātman*—O great personality; *dṛṣṭvā*—seeing; *idam*—this; *adbhutam*—astonishing; *ugram*—terrible; *rūpam*—form; *tava*—of Yours; *loka-trayam*—the three worlds; *pravyathitam*—are very disturbed.

You alone pervade all the directions and all space between earth and the heavens. O Mahātman! Seeing this wondrous and terrible form of Yours, all the inhabitants of the three worlds are becoming afflicted with fear.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Now in this *śloka* beginning with the word *dyāv* and for the next nine *ślokas*, Śrī Bhagavān is showing His *kāla-rūpa*, the feature of all-devouring time, as part of that universal form, because it has a purpose in the present context.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

After seeing that *kāla-rūpa* of Śrī Bhagavān, Arjuna says, “O Sarvāśraya, resting place of everyone, You are pervading the whole earth, the firmament, the sky and all directions with Your *viśvarūpa*. By You alone, the three worlds are pervaded. Upon seeing this most wonderful divine form of Yours, the people of the three worlds are disturbed and agitated in fear.”

This great battle of Kurukṣetra was also seen by devas such as Brahmā, many *asuras*, the Pitṛs (forefathers), Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Kinnaras and human beings. All saw the battle according to their respective temperaments such as friendship, enmity and indifference, but only those who were *bhaktas* could see the universal form, by Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, due to being given *divya-cakṣu*.

It was not that only Arjuna saw the *viśvarūpa* with its chariots, horses and so on like a person who sees his own dream, but even personalities like Vyāsa, Sañjaya, Grandsire Bhīṣma and Brahmā witnessed this *aiśvarya* form of Śrī Bhagavān. This is the meaning of this *śloka*.

ŚLOKA 21

अमी हि त्वां सुरसङ्घा विशन्ति केचिद्ग्रीताः प्राञ्जलयो गृणन्ति।
स्वस्तीत्युक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसङ्घा वीक्षन्ते त्वां स्तुतिभिः पुष्कलाभिः।

amī hi tvāṁ sura-saṅghā viśanti
kecid bhītāḥ prāñjalayo gr̄ṇanti
svastiḥ uktvā maharṣi-siddha-saṅghāḥ
stuvanti tvāṁ stutibhiḥ puṣkalabhiḥ

hi—indeed; *amī sura-saṅghāḥ*—the assembly of gods; *viśanti*—are entering; *tvāṁ*—unto You; *kecit*—some; *bhītāḥ*—out of fear; *prāñjalayah*—with hands clasped; *uktvā iti*—after first uttering; *svasti*—let there be auspiciousness; *gr̄ṇanti*—they are offering

prayers; *maharṣi-siddha-saṅghāḥ*—the assembly of great sages and *siddhas*; *stuvanti*—are praising; *tvām*—You; *puṣkalābhīḥ*—with Vedic; *stutibhīḥ*—hymns.

The hosts of *devas* are taking Your shelter by entering into You. Out of fear, some are eulogizing You with folded hands. The great sages and *siddhas* are gazing upon You while chanting auspicious Vedic hymns, offering many prayers and praising You profusely.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

The word *tvām* means unto You.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Upon seeing the *kāla-rūpa* feature of the universal form, Arjuna became absorbed in it and again began saying, “All the *devas* on the battlefield are taking shelter of You by entering into You. Some of them are ready to run in fear but, unable to do so, are praying in a perplexed mood with folded hands, ‘O Prabhu, please protect me!’ At the same time, the *maharṣis* and *siddhas* are seeing the terrible result of the battle and saying, ‘Let there be auspiciousness for the universe.’”

SLOKA 22

रुद्रादित्या वसवो ये च साध्या विश्वेऽश्विनौ मरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च।
गन्धवर्यक्षासुरसिद्धसङ्घा वीक्षन्ते त्वां विस्मिताश्चैव सर्वे।२२।

rudrādityā vasavo ye ca sādhyā
viśve 'śvinau marutaś coṣmapāś ca
gandharva-yakṣasura-siddha-saṅghā
vikṣante tvāṁ vismitāś caiva sarve

rudra—the Rudras; *ādityāḥ*—the Ādityas; *ye vasavāḥ*—the Vasus; *ca*—and; *sādhyāḥ*—the Sādhyadevas; *viśve*—the Viśvadevas; *āśvinau*—the two Aśvinīs; *marutāḥ*—the Maruts; *ca*—and; *uṣma-pāḥ*—the forefathers; *ca*—and; *gandharva*—the Gandharvas; *yakṣa*—Yakṣas; *asura*—Asuras; *ca*—and; *siddha-saṅghāḥ*—the assembly of Siddhas; *vismitāḥ*—in great wonder; *sarve*—all; *vīkṣante eva*—are verily beholding; *tvām*—You.

The eleven Rudras, the twelve Ādityas, the eight Vasus, the Sādhyadevas, the Viśvadevas, the two Aśvinī-kumāras, the Maruts, Pitṛs, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Asuras and the Siddhas are all beholding You with wonder.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Those who accept offerings of hot food items are known as *uṣma-pāḥ*. In the śruti also it is stated: *uṣma bhāgā hi pitaraḥ*. “The portion given to the Pitṛs is *uṣma* (hot).”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Not only Arjuna but also the Rudras, the twelve Ādityas, the eight Vasus, the Sādhyas, the Viśvadevas, the two Aśvinī-kumāras, the Maruts, the Pitṛs headed by Uṣma-pā, the Gandharvas such as Citraratha, the Yakṣas such as Kuvera, the Daityas such as Virocana, and the Siddhas (perfected beings) such as Kapila, all are looking at the majestic form of Śrī Bhagavān with amazement. Here the word *uṣma-pāḥ* means the forefathers who accept offerings of hot food.

ŚLOKA 23

रूपं महत्ते बहुवक्त्रनेत्रं महाबाहो बहुबाहूरूपादम्।
बहूदरं बहुदंष्ट्राकरालं दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्रव्यथितास्तथाहम्॥२३॥

rūpaṁ mahat te bahu-vaktra-netram
 mahā-bāho bahu-bāhūru-pādam
 bahūdaram bahu-damṣṭrā-karālam
 dṛṣṭvā lokāḥ pravyathitās tathāham

mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed one; *dṛṣṭvā*—seeing; *te*—Your; *mahat*—gigantic; *rūpam*—form; (with its) *bahu*—many; *vaktra*—faces; (and) *netram*—eyes; *bahu*—many; *bāhu*—arms; *uru*—thighs; *pādam*—and feet; *bahu*—many; *udaram*—bellies; *bahu*—many; *karālam*—terrible; *daṁṣṭrā*—teeth; *lokāḥ*—the people; *pravyathitāḥ*—are very fearful; *tathā*—as also; *aham*—I (am).

O Mahā-bāho, on seeing Your gigantic form with its unlimited mouths, countless eyes, innumerable arms, thighs, feet, bellies and many fearsome teeth, everyone, including me, is becoming terrified.

ŚLOKA 24

नभःस्पृशं दीप्तमनेकवर्णं व्यात्ताननं दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् ।
 दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा धृतिं न विन्दामि शमञ्च विष्णो ॥

nabhaḥ-sprśam *dīptam* *aneka-varṇam*
vyāttānanam *dīpta-viśāla-netram*
dṛṣṭvā *hi* *tvāṁ* *pravyathitāntar-ātmā*
dhṛtim *na* *vindāmi* *śamañ* *ca* *viṣṇo*

viṣṇo—O Lord Viṣṇu; *dṛṣṭvā*—seeing; *tvāṁ*—Your form; (which is) *dīptam*—blazing; (and) *aneka-varṇam*—multi-coloured; *nabhaḥ-sprśam*—pervading the sky; *vyāttā-ānanam*—with wide-open mouths; *dīpta-viśāla-netram*—with fiery vast eyes; *antar-ātmā*—my mind; *pravyathita*—is very disturbed; *hi*—indeed; *na vindāmi*—I do not find; *dhṛtim*—steadiness; *ca*—or; *śamam*—peace.

O Viṣṇu! Seeing Your blazing, multi-coloured form pervade the sky with Your great fiery eyes and vast,

wide-open mouths, my mind is overpowered by fear and I am not feeling steady or at peace.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *śamam* means peace.

SLOKA 25

दंष्ट्राकरालानि च ते मुखानि दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसन्निभानि।
दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास।।।।२५॥

*damṣṭrā-karālāni ca te mukhāni
dṛṣṭvaiwa kālānala-sannibhāni
diśo na jāne na labhe ca śarma
prasīda deveśa jagat-nivāsa*

dṛṣṭvā—seeing; *te*—Your; *damṣṭrā-karālāni*—fearsome teeth; *ca*—and; *mukhāni*—mouths; *eva*—indeed; *sannibhāni*—resembling; *anala*—the fire; *kāla*—of annihilating time; *na jāne*—I am unable to ascertain; *diśaḥ*—the four directions; *ca*—and; *na labhe*—I do not obtain; *śarma*—happiness; *deva-iśa*—O Lord of the gods; *jagat-nivāsa*—O shelter of the universe; *prasīda*—be pleased.

Seeing all those dreadful mouths, full of fearsome teeth and blazing like the fire of annihilation, I am unable to ascertain where the four directions are, or feel any kind of happiness. O Lord of the *devas*! O shelter of the universe! Kindly be merciful to me.

SOKAS 26-27

अमी च त्वा धूतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्राः सर्वे सहैवावनिपालसङ्घैः।
भीष्मो द्रोणः सूतपुत्रस्तथासौ सहास्यदीयैरपि योधमुख्यैः।।२६॥
वक्त्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति दंष्ट्राकरालानि भयानकानि।
केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु सन्दूश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमाङ्गैः।।२७॥

amī ca tvāṁ dhṛtarāṣṭrasya putrāḥ
 sarve sahaivāvani-pāla-saṅghaiḥ
 bhīṣmo droṇaḥ sūta-putras tathāsau
 sahāsmadīyair api yodha-mukhyaiḥ
 vaktrāṇi te tvaramāṇā viśanti
 daṁṣṭrā-karālāni bhayānakāni
 kecid vilagnā daśanāntareṣu
 sandṛsyante cūrṇitair uttamāṅgaiḥ

ca—and; eva—indeed; sarve—all; amī—these; putrāḥ—sons; dhṛtarāṣṭrasya—of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; saha—together; avani-pāla-saṅghaiḥ—with the assembly of kings; bhīṣmaḥ—Bhīṣma; droṇaḥ—Droṇācārya; asau—that; sūta-putraḥ—charioteer's son, Karṇa; tathā—and also; api—indeed; saha—together; asmadīyaiḥ—with our; yodha-mukhyaiḥ—chief soldiers; te—they; viśanti—are entering; tvaramāṇāḥ—speedily; tvāṁ—Your; vaktrāṇi—mouths; bhayānakāni—which are filled with fearful; daṁṣṭrā-karālāni—frightful teeth; kecit—some; sandṛsyante—are seen; vilagnāḥ—stuck; daśana-antareṣu—between the teeth; uttama-aṅgaiḥ—with their heads; cūrṇitaiḥ—crushed.

All the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra along with their allied host of kings, Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Karṇa, as well as the leading warriors on our side, are rushing towards you with great speed and entering Your cave-like mouths which are filled with frightful teeth. Some are also trapped there, with their heads crushed between those teeth.

ŚLOKA 28

यथा नदीनां बहवोऽस्तुवेगाः समुद्रमेवाभिमुखा द्रवन्ति।
 तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा विशन्ति वक्त्राण्यभितो ज्वलन्ति।२८।

yathā nadīnāṁ bahavo'mbu-vegāḥ
 samudram evābhimukhā dravanti
 tathā tavāmī nara-loka-vīrā
 viśanti vaktrāṇi abhivijvalanti

eva—indeed; (*just*) *yathā*—as; *amī*—these; *vīrā*—heroes; *nara-loka*—of human society; *viśanti*—enter; *tava*—Your; *abhivijvalanti*—blazing; *vaktrāṇi*—mouths; *tathā*—similarly; *bahavaḥ*—the many; *ambu-vegāḥ*—waves; *nadīnām*—of rivers; *dravanti*—impetuously rush; *abhimukhāḥ*—towards; *samudram*—the ocean.

All these great heroes are entering Your blazing mouths, just as the waves of a river rush impetuously towards the ocean.

ŚLOKA 29

यथा प्रदीप्तं ज्वलनं पतङ्गा विशन्ति नाशाय समृद्धवेगाः।
 तथैव नाशाय विशन्ति लोकास्तवापि वक्त्राणि समृद्धवेगाः।२९।

yathā pradīptam jvalanam pataṅgā
 viśanti nāśāya samṛddha-vegāḥ
 tathaiva nāśāya viśanti lokāḥ
 tavāpi vaktrāṇi samṛddha-vegāḥ

yathā—as; *pataṅgāḥ*—moths; *samṛddha-vegāḥ*—with great speed; *viśanti*—enter; *pradīptam*—a blazing; *jvalanam*—fire; *nāśāya*—for destruction; *tathā*—similarly; *eva*—indeed; *lokāḥ*—these people; *api*—also; *samṛddha-vegāḥ*—with great speed; *viśanti*—enter; *tava*—Your; *vaktrāṇi*—mouths; *nāśāya*—to their destruction.

As moths rush into a blazing fire and perish, so too are these warriors entering Your mouths with great speed, only to die.

ŚLOKA 30

लेलिहासे ग्रसमानः समन्ताल्लोकान् समग्रान् वदनैर्जर्वलद्धिः।
तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्रं भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो॥३०॥

*lelihyase grasamānāḥ samantāl
lokān samagrān vadanair jvaladbhiḥ
tejobhir āpūrya jagat samagram
bhāsas tavogrāḥ pratapanți viṣṇo*

viṣṇo—O Viṣṇu; *lelihyase*—You lick (them with fiery mouths); *samagrān*—all; *lokān*—people; *samantāt*—from all sides; *grasamānāḥ*—devouring (them); *jvaladbhiḥ*—with blazing; *vadanaiḥ*—mouths; *pratapanți*—scorching (the universe); *samagram*—the entire; *jagat*—universe; *āpūrya*—filled; *tejobhiḥ*—with the rays; (of) *tava*—Your; *ugrāḥ*—terrible; *bhāsah*—light.

O Viṣṇu, with Your fiery tongues You are licking up the hosts of living beings on all sides and devouring them with Your blazing mouths. You are scorching the entire universe with the fierce, all-pervading rays of Your effulgence.

ŚLOKA 31

आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्रहूपो नमोऽस्तु ते देववर प्रसीद।
विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवन्तमाद्यं न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम्॥३१॥

*ākhyāhi me ko bhavān ugra-rūpo
namo 'stu te deva-vara prasīda
vijñātum icchāmi bhavantam ādyam
na hi prajānāmi tava pravṛttim*

deva-vara—O best of gods; *astu namah*—let my obeisances be; *te*—unto You; *prasīda*—be gracious (to me); *icchāmi*—I wish; (You to) *ākhyāhi*—tell; *me*—me; *kah*—who?; (are)

bhavān—You (are); (this) *ugra-rūpah*—fierce form of the Lord; *vijñātum*—to understand; *bhavantam*—Your honour; (who are) *ādyam*—the primeval cause; *hi*—indeed; *na prajānāmi*—I do not understand; *tava*—Your; *pravṛttim*—activities.

O Deva-vara, best among gods, I offer my obeisances unto You. Kindly be gracious to me and tell me who You are in this ferocious form. I very much want to know You, the primeval cause, because I do not comprehend Your activities.

ŚLOKA 32

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो लोकान् समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः।
ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः॥

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
 kālo 'smi loka-kṣaya-kṛt pravṛddho
 lokān samāhartum iha pravṛttah
 r̥te 'pi tvām na bhaviṣyanti sarve
 ye 'vasthitāḥ pratyanikeṣu yodhāḥ

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Lord said; *asmi*—I am; *pravṛddhah*—mighty; *kālah*—time; *loka-kṣaya-kṛt*—destroyer of the worlds; *pravṛttah*—engaged; *samāhartum*—to destroy; *lokān*—the people; *iha*—in this world; *api*—even; *r̥te*—without; *tvām*—you; *sarve*—all; *yodhāḥ*—the soldiers; *ye*—who; *avasthitāḥ*—are present; *pratyanikeṣu*—in either army; *na bhaviṣyanti*—shall not remain.

Śrī Bhagavān said: I am time, the mighty destroyer of the world, and I am here to annihilate all these people. Even without your efforts, not one warrior in either army will survive.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Bhagavān tells Arjuna, “I am all-destroying time and at present I have accepted this gigantic form. I am present here to annihilate Duryodhana and others. The result of My mission will be that, except for you five Pāṇḍavas, no one on this battle-field will remain alive. Even without your endeavour or the efforts of other warriors like you, all will be devoured within the jaws of terrible time, because in My form as time I have already taken their lives. Those heroes who are present on both sides will definitely enter the mouth of death, even without doing battle. Therefore, O Arjuna, if you remain aloof from the battle, you will fall down from your status as a *kṣatriya* because you have neglected your *sva-dharma*, and still they will not be saved.”

ŚLOKA 33

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व जित्वा शत्रून्भुडक्ष्व राज्यं समृद्धम्।
मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन्॥३३॥

tasmāt tvam uttiṣṭha yaśo labhasva
jitvā śatrūn bhuṅksva rājyam samṛddham
mayaivaitē nihatāḥ pūrvam eva
nimitta-mātraṁ bhava savya-sācin

tasmāt—therefore; *tvam*—you; *uttiṣṭha*—arise; (and) *labhasva*—attain; *yaśah*—fame; *jitvā*—by conquering; (*your*) *śatrūn*—enemies; (and) *bhuṅksva*—enjoy; *samṛddham*—a prosperous; *rājyam*—kingdom; *eva*—indeed; *ete*—these (soldiers); *pūrvam*—already; *nihatāḥ*—are slain; *maya*—by Me; *savya-sācin*—O expert bowman; *bhava*—just be; *eva nimitta-mātram*—but an instrument.

Rise up, therefore, to enter the battle and achieve glory by conquering your enemies, and thereby enjoy an unrivalled kingdom. All these warriors are already slain by Me alone. O Savyasācin, expert bowman, just become My instrument.

ŚLOKA 34

द्रोणञ्च भीष्मञ्च जयद्रथञ्च कर्णं तथान्यानपि योधवीरान्।
मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान्॥

*droṇañ ca bhīṣmañ ca jayadrathañ ca
karṇaṁ tathānyān api yodha-vīrān
mayā hatāṁs tvam jahi mā vyathiṣṭhā
yudhyasva jetāsi raṇe sapatnān*

droṇam—Droṇa; *ca*—and; *bhīṣmam*—Bhīṣma; *ca*—and; *jaya-dratham*—Jayadratha; *ca*—and; *karṇam*—Karṇa; *tathā*—also; *anyān*—other; *yodha-vīrān*—heroes among the fighters; *api*—although; (they are) *hatān*—already slain; *mayā*—by Me; *jahi*—you must slay (them); *tvam*—you; *mā vyathiṣṭhāḥ*—should not be disturbed; *yudhyasva*—just fight; *jetāsi*—you shall vanquish; (*your*) *sapatnān*—enemies; *raṇe*—on the battlefield.

Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Jayadratha, Karṇa and many other great heroes have already been destroyed by Me, so simply kill them and do not be disturbed. Your victory in battle is assured; therefore fight.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARSINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

There is a hidden meaning to the statement, “I have already killed Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Jayadratha, Karṇa and others.” Bhagavān is saying that when all the warriors on the side of the Kauravas were publicly insulting Draupadī by disrobing her, at that time they were all killed by Him because of their heinous Vaiṣṇava *aparādha*. “Just to give you fame, I have made these people stand before you like statues. It is as if they are lifeless. Just be the instrument in killing them.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa had already taken the life force from all the heroes who were participating in the battle of Mahābhārata. Similarly, in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Bhīṣma prayed as follows:

sapadi sakhi-vaco niśamya madhye
 nija-parayor balayo rathāṁ niveśya
 sthitavati para-sainikāyur akṣṇā
 hṛtavati pārtha-sakhe ratir mamāstu
 (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.9.35)

Let my supreme attachment be to that Pārtha-sakhā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who, upon hearing the request of his friend Arjuna to situate his chariot in the centre of both armies, immediately brought the chariot to that spot. On the pretext of pointing out Droṇa, Bhīṣma and so on, He took away the life of the warriors in the opposing party with His glance.

ŚLOKA 35

सञ्जय उवाच—

**एतच्छ्रूत्वा वचनं केशवस्य कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरीटी।
 नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाह कृष्णं सगद्गदं भीतभीतः प्रणम्य॥३५॥**

*sañjaya uvāca
 etac chrutvā vacanāṁ keśavasya
 kṛtāñjalir vepamānāḥ kirīṭī
 namaskṛtvā bhūya evāha kṛṣṇāṁ
 sa-gadgadāṁ bhīta-bhītāḥ praṇamya*

sañjaya uvāca—Sañjaya said; *śrutvā*—hearing; *etat*—this; *vacanam*—statement; *keśavasya*—of Śrī Keśava; *kirīṭī*—Arjuna; *kṛtāñjalih*—with folded hands; *vepamānāḥ*—trembling; *namaskṛtvā*—bowed down; *bhūyah*—repeatedly; *eva*—indeed; *praṇamya*—with a bowed head; *bhīta-bhītāḥ*—very fearfully; *āha*—he addressed; *kṛṣṇam*—Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *sa-gadgadām*—with a choked voice.

Sañjaya said to Dhṛtarāṣṭra: Upon hearing these words of Śrī Keśava, Arjuna, trembling, offered repeated obeisances with folded hands and, being extremely frightened, began speaking to Kṛṣṇa in a faltering voice as follows.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

After hearing this dialogue between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna from the mouth of Sañjaya, Dhṛtarāṣṭra Mahārāja undoubtedly understood that the great unconquerable fighters headed by Bhīṣma and Droṇa would also be killed and that there was no possibility of Duryodhana's victory. The idea that they should try for a truce in such a situation came to his mind, but he didn't express this externally.

The wise Sañjaya could understand his mind and immediately began to describe what happened next. On the side of the Pāṇḍavas, Arjuna trembled upon hearing the words of Kṛṣṇa. Paying obeisances again and again, with a disturbed mind and a faltering voice, he offered his supplication at the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān.

ŚLOKA 36

अर्जुन उवाच—

स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या जगत्प्रहृष्ट्यत्यनुरज्यते च।
रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसङ्घाः ।३६।

*arjuna uvāca
sthāne hṛṣikeśa tava prakīrtyā
jagat prahṛṣyaty anurajyate ca
rakṣāṁsi bhītāni diśo dravanti
sarve namasyanti ca siddha-saṅghāḥ*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *sthāne*—rightly; *hṛṣika-iśa*—O Lord of the senses; *jagat*—the world; *prahṛṣyati*—rejoices; *ca*—and; *anurajyate*—becomes attached; *tava prakīrtyāḥ*—to Your glorification; *bhītāni*—the fearful; *rakṣāṁsi*—fiends; *dravanti*—flee; *diśāḥ*—to all directions; *ca*—and; *siddha-saṅghāḥ*—the assembly of perfected beings; *sarve*—all; *namasyanti*—bow down.

Arjuna said: O Hṛṣīkeśa! Everyone in the universe is becoming joyful and attached to You on hearing the glorification of Your name, form and qualities. The *rākṣasas* are scattering out of fear, while the hosts of *siddhas* are offering their obeisances unto You. All this is, indeed, most appropriate.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Arjuna knows the following *tattva*: The *śrī vigraha* of Bhagavān is pleased with those who are devoted to Him, whereas He displays His dreadful feature to those who are averse to Him. Arjuna explains this while offering prayers to Śrī Bhagavān. The word *sthāne* is indeclinable and it means *yukta* or appropriate. It is used in all components of this *śloka*. Arjuna has addressed Kṛṣṇa as Hṛṣīkeśa, meaning one who turns the senses of His *bhaktas* towards Himself, and the senses of His non-devotees away. “This entire world is being attracted to You by the *saṅkīrtana* of Your glories. This is appropriate because this world is devoted to You. *Rākṣasas*, *asuras*, *dānavas*, *piśācas*, etc., are running in all directions out of fear. This is also appropriate because they are averse to You. Hosts of beings, who have become perfect by practising *bhakti* to You, are paying obeisances to You. This is also appropriate because they are Your *bhaktas*.” This *śloka* is famous in *mantra-śāstra* as the *rākṣoḥṇa-mantra* (a *mantra* to destroy *rākṣasas*).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The transcendental influence of Śrī Bhagavān’s form is such that *bhaktas* become joyful upon seeing it. But to those who are *āsurika* by nature and who are not devoted to Him, this form appears like Yamarāja, the lord of death. In the wrestling arena of Mathurā, worshipable elders like Nanda

Mahārāja, friends and the Yādavas were very pleased to see the beautiful *nava-kiśora*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but He appeared as death personified to Kāṁsa, as hard as a thunderbolt to the wrestlers, as the enforcer of chastisement to the wicked kings, and as *para-tattva* (Paramātmā) to the yogīs. Therefore, upon hearing the glories of Kṛṣṇa, devoted jīvas feel joy and become attached to Him. The siddhas become surrendered to Him, while the *asuras* and *rākṣasas* who are averse to Him run in fear. These reactions are appropriate for each of them.

ŚLOKA 37

कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन्महात्मन् गरीयसे ब्रह्मणोऽप्यादिकर्त्रै।
अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास त्वमक्षरं सदसत्त्वरं यत्॥३७॥

*kasmāc ca te na nameran mahātman
garīyase brahmaṇo 'py ādi-kartre
ananta deveśa jagan-nivāsa
tvam akṣaram sad-asat tat param yat*

mahātman—O great person; *deva-īśa*—Lord of the gods; *ananta*—O unlimited person; *ca*—and; *jagat-nivāsa*—O refuge of the universe; *garīyase*—who are greater; *api*—even; *brahmaṇaḥ*—than Brahmā; *ādi-karttre*—and who are the original creator; *tvam*—You (are); *akṣaram*—the imperishable (reality); *tat*—that; *yat*—which (is); *param*—transcendental; *satasat*—to cause and effect; *kasmāt*—why?; *na nameran*—should they not offer obeisances; *te*—to You.

O Mahātman! O Lord of the *devas*! O Ananta! O refuge of the world! You are greater even than Brahmā. You are the original creator and You are *brahma*, the imperishable reality beyond both cause and effect. Why then, would they not offer obeisances to You?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna said, “Why will they not offer obeisances and bow down to You? Certainly they will.” Here, the word *sat* means effect, and *asat* means the cause, thus, “That person who is superior to and beyond both *sat* and *asat* is You, the imperishable (*akṣara*) *brahma*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the previous *śloka*, Arjuna explained that Śrī Bhagavān is worshipable for Brahmā, etc. In this *śloka*, he establishes that Śrī Bhagavān is the soul of everyone. “*Devas*, *rṣis*, Gandharvas and other beings like them will indeed pay obeisances to You. They cannot exist without doing so because You are one without a second, inconceivable, and endowed with wonderful potencies. You are the Supreme Person, superior to everyone. You are the original creator of Lord Brahmā, who is the creator of the universe. Therefore, You are even superior to Brahmā.”

Arjuna also said, “Only Śrī Bhagavān is worshipable for all, but not only that but since He is the soul of everyone, He is everything.” He is superior to and distinct from the imperishable *brahma-tattva*, *jīva-tattva* and *prakṛti-tattva*. Although He is different from all these *tattvas*, they manifest from His *acintya-śakti*. Therefore, He also exists as everything. Not everything is Śrī Bhagavān, nor is anything equal to Him. Everything is the effect or result of His *śakti*. From this point of view, He alone is everything, because no other object or reality exists independent of Him. Thus, He is called the unparalleled *parama-tattva*. The *śrutis* state, *sarvam khalv idam brahma*. “Indeed, everything is *brahma*” (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 3.14.1). They also state, *neha nānāsti kiñcana* “(*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 4.4.19) and (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.1.11). Here it is said that everything such as the *jīva* and the inert world is *brahma*. There is nothing except *brahma*.

In contrast to this, śruti states:

*nityo nityānāṁ cetanāś cetanānām
eko bahūnāṁ yo vidadhāti kāmān*

Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.2.13,

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.13

Parabrahma is the prime eternal among all eternal beings and the prime conscious entity among all conscious beings.

According to this śloka, the *jīvas* are eternal, conscious and unlimited in number but *parabrahma* is the one and only supreme eternal and the supreme conscious being. Subsequently, the only verdict of the *Vedas* is the principle of *acintya-bhedābheda*, the purest of all *tattvas*.

ŚLOKA 38

**त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराणस्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम्।
वेत्तासि वेद्यञ्च परञ्च धाम त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप्य॥३८॥**

*tvam ādi-devah puruṣah purāṇas
tvam asya viśvasya param nidhānam
vettāsi vedyāñ ca parañ ca dhāma
tvayā tatañ viśvam ananta-rūpa*

tvam—You (are); *ādi-devah*—the original God; *tvam*—You (are); *purāṇah*—the primeval; *puruṣah*—personality; *param* *nidhānam*—the sole resting place; *asya*—of this; *viśvasya*—universe; *param*—the supreme; *dhāma*—abode; *ca*—and; *asi*—You are; *vettā*—the knower; (and) *vedyam*—that which is worthy of being known; *ananta-rūpa*—O You who have unlimited forms; *tvayā*—by You; *viśvam*—the universe; *tatam*—is pervaded.

You are the original Lord, the primeval person and the sole resting place of this universe. You are the supreme abode, the knower of everything and all that is to be known. O Ananta-rūpa, possessor of unlimited forms, You alone pervade the entire universe.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Nidhānam means resting place or place of dissolution, and *param dhāma* refers to that *svarūpa* which is beyond the *guṇas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original God. He is the supreme refuge of everyone and He is all-pervading. Because His *dhāma* is a manifestation of His *parā-śakti* (transcendental energy), He is non-different from His abode according to the principle of *śakti-śaktimān abheda*. This is established in Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.7):

tam iśvarāṇāṁ paramāṁ maheśvaraṁ
tam devatānāṁ paramāṁ ca daivatam
patīm patīnāṁ paramāṁ parastād
vidāma devām bhuvaneśam īḍyam

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

And furthermore, Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.8) states:

na tasya kāryāṁ karaṇāṁ ca vidyate
na tat-samaś cābhyaadhikaś ca drṣyate
parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate
svābhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca

The Lord has no duty to perform nor is anyone seen to be equal to or greater than Him. From realised souls we hear that the Supreme Lord's energy acts in manifold ways to make everything in His creation function systematically, as if it takes place automatically.

ŚLOKA 39

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशाङ्कः प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च।
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते। ३९।

vāyur yamo 'gnir varuṇah śaśāṅkah
prajāpatis tvam̄ prapitāmahaś ca
namo namas te 'stu sahasra-kṛtvah
punaś ca bhūyo 'pi namo namas te

tvam—You (are); *vāyuḥ*—the wind-god; *yamah*—the god of chastisement; *agnih*—the fire-god; *varuṇah*—the ocean-god; *śaśa-aṅkah*—the moon-god; *prajā-patiḥ*—the progenitor Brahmā; *ca*—and; *pra-pitā-mahah*—the father of the grandfather Brahmā; *astu*—let there be; *namah namah*—repeated obeisances; *te*—to You; *sahasra-kṛtvah*—a thousand times; *ca*—and; *punah*—again; *api*—and still; *bhūyah*—further; *namah namah*—repeated obeisances; *te*—unto You.

You are the wind-god Vāyu and Yama, the superintendent of death. You are the fire-god Agni, the ocean-god Varuṇa, the moon-god Candra, the creator Brahmā, and also the father of Brahmā. Therefore, I offer my obeisances to You thousands of times, again and again.

ŚLOKA 40

नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व।
अनन्तवीर्यामितविक्रमस्त्वं सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वः। ४०।

namah purastād atha pṛṣṭhatas te
namo 'stu te sarvata eva sarva
ananta-vīryāmita-vikramas tvam̄
sarvam̄ samāpnoṣi tato 'si sarvah

sarva—O original form of everything; *astu*—let there be; *namah*—obeisances; *te*—to You; *purastāt*—from the front; *atha*—and then; *prsthataḥ*—from behind; *namah*—obeisances; *te*—to You; *sarvataḥ*—from all sides; *eva*—indeed; *amitavikramah*—You possess limitless prowess; *ananta-vīrya*—and limitless valour; *tvam*—You; *samāpnoṣi*—pervade; *sarvam*—everything; *tataḥ*—hence; *asi*—You are; *sarvah*—everything.

O Sarva-svarūpa! My obeisances to You from the front, behind and from all sides! Possessing infinite prowess and valour, You pervade the entire universe. Therefore, You are everything.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

“Just as gold is present in all golden ornaments, such as armour and earrings, You pervade this world which is Your effect, and thus You are *sarva* (everything).”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Upon understanding that Kṛṣṇa is everyone’s worshipable object, Arjuna paid his obeisances again and again to He who embodies everything. Out of deep faith and honour, not considering these *pranāmas* enough, he bowed down to Kṛṣṇa who has unlimited prowess (*ananta-vīrya*) and immeasurable strength (*aparimeya-śakti*), who is *sarvātmā*, the soul of souls, and *sarva-svarūpa*, the form of everything (front, back, left, right and all directions). This is also seen in the statement of Śukadeva Gosvāmī in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.56):

*vastuto jānatām atra / kṛṣṇam sthāsnu cariṣṇu ca
bhagavad-rūpam akhilam / nānyad vastv iha kiñcana*

Those in this world who understand Śrī Kṛṣṇa as He is, perceive all things, either moving or non-moving, to be His manifestations. Such liberated souls see no other reality.

ŚLOKAS 41-42

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति।
 अजानता महिमानं तवेदं मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वापि॥४१॥
 यच्चावहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि विहारश्यासनभोजनेषु।
 एकोऽथवाप्यच्युत तत्समक्षं तत्क्षामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम्॥४२॥

sakheti matvā prasabham yad uktam
 he kṛṣṇa he yādava he sakheti
 ajānatā mahimānam tavedam
 mayā pramādāt praṇayena vāpi
 yac cāvahāsārtham asat-kṛto 'si
 vihāra-śayyāsana-bhojaneṣu
 eko 'tha vāpy acyuta tat-samakṣam
 tat kṣāmaye tvām aham aprameyam

ajānatā—because of not knowing; *idam*—these; *mahimānam*—glories; *tava*—of Yours; *pramādāt*—out of carelessness; *va api*—or else perhaps; *praṇayena*—out of affection; *matvā*—thinking (of You); *iti*—as; *sakhā*—a friend; *yat*—what; *uktam*—was said; *mayā*—by me; *prasabham*—rashly; *iti*—thus; *he kṛṣṇa*—O Kṛṣṇa!; *he yādava*—O Yādava!; *he sakha*—O friend!; *avahāsa-ar�am*—with the purpose of jesting; *yat*—by which; *asi*—You were; *asat-kṛtaḥ*—dishonoured; *ca vihāra-śayyā-āsana-bhojaneṣu*—while sporting, relaxing, sitting and taking food; *ekah*—alone; *atha vā*—or; *api*—also; *acyuta*—O Acyuta!; *tat-samakṣam*—in the presence of relatives; *tat*—for that; *tvām*—from You; *aprameyam*—O immeasurable one; *aham kṣāmaye*—I request forgiveness.

Not knowing Your glories, and either because I was careless, or affectionately considering You as my friend, I have rashly addressed You, “He Kṛṣṇa! He Yādava! He Sakha! He Acyuta!” If in jesting I have shown You disrespect, either alone with You or in

the presence of relatives, while sporting, relaxing, sitting or taking food, I humbly entreat You, O Aprameya, Lord of boundless glories, to please forgive me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Alas! Alas! I have committed unlimited offenses to You, the possessor of supreme *aiśvarya*.” Lamenting like this Arjuna spoke this *śloka* beginning with the word *sakheti*. Arjuna says, “He Kṛṣṇa” and so forth, meaning ‘You, Kṛṣṇa, are famous as the son of Vasudeva, a human being who is not famous and who is even known as an *arddharathī* (one who needs assistance to defeat a single opponent). But I, Arjuna, am an *atirathī* (one who can fight alone against unlimited warriors), and I am popular as the son of King Pāṇḍu.’ He Yādava means, “You were born in the Yadu dynasty and have no kingdom, whereas I was born in the dynasty of Puru and am therefore of royal lineage. Yet the friendly relationship I have with You is not because of Your ancestors or the influence of a dynasty, but because of You. It was with friendly intentions that I rashly spoke insulting words. For that reason, I am begging Your forgiveness.” These words are related to the following statement.

“Due to madness, the affection I expressed while sporting and joking with You insulted the glory of Your universal form. In other words, either alone or in the presence of friends, I have insulted You with sarcastic words such as *satyavādi*, you are truthful, *niṣkapaṭa*, you are free from cheating, and *parama-sarala*, you are very simple. I beg Your forgiveness for thousands of such offenses. O Prabhu! Please forgive me. I implore You!”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Upon seeing the supremely majestic *viśvarūpa* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is a manifestation of His *vibhūti*, Arjuna for-

got his natural friendly relationship in *sakhya-rasa*, as *aiśvaryā-jñāna* arose within him. He is lamenting for all the times he addressed Kṛṣṇa in *sakhya-bhāva* “He Sakhe! He Yādava! He Kṛṣṇa!” and is begging His forgiveness again and again.

ŚLOKA 43

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुगरीयान्।
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो लोकत्रयेऽप्रतिमप्रभाव॥

*pitāsi lokasya carācarasya
tvam asya pūjyaś ca gurur gariyān
na tvat-samo 'sty abhyadhikah kuto 'nyo
loka-traye 'py apratima-prabhāva*

apratima-prabhāva—O possessor of unrivalled power; *asi*—You are; *pitā*—the father; *lokasya*—of this world; *cara-acarasya*—of moving and non-moving beings; *tvam*—You; *pūjyah*—are worshipable; *ca*—and; *guruḥ*—the spiritual guide; *gariyān*—the greatest respectable person; *asya*—of this world; *na asti*—there is no one; *tvat-samah*—equal to You; *api loka-traye*—even within these three worlds; *kutah*—where is?; *anyah*—another; (who is) *abhyadhikah*—greater.

O possessor of unrivalled power! You are the father, the most worshipable, the *guru* and the most honoured person in this entire world of moving and non-moving beings. No one in the three worlds is Your equal, so who could possibly be greater than You?

ŚLOKA 44

तस्मात्प्रणाय प्रणिधाय कायं प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीञ्चम्।
पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोद्गम्।४४।

tasmāt pranamya pranidhāya kāyam

*prasādaye tvām aham iśam īdyam
piteva putrasya sakheva sakhyuḥ
priyah priyāyārhasi deva soḍhum*

tasmāt—thus; *pranamya*—offering obeisances; *pranidhāya*—prostrating; *kāyam*—my body; *aham prasādaye*—I plead for grace; *tvām*—from You; *īdyam*—the adorable; *iśam*—Lord; *iva*—as; *pītā*—a father; *putrasya*—with his son; *iva*—as; *sakha*—a friend; *sakhyuḥ*—with his friend; *priyah*—as a lover; *priyāyā*—with his beloved; *deva*—O Lord; *arhasi*—You ought; *soḍhum*—to forgive (me).

Thus, I offer my prostrated obeisances at Your lotus feet. O adorable Parameśvara, I entreat You to be gracious to me. O Deva, just as a father forgives his son, a friend tolerates a friend or a lover excuses his beloved, please forgive all my offenses.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The phrase *kāyam pranidhāya* means falling to the ground like a stick.

ŚLOKA 45

अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे।
तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास॥४५॥

*adṛṣṭa-pūrvam hṛṣito 'smi dṛṣṭvā
bhayena ca pravyathitam mano me
tad eva me darśaya deva rūpam
prasīda deveśa jagan-nivāsa*

deva—O Lord; *dṛṣṭvā*—having seen; *adṛṣṭa-pūrvam*—that which has not been seen before; *asmi*—I; *hṛṣitah*—am overjoyed; *ca*—but; *me*—my; *manah*—mind; *pravyathitam*—is extremely perturbed; *bhayena*—by fear; *eva darśaya*—just show; *me*—me; *tat*—

that (familiar); *rūpam*—form; *deva-iśa*—O Lord of the gods; *jagan-nivāsa*—O abode of the universe; *prasīda*—please be gracious.

O Deva! Having seen this *viśvarūpa* of Yours which was never seen before, I am overjoyed, but my mind is also very much perturbed due to fear. O Deveśa, God of gods! Please again show me Your four-handed form. O Jagan-nivāsa, refuge of the entire universe, please be gracious to me!

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Arjuna says, “Upon seeing this *viśvarūpa* which has never been seen before, I feel jubilant. At the same time, my mind is agitated with fear because of its terrible features. Therefore, please show me that form of Yours as Vasudevanandana, which is the pinnacle of sweetness and millions of times more dear to me than my own life. Please be gracious to me. I have seen enough of Your *aiśvarya*. I acknowledge that You alone are Deveśa, the God of all gods, the controller of all *devas*, and Jagan-nivāsa, the abode of the whole universe.” When Arjuna saw the universal form, he was unable to see Kṛṣṇa’s original human form, because it was covered by *yogamāyā*, even though Kṛṣṇa remained present before him. This is understood here.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *asamorddhva-tattva*: nobody is equal to or greater than Him. In this regard Bhagavān Himself says:

mamāham evābhīrūpah kaivalyād
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.3.17

I am *advitiya-puruṣa*, one without a second. Only I am equal to Myself. There is no one who is equal to Me, what to speak of being greater than Me.

It is also said in *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (6.8):

na tat-samaś cābhyaadhikaś ca dṛṣyate

The Lord has no duty to perform. A person who is equal to Him or greater than Him is not to be seen.

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya-līlā* 20.152) it is said:

*kṛṣṇera svarūpa-vicāra śuna, sanātana
advaya-jñāna-tattva, vraje vrajendra-nandana*

O Sanātana, please hear about Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eternal *svarūpa*. Although He is the Absolute Truth devoid of duality, He is eternally present in Vraja as the son of Nanda Mahārāja.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's power is inconceivable. He is the adorable father and the *ādi-guru* (original *guru*) of the entire moving and non-moving world. He alone is the supreme worshipable reality (*sevya-tattva*) for the *jīvas*. Considering this, Arjuna paid obeisances again and again and said, "In this world, the father does not accept the faults of his son as serious, a friend the faults of a friend, nor a lover the faults of the beloved. You are Śrī Bhagavān, yet You feel pleasure in dealing with *bhaktas* in *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *mādhurya-rasa*. Out of mercy, You reciprocate with all of them accordingly. Although my earlier behaviour with You was not improper from the perspective of our eternal relationship in *sakhya-bhāva*, when I consider Your glories and *tattva*, it seems that it was improper.

"Previously, I had not seen this universal form of Yours. Now my curiosity is satisfied. Although by seeing it I feel happy, my mind is disturbed due to its terrible features. Therefore, please again show me Your form as Vasudeva-nandana, the zenith of sweetness, which is millions of times more dear to me than my own life." Although the *narākāra-rūpa* (human-like form) of Vasudeva-nandana Kṛṣṇa was present before Arjuna as he beheld the universal form, it was covered by *yogamāyā*. Therefore, Arjuna was unable to see Him

and he requested Him to show His *caturbhūja-rūpa* (four-handed form).

ŚLOKA 46

**किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्तमिच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव।
तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते॥४६॥**

kirīṭinam gadinam cakra-hastam
icchāmi tvām draṣṭum aham tathaiva
tenaiva rūpeṇa catur-bhujena
sahasra-bāho bhava viśva-mūrtte

aham—I; icchāmi—wish; draṣṭum—to see; tvām—You; tathā eva—like that; kirīṭinam—helmeted; gadinam—holding a club; cakra-hastam—and disc in hand; sahasra-bāho—O thousand-armed one; viśva-mūrtte—O universal form; eva bhava—just be present; tena—in that; rūpeṇa—form; catur-bhujena—with four arms.

I long to see You in that *caturbhūja-rūpa*, adorned with helmet, mace and disc. O Sahasra-bāho, thousand-armed one! O Viśvamūrte, universal form! Please show me that four-armed form once again.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“In the future, whenever You show me Your *aiśvarya* feature, please only show me that of Your *nara-lilā*, that Vasudeva-nandana *rūpa* which I have seen earlier. Please show me that *parama-rasamaya-rūpa*, the form which embodies supreme *rasa* and which gives bliss to *mana-nayana*, the eyes of my mind. That form is not *adṛṣṭa-pūrva*, that which was not seen before. The *aiśvarya* of the universal form, which is part of Your divine pastime, is not very appealing to the eyes of my mind.”

With the above intention in mind, Arjuna says, “Please give

me *darśana* of that form I saw previously, which has a divine, precious helmet made of jewels. In other words, I want to see that form You showed Your parents at the time of Your birth. O Viśvamūrte (one who has the form of the universe)! O Sahasra-bāho (one who has thousands of arms)! Please withdraw this present form (*viśvarūpa*), and appear in Your *caturbhūja-rūpa*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *svarūpa* of Kṛṣṇa is that of a young boy (*nava-kiśora*), a beautiful actor (*naṭa-vara*), dressed as a cowherd boy (*gopaveśa*) with a flute in his hand (*veṇu-kara*). This is Kṛṣṇa’s eternal form. Although He is the embodiment of *mādhurya*, *aiśvarya* is also fully present in Him. Whether *aiśvarya* is manifest or not, if the activities appropriate for *nara-līlā* are not transgressed, it is certainly called *mādhurya*. For example, the killing of Pūtanā occurred when Kṛṣṇa was a baby. However, His behaviour as a baby was not exceeded by this manifestation of His *aiśvarya*. Neglecting the activities of *nara-līlā* to manifest *aiśvarya-bhāva* is called *aiśvarya*. For example, at the time of His birth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared before Vasudeva and Devakī bedecked with various ornaments and dresses, thus exceeding the activities of a human child. This is called *aiśvarya-mayī-līlā*.

Here Arjuna’s seeing the universal form is *aiśvarya-mayī-līlā*. Afterwards he prayed to see the four-handed form, which was somewhat familiar to him, as this was appropriate for the activities of *nara-līlā*. While performing His pastimes with the Yādavas and Pāṇḍavas in His two-handed form, Śrī Kṛṣṇa would sometimes manifest His four-handed form. The pastimes in Dvārakā are somewhat *aiśvarya-mayī*, but all pastimes in Vraja are *mādhurya-mayī*, or *naravat* (human-like).

When Arjuna tied Aśvatthāmā, the killer of Draupadī’s five sons, with ropes and brought him to her feet, Draupadī

was able to forgive Aśvathāmā, but Bhīma could not and wanted to kill him. To fulfil the desires of both and also to test the sharpness of Arjuna's intelligence, Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested His four-handed form. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.7.52) states:

*niśamya bhīma-gaditam / draupadyāś ca catur-bhujaḥ
ālokya vadanaṁ sakhyur / idam āha hasann iva*

Caturbhūja, after hearing the words of Bhīma, Draupadī and others, saw the face of His dear friend Arjuna, and began to speak as if smiling.

Once, while Kṛṣṇa was joking with Rukminī, she could not understand the meaning of His words and fell to the ground unconscious. At that time, Kṛṣṇa manifested His *caturbhūja-rūpa* and lifted her up with two of His arms. With His other two arms He began to arrange her dishevelled hair and clean her face. As it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.60.26):

*paryāṅkād avaruhyāśu / tām utthāpya catur-bhujaḥ
keśān samuhya tad-vaktram / prāmṛyat padma-pāṇinā*

Arising swiftly from the couch, the four-armed Lord smoothed her hair and gently touched her face with His lotus hand.

Once, in His Vraja *līlā*, Kṛṣṇa suddenly disappeared from the *rāsa-līlā*. Manifesting His *caturbhūja-rūpa* He stood on the path of the *gopīs* who were searching for Him. When the *gopīs* saw Him, they paid their obeisances and moved on in search of *dvibhuja* (two-handed) Śyāmasundara. In the meantime, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the embodiment of *mahābhāva*, came to that place. Seeing Her, Kṛṣṇa became overwhelmed and despite great endeavour He was unable to maintain His four-armed form. This *caturbhūja-rūpa* disappeared into His *dvibhuja-rūpa*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Arjuna as saying, "Now

I want to see Your four-armed form in which You wear a crown on Your head and carry weapons such as a club and disc in Your hands. When You manifested the creation from Your *caturbhūja-mūrti*, You manifested Your *viśvarūpa-mūrti*, of *sahasra-bāhu* (one thousand arms). O Kṛṣṇa, I have understood without a doubt that this two-armed Śyāmasundara form is the embodiment of *sac-cid-ānanda para-tattva*, is eternal and is the attractor of all *jīvas*. The *caturbhūja-mūrti* of Nārāyaṇa eternally exists as the *aiśvarya-vilāsa* of this two-armed Śyamasundara *rūpa*. At the time of creation, this gigantic *viśvarūpa-mūrti* manifests from that four-armed Nārāyaṇa form. My curiosity has been satisfied by this supreme knowledge.”

ŚLOKA 47

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

मया प्रसन्नेन तवार्जुनेदं रूपं परं दर्शितमात्मयोगात्।
तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमादां यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम्॥४७॥

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
 mayā prasannena tavārjunedam
 rūpam param darśitam ātma-yogāt
 tejo-mayam viśvam anantam ādyam
 yan me tvad anyena na dṛṣṭa-pūrvam

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Lord said; *arjuna*—O Arjuna; *mayā*—because I; (am) *prasannena*—pleased; *tava*—with you; *idam*—this; *tejo-mayam*—resplendent; *anantam*—unlimited; *ādyam*—original; *param*—supreme; *viśvam*—universal; *rūpam*—form; *darśitam*—has been shown; *me ātma-yogāt*—by My *yogamāyā*; (a form) *yat*—which; *na dṛṣṭa-pūrvam*—has not been seen previously; *anyena*—by someone other; *tvat*—than you.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O Arjuna, because I am pleased with you, I have shown you My resplendent, unlimited and pri-

meval universal form by My inconceivable *yogamāyā śakti*. This form has never been seen by anyone other than you.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“O Arjuna, you prayed to Me, Puruṣottama, to show you My *aiśvarya-rūpa* (*Gītā* 11.3), and thus I have shown you that *viśvarūpa puruṣa* which is but an *anṛ̥ṣa*, partial aspect of Me. Why has your mind become disturbed upon seeing it? Moreover, you now desire to see My human-like form and are entreating Me, ‘Be gracious, be gracious!’ Why do you speak in this surprising manner? I showed you and no one else My *viśvarūpa* because I was pleased with you. No one but you has ever seen it before. Why do you no longer wish to see it?”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna, “On your request, I showed you My partial aspect, My resplendent *viśvarūpa*, through the potency of My *acintya-śakti* because I was pleased with you.” In Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa’s commentary, he has compared this *prakāṣṭa* (manifestation) of Kṛṣṇa with a valuable gem and an expert theatre actor. Although a valuable gem is only one object, by displaying its various colours it satisfies many viewers. Similarly, an expert actor entertains his audience by appearing in various roles. In the same way, although Kṛṣṇa is one, He manifested the *viśvarūpa* which is present within Him. This is the hidden meaning of Kṛṣṇa’s statement.

Kṛṣṇa again said, “Because of you, even the *devatās* and many *bhaktas* saw this form. No one had ever seen it before. When I went to the assembly of Duryodhana as a messenger of the Pāṇḍavas, and in various ways tried to persuade the Kauravas to give half the kingdom to the Pāṇḍavas, the wicked Duryodhana tried to capture Me. I then manifested a partial aspect of My *viśvarūpa* before Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the kings of various states and many noble persons. Bhīṣma, Drona and

all the ṛṣis who were present in that assembly were unable to tolerate its effulgence and closed their eyes. On Dhṛtarāṣṭra's request, I gave him divine vision for a short while so that he could see Me. Arjuna, you are My friend, and I have shown you this form which was never shown to anyone else because I am pleased with you."

ŚLOKA 48

न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैर्दानैर्चक्रियाभिन्तपोभिरुग्रैः।
एवंरूपः शक्य अहं नृलोके द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर॥४८॥

na *veda-yajñādhyayanair* na *dānair*
na *ca kriyābhir* na *tapobhir ugraiḥ*
evam-rūpaḥ *śakya* *aham* *nṛ-loke*
draṣṭum *tvad anyena kuru-pravīra*

kuru-pravīra—O hero among the Kurus; *anyena tvat*—other than by you; *aham*—I; *na śakyaḥ*—cannot; *draṣṭum*—be seen; *nṛ-loke*—in this world of men; *evam-rūpaḥ*—in this way; *veda-adhyayanaiḥ*—through study of the Vedas; *yajña*—through sacrificial performances; *na*—not; *dānaiḥ*—by acts of charity; *na*—not; *kriyābhiḥ*—by ritualistic activities; *ca*—and; *na*—not; *ugraiḥ*—by severe; *tapobhiḥ*—austerities.

O Kuru-pravīra, great hero among the Kurus, no one but you in this mortal world is able to see My *viśvarūpa*. This form cannot be seen by study of the Vedas, nor through sacrifices, charity, rituals or severe penances.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

Śrī Bhagavān says, "The ability to see the form I have shown you cannot be achieved even by processes such as studying the Vedas. I am unable to show this form to anyone other than you. Fix your *niṣṭhā* in that most rare of forms only,

understanding that you have achieved the most unattainable object. Why do you again wish to see My human form after seeing this most rare form?"

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "O Kuru-pravīra, nobody in this world has ever seen this viśvarūpa, manifested by My yogamāyā-śakti, even by the study of the Vedas, sacrifices, charity, religious activities or severe austerities. You are the only one to have seen it. All those jīvas who have attained the position of devas see and remember My viśvarūpa with their divine eyes and divine minds. In this mundane world, those who are bound by delusion and covered by ignorance cannot see this divine form, but My bhaktas, who are in *yoga* (union) with Me and always fixed in *nitya-cit-tattva* (the eternal conscious reality), transcend delusion as well as divinity. They, just like you, do not feel comfortable with this form, but hanker to see My *cinmaya-nitya-rūpa*, that transcendentally beautiful human-like form."

ŚLOKA 49

मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढभावो दृष्ट्वा रूपं घोरमीदृढ़ममेदम्।
व्यपेतभीः प्रीतमनाः पुनस्त्वं तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य॥

mā te vyathā mā ca vimūḍha-bhāvo
dṛṣṭvā rūpam ghoram īdrṇ mamedam
vyapeta-bhiḥ pṛīta-manāḥ punas tvam
tad eva me rūpam idam prapaśya

mā te—you should not have; vyathā—fear; ca—and; mā—do not; (be) vimūḍha-bhāvah—bewildered; dṛṣṭvā—having seen; īdrṇ—such; idam ghoram—a terrible; rūpam—form; mama—of Mine; (be) vyapeta-bhiḥ—free from fear; pṛīta-manāḥ—of cheerful mind; tvam prapaśya—you just behold;

punah—again; *idam*—this; *tat eva*—very same; *rūpam*—form; *me*—of Mine.

Do not fear or be deluded by seeing this terrible form of Mine. Become fearless and with a cheerful mind behold once again My beautiful four-armed form to your complete satisfaction.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“O Parameśvara! Why aren’t You blessing me? You want to forcibly show me this form even though I am unwilling to see it. My body is becoming troubled and my mind perplexed by seeing Your *aiśvarya-rūpa*. I am repeatedly falling unconscious. I pay my obeisances from a distance to this *parama-aiśvarya-rūpa* of Yours, and will never again pray to You to show it to me. Please forgive me for this. Please forgive me. Please show me the moon-like face of Your human-like form with which You shower the nectar of Your sweet smile.”

Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *mā te* to give solace to a disturbed Arjuna.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Arjuna became very fearful and agitated upon seeing the terrible *viśvarūpa*. Śrī Bhagavān pacified him saying, “Be neither fearful nor agitated. In the assembly when Draupadī was being insulted, Duryodhana, Bhīṣma, Droṇācārya and others remained silent. Even Yudhiṣṭhīra and the other Pāṇḍavas were unable to protect her and remained sitting with their heads lowered. Duryodhana, Karṇa and others were ridiculing her with various sarcastic statements and Duḥśāsana slapped his thigh and then pulled at Draupadī’s cloth with his full strength. In such a helpless situation, Draupadī fully surrendered to Me. At that time, I vowed to

destroy the *adharma*, wicked Duryodhana and all his followers. Therefore, I will surely execute this massacre. You are just an instrument. I have shown you My wrathful, terrible, annihilating form just to give you faith in this. You are My *nitya-sakhā* therefore, I know that this form will not be pleasing to you. Now without fear, behold that form you have requested Me to show you."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "Foolish persons do not believe in this *viśvarūpa*. By seeing this terrible form you should be neither agitated nor bewildered. My *bhaktas* are peaceful, and therefore they long to see My *sac-cid-ānanda-nara-rūpa*. I therefore bless you not to be agitated or bewildered by My *viśvarūpa*. Those *bhaktas* who are attracted to My *mādhurya* have no purpose with this *viśvarūpa*. Since you are My *līlā-sakhā* (pastime friend), you are to be an instrument in all My pastimes. It is not proper for you to be disturbed like this. Now give up your fear, and with a cheerful mind see My *nitya-rūpa* (transcendental human-like form)."

ŚLOKA 50

सञ्जय उवाच—

इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः।
आश्वासयामास च भीतमेनं भूत्वा पुनः सौम्यवपुमहात्मा।५०।

sañjaya uvāca

ity arjunam vāsudevas tathoktvā
svakam rūpam darśayām āsa bhūyah
āśvāsayām āsa ca bhītam enam
bhūtvā punah saumya-vapur mahātmā

sañjaya uvāca—Sañjaya said; *tathā iti*—thus; *uktvā*—speaking; *mahā-ātmā*—the magnanimous; *vāsudevah*—son of Vasudeva; *bhūyah*—again; *darśayām āsa*—showed; *svakam*—His personal; *rūpam*—form; *arjunam*—to Arjuna; *ca*—and; *āśvāsayām āsa*—

consoled; *enam*—that; *bhitam*—frightened person; *bhūtvā*—by becoming; *punah*—again; *saumya-vapuh*—the gentle form.

Sañjaya said: Having spoken thus, the supremely compassionate son of Vasudeva again revealed His four-armed form, and then further consoled the frightened Arjuna by assuming His gentle two-armed form.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this way, after showing the extremely wrathful form of His *amṛta*, Śrī Bhagavān showed His *mādhurya-aiśvarya-maya caturbhūja-rūpa*, His four-armed form decorated with helmet, mace, *cakra* and so forth, being so requested by Arjuna. That Supreme Personality again manifested His pleasing two-handed form, decorated with bracelets, earrings, turban, *pītāmbara* and other ornaments, thus giving solace to the frightened Arjuna.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Sañjaya is describing what happened next. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa withdrew His *sahasra-sīrṣa-rūpa* (thousand-headed form) and manifested His *caturbhūja-rūpa*, blackish in colour like the blue lotus. He had manifested this form as Devakī-nandana in the prison house of Kaṁsa. Finally, He gave solace to the frightened Arjuna by manifesting His supremely pleasing *dvibhuja-mūrti* (two-armed form).

ŚLOKA 51

अर्जुन उवाच—

दृष्ट्वेदं मानुषं रूपं तव सौम्यं जनार्दनं।

इदानीमस्मि संवृत्तः सचेताः प्रकृतिं गतः॥५१॥

arjuna uvāca

*dr̥ṣṭvedam ī mānuṣam rūpam / tava saumyam janārdana
idānīm asmi saṁvṛttah / sa-cetāḥ prakṛtim gataḥ*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *janārdana*—O Janārdana; *drṣṭvā*—seeing; *idam*—this; *mānuṣam*—human-like; *saumyam*—pleasing; *rūpam*—form; *tava*—of Yours; *idānīm*—now; *asmi saṁvṛttah*—I have become; *sa-cetāḥ*—rational; (and) *gataḥ*—have returned; *prakṛtim*—to my nature.

Arjuna said: O Janārdana, now my heart feels delight upon seeing this captivating human-like form of Yours, and I have returned to my normal condition.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Seeing the most sweet form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and feeling as if he were immersed in the ocean of bliss, Arjuna said, “My heart feels delight now that I have returned to my *prakṛtim* (normal state).”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

At that time Arjuna, who was now free from all fear, saw Śrī Kṛṣṇa first in His extremely sweet *caturbhujā-rūpa*, and then in His *dvibhuja* Śyāmasundara form. In great bliss Arjuna said, “O Janārdana, after seeing Your most pleasing human-like form, I have become self-composed and have regained my natural condition.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa mostly performed His pastimes with the Yādavas and the Pāṇḍavas in His *dvibhuja-rūpa*, yet sometimes He performed them in His *caturbhujā-rūpa*. Therefore, His *caturbhujā-rūpa* is also known as human. In Śrimad-Bhāgavatam (7.15.75), Nārada Muni describes Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s human form to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira: *gūḍham param brahma manuṣya-liṅgam*. “Śrī Kṛṣṇa is living intimately with you in your house, just like your brother.”

ŚLOKA 52

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्मम।
देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शनकाङ्क्षणः॥५२॥

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
su-durdarśam idam rūpam / dṛṣṭavān asi yan mama
devā apy asya rūpasya / nityam darśana-kāṅkṣīṇah

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Lord said; *idam*—this; *rūpam*—form; *mama*—of Mine; *yat*—which; *dṛṣṭavān asi*—you have seen; (*is*) *su-durdarśam*—very rarely seen; *api*—even; *devāḥ*—the gods; *nityam*—always; *darśana-kāṅkṣīṇah*—aspire to have a sight; *asya*—of this; *rūpasya*—form.

Śrī Bhagavān said: This human form of Mine which you have seen, is rarely seen by others. Even the *devas* are ever hankering to have *darśana* of this form.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this and the next two *ślokas* beginning with the words *su-durdarśam*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the glory of the *svarūpa* He is now showing to Arjuna. “Even the *devas* aspire to see this *svarūpa* but never can. However you, Arjuna, do not want to see My *viśvarūpa*. This is appropriate because you are eternally tasting the *mahā-mādhurya* of My original human form. How, therefore, could this *viśvarūpa* attract your eyes? I blessed you with divine eyes, but I did not bless you with a corresponding divine mind. Therefore, you whose mind only likes to see My *mahā-mādhurya* human form, did not fully appreciate seeing My other (universal) form, even though I gave you divine vision. If I had given you an appropriate divine mind, then you would also have become attracted to My *viśvarūpa*, like the *devas*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the present śloka Śrī Kṛṣṇa is explaining the glory of His human-like form (*nara-rūpa*). Exhibiting the most exceptional aspect of His mercy to Arjuna, He says, “It is extremely rare to behold this human form which you are seeing. Even the *devas* cannot see it. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Tenth Canto, the *Garbha-stotra* states that it is even difficult for the *devas* to see this form. You are My *nitya-bhakta* who tastes the great sweetness of My human form. Therefore, the *viśvarūpa* was not pleasing to you. I gave you divine eyes but not a divine mind. If I had given you a divine mind, then, like the *devas*, you would have been attracted to this universal form. Because you are My *nitya-sakhā*, you can never give up your *sakhya-bhāva*. Thus, this human form is very pleasing to you.”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Arjuna, the form which you now see is most rare, *sudurdarśam*. Even *devas* like Brahmā and Rudra always hanker to see this *nitya-rūpa*. If you wonder how this human form is so rare when it is seen by everyone, then I want to explain this *tattva* to you. Hear attentively. There are three types of perceptions related to My *sac-cid-ānanda kṛṣṇa-rūpa*: *avidvat-pratīti*, *yauktika-pratīti* and *vidvat-pratīti*. *Avidvat-pratīti* is the perception of the ignorant which is only based on empiric knowledge. They see My *nitya-svarūpa* as mundane and temporary. One cannot understand the supreme nature of this *svarūpa* by such perception. By *yauktika* (reasoning) or *divya-pratīti*, the *devas* and persons who are proud of their *jñāna* consider My *svarūpa* to be mundane and temporary. They accept the eternal reality of either My universal form, which pervades the whole universe, or My negative aspect of the universe, *nirviśeṣa-brahma*. They conclude that My human form is only a temporary means of worship. However, by

vidvat-pratīti (perception which is based on transcendental knowledge), My *bhaktas*, who are endowed with conscious vision (*cit-cakṣu*), realise My human form to be directly the abode of *sac-cid-ānanda*. This type of realised vision is rare even for the *devas*, among whom only Brahmā and Śiva, who are My *śuddha-bhaktas*, are always longing to see My human form. Having seen this *viśvarūpa*, you have been able to understand, by My mercy, the supremacy of My eternal form. This is because you are engaged in My pure *bhakti* in friendship.”

ŚLOKA 53

नाहं वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन न चेज्यया।
शक्य एवंविधो द्रष्टुं द्रष्टवानसि यन्मम॥५३॥
nāham vedair na tapasā / na dānena na cejyayā
śakya evam-vidho draṣṭum / dṛṣṭavān asi yan mama

aham—I; *na śakyah*—can not; *draṣṭum*—be seen; *evam-vidhah*—in this way; *yathā*—as; *dṛṣṭavān asi*—you have seen; *mām*—Me; *vedaiḥ*—by study of the *Vedas*; *na*—nor; *tapasā*—by austerities; *na*—not; *dānena*—by charitable acts; *ca*—and; *na*—nor; *ījyayā*—by sacrifice.

It is not possible to see Me in this form as you see Me now merely by studying the *Vedas*, practising austerities, giving in charity or performing sacrifices.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“If, like you, someone wants to see My eternal two-handed human form, considering it to be the essence of human endeavour, they will not be able to know or see it, even if they perform such processes as studying the *Vedas* and executing austerities. Believe this.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

One cannot obtain *darśana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His most pleasing eternal human like form, which was seen by the *bhakta* Arjuna, by studying the *Vedas*, or by performing austerities, charity or worship, etc. It is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.12.9):

*yam na yogena sāṅkhyena / dāna-vrata-tapo-'dhvaraiḥ
vyākhyā-svādhyāya-sannyāsaiḥ / prāpnuyād yatnavān api*

Even by practices performed with great endeavour such as mystic *yoga*, philosophical speculation, charity, vows, austerities, performance of sacrifice, teaching Vedic *mantras*, study of *śāstra*, or taking the renounced order of life, one cannot achieve Me.

And furthermore it is said:

*na sādhayati mām yogo / na sāṅkhyam dharma uddhava
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo / yathā bhaktir mamorjitaḥ*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.14.20

My dear Uddhava, I am controlled only by the *bhakti* rendered to Me by My pure hearted devotees. I can never be controlled by those who only study Sāṅkhya philosophy or *śāstra*, or who perform mystic *yoga*, pious acts, austerity or renunciation.

ŚLOKA 54

**भक्त्या त्वन्यया शक्यो अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन।
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुञ्च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुञ्च परत्तप॥५४॥**

*bhaktyā tv ananyayā śakya / aham evam-vidho 'rjuna
jñātum draṣṭuñ ca tattvena / praveṣtuñ ca parantapa*

parantapa—O chastiser of the foe; *arjuna*—Arjuna; *tu*—however; *ananyayā*—by exclusive; *bhaktyā*—devotional service; *aham*—I; *śakyah*—can; *jñātum*—be known; *ca*—and; *draṣṭum*—seen; *evam-vidhah*—in this way (in this human-like form); *ca*—and; *tattvena*—truly; *praveṣtum*—enter (into association with Me.)

O Parantapa, Arjuna! Only by *ananya-bhakti* can one actually know and see My eternal, beautiful human form and truly enter into association with Me in My abode.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Then by which means are You attainable?” Expecting this question from Arjuna, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *bhaktyā*. Even if one has the desire to attain *nirvāṇa-mokṣa* (impersonal liberation), he can only enter into the *brahma-svarūpa* with the help of *bhakti*. There is no other way. After *jñāna-sannyāsa*, the *guṇi-bhūtā bhakti* of the *jñānīs* finally develops to a slight degree. Nothing else happens. By this they attain *sāyujya-mukti*.

“Later they attain Me, having known My *svarūpa* in truth.” This I will explain and establish later in *Gītā* 18.55.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The vision of this pleasing human form is possible only by *ananya-bhakti*. In this regard, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.12.8) states:

kevalena hi bhāvena / gopyo gāvo nagā myṛgāḥ
ye 'nye mūḍha-dhiyo nāgāḥ / siddhā mām īyur añjasā

The residents of Vraja, such as the *gopīs*, cows, animals, the snakes such as Kāliya, the twin *arjuna* trees and other non-moving entities with their consciousness covered, such as, bushes and shrubs, all attained the perfection of life, and came to Me simply because of their one-pointed devotion for Me.

And furthermore, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.21) states:

bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyāḥ / śraddhayātmā priyah satām
bhaktih punāti man-niṣṭhā / śva-pākān api sambhavāt

I can only be attained through *bhakti* performed with full faith. I am naturally dear to My *bhaktas* who take Me as the exclusive goal of their *bhajana*. Even the dog-eaters can purify themselves of their lower birth by performing *bhajana* to Me.

ŚLOKA 55

मत्कर्मकृन्त्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥५५॥

*mat-karma-kṛṇ mat-paramo / mad-bhaktaḥ saṅga-varjitaḥ
nirvairah sarva-bhūteṣu / yaḥ sa mām eti pāṇḍava*

pāṇḍava—O son of Pāṇḍu; *sah*—he; *yaḥ*—who; *mat-karma-kṛt*—dedicates his work to Me; *mat-paramah*—makes Me his ultimate shelter; *mat-bhaktaḥ*—practises devotional service to Me; *saṅga-varjitaḥ*—free from (materialistic) association; *nirvairah*—without enmity; *sarva-bhūteṣu*—towards any living being; *eti*—comes; *mām*—to Me.

O son of Pāṇḍu, one who works exclusively for Me and considers Me alone to be his supreme goal, who engages in the various limbs of *bhakti* such as *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam* while avoiding mundane attachments, and who remains free from enmity towards any living being—he alone attains Me in My supremely beautiful Kṛṣṇa form.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now in this *śloka* beginning with the words *mat-karma-kṛt*, Śrī Bhagavān explains the characteristics of His *ananya-bhaktas* to conclude the discussion on *bhakti*, which began in Chapter Seven. *Saṅga-varjitaḥ* means devoid of attachment to the results and free from poor association.

The import of the Eleventh Chapter is that Arjuna has become firmly convinced about the *mahā-aiśvaryā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and that he will be victorious in battle.

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

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this *śloka* Śrī Kṛṣṇa is explaining the limbs of *bhakti* that are to be followed by *bhaktas* who take shelter of *ananya-bhakti*. “Those who become free from all mundane attachment and envy towards all *jīvas* and engage in My *ananya-bhakti* by performing activities such as building temples for Me, cleaning them, offering service to Tulasi-devī, and performing *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana* and *smaraṇa* of *hari-kathā*, they alone are My *bhaktas*.”

Similar statements are made in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.11.38-39):

*mamārcā-sthāpane śraddhā / svataḥ saṁhatya codyamah
udyānopavanākṛīda- / pura-mandira-karmaṇi
sammārjanopalepābhyaṁ / seka-manḍala-vartanaiḥ
gṛha-śuśrūṣāṇam mahyam / dāsa-vad yad amāyayā*

One should faithfully install My Deity form in the temples. If one is unable to perform this work alone, he should endeavour with the help of others. He should make flower and fruit gardens, cities and temples for Me, as well as places to celebrate My pastime festivals. Like a faithful and devoted servant he should, render service in the temple without duplicity, clean it, wash it, sprinkle it with fragrant water, and perform various services.

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa writes, “My *bhaktas* are those who are *mat-paramāḥ*, who consider only Me to be the supreme goal and who do not aspire for other goals, such as Svarga. They are engaged in tasting nine types of *bhakti-rasa* (the limbs of *bhakti*), such as the hearing and chanting of My name, form and so forth. Those who are *saṅga-varjita*, free from the attachment to the results of their actions and free from poor association, and those who are *nirvaira*, free from enmity to all living beings, see that their miseries are the result of their own previous *karma* and have no feeling of enmity towards those who are inimical towards them. Rather, they feel compassion for them. Only such persons attain to My *kṛṣṇa-svarūpa*, not others.”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes in his *Vidvat-rañjana* commentary, “In this chapter Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *rūpa* has been established as the supreme refuge and the ultimate worshipable reality, compared to His *viśvarūpa kāla-rūpa* and even the *viṣṇu-rūpa*. Besides the *svarūpa-vigraha*, (the eternal, all-attractive human form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa), *bhaktas* have no attraction for the *sambandha-vigraha* (the relative manifestation of Bhagavān). This chapter concludes that the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is the ocean of all nectarean mellows (*nikhila-rasāṁṛta-sindhu*) and the only abode of supreme sweetness (*parama-mādhurya-bhāva*).”

*Thus ends the Sārārtha-Varṣiṇī Prakāśikā-vṛtti,
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja,
on the Eleventh Chapter of Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā.*

CHAPTER TWELVE



Bhakti-Yoga The Yoga of Pure Devotional Service

ŚLOKA 1

अर्जुन उवाच—

एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते।
ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥१॥

arjuna uvāca

*evam satata-yuktā ye / bhaktās tvāṁ paryupāsate
ye cāpy akṣaram avyaktam / teṣām ke yoga-vittamāḥ*

arjunah uvāca—Arjuna said; (*there are*) *bhaktāḥ*—the *bhaktas*; *ye*—who; (*are*) *satata-yuktāḥ*—always engaged; *evam*—in this way; *ca*—and; *api*—also; (*there are those*) *ye*—who; *paryupāsate*—worship; *tvāṁ*—You; (*as*) *akṣaram*—the imperishable; *avyaktam*—un-manifest; *ke*—which?; *teṣām*—of them; (*are*) *yoga-vittamāḥ*—the best knowers of *yoga*.

Arjuna said: According to Your earlier explanation, there are *bhaktas* endowed with *niṣṭhā*, who continuously engage in *bhajana* to Your Śyāmasundara form, and there are also those who worship *nirviśeṣa-akṣara-brahma*. Of these two, who is the best type of *yogi*?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

In this Twelfth Chapter, Śrī Bhagavān confirms the superiority of all types of *bhaktas* over the *jñānīs*. And among the *bhaktas*, only those who possess qualities such as non-enviousness are glorified.

When the subject of *bhakti* was introduced, Arjuna heard that those who are endowed with *śraddhā*, who engage in *bhajana* to Śrī Bhagavān with their hearts devoted to Him, are *yuktatama*, the best among all types of *yogīs*. This is the opinion of Śrī Bhagavān (*Gitā* 6.47). Arjuna heard about the supremacy of the *bhaktas* in introductory statements such as these, and as this section concludes, he inquires further, being desirous to hear more about that supremacy. “You explained that the word *satata-yuktāḥ* means those who are devoted to performing work for You. Those who are endowed with the symptoms You previously described engage in the service of Your Śyāmasundara form. Others worship *nirviṣeṣa* (featureless), *akṣara* (imperishable) *brahma*, which is described in the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka śruti*: ‘O Gārgī, the *brāhmaṇas* know this *akṣara-brahma* as *asthūla* (that which is not gross), *asūkṣma* (that which is not subtle), *ahrasva* (that which is not small), and so forth.’ Of these two types of persons who know *yoga*, who is superior? In other words, who is acquainted with the better means to know and achieve You?” Here, in the original *śloka*, the word *yoga-vittamāḥ* has been used. The word *yoga-vittara* is generally used to compare two types of worshippers, whereas the word *yoga-vittamāḥ* indicates the superlative degree, and is used to decide who is the best among all types of people who perform worship. By using this word, Arjuna not only compares the two, but wants to know who is the best.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Of the various types of *sādhana* practised to quickly attain Bhagavān, *śuddha-bhakti* is the simplest, easiest and most natural to perform. Its influence is unfailing. In this chapter, *viśuddha-bhakti* is exclusively established as superior.

Arjuna has been hearing Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's instructions with great attention. In the Sixth Chapter, in the *śloka*: *yoginām api sarveśām* (Gītā 6.47), Śrī Kṛṣṇa said that of all *yogīs* (such as the *karma-yogī*, the *dhyāna-yogī* and the *tapa-yogī*) the *bhakti-yogī* is superior. In the Seventh Chapter, in the *śloka*, *mayy āsakta-manāḥ* (Gītā 7.1), He said that to take shelter of *bhakti-yoga* is best. In the Eighth Chapter, in the *śloka*, *prayāṇa-kāle manasācalena* (Gītā 8.10), He described the glory of *yoga-bala*, the power of *yoga*. In the Ninth Chapter, in the *śloka*, *jñāna-yajñena cāpy anye* (Gītā 9.15), He talked about *jñāna-yoga* and at the end of the Eleventh Chapter, in the *śloka*, *mat-karma-kṛṇ mat-paramo* (Gītā 11.55), He again described the excellence of *bhakti-yoga*. After hearing about these various types of *yoga*, Arjuna was unable to ascertain whether it is better to worship the *saviśeṣa-svarūpa* (the personal form) of Yaśodā-nandana Śyāmasundara Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or *brahma*, which is *nihśaktika* (devoid of energy), *nirākāra* (formless), *avyakta-svarūpa* (unmanifest) and *nirviśeṣa* (featureless). Of these two types of *yogīs*, who has the superior knowledge of *yoga*? By saying *yoga-vittamāḥ*, Arjuna is inquiring about who is the best of all *yogīs*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Arjuna as saying, "O Kṛṣṇa! From all the instructions You have given so far, I have understood that there are two types of *yogīs*. One type worships You by performing all bodily and social activities under the control of Your supreme *ananya-bhakti*. The other type of *yogī* accepts bodily and social activities only according to his needs by following the principles of *niṣkāma-karma-*

yoga, and takes shelter of Your imperishable and unmanifest feature through *adhyātmika-yoga* (*yoga* related to *brahma*). Of these two types of *yogīs*, who is superior?”

ŚLOKA 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते।
श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः॥२॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
mayy āveśya mano ye mām / nitya-yuktā upāsate
śraddhayā parayopetās / te me yuktatamā matāḥ

śrī bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Lord said; *te*—those; *ye*—who; (are) *nitya-yuktāḥ*—always connected (with Me); *upetāḥ*—engaged; *parayā*—with transcendental; *śraddhayā*—faith; *āveśya*—absorbing; (their) *manāḥ*—minds; *mayi*—within Me; (and) *upāsate*—worship; *mām*—Me; *matāḥ*—are considered; *me*—by Me; (to be) *yuktatamāḥ*—the best connected.

Śrī Bhagavān said: Those *yogīs*, who with transcendental faith fix their mind on My Śyāmasundara form, and constantly worship Me with *ananya-bhakti*, are the best among those who know *yoga*. This is My opinion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān responds to Arjuna’s question in the previous *śloka* by saying, “My *bhaktas* are the best who, with *nirguṇa-śraddhā* (faith which is free from the influence of the modes), fix their minds on My Śyāmasundara form, being ever-desirous of union with Me.” As it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.27), “Śraddhā which has the *ātmā* (self) as its focus is in *sattva-guṇa*; śraddhā which has *karma* (action) as its focus is in *rajo-guṇa*, and śraddhā which has

irreligious activities as its focus is in *tamo-guṇa*. But that *śraddhā* whose object and focus is service to Me is *nirguṇa*.” In the present *śloka* it is said, “My *ananya-bhaktas* are *yuktatamāḥ*, or *yoga-vittamāḥ*, the best of *yogīs*.” From this it can be concluded that, compared to *ananya-bhaktas*, others, such as those whose *bhakti* is mixed with *jñāna* or *karma*, are *yoga-vittara*, but not *yoga-vittamāḥ* (the best knowers of *yoga*). Thus, *bhakti* is superior to *jñāna* and, within *bhakti*, *ananya-bhakti* is supreme. This has been established here.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

After hearing Arjuna’s question, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was very much pleased and said, “I consider only those *bhaktas* who constantly worship Me with *nirguṇa-śraddhā* and unalloyed devotion, fixing their minds on My Śyāmasundara form, to be the best of *yogīs*.” Such unalloyed devotees are in reality the topmost *yogīs*. A *yogī* whose *bhakti* is mixed with *jñāna* and *karma* is a little inferior. *Bhakti-yoga* is therefore superior to *jñāna-yoga* because it is by this *yoga* alone that one performs pure *ananya-bhakti*. The word *śraddhā* mentioned in the original *śloka* means staunch faith in the statements of *sāstra*, *guru* and Bhagavān. As it is said in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya-līlā 22.62):

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

The determined faith, that merely by the performance of *bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa all activities are performed, is called *śraddhā*.

Elsewhere it is also said: *śraddhā tv anyopāya-varjam* *kṛṣṇonmukhī citta-vṛtti-viśeṣah*. “The *citta-vṛtti*, tendency of the heart, which is directed only towards Kṛṣṇa, and which is free from any desire to follow other processes, is called *śraddhā*.”

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.27) describes four types of faith:

sāttviky ādhyātmikī śraddhā / karma-śraddhā tu rājasī
tāmasī adharme yā śraddhā / mat-sevāyāṁ tu nirguṇā

Faith in *śāstra* which deals with the science of the self is *sāttvika*; faith related to fruitive activities is *rājasika*; faith in *adharmika* acts is *tāmasika*, and faith in My service is *nirguṇa*.

Here it should be understood that the word *nirguṇa* means transcendental and beyond material qualities (*aprakṛta*). It does not mean bereft of all qualities. Hence, a *bhakti-yogi* endowed with *nirguṇa-śraddhā* is best. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's intention is to give this understanding.

ŚLOKAS 3-4

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमत्यक्तं पर्युपासते।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यज्ञ कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम्॥३॥
सन्नियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः॥४॥

ye tv akṣaram anirdeśyam / avyaktam paryupāsate
sarvatra-gam acintyañ ca / kūṭastham acalam dhruvam
sanniyamyendriya-grāmam / sarvatra sama-buddhayaḥ
te prāpnuvanti mām eva / sarva-bhūta-hite ratāḥ

tu—but; *eva*—certainly; *ye*—those who; *paryupāsate*—worship; *akṣaram*—the imperishable; *anirdeśyam*—undefinable; *avyaktam*—unmanifest; *sarvatra-gam*—all-pervading; *acintyam*—inconceivable; *ca*—and; *kūṭa-stham*—uniform; *acalam*—non-moving; *dhruvam*—fixed; *sanniyamya*—controlling; *indriya-grāmam*—the group of senses; (and) *sama-buddhayaḥ*—being equally disposed; *sarvatra*—in all situations; *ratāḥ*—being attached; *hite*—to the welfare; *sarva-bhūta*—of all beings; *eva*—certainly; *prāpnuvanti*—obtains; *mām*—Me.

But those who worship My indescribable, unmanifest, all-pervading, inconceivable, immutable, eternal and featureless *brahma-svarūpa* while controlling their senses, maintaining equal vision everywhere and engaging in activities for the welfare of all beings, also attain Me alone.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

“Those who worship My *nirvišeṣa-brahma-svarūpa* remain distressed; therefore, they are inferior to My *bhaktas*.” In order to establish this principle, Śrī Bhagavān speaks these two ślokas beginning with *ye tu*. *Akṣara* means that *brahma* cannot be described in words, because it is unmanifest, formless (*avyaktam*), all-pervading (*sarvatra-ga*) and eternal (*dhruvam*). It is not subject to transformation (*acalam*), but exists uniformly at all times (*kuṭa-stham*), and it cannot be comprehended by logic (*acintya*). The phrase *mām eva* means, “They attain Me alone. In other words, there is no difference between that imperishable (*akṣara*) *brahma* and Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Bhagavān says, “Those who with controlled senses and equal vision engage in activities for the welfare of all *jīvas* and worship My *akṣara* (imperishable), *anirdeṣya* (indescribable) and *avyakta* (unmanifest) *nirvišeṣa-brahma-svarūpa*, ultimately attain Me only after performing troublesome *sādhana*. From the śloka, *brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham* (Gītā 14.27), it is understood that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the *āśraya* (shelter) of *nirvišeṣa-tattva*. Therefore, the worshippers of *nirvišeṣa-brahma* are also indirectly dependent on Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the shelter of all *upāṣya-tattva* (worshipable realities), and is Himself the supreme worshipable object. *Upāṣya-tattva* includes Śrī Rāmacandra, Śrī Nārāyaṇa, Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva and *nirvišeṣa-brahma*, who all depend on Kṛṣṇa. Those

wor-shippers who have taken shelter of *upāsya-tattva* are certainly under the shelter of Kṛṣṇa. All *upāsya-tattva* is dependent on *kṛṣṇa-tattva* as their origin. Among *upāsya-tattva*, the first three *svarūpas* are *tad-ekātma-rūpa* (one in *tattva*), but from the perspective of *rasa*, there is a gradation. Similarly, there is also a gradation among those worshippers who have taken shelter of these realities. *Brahma* is the effulgence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's limbs, an incomplete manifestation of Kṛṣṇa's *cid-āṁśa* (internal self-conscious potency). Therefore, those who achieve *nirvišeṣa-brahma* or *sāyujya-mukti* are indirectly dependent on Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone. However, they do not experience the bliss of loving *sevā*, etc. For this reason, even if Śrī Kṛṣṇa offers His *bhaktas* the various types of *mukti* such as *sāyujya*, they do not accept them, as stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.29.13):

*sālokya-sārṣṭi-sāmīpya- / sārūpyaikatvam apy uta
dīyamānam na gṛhṇanti / vinā mat-sevanam janāḥ*

A pure devotee does not accept any kind of liberation: *sālokya*, *sārṣṭi*, *sāmīpya*, *sārūpya* or *ekatvam* (*sāyujya*), even though they may be offered to him.

Some consider worship of *akṣara-brahma* to be superior to the worship of the *sac-cid-ānanda-mūrti* of Śyāmasundara Śrī Kṛṣṇa. However, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Himself very clearly explaining the superiority of His *ananya-bhaktas* over those who worship *nirākāra* (formless) *nirvišeṣa-brahma*. Furthermore, some persons think, "Why would worship of *brahma* not be superior, since it is full of difficulty and perfected over a long period of time?" They consider that of the two types of *brahma*, *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*, *nirguṇa-nirākāra-brahma* is the original and superior *tattva*. They think that common people are unable to perform worship of *nirguṇa-brahma* because it is trouble-

some, whereas the worship of *saguṇa sākāra*, personal *brahma*, is easily performed since anyone can do it. Here it is necessary to understand that these conceptions are false. Kṛṣṇa alone is the original *tattva*. *Brahma-tattva* is dependent on Him, and is simply the effulgence of His bodily limbs. In *Gītā* (15.18), Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has declared that as *puruṣottama-svarūpa*, He is superior to *akṣara* (imperishable) and *kūṭa-stha* (unchanging) *brahma*. Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa and other commentators on the *Gītā* explain *akṣara-svarūpa* to mean *jīva-svarūpa*, whereas Śrī Rāmānujācārya explains it to mean *pratyag-ātma* (the all-pervading) *svarūpa*.

Here the word *akṣara* does not mean *parabrahma*. The Supreme Person, *parabrahma*, has been clearly described as different from and superior to that *brahma*, which is *akṣara* and *kūṭa-stha*. In this regard, one should refer to *Gītā* (15.16-17): *kūṭa-stho 'kṣara ucyate* and *uttamah puruṣas tv anyah*.

Moreover, worshippers of *brahma* also consider the *jīva* alone to be *brahma*: *jīvo brahmaiva nāparah*. They say that when the ignorance of the *jīva* is dispelled, the *brahma-jñānī* becomes *brahma*. Even if the *jīva* attains the stage of *brahma*, it is not stated in any *śāstra* that he attains the nature of *parabrahma*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is *parabrahma*. This has been established in various statements from *śruti* and *smṛti*. In the *Vedānta* also it is stated that the *jīva* never attains the stage of *parabrahma*. One should always keep in mind that the attributes of Bhagavān described in *śāstra*, such as *saguṇa*, *sākāra* and *saviṣeṣa*, are transcendental and fully conscious. Therefore, Śrī Bhagavān is simultaneously both *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*. *Saguṇa* and *nirguṇa* are not two separate *tattvas*, but two aspects of the same *tattva*.

ŚLOKA 5

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।

अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्विरवाप्यते ॥५॥

*kleśo’dhikataras teṣām / avyaktāsakta-cetasām
avyaktā hi gatir duḥkham / dehavadbhīr avāpyate*

teṣām—for those; *cetasām*—whose minds; *avyakta-āsakta*—are attached to the unmanifest; (*there is*) *adhikatarah*—more; *kleśah*—trouble; *hi*—because; *avyaktā*—the unmanifest; *gatiḥ*—state; *avāpyate*—is obtained; *duḥkham*—with difficulty; *dehavadbhiḥ*—by those who are embodied.

Those whose minds are attached to the *nirviśeṣa-brahma-svarūpa* experience great difficulty, for it is troublesome for the embodied *jīvas* to attain steadiness in that which is unmanifest.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

“How then, are the *jñānis* inferior?” In response to Arjuna’s question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the words *kleśo’dhikataras teṣām*. “Those who desire the experience of *brahma* which is *avyakta* (unmanifest) must undergo extreme difficulty in attaining it. The senses are only able to experience that which has attributes (*viśeṣa*) that pertain to the respective senses, such as sound. They are unable to experience that which is devoid of qualities or attributes (*nirviśeṣa*).”

It is essential for those who desire *nirviśeṣa-jñāna* to control the senses, but to do so is as difficult as controlling the flow of a river. As Sanat Kumāra says to Pṛthu Mahārāja in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.22.39), “The *bhaktas* can easily cut the *hṛdaya-granthi* (knot of the heart), which consists of *karma-vāsanā* (fruitive desires) by remembering with devotion the

effulgence of the toes of the lotus petal-like feet of Bhagavān. The *yogīs*, however, who are bereft of *bhakti*, are not able to cut the knot of the heart as *bhaktas* can, even though they are free from any mundane enjoying propensity and can control their senses. Therefore, give up the endeavour to control the senses and so forth and engage in the *bhajana* of Śrī Vāsudeva. Those who practise the processes of *yoga*, etc., with a desire to cross this ocean of material existence, which is full of crocodiles in the form of the senses, have to face extreme difficulties if they fail to take shelter of Bhagavān, who is likened to a boat. Therefore, O King, you should also accept the lotus feet of the most worshipable Bhagavān as the boat in which to cross this ocean, which is insurmountable and full of obstacles.”

Even if the destination of *nirviśeṣa-brahma* is achieved after much trouble, it happens only with the help of *bhakti*. Without *bhakti* for Bhagavān, the worshipper of *brahma* not only undergoes misery, but also fails to attain *brahma*. As Lord Brahmā said, “The only gain of a person who beats a husk from which the rice has been taken is the trouble they took to beat it” (*Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* 10.14.4).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

Worshippers of *nirviśeṣa-brahma* face misery both during *sādhana* and *siddha*. No *sādhana* can give perfection without the help of *bhakti*. Taking support of *bhakti* as a secondary process, those who worship *nirviśeṣa-brahma* strive to achieve *brahma-jñāna*. In turn, Bhakti-devi awards them the secondary result, which is *brahma-jñāna*, and then disappears. Such persons who worship *brahma*, thus, remain bereft of relishing the supremely beneficial name, form, pastimes and qualities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They eternally submerge themselves in an ocean of great misery in the form of *sāyujya-*

mukti. This is self-destructive. For this reason Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.4) states: *śreyah-sṛtim bhaktim udasya te vibho*.

“My dear Lord, *bhajana* unto You is the most superior path for realisation of the self. If someone gives up that path and engages in cultivating speculative knowledge, he will simply undergo a troublesome process and will not achieve his desired ends. As a person who beats an empty husk of wheat cannot get grain, one who simply speculates cannot achieve self-realisation. His only gain is trouble.”

The stages of both *sādhana* (practice) and *sādhyā* (perfection) are described as troublesome for the *nirviśeṣa-jñānīs*. On the other hand, *bhakti* is supremely pleasurable and auspicious in both stages, *sādhana* and *sādhyā*. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.22.39) states:

yat-pāda-paṅkaja-palāśa-vilāsa-bhaktyā
karmāśayam grathitam udgrathayanti santaḥ
tadvan na rikta-matayo yatayo 'pi ruddha-
sroto-gaṇāś tam arañam bhaja vāsudevam

The *bhaktas*, who are always engaged in the service of the toes of the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān, can very easily overcome the hard knot of desires for fruitive activities. Because this is very difficult, the non-devotees, *jñānīs* and *yogīs* who endeavour to stop the waves of sense gratification, are unable to do so. Therefore, you are advised to engage in the *bhajana* of Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva.

And furthermore, in 12.4.40:

saṁsāra-sindhum ati-dustaram uttitīrṣor
nānyah plavo bhagavataḥ puruṣottamasya
līlā-kathā-rasa-niṣevaṇam antareṇa
pumso bhaved vividha-duḥkha-davārditasya

For those who are scorching in the forest fire that generates various types of miseries, and who desire to cross over the insurmountable ocean of material existence, there is no other boat than serving and relishing the nectar of the *līlā-kathā* of Puruṣottama Bhagavān Śrī Hari.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “The difference between a *jñānī-yogī* and a *bhakti-yogī* is that in the stage of *sādhana* a *bhakti-yogī* can easily cultivate the process to achieve the supreme objective, Bhagavān, and attains the *sādhyā* (stage of perfection) without fear of self-destruction. On the other hand, during a *jñāna-yogi*’s *sādhana*, he becomes fixed in *avyakta-tattva* (the unmanifest reality) and has to suffer the trouble of practising *vyatireka-cintā*, the conception of negation, always thinking, ‘Not this, not this.’ The *vyatireka-cintā* (negative process) means to think in a way that is opposite to the natural aptitude or constitutional function of the *jīva*, so it is very troublesome for the living entities. The stage of *sādhana* is also not free from fear because the *nitya-svarūpa* of Bhagavān has not been realised before completion of the *sādhana* stage. Hence, the *jñāna-yogī*’s supreme destination is also miserable. The *jīva* is an eternal conscious entity (*nitya-cinmaya-vastu*). If the *jīva* becomes merged in the unmanifest state, which is suicidal for him, his constitutional and purposeful quality of *kṛṣṇa-dāsyā* is destroyed. He has cultivated very deep impressions (*saṃskāras*) of *ahaṅ-graha-buddhiḥ* (considering oneself as supreme) by identifying himself with *brahma*, so it is very difficult for him to give up this conditioned consciousness, even if he comes to understand that his own *svarūpa* is individual and has the constitutional nature of service.

“For the embodied *jīva*, embarking upon meditation on the unmanifest only results in misery, both as the means (*sādhana*) and as the objective (*sādhyā*). In reality, the *jīva*

is *caitanya-svarūpa*, conscious by nature, and has a spiritual body. Therefore, this unmanifest or impersonal meditation is contrary to the *jīva*'s own *svarūpa* and is simply a source of misery. *Bhakti-yoga* alone is the source of eternal auspiciousness for the *jīva*. *Jñāna-yoga*, when bereft of *bhakti* and practised independently, always becomes a source of inauspiciousness. Therefore, *adhyātma-yoga*, the process of self-realisation which is performed by worshipping the *nirākāra*, *nirvikāra*, *sarva-vyāpī* (all-pervading) *nirviśeṣa-svarūpa* is not praiseworthy and does not guarantee attainment of the ultimate destination."

ŚLOKAS 6-7

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि सन्न्यस्य मत्पराः ।
 अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥६॥
 तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
 भवामि न चिरात् पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥७॥

*ye tu sarvāṇi karmāṇi / mayi sannyasya mat-parāḥ
 ananyenaiva yogena / mām dhyāyanta upāsate
 teṣām aham samuddhartā / mṛtyu-saṁsāra-sāgarāt
 bhavāmi na cirāt pārtha / mayy āveśita-cetasām*

tu—but; eva ye—they; mat-parāḥ—who are dedicated to achieve Me; sannyasya—renouncing; sarvāṇi—all; karmāṇi—activities; mayi—unto Me; ananyena—with unwavering; yogena—connection; dhyāyantah—meditate on; (and) upāsate—worship; mām—Me; pārtha—O Pārtha; teṣām—for those; āveśita-cetasām—whose minds are absorbed; mayi—in Me; na cirāt—before long; aham—I; bhavāmi—become; samuddhartā—the deliverer; sāgarāt—from the ocean; mṛtyu-saṁsāra—of death and rebirth.

But to those loving *bhaktas* who perform all their actions with the goal of attaining Me, O Pārtha, and who absorb themselves exclusively in My *bhajana* with unalloyed devotion, I give swift deliverance from this ocean of birth and death.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān says, “Without *jñāna*, simply by *bhakti* alone, My *bhaktas* are easily and blissfully freed from this material existence. Here the word *sannyāsa* means *tyāga* (to give up). Becoming free from *karma*, *jñāna*, *tapasyā* and other processes, My *bhaktas* give up all other activities for My sake and engage in worship of Me with *ananya-bhakti* for the purpose of achieving Me. Thus, they are easily and happily freed from the material world.” As it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.32-33), “Whatever result one achieves by the performance of *karma*, *tapasyā*, *jñāna* and *vairāgya*, and also whatever My *bhakta* desires, be it *Svarga*, *mokṣa*, or even residence in My *dhāma*, can all be easily attained by performance of My *bhakti-yoga*.”

It is also said in the *Nārāyaṇīya-mokṣa-dharma*, “The fruits one receives from performing *sādhana* to attain the four types of human goals (*catuh puruṣārtha*), are attained by a person who has taken refuge in Śrī Nārāyaṇa without performing any such *sādhana*.”

“If one asks, ‘By which *sādhana* do they cross over this material world?’ then listen. This question is irrelevant, because I Myself deliver them, even if they do not perform any *sādhana*.” From this statement it is understood that Bhagavān only exhibits His *vātsalya-bhāva* for His *bhaktas* and not for the *jñānīs*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the previous two *ślokas*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the glories of His *ananya-bhakti* and His *ananya-bhakta*. By performing this *ananya-bhakti* and by the mercy of Bhagavān, an *ananya-bhakta* can very easily cross over the ocean of material existence and attain supremely blissful *prema-sevā* to Śrī Bhagavān.

Kṛṣṇa Himself is the shelter or *pratiṣṭhā* of *brahma*. This Kṛṣṇa, Svayam Bhagavān, is the source of Paramātmā and all other *avatāras*. A *bhakta* who knows the reality of this *svarūpa* of Bhagavān takes shelter of *kevala-bhakti* in the association of *bhaktas*. He does not have to undergo the difficulties experienced in the *sādhana* and *sādhyā* stages as do those who worship *nirviṣeṣa nirākāra-brahma* described above. In a very short time, he easily attains *prema-mayī sevā* to Śrī Bhagavān.

In introducing the *bhaktas* who take shelter of such *kevala-bhakti*, Śrī Bhagavān says, “Such one-pointed *bhaktas* consider their prescribed duties of *varṇa* and *āśrama* to be obstacles to *bhakti*, and completely give them up. They consider My *prema-mayī sevā* to be the one and only goal to be attained, and with *ananya-bhakti* engage in My worship by hearing, chanting and remembering My *nāma*, *rūpa*, *guṇa* and *līlā*. They even become absorbed in Me during the *sādhana* stage, while performing *śravanām*, *kīrtanām* and so forth. I very quickly deliver such *bhaktas*, whose hearts are attached to Me and who are fully absorbed in Me, from this ocean of material existence, which is very difficult to cross. They need not be in anxiety about crossing over it, unlike the *jñānīs* and *yogīs*. Furthermore, they are unable to tolerate any delay in achieving Me. Placing them on the back of Garuḍa, I very quickly carry them to My abode. They do not attain gradual *mukti* through the paths of *Arci* (light) and

so forth, as followed by *jñānīs* and *yogīs*. By My own will, I free them from this illusory world, bring them to My abode, and engage them in My *prema-mayī sevā*."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "I very quickly deliver from the ocean of material existence, characterised by birth and death, those who take shelter of My *bhagavat-svarūpa* (personal feature). Making all bodily and social activities completely subordinate to My *bhakti*, and always meditating upon and worshipping My *nitya-śrī-vigraha*, the eternal, beautiful human-like form of Kṛṣṇa, by the process of My *ananya-bhakti*, their hearts, thus, become completely absorbed in Me. In other words, in their conditioned state, I give them liberation from the bondage of this illusory material existence. After their bondage of *māyā* has been cut, I protect them from the suicidal attempt of adopting the conception of oneness. This self-destructive conception of oneness in people whose minds are attached to the unmanifest is the cause of inauspiciousness for them. My vow is: *ye yathā mām prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham* (*Gītā* 4.11). From this it is understood that those who meditate on the *avyakta* (unmanifest) become merged in the *avyakta-svarūpa*. What is My loss in this? Having attained such a destination, the *jīvas* who have the suicidal conception of oneness lose the importance or utility of their own *svarūpa*. In other words, they become deprived of the eternal bliss of My loving service."

ŚLOKA 8

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः॥८॥

*mayy eva mana ādhatsva / mayi buddhim niveśaya
nivasiṣyasi mayy eva / ata ūrdhvam na saṁśayah*

ādhatsva—fix; (your) *manah*—mind; *eva*—only; *mayi*—on Me; (and) *niveśaya*—repose; (your) *buddhim*—intelligence; *mayi*—in Me; *ataḥ ūrddhvam*—thus at the last moment of quitting the body; *eva nivasiṣyasi*—you shall certainly reside; *mayi*—in Me; *na saṁśayah*—there is no doubt.

Fix your mind exclusively on My Śyāmasundara form, and engage your intelligence fully in Me. Thus, upon leaving your body, you shall certainly come to reside with Me. Of this there is no doubt.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Since My *bhakti* is the topmost process, you should perform *bhakti* only.” To instruct Arjuna in this way, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking three *ślokas* beginning here with *mayy eva*. Worship of the *nirviśeṣa-svarūpa* has been prohibited by use of the word *eva*. Śrī Bhagavān says *mayi*, meaning ‘upon Me’. “You should fix your mind exclusively on My Śyāmasundara form, which is decorated with yellow garments (*pītāmbara-dhārī*) and a beautiful forest garland (*vana-mālā*). In other words, remember Me and engage your pure intelligence in Me, that is, think of Me alone. This thinking should be in accordance with the statements of *sāstra* that establish *dhyāna* (meditation). Then you will live only with Me, who am described in the *Vedas*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here in these few *ślokas* Śrī Kṛṣṇa is explaining the *sādhanapraṇālī*, or the process of practice adopted by His *ananya-bhaktas*. First of all He said to Arjuna, “O Arjuna, I very quickly deliver from the ocean of birth and death, My *ananya-bhakta* who surrenders to Me and who has given up *varṇāśrama-dharma*, and bestow upon him My *prema-mayī sevā*. Therefore, you should fix your mind exclusively on Me,

parabrahma, the Supreme Transcendental Reality. Removing all desires for sense gratification from your *citta* (thoughts), absorb your *citta* in Me alone.” The mind has the tendencies of accepting (*sāṅkalpa*) and rejecting (*vikalpa*), so to fix it in objects related with Bhagavān, it is necessary to surrender one’s intelligence to Him after disengaging the mind from all sense objects. Acquiring knowledge of Bhagavān’s *svarūpa* with one’s *vyavasāyātmikā buddhi* (resolute intelligence), know Him alone to be the supreme worshipable reality. Direct the functions of the pure intelligence towards Him, by performing *sādhana* such as *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam* and *smaraṇam*. By doing so, the mind will be under the control of such resolute intelligence and will automatically become absorbed in thoughts of Him. In such a state, you will always live near Him.

Therefore, by making Arjuna His instrument, Śrī Bhagavān is instructing us all that *bhakti* alone is the best *sādhana* and the best *sādhyā*. Thus it is imperative to constantly remember the *nitya-svarūpa* of Śyāmasundara by fixing the mind on Him and surrendering one’s intelligence exclusively to Him. When this is done, one will attain the highest fruit of *sādhana-bhakti* and become His associate, attaining *nirupādhika-prema* (unalloyed love). There is no doubt about this. Thus, it is explained that the destination achieved by *bhakti-yoga* is superior to all others.

ŚLOKA 9

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम्।
अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छाप्तुं धनञ्जय॥९॥

atha cittam samādhātum / na śaknoṣi mayi sthiram
abhyāsa-yogena tato / mām icchāptum dhanañjaya

dhanañjaya—O winner of wealth; *atha*—and if; *na śaknoṣi*—you are unable; *samādhātum*—to fix; *cittam*—the mind; *sthiram*—steadily;

mayi—on Me; *tataḥ*—then; *iccha*—you should desire; *āptum*—to attain; *mām*—Me; *abhyāsa-yogena*—through *abhyāsa-yoga*.

O Dhanañjaya, if you are unable to fix your mind steadily on Me, then try to seek Me by *abhyāsa-yoga*, the practice of fixing the mind on Me while constantly restraining it from worldly affairs.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

For the benefit of those who cannot directly remember Him, Śrī Bhagavān explains the means whereby perfection of such remembrance can be achieved. He says, “By time and again controlling the mind, which runs from one place to another, one should practise concentrating it exclusively on My form. This is *yoga*. One should gradually fix the mind’s course on My most beautiful form, qualities and so forth, by this practice of completely checking the flow of the mind which flows like a river towards abominable mundane sense objects, such as form and taste.”

The present *śloka* emphasises the word Dhanañjaya. Just as Arjuna has accumulated a lot of *dhana* (wealth) by conquering many enemies, in the same way, he is also able to achieve the wealth of *dhyāna* (meditation on Bhagavān) by conquering and controlling his mind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the previous *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān instructs everyone to become one-pointedly devoted to Him by exclusively fixing their minds and intelligence on Him. Thus, the following question may be raised: Just as the Gaṅgā flows towards the ocean, those whose *mano-vṛtti* (attitude or flow of mind) is always running with great speed towards Śrī Bhagavān can very quickly attain Him; of this there is no doubt. By what means, however, can Bhagavān be achieved by those who do

not have such strong *citta-vṛtti* (flow of thoughts or feelings) towards Him? In response to this, Śrī Bhagavān has given a second option. “Those who are unable to firmly and steadily fix their mind on Me by the previously stated means should try to achieve Me by *abhyāsa-yoga*. This means that they should try to fix the mind on Me by gradually curbing the tendency of the mind to become attracted to various sense objects. Such endeavour is called *abhyāsa-yoga*. By this *abhyāsa-yoga*, the mind slowly becomes attached to Me, after which attaining Me becomes easy.”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “That previously mentioned *nirupādhika-prema* is the eternal function of a mind devoted to Me. To achieve this, one needs to perform *abhyāsa*, constant practice. If you are unable to steadily fix your mind on Me, then it is better for you to engage in *abhyāsa-yoga*.”

ŚLOKA 10

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव।
मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन् सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि॥१०॥

*abhyāse 'py asamartho'si / mat-karma-paramo bhava
mad-artham api karmāṇi / kurvan siddhim avāpsyasi*

api—if, however; *asi*—you are; *api*—also; *asamarthah*—unable; *abhyāse*—to perform the practice of *sādhana-bhakti*; *bhava*—just be; *paramah*—devoted; *mat-karma*—to My work; *kurvan*—through performing; *karmāṇi*—activities; *mad-artham*—for My sake; *avāpsyasi*—you will obtain; *siddhim*—perfection.

If you are unable to engage in *abhyāsa-yoga*, just devote yourself to acting for Me alone, because by performing activities such as *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam* for My pleasure, you will certainly attain perfection.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

“O Arjuna, just as a person whose tongue is affected by jaundice does not desire to taste *miśrī*, in the same way a mind that is polluted by *avidyā* does not accept the sweetness of My form. Consequently, if you think that you are unable to engage in *abhyāsa* because you cannot fight with this very powerful, formidable mind, then listen. By performing virtuous and blessed activities for My pleasure, such as hearing and chanting about My pastimes, praying, worshipping, cleaning My temple, watering Tulasī, collecting flowers and various other services, you will achieve the perfection of becoming My loving associate, even without *smaraṇam* of Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the previous *śloka*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructed Arjuna to adopt *abhyāsa-yoga*, but with great humility Arjuna said, “O Prabhu, because the mind is more flickering than the wind and very difficult to control, I will not have the strength to restrict it from sense objects by the practice of *abhyāsa-yoga*. I have previously submitted the same opinion at Your lotus feet (in the *śloka*: *cañcalam hi manah kṛṣṇa pramāthi balavad dṛḍham*, *Gītā* (6.34)). Therefore, what shall I do?”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, smiling, gave a third option. “If one is even unable to engage in *abhyāsa-yoga*, then he should perform activities that are favourable to *bhakti*.” By the influence of activities performed in the service of Śrī Bhagavān, to His Deity and His temple, such as building, maintaining and cleaning temples or making a flower-garden and caring for Tulasī, which can be done with very little effort, the mind easily becomes controlled and fixed in meditating on activities which are related to Bhagavān. Then, by practising the limbs of *suddha-bhakti* such as *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam* and *smaraṇam* under the guidance of pure Vaiṣṇavas, one gradually attains the perfection of *bhagavat-sevā*.

In this regard, it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.11.34-41), “O Uddhava, a sādhaka gradually attains the fruit of *bhagavat-prema*, which is to become My associate, by engaging with śraddhā in activities such as taking *darśana* of, touching, worshipping, serving, glorifying and paying obeisances to My śrī-vigraha, as well as My *bhaktas*, and always chanting about their qualities and activities. That fruit is also attained by always hearing about and meditating upon Me, offering one’s possessions to Me, performing ātma-nivedana (surrendering one’s very self) to Me in the mood of dāsyabhbāva (servitorship), taking initiation according to the processes mentioned in the Vedas and other śāstras, observing vratas for Me, giving Me flowers and fruits, cleaning and decorating My temple, watering the Tulasī garden, and so forth. One should not doubt that these sādhanas are related to śuddha-bhakti. These instructions provide a simple means for persons of a specific *adhikāra*.”

ŚLOKA 11

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुमद्योगमाश्रितः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥११॥

athaitad apy aśakto 'si / karttum mad-yogam āśritah
sarva-karma-phala-tyāgam / tataḥ kuru yatātmavān

atha api—if, however; *asi*—you are; *aśaktaḥ*—unable; *karttum*—to perform; *etat*—this; (then) *āśritah*—taking shelter of; *mad-yogam*—My *bhakti-yoga*; *tataḥ*—then; *yata-ātmavān*—with a controlled mind; *kuru*—perform; *phala-tyāgam*—renunciation of the fruits; *sarva-karma*—of all your activities.

If, however, you are unable to work for Me in this way, then take shelter of My *bhakti-yoga* by renouncing the results of all your actions and, with a controlled mind, offer them to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān says, “If you are unable to do this, then take shelter of My *bhakti-yoga* and renounce the results of all actions by offering them to Me” (as described in the first six chapters).

The first six chapters explain *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, activities offered to Bhagavān, as the means to attain *mokṣa*. The second six chapters describe *bhakti-yoga* as the means to attain Bhagavān. This *bhakti-yoga* is of two types: 1) the actions of the internal senses which are steadily fixed on Bhagavān, and (2) the activities of the external senses. The first type of *bhakti-yoga* is further divided into three categories: (1) *smarana* (remembrance), (2) *manana* (meditation) and (3) *abhyāsa*, the practice of those who are unable to constantly remember but who are attached to attaining such a stage. These three practices are indeed very difficult for those who are less intelligent, but they are easy for those who are free from offences and devoted to pure intelligence. However, the second type of *bhakti-yoga*, which engages the activities of the external senses (as previously described) in hearing, chanting and so forth, is an easy means for everyone. Those who are engaged in either of these two types of *bhakti-yoga* are superior to all others. This is described in the second six chapters of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Those who are unable to perform either of these, and who cannot worship Śrī Bhagavān faithfully by controlling their senses and minds, are qualified to perform *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* offered to Bhagavān, as described in the first six chapters. They are inferior to the above two types of *bhakti-yogīs*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

In the previous *śloka*, in the statement *mat-karma-paramo bhava*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave instructions to clean His temple, water

Tulasī and the flower-gardens, and so forth. After hearing this, Arjuna wondered what should someone do who considers these services to Bhagavān, which are simple, easy and happily performed, to be insignificant and is unwilling to perform them on account of having taken birth in a high family or being a respected person in society. In the present *śloka*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, understanding Arjuna's *manobhāva* (mind), gives the fourth option. "If one is unable to perform such simple services for Śrī Bhagavān, then the only means is to adopt the process of *bhagavad-arpita niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, selfless work offered to Bhagavān." However, it is not proper to avoid the performance of services such as cleaning the temple because of one's material false ego. Although King Ambarīṣa was the lord of the earth's seven islands, he constantly remained engaged in the service of Śrī Bhagavān by cleaning the temple with his own hands and performing other services. According to Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, King Pratāparudra would sweep in front of Śrī Jagannātha Deva's chariot during the Rathayātrā festival in Jagannātha Puri. Upon seeing such a service attitude, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu became very pleased with him. Therefore, according to the instructions of our *guru-varga*, to perform even an insignificant service to Śrī Bhagavān is most auspicious for us. To think *sevā*, such as cleaning the temple, is insignificant, and to consider oneself superior because of material false ego, causes falldown from pursuance of the transcendental goal.

If, because of such a superiority complex, one is unable to engage in *sevā* as instructed by Bhagavān, then for him the most compassionate Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is giving another option. He should perform his prescribed duties according to *varṇāśrama-dharma*, without desiring to enjoy the fruits of his *karma*, and he should offer the results to Bhagavān.

Śrī Bhagavān has given four sequential options in descending order for persons possessing four types of *adhibhāra*:

1) By fixing one's mind on the *svarūpa* of Bhagavān, one should try to achieve *nirupādhika-prema* through the process of *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana* and *smaraṇa* of the *nāma*, *rūpa*, *guṇa* and *līlā* of Bhagavān. This is the path of *rāgānuga-bhakti*, natural attachment.

2) For those who are unable to absorb the mind in Bhagavān through the path of attachment, it is better to take shelter of *abhyāsa-yoga* by following the path of *vaidhi-bhakti*.

3) For those who are unable to perform even this *abhyāsa-yoga* in the form of *vaidhi-bhakti*, it is necessary to become devoted to performing work (service) for Bhagavān. In this way, while being devoted to working for Bhagavān, they will gradually attain perfection in *abhyāsa-yoga*, and eventually the mind will become fixed at the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān.

4) For those who are unable to even perform *karma* (action) in service to Śrī Bhagavān, it is better to become surrendered to Him and perform that *karma* prescribed in the *Vedas*, offering Him the fruits of all their actions.

As a result of such actions, one will gradually (step by step) attain the path leading to *parā bhakti*, which imparts knowledge of one's own *svarūpa* and that of Bhagavān.

ŚLOKA 12

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ञानाकृच्यानं विशिष्यते।
ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् ॥१२॥

śreyo hi jñānam abhyāsāj / jñānād dhyānam viśiṣyate
dhyānāt karma-phala-tyāgas / tyāgāc chāntir anantaram
śreyah—better; abhyāsāt—than the practice of *sādhana*; (is) *jñānam*—transcendental knowledge; *dhyānam*—remembrance of Me; *viśiṣyate*—is better; *jñānāt*—than knowledge; *karma-*

phala-tyāgah—renunciation of the fruits of action is better; *dhyānāt*—than remembrance; *hi*—because; *anantaram*—after; *tyāgāt*—such renunciation; (there is) *sāntih*—cessation (of the search by the senses for any object other than Me).

Better than *abhyāsa* is the *jñāna* that gives rise to contemplation upon Me. Superior to *jñāna* is *dhyāna*, that meditation by which I am constantly remembered. Such *dhyāna* then leads to renunciation of the fruits of one's actions, whereby one becomes freed from the desires to enjoy Svarga and attain *mokṣa*, and thus achieves peace of mind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now, while explaining the gradation of *abhyāsa*, *manana* and *smarana* in ascending order, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with *śreyah*. “*Jñāna* means to absorb your intelligence in Me, because such *manana* (contemplation) of Me is superior to *abhyāsa*.” In *abhyāsa*, *dhyāna* (meditation) requires endeavour and is troublesome, as there are obstacles, but when one reaches the stage of *manana*, *dhyāna* becomes easy. This is the superiority of *jñāna*. Superior to *jñāna*, however, is *dhyāna*. If one asks why, the answer is that *dhyāna* leads to *karma-phala-tyāga*, that is, it even dispells the desires for the results of actions, such as the pleasures of Svarga and attainment of the result of *niṣkāma-karma* (*mokṣa*). Even if they become available of their own accord, one neglects them. Bhaktas who have not achieved stability in *dhyāna*, in whose hearts *rati* has not been aroused, desire to give up the pursuit of liberation (*mokṣa-tyāga*). However, those who have attained stability in *dhyāna* do not even have the desire to give up *mokṣa*, because they disregard it naturally. Only *bhakti* of this type is called *mokṣa-laghutā-kāriṇī* (that which derides even

mokṣa). It has been described in *Bhakti-rasāṁṛta-sindhu* (1.12), in the śloka beginning with the four words *kleśa-ghnī śubha-dā*, “Devotional service destroys miseries and bestows auspiciousness.”

It is also said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.14.14):

na pārameṣṭhyam na mahendra-dhiṣṇyam
na sārvabhaumam na rasādhipatyam
na yoga-siddhīr apunar-bhavam vā
mayy arpitātmecchati mad vinānyat

Those who have surrendered their hearts to Me do not desire the positions of Brahmā or Indra, sovereignty over the whole earth, the kingdom of the lower planets, mystic perfections such as *aṇīmā*, or even the state of liberation. They desire nothing but Me.

The phrase *mayy arpitātmecchati* in the above quoted *Bhāgavatam* śloka means, “To be steadfast in My *dhyāna*.”

The word *tyāgāt* in the present śloka means, “One becomes peaceful only when he is free from material desires. This means that besides being attracted to My form, qualities and so on, one’s senses become detached from all other sense objects.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Within these three types of *bhakti*—namely *smaraṇa* (remembrance), *manana* (contemplation) and *abhyāsa* (practice)—*jñāna* in the form of *manana* (placing one’s intelligence in Śrī Bhagavān), is superior to *abhyāsa*.

Superior to *jñāna* in the form of *manana* is *dhyāna*, which is characterised by *smaraṇa* (rememberance). This is because, in that *jñāna* which is characterised by *manana*, one only achieves *dhyāna* with great endeavour and trouble. But when one becomes perfect in *manana*, then *dhyāna* (*smaraṇa*) is achieved easily. When one becomes perfect in *dhyāna*, his

desires for the pleasures of Svarga and *mokṣa* are dispelled. When desires for sense enjoyment and *mokṣa* are dispelled, the mind becomes attached to the form, qualities, etc., of Bhagavān. In such a state, one becomes detached from all other sense objects, and thus one naturally attains peace. But if one has not attained perfection in *dhyāna*, then such a *sādhaka* who is also unable to perform *abhyāsa* (the practice) of *dhyāna* should engage in *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* which is offered to Bhagavān. By this process one can gradually perform *bhakti* to Bhagavān with a peaceful mind.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Arjuna, *sādhana-bhakti* is the only means to attain *nirupādhika-prema* (unalloyed love). This *bhakti-yoga* is of two types: 1) the activities of the internal sense, the mind that is fixed on Bhagavān; and 2) the activities of the external senses. The activities of the internal sense, the mind which is fixed on Bhagavān, is of three types: *smaraṇa* (remembrance), *manana* (contemplation) and *abhyāsa* (practice), but for less intelligent people, these three types of activities are very difficult to perform. The second type of *bhakti*, the actions of the external senses in the form of hearing and chanting, is easily performed by everyone. Therefore, *manana*, intelligence in relation to Me, is the superior *jñāna*, and is better than *abhyāsa*. Here, *jñāna* does not refer to *jñāna-yoga*. During *abhyāsa*, one performs *dhyāna* with endeavour, but when one achieves the result of *abhyāsa*, which is *manana*, *dhyāna* is easily performed. *Dhyāna* is superior to mere *jñāna*, because, when *dhyāna* becomes stable, one becomes free from the desire to enjoy either the pleasures of Svarga or the happiness of *mokṣa*. When both of these desires are dispelled, one achieves peace in the form of detachment from all sense objects, but not detachment from My transcendental form, qualities, etc.”

ŚLOKAS 13-14

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च।
 निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी॥१३॥
 सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः।
 मर्यपितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः॥१४॥

adveṣṭā sarva-bhūtānāṁ / maitraḥ karuṇa eva ca
 nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ / sama-duḥkha-sukhah kṣamī
 santuṣṭaḥ satataṁ yogī / yatātmā dṛḍha-niścayah
 mayy arpita-mano-buddhir / yo mad-bhaktaḥ sa me priyah

sah—he; yaḥ—who; (is) adveṣṭā—non-envious; sarva-bhūtānāṁ—to all living beings; maitraḥ—friendly to all persons; karuṇaḥ eva ca—and merciful to lowly persons; (who is) nirmamāḥ—free from possessiveness; (who is) nir-aham-kāraḥ—devoid of false ego; sama-duḥkha-sukhah—even-minded in happiness and distress (considering them the fruits of prārabdha-karma); kṣamī—tolerant; satataṁ—always; santuṣṭaḥ—fully satisfied; yogī—who is linked-up in bhakti-yoga; yata-ātmā—sense-controlled; dṛḍha-niścayah—firmly determined to perform ananya-bhakti; arpita—who has offered; mano-buddhiḥ—mind and intelligence; mayi—to Me; (that) mat-bhaktaḥ—bhakta of Mine; (is) priyah—dear; me—to Me.

My *bhakta* who is non-envious, compassionate and friendly towards all living beings, free from feelings of possessiveness, devoid of false ego and even-minded in both happiness and distress, who is forgiving, ever-content, endowed with *bhakti-yoga*, in control of his senses, resolutely determined and dedicated to Me in both mind and intelligence, is very dear to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“What is the nature of the *bhaktas* who have attained the aforementioned stage of peace?” Expecting this question from Arjuna, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the various qualities of His different types of *bhaktas* in eight *ślokas*, the first of which begins with the word *adveṣṭā*. A person who is not envious of one who envies him, but instead maintains a friendly attitude towards him, is called *adveṣṭā*. Desiring that such a discontented person should not become degraded or fall down due to his envious attitude, *bhaktas* feel only compassion for him. If someone questions how, and with what type of discrimination one can show friendship and compassion towards an envious person, the answer is that these moods exist naturally within the *bhaktas*, who do not discriminate. “Because My *bhakta* is *nirmamah*, meaning that he does not have a feeling of possessiveness towards son, wife and so forth, and does not falsely identify with the body, he is free from envy towards anyone.” Furthermore, why should he discriminate when, by not doing so, he can avoid the misery arising from envy? One may wonder if he would feel any bodily pain if another person ran at him or beat him with shoes or a fist. In response Bhagavān says: *sama-duḥkha-sukhah*. “He remains even-minded both in happiness and in misery.”

As Candrārdha Śekhara (Lord Śiva) says in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.17.28): *nārārayaṇa-parah sarve na*. “Those who are devoted to Śrī Nārāyaṇa do not fear anyone because they see Svarga, *mokṣa* and *narakā* (hell) as equal.” To see happiness and distress as equal is called *sama-darśitva*. Moreover, they think that any misery coming to them is the result of their *prārabdha-karma*, it must be faced. Becoming equipoised, they endure all misery with great tolerance. To convey this, Śrī Bhagavān says that they are *kṣamī*, or forgiving. The root word *kṣam* is used in the sense of tolerance.

If the question is raised as to how such *bhaktas* maintain their lives, the response is *santuṣṭah*, that is, they remain satisfied with whatever eatables they get by the will of providence or with little endeavour. Arjuna asked, “But earlier You said that they are even-minded both in misery and happiness, satisfied even if they face the hardship of not getting any food, so how can it be that they feel satisfaction when attaining food for themselves? This seems contradictory.” In response Śrī Bhagavān says: *satataṁ yogī*. “Being endowed with *bhakti-yoga*, they want to maintain their bodies simply to attain perfection in *bhakti*.” As it is said, “One must endeavour to acquire food to maintain one’s life. Such maintenance of the body is proper, because only by keeping the body healthy can one think of the Absolute, and by specific knowledge of the Absolute, one can attain *brahma*.” If, by the will of providence, they do not get anything to eat, they remain undisturbed (*yatātmā*). And if they have to face a situation that disturbs their minds, they still do not engage in the practice of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* to pacify it. For this reason, they are known as *dṛḍha-niścayah*, that is, they never deviate from their sole purpose of attaining *ananya-bhakti* to Bhagavān. They remain devoted to remembrance of and contemplation on Bhagavān. “Such *bhaktas* are dear to Me, as they act in such a way that is pleasing to Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

In previous *ślokas*, after explaining the various types of *sādhana* practised by *aikāntika* (one-pointed) and *sa-niṣṭhita* (steadfast) *bhaktas*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining their qualities in the next seven *ślokas*. Here, the word *adveṣṭā* means that they do not even envy those who are envious of them. They think that such envy of them is the result of their *prārabdha-karma* as given by Parameśvara and therefore they envy no one. Rather, considering everyone as the

dwelling place of Parameśvara, they maintain a friendly attitude towards all. Upon seeing the misery of others, they try to remove it, whatever the cause may be; therefore, they are compassionate. They consider the body and anything related to the body as transformations of material nature and different from their *ātma-svarūpa* (own self); thus they do not even have a feeling of possessiveness toward their own bodies, and while performing their activities, they remain free from false bodily identification. When they have to face material happiness and distress, they become neither elated nor disturbed as they are steady in both. Because they are forgiving, they are also tolerant. Since they remain content in all situations of loss or gain, fame or infamy, victory or defeat, they are *yogīs* and remain steadily fixed in the *sādhana* given to them by Śrī Gurudeva. The word *yatātmā* means one who has control over the senses. Since they cannot be disturbed by any false logic, their determination is firm. In this material world, no misery can deviate them from *bhagavad-bhakti*. This is the special quality of *aikāntika-bhaktas*. They are endowed with the firm faith that, “I am the servant of Bhagavān,” and their mind, body and everything else is surrendered unto the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān. Therefore, such *bhaktas* are dear to Him. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.11.29-32), Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes these qualities to His devotee Uddhava. They are also described in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* (22.78-80).

ŚLOKA 15

यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः।
हर्षमर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः॥१५॥

*yasmān nodvijate loko / lokān nodvijate ca yaḥ
harṣamarṣa-bhayodvegair / mukto yaḥ sa ca me priyah*

sah—one; *yah*—who; *yasmāt*—by whom; *lokaḥ*—people; *na udvijate*—are not disturbed; *ca*—and; *yah*—who; *na udvijate*—is not disturbed; *lokāt*—by (other) people; *muktaḥ*—liberated; *harṣa*—from elation; *amarṣa*—intolerance; *bhaya*—fear; *ca udvegaiḥ*—and anxiety; (is) *priyah*—dear; *me*—to Me.

The *bhakta* who neither disturbs anyone, nor is himself disturbed by others, and who is free from mundane happiness, intolerance, fear and anxiety is certainly dear to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Moreover, in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.18.12) it is said, “The *devas* along with all their good qualities only reside fully in those who have *akiñcana-bhakti* for Bhagavān.” Such statements of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam also confirm that all the good qualities which please Śrī Bhagavān arise naturally by continuous *abhyāsa* (practice of His *bhakti*). “Now hear those qualities in five *ślokas*, the first beginning with *yasmāt*. My *bhakta* is free from mundane elation, intolerance, etc.” While explaining the rarity of qualities like these, Śrī Bhagavān further says: *yo na hṛṣyati*, etc. (Gītā 12.17).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In these *ślokas*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is describing other qualities which naturally manifest in the *bhaktas* by the influence of *bhakti*. “As I said previously, there is no possibility of My *bhaktas*’ behaviour causing anybody any harm, since they are free from the tendency to be violent towards any living being, and have a friendly and compassionate disposition towards all. They do not create any fear or anxiety in anyone. Nobody can agitate them in any way, because they are even-minded both in happiness and misery. When they attain their desired goal, they do not feel elated; they do not

become envious by seeing the superiority or progress of others, and their minds are never disturbed by fear or the anxiety of losing a possession.” The import is this: “Those *bhaktas* who are free from elation, envy, fear and agitation are most dear to Me.”

ŚLOKA 16

अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्बक्तः स मे प्रियः॥१६॥

*anapekṣah śucir dakṣa / udāśīno gata-vyathah
sarvārambha-parityāgī / yo mad-bhaktaḥ sa me priyah*

sah—that; *mat-bhaktaḥ*—bhakta of Mine; *yah*—who; (is) *anapekṣah*—indifferent; *śuciḥ*—pure; *dakṣaḥ*—expert; *udāśinah*—aloof; *gata-vyathah*—free from agitation; (and who) *parityāgī*—has fully renounced; *sarva-ārambha*—all endeavours; (is) *priyah*—dear; *me*—to Me.

That *bhakta* of Mine who is indifferent to all mundane activities, who is internally and externally pure, who is expert, aloof, free from all agitation and careful to avoid any activity unfavourable to *bhakti*, is dear to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Anapekṣah means, “My *bhaktas* are unconcerned about all mundane affairs.” *Udāśinah* means that they remain indifferent in their dealings with society. It becomes a part of their nature to give up the seen (that which they are conscious of) and unseen (that which they are not aware of) fruits of their mundane activities and, if spiritual endeavours such as teaching *śāstra* become unfavourable to their *bhakti*, they naturally give them up.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Furthermore it is said, “My *bhaktas* – who are *anapekṣa* (free from the desire for objects that become available of their own accord), who are pure externally and internally, expert in grasping the essence of the Vedic literature, who are unbiased, indifferent, not agitated even when mistreated by others, and who do not make the slightest endeavour to perform any pious or impious work which is unfavourable to their *bhagavad-bhakti* – are dear to Me.”

ŚLOKA 17

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काञ्छति।
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान् यः स मे प्रियः ॥१७॥

yo na hṛṣyati na dveṣṭi / na śocati na kāñkṣati
śubhāśubha-parityāgī / bhaktimān yaḥ sa me priyah

sah bhaktimān—that devoted person; *yaḥ*—who; *na hṛṣyati*—neither becomes elated; *na dveṣṭi*—nor grieves; *yaḥ*—who; *na śocati*—neither laments; *na kāñkṣati*—nor hankers; *parityāgī*—who fully renounces; *śubha-aśubha*—the results of pious and impious actions; (*is*) *priyah*—dear; *me*—to Me.

He who neither delights in mundane pleasures nor despairs in worldly sorrows, who does not lament for any loss or hanker for any gain, who renounces both pious and impious activities, and who serves Me with loving devotion, is indeed My dear *bhakta*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

“Those *bhaktas* who neither become overwhelmed with joy when they have a dear son or get a good disciple, or feel dejected over a wayward son or bad disciple, who do not become absorbed in lamentation at the loss of some lovable object, or desire some pleasing object which they do not have,

who do not engage in either pious or sinful activities, and who are devoted unto Me, are dear to Me."

ŚLOKAS 18-19

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।
 शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ॥१८॥
 तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मानी सन्तुष्टो येन केनचित् ।
 अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान् मे प्रियो नरः ॥१९॥

samaḥ śatru ca mitre ca / tathā mānāpamānayoh
 śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkheṣu / samaḥ saṅga-vivarjitaḥ
 tulya-nindā-stutir maunī / santuṣṭo yena kenacit
 aniketaḥ sthira-matir / bhaktimān me priyo narah

bhaktimān—the devoted; *narah*—man; (who is) *samaḥ*—equal; *śatru*—towards an enemy; *ca*—and; *mitre*—friend; *ca tathā*—as well as; *māna-apamānayoh*—in honour and dishonour; *samaḥ*—equal; *śīta-uṣṇa*—in cold and heat; *sukha-duḥkheṣu*—happiness and unhappiness; *saṅga-vivarjitaḥ*—free from attachment to (mundane) association; *tulya*—equal; *nindā-stutiḥ*—in blame and praise; *maunī*—silent; *santuṣṭah*—fully satisfied; *yena kenacit*—by whatever necessities for bodily maintenance come to him (by the Lord's grace); *aniketaḥ*—without attachment to any residence; (and) *sthira-matiḥ*—whose mind is fixed; (is) *priyah*—dear; *me*—to Me.

Being blessed with My *bhakti*, he who looks equally upon friends and enemies, who is equipoised in honour and dishonour, heat and cold, joy and anguish, praise and criticism; who is free from unfavourable association, who practises silence by controlling his speech, who remains satisfied with whatever comes to him, who is without attachment to his place of residence and whose intelligence is firmly fixed, such a *bhakta* is naturally dear to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *aniketaḥ* means without attachment to mundane possessions such as a house.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Kṛṣṇa now concludes His glorification of the natural qualities of His dear *bhaktas* in the present two *ślokas*. They behave equally towards enemies and friends, and they remain equipoised in honour and dishonour, heat and cold and happiness and distress. They are not attached to any bad association, and do not feel unhappy when criticised or happy when glorified. They do not speak anything except *bhagavat-kathā*. They remain content with either palatable or unpalatable foodstuffs which are useful for the maintenance of the body and which come by the will of Bhagavān. They do not reside in one place, and their intelligence is fixed and focused on the transcendental goal. Such *bhaktas* are dear to Him.

ŚLOKA 20

ये तु धर्मामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते।
श्रद्धाना मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः॥२०॥

*ye tu dharmāmṛtam idam / yathoktaṁ paryupāsate
śraddadhānā mat-paramā / bhaktās te'tīva me priyāḥ*

tu—indeed; *te*—those; *bhaktāḥ*—*bhaktas*; *ye*—who; (*are*) *śraddadhānāḥ*—faithful; *mat-paramāḥ*—devoted to Me; (*and*) *paryupāsate*—worship in every way; *idam*—this; *dharma-mṛtam*—nectarean *dharma*; *yathā*—as; *uktam*—described (by Me); (*are*) *atīva*—extremely; *priyāḥ*—dear; *me*—to Me.

Certainly, those *bhaktas* who engage in My exclusive *bhajana* with firm faith and worship this nectarean *dharma* that I have described are exceedingly dear to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

While concluding His description of the characteristics in which His *bhaktas* are steadily fixed, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the result for those who hear, study or meditate on these instructions with a desire to attain them. These characteristics are all born of *bhakti* and bring peace. They are not material qualities. It is said: *bhaktyā tuṣyati kṛṣṇo na guṇaiḥ.* “Kṛṣṇa is pleased only by *bhakti*, not by any material qualities.” There are unlimited statements like this in the *śāstra*.

Here the word *tu* (but) is used to show a different subject. *Bhaktas* who have the above-stated characteristics are fixed in certain good qualities. But *bhakti sādhakas* who desire all these qualities are superior to perfected mystics and those who have perfected *jñāna*. The word *atīva* has been used here to indicate this.

Bhakti is supreme, pleasurable and the most easily achievable among all *sādhyas* (goals). In this chapter, many such qualities of *bhakti* have been delineated. *Jñāna* has been described as *nimba* (a bitter lemon) and *bhakti* as *drākṣa* (sweet grapes). *Sādhakas* who are greedy for their respective tastes accept a particular one, according to their desires.

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

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In concluding this chapter, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “Those who are devoted to Me and endowed with faith thoroughly worship this *dharmāṁṛta*, the nectarean *dharma* of immortality, as described by Me. Such *bhaktas* of Mine are very dear to Me.” Bhagavān is only pleased by *bhakti*, not merely by a

person's qualities. All good qualities naturally manifest in *bhaktas* by the influence of *bhakti*. There is no possibility of good qualities arising in non-devotees who are averse to Hari.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.18.12) says:

yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā
sarvair gunais tatra samāsate surāḥ
harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā
manorathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ

All the *devatās* along with their superior qualities become manifest in the body of one who has developed unalloyed *bhakti* to Śrī Bhagavān. On the other hand, a person who is devoid of *bhakti* and engaged in material activities has no good qualities. He is driven by his own mental speculations, and must submit to the Lord's external potency. How can there be any good qualities in such a man?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has written that the intention of the Twelfth Chapter is to determine which is the superior worship of Śrī Bhagavān, *nirguṇa* (impersonal) or *saguṇa* (personal).

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa writes, "Among the various types of *sādhana*, only *śuddha-bhakti*, which is supremely effective and performed without any trouble, quickly bestows attainment of Bhagavān. This is the essence of this chapter."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "Those who are devoted to Me faithfully worship, hear, study, contemplate and practise this *dharmaṁṛta* as described by Me from beginning to end. They are, indeed, My *bhaktas* and therefore are very dear to Me. A *jīva* attains *nirupādhikā-prema* (pure love free from all motivation) by following this gradual, step-by-step process, as described by Me."

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

CHAPTER THIRTEEN



Prakṛti-Puruṣa-Vibhāga-Yoga

Yoga Through Understanding the Distinction Between Material Nature and the Enjoyer

ŚLOKA 1

अर्जुन उवाच—
प्रकृतिं पुरुषज्ञेव क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रज्ञमेव च।
एतद्वेदितुमिच्छामि ज्ञानं ज्ञेयज्ञं केशव॥१॥

arjuna uvāca
prakṛtim puruṣam caiva / kṣetram kṣetrajñam eva ca
etad veditum icchāmi / jñānam jñeyāñ ca keśava

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; keśava—O Keśava; icchāmi—I desire; veditum—to understand; etat eva—these specific things; prakṛtim—nature; ca—and; puruṣam—the enjoyer; kṣetram—the field; ca—and; kṣetra-jñam—the knower of the field; jñānam—knowledge; ca—and; jñeyam—the object of knowledge.

Arjuna said: O Keśava, I would like to understand prakṛti (nature), puruṣa (the enjoyer), kṣetra (the field), kṣetra-jñā (the knower of the field), jñāna (knowledge), and jñeya (the object of knowledge).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

I pay my obeisances unto *bhagavad-bhakti*, a portion of which is mercifully situated in processes such as *jñāna*, so as to make them successful. *Bhakti-miśra-jñāna*, or *jñāna* which is mixed with *bhakti* is described in this third set of six chapters. They also indirectly refer to the supremacy of *kevala-bhakti*. The Thirteenth Chapter specifically deals with the subjects of the body (*kṣetra*), the *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā* (*kṣetrajña*), the *sādhana* to attain knowledge of them, the *puruṣa* (enjoyer) and *prakṛti* (nature).

Bhagavān is attained only by *kevala-bhakti*. This is described in the second set of six chapters. These chapters also describe three types of worship, such as *ahaṇ-graha-upāsanā*. A *niṣkāma-karma-yogī* attains *mokṣa* by *bhakti-miśra-jñāna* (*jñāna* mixed with *bhakti*), which was described in brief in the first six chapters. The third set of six chapters now begins. It explains in detail *kṣetra* (the field), *kṣetra-jña* (the knower of the field) and so forth.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīmad *Bhagavad-gītā* consists of eighteen chapters, which have been divided into three divisions. The first six chapters describe *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, *bhakti-miśra-jñāna* and topics which are relevant for knowledge of the *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā*. The second set of six chapters explains the glory of *kevala-bhakti*, deliberates on *parā* and *aparā bhakti*, and describes the glory of Śrī *Bhagavān*'s *svarūpa*, as well as the glory of the *svarūpa* of the *bhakta*. It also explains the specificity and supremacy of *bhakti* among various processes, and gives details of other similar topics. *Tattva-jñāna* is explained in detail in the third set of six chapters. It was previously described only in brief. The present description is part of a deliberation on *prakṛti* (material nature), *puruṣa* (the enjoyer), *kṣetra* (the field) and *kṣetra-jña* (the knower of the

field). The most confidential instruction of Śrī Gītā is finally delivered in the Eighteenth Chapter.

In the first śloka of this chapter, Arjuna is inquiring about the principles such as *prakṛti*, *puruṣa*, *kṣetra*, *kṣetra-jñā*, *jñāna* and *jñeyā*, however, some commentators have purposely omitted this first śloka which raises these questions.

ŚLOKA 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते।
एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः॥२॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca

*idam śarīram kaunteya / kṣetram ity abhidhīyate
etadyo vetti tam prāhuh / kṣetrajña iti tad-vidah*

śrī bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Lord said; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *idam*—this; *śarīram*—body; *abhidhīyate*—is known; *iti*—as; *kṣetram*—the field; (he) *yah*—who; *vetti*—knows; *etad*—this; *prāhuh*—describe; *tam*—that (person); *iti*—thus; (as) *kṣetra-jñāḥ*—the knower of the field; (by) *tat-vidah*—persons conversant with that truth.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O Kaunteya, this body is known as *kṣetra* (the field), and one who knows this body is called *kṣetra-jñā* (the knower of the field), by those endowed with knowledge of *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jñā*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

What is *kṣetra* and who is *kṣetra-jñā*? In reply to this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *idam*. This body is the refuge of all sense enjoyment through the medium of the senses and is indeed called *kṣetra*. In other words, it is the origin of the tree of material existence. Those

in bondage are covered by the misconception, of 'I' and 'mine' in relation to their bodies. This is generated by the false ego. They are freed from this misconception however, in the liberated stage. In other words, they remain free from attachment to the body when they are liberated. The *jīva* situated in either of these stages is known as *kṣetra-jīna*. Like a farmer, he alone is *kṣetra-jīna*, the knower of his field, and the enjoyer of its fruits.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.12.23) Śrī Bhagavān says:

*adanti caikam phalam asya gṛdhraḥ
grāme-carā ekam aranya-vāsāḥ
haṁsā ya ekam bahu-rūpam ijyair
māyā-mayam veda sa veda vedam*

Those ignorant conditioned souls who are greedy to acquire sense objects experience misery as one of the fruits of this tree of material existence. Places like Svarga are also ultimately miserable. However swan-like *mukta-jīvas* (liberated souls) who live in the tree enjoy another type of fruit, namely the happiness of *mukti*, which is always blissful. Thus, the one tree of material existence leads to various destinations such as Svarga, Naraka (hell) and *mukti*. This tree, therefore, is seen to be composed of *māyā* (illusion) and it has multiple forms because it is born from *māyā* *sakti*. Only those who accept a *sad-guru* understand this secret, and it is they who actually know *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jīna*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

After hearing Arjuna's questions, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes the body of the conditioned *jīva* which, along with his life air and senses, is the place of enjoyment and is called the *kṣetra*. One who knows this body understands that it is the means of enjoyment for those in the conditioned state, and the means of attaining liberation for those in the stage of *mokṣa*. The *jīva* situated in either of these states is called *kṣetra-*

jñā. However, Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa says: *śarīrātmāvādī tu kṣetrajño na / na kṣetratvena tat jñānābhāvāt*. “That jīva who identifies himself with this body does not understand the *tattva* of the body. Therefore, he is not *kṣetra-jñā*.”

Those who accept this body as their self consider it to be a means of enjoyment only. Intoxicated by the material false ego, they become bound to *samsāra* (material existence). Life after life, their only attainment is misery. On the contrary, those who become free from the materialistic ego while remaining in this body, and who render service to Śrī Hari, gradually attain the happiness of *mokṣa*. They become successful after attaining the bliss of rendering service to Bhagavān. This has been confirmed in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.12.23):

*adanti caikam phalam asya gr̄dhra
grāme-carā ekam aranya-vāsāḥ
hamśā ya ekam bahu-rūpam ijyair
māyā-mayam veda sa veda vedam*

Those attached to family life and who hanker after mundane pleasures, taste only the miserable fruit of bodily enjoyment, while the wise and swan-like *sannyāsīs*, who have renounced all material goals, taste only the blissful fruit of transcendental happiness.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes, “Śrī Bhagavān says: ‘O Arjuna! To make you clearly understand *bhakti-tattva*, which is supremely confidential, I first explained the *svarūpa* of the *ātmā*. I then explained the various types of activities (*karma*) of the *baddha-jivas* and the *svarūpa* (nature) of *nirupādhika-bhakti* (unalloyed *bhakti* free from all designations). To realise the highest end, I concluded with a presentation on the three types of *abhidheya* (means): *jñāna*, *karma* and *bhakti*. At present, I am giving a special description of *jñāna* and *vairāgya* based on scientific reasoning. You will become more fixed in *nirupādhika bhakti-tattva* by hearing this.’

*jñānam parama-guhyam me / yad vijñāna-samanvitam
sarahasyam tad-aṅgam ca / gṛhāṇa gaditam mayā*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.9.31

While instructing the *catuh-ślokī* to Brahmā, I described four subjects: *jñāna* (knowledge), *vijñāna* (realised knowledge), *rahasya* (confidential or secret topics) and *tad-aṅga* (the limbs or various aspects of those confidential topics). The hidden meaning of *bhakti-tattva* does not manifest in the heart without properly understanding these four essential topics. Therefore, I am giving you the pure intelligence which is needed to understand this *rahasya*, along with instructions on *vijñāna*. When *viśuddha-bhakti* arises, causeless knowledge and renunciation appear side by side. These are the two concomitant fruits experienced while engaging in *bhakti*. O Kaunteya, this body is called *kṣetra* and those who know this *kṣetra* are called *kṣetra-jñā*.

ŚLOKA 3

**क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्जनं यत्तज्जानं मतं मम॥३॥**

*kṣetrajñam cāpi mām viddhi / sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata
kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor jñānam / yat taj jñānam mama*

ca—and; *bhārata*—O scion of Bhārata; *viddhi*—know; *mām*—Me; *api*—also; (to be) *kṣetra-jñam*—the knower of the field; *sarva-kṣetreṣu*—within all the fields; (it is) *tat*—that; *jñānam*—knowledge; *kṣetra-kṣetra-jñayoh*—of the field and the knower of the field; *yat*—which; (is actual) *jñānam*—knowledge; (this is) *mama*—My; *matam*—opinion.

O Bhārata, know Me alone to be the knower in all *kṣetras* (bodies). This knowledge of the body as *kṣetra*, and the *jīva* and Īśvara as *kṣetra-jñā*, is certainly true knowledge in My opinion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Thus, the living entity is called *kṣetra-jñā* because he has knowledge of *kṣetra* (the body), but Paramātmā completely knows all *kṣetras*, more so than the *jīvas*. This śloka, beginning with the word *kṣetra-jñām*, explains His *kṣetra-jñatva* (quality of knowing the *kṣetra*). Śrī Bhagavān says, “Know Me, Paramātmā, to be *kṣetra-jñā*, who is situated as the controller in all *kṣetras*. The *jīva* is the *kṣetra-jñā* only of his individual *kṣetra*, and his knowledge of *kṣetra* is also incomplete. I alone am the perfect and complete knower of all *kṣetras*. Consider this to be My speciality.”

What is *jñāna*? Anticipating this question, Śrī Bhagavān says, “Knowledge of *kṣetra* (the body) along with *kṣetra-jñā* (the *jīvātmā* and Paramātmā), is indeed called *jñāna*. I accept this as actual knowledge.”

Paramātmā is the superior of the two *puruṣas*, or *kṣetra-jñās*. Some persons explain that there is only one *ātmā*. This is rejected here, and it also contradicts a later statement of the Gītā (15.17).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Although the word *kṣetra-jñā* was used in the previous śloka to indicate the embodied soul or the *jīva* situated within the body, in the present śloka Śrī Bhagavān, who is *sarvantaryāmī* (the indwelling witness in all), *sarveśvara* (the Lord of all), *sarva-niyantā* (the Supreme Controller) and Paramātmā, explains the perfect *kṣetra-jñā*, not the *jīva*.

The essence of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa’s commentary on this śloka is as follows: “The *jīva* remains situated in this body just as a subject is situated under a king, even though he is *kṣetra-jñā* and has knowledge of his own *kṣetra* as a means of enjoyment and liberation. However, I alone am his controller and maintainer, and, thus, I am the perfect *kṣetra-jñā* because I know all *kṣetras*. Thus, I remain situated like a king.”

It is also seen in the smṛti:

kṣetrāṇi hi śarīrāṇi / bijam cāpi śubhāśubhe
tāni vetti sa yogātmā / tataḥ kṣetra-jñā ucyate

The entire body is like a *kṣetra*, and righteous and unrighteous actions are like the seeds of that body in that they are the cause. That *yogātmā puruṣa* (Paramātmā) knows the *tattva* (essence) of all bodies or *kṣetras*. He is therefore called the perfect *kṣetra-jñā*.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (8.3.13) also says:

kṣetra-jñāya namaḥ tubhyam / sarvādhyakṣāya sākṣiṇe
puruṣāyātma-mūlāya / mūla-prakṛtaye namah

In his commentary on this *śloka*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes: *kṣetram dehadvayam tattvena jānātīti kṣetrajño 'antaryāmī*. “Antaryāmī knows the *tattva* of both the subtle and gross bodies and is called *kṣetra-jñā*.” Furthermore, Śrī Bhagavān says in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (8.17.11): *kṣetra-jñāḥ sarva bhūtānām*, “One who knows all living beings is called *kṣetra-jñā*.”

The import of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s statement is that true knowledge means to have knowledge of *kṣetra* (the body), its knower (the *jīvātmā*, conditioned or liberated) and Paramātmā (the original *kṣetra-jñā*), who is situated within all. However, Paramātmā *svarūpa* is different from the *baddha-jīvas* (*kṣara*) and the *mukta jīvas* (*akṣara*) and superior to them. Therefore, the imaginary conception that the *jīvātmā* and Paramātmā are one is against the conclusion of *śāstra*. Also the *śruti* statement, *nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān*, describes Paramātmā as being superior to all living, conscious, eternal *jīvas* and their controller and prompter. This conclusion is verified throughout the *Gītā*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna, “Because you are a *jīva*, you forget this fact again and again, but as Parameśvara, I never forget it.” According to the statement, *mamaivāṁśo*

jīva-loke jīva-bhūtah sanātanah, the *jīva* is an insignificant part of Bhagavān. The *jīva* is eternally His part, and in no state can he become one with Bhagavān by merging with Him.

The statement that *brahma* Himself has become a *jīva* due to ignorance and when freed from ignorance, the *jīva* becomes *brahma*, is also incorrect from the perspective of reasoning, logic and *sāstra*. Ignorance can never touch *parabrahma* who remains *jñāna-svarūpa* (intrinsically qualified as knowledge) in all states. It is said in the *śruti*: *satyam jñānam anantam brahma*. “*Parabrahma* never falls into ignorance by being overpowered by *māyā*.” Thousands of Vedic statements give evidence of this. So in this material body there are two *kṣetra-jñas*: the *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā*. *Paramātmā* is the controller, prompter and imminent witness of the different *jīvas* who are situated in different bodies as localised *kṣetra-jñas*. *Paramātmā* and the *jīva* can never be one.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “In regard to *kṣetra* (the field) and *kṣetra-jña* (the knower of the field), there are three principles: Īśvara, the *jīva* and *jada* (inert matter). Just as there is one *kṣetra-jña* (the *jīvātmā*) in each body, know Me, Īśvara, to be the principal *kṣetra-jña* of this entire inert world. By My *aiśī-* *sakti* (controlling potency) as *Paramātmā*, I am the *kṣetra-jña* of all *kṣetra-jñas* and of the universe. The *jñāna* of those who have understood these three principles by deliberating on *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jña* is indeed *vijñāna*.”

ŚLOKA 4

तत् क्षेत्रं यच्च यादृक् च यद्विकारि यतश्च यत्।
स च यो यत्प्रभावश्च तत्समासेन मे शृणु॥४॥
tat kṣetram yac ca yādṛk ca / yad-vikāri yataś ca yat
sa ca yo yat prabhāvaś ca / tat samāsena me śṛṇu

śṛṇu—hear; tat—this; me—from Me; samāsena—in brief; yat—what; tat—that; kṣetram—field (is); ca—and; yādṛk—what its nature (is); ca—and; yat-vikāri—what its transformations (are); yataḥ—whence; ca—and; yat—for what reason (it is existing); ca—and; saḥ yaḥ—he who (is the kṣetra-jñā); ca—and; yat-prabhāvah—what his influence (is).

Hear from Me a brief description of that kṣetra, its characteristics and transformations, why and from whom it has come into existence, and what the svarūpa (nature) and influence of the kṣetra-jñā is.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

In this śloka beginning with the words tat kṣetram, Śrī Bhagavān is beginning to elaborate on the meaning which was previously only spoken of in brief. What is that kṣetra or body? It is a combination of five elements (*mahābhūta*), the life air (*prāṇa*) and the senses (*indriya*). “Hear from Me how this kṣetra (field consisting of a gross and subtle body) possesses different types of natures, desires and transformations such as enmity and friendship. Hear how it is born from the union of *prakṛti* (material nature) and *puruṣa* (the enjoyer), and how it manifests differently in varieties of moving and non-moving forms. That kṣetra-jñā is the *jīvātmā* and also *Paramātmā*.” According to the rules of Sanskrit grammar, kṣetra-jñā is in the neutral gender here because the word kṣetra is used in the neutral gender.

SLOKA 5

ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छन्दोभिर्विविधैः पृथक् ।

ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्विर्विनिश्चितैः ॥५॥

ṛṣibhir bahudhā gītāṁ / chandobhir vividhaiḥ pṛthak
brahma-sūtra-padais caiva / hetumadbhir viniścitaīḥ

(this knowledge) *gītam*—has been described in song; *bahudhā pṛthak*—in several distinct ways; *rṣibhiḥ*—by the sages; *vividhaiḥ*—through various; *chandobhiḥ*—Vedic *ślokas*; *ca*—and; *eva hetumadbhiḥ*—with reasonable; *viniścitatīḥ*—and perfectly ascertained conclusions; *brahma-sūtrapadaiḥ*—through the *sūtras* of *Vedānta-sūtra* and *Brahma-sūtra*.

This *tattva* of *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jñā* has been explained in several different ways by the *rṣis* in numerous Vedic literatures, and it is sung with perfect logic and definitive conclusions in the *Brahma-sūtra*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“Whose description of this subject matter are You going to briefly explain to me?” Anticipating this question from Arjuna, Śrī Bhagavān says, “Saints like Vasiṣṭha and others have described this in their *Yoga-śāstras*. *Chandobhir* means that it is also explained in the *Vedas*. Moreover, it is described in the *Brahma-sūtra* in *sūtras* (aphorisms) such as, *athāto brahma-jijñāsā*. “Therefore one should enquire about *brahma*” (*Brahma-sūtra* 1.1.1). Since *brahma*, the Supreme Absolute Truth, is substantiated by these *sūtras*, they are known as *pada* (that which gives evidence to establish Him). What is the nature of that *brahma*? In response to this question, Śrī Bhagavān explains, “This specifically addresses the objections of the *hetuka-gana* (seers who investigate the cause and effect of the universe).” This is evident by deliberating upon the truth of the substantial imports of *Brahma-sūtra*, *ikṣhate nāśabdam*, “The Supreme Lord is not indescribable,” (*Brahma sūtra* 1.1.5) and *ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt*, “By nature the Supreme Lord is blissful” (*Brahma-sūtra* 1.1.12).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

The *tattva* of *kṣetra* and its *kṣetra-jñā*, as explained by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is accepted by all philosophers. This *siddhānta* is clearly established in authoritative *śāstras* such as the *Vedas*, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Brahma-sūtras*. The *Vedas* are *apauruṣeya* (not created by a conditioned person) so they are accepted by everyone. The essence of the *Vedas* is called *Vedānta* (the *Upaniṣads*).

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa, an *avatāra* of Bhagavān, reconciled the seemingly contradictory statements of the *Vedas* and presented them in the form of *sūtras* known as the *Vedānta-sūtra*. Statements of the *Vedānta-sūtras* such as *ikṣate nāśabdam* (*Brahma-sūtra* 1.1.5) and *ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt* (*Brahma-sūtra* 1.1.12) confirm this conclusion. ‘*Ikṣate nāśabdam* means that *brahma* can be seen and experienced only through *śāstra* because He is *na aśabdam*. This means that He cannot be known (*na*) other than through words (*aśabdam*). That is to say, He is knowable only through *śabda* (words).’ This is explained in *Brahma-sūtra* (1.1.3): *śāstra-yonitvāt*. “*Brahma* can be known and experienced through *śāstra*.” *Brahma* is the subject matter established by the *Vedas*; therefore, He is not beyond *śabda* (words). How is He experienced? In response to this question, it is further said: *ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt*. “*Paramānanda-maya brahma*, whose very nature is supreme bliss, can be seen and experienced by the practice of *bhakti*.” These statements establish *parabrahma* as the perfect or complete *kṣetra-jñā* and the *jīva* who sees or experiences Him, or who performs *bhakti* to that *ānandamaya-puruṣa*, as the partial or secondary *kṣetra-jñā*. Furthermore, according to *Brahma-sūtra* (2.3.16): *nātmā śruter nityatvāc ca tābhyaḥ*. “The *jīvas* are described as the partial *kṣetra-jñas*.” According to *Brahma-sūtra* (2.3.39): *parāt tu tac chruteḥ*, “*Parabrahma* is accepted as the complete *kṣetra-jñā* and is superior to the *jīvātmā*.”

In this śloka, the *chanda* (Sanskrit metre) and the literature written by ṛṣis like Vasiṣṭha and others refer to Vedic literature. In the Ḗju branch of the Vedas it is said: *tasmād vā etasmād ātmana ākāśah sambhūtaḥ ity ādinā brahma pucchaṁ pratiṣṭhā ity astenānna-mayaṁ prāṇamaya-mano maya-vijñānamayānanda-mayāḥ pañca-puruṣāḥ pañhitāḥ teṣv annamayādi-trayaṁ jaḍa-kṣetra-svarūpaṁ, tato bhinno vijñānamayo jīvas tasya bhokteti jīva-kṣetrajña-svarūpaṁ, tasmāc ca bhinnāḥ sarvāntara ānandamaya itīsvara-kṣetrajña-svarūpaṁ uktam* (Taittrīya Upaniṣad 2.1.2).

“There are five *puruṣas*: *annamaya* (only being conscious of food), *prāṇamaya* (only being conscious of life), *jñānamaya* (being conscious of ātma-tattva), *vijñānamaya* (being conscious of practical service to Kṛṣṇa) and *ānandamaya* (only being conscious of blissful Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa sevā). The first three (*annamaya*, *prāṇamaya* and *jñānamaya*) represent the inert *kṣetra* (material body). Different from them is the *vijñānamaya-puruṣa*, the *jīva*, who, as the knower of the *kṣetra* (this material body), is the secondary *kṣetra-jīva*. Antaryāmī, the Supersoul of everyone, is distinct from these two and He is the *ānandamaya-puruṣa*. This *ānandamaya-puruṣa* is, indeed, Parameśvara (the Supreme Controller), *sarva-niyantā* (the regulator of everything), *sākṣī* (the witness) and the original *kṣetra-jīva*.

ŚLOKAS 6-7

महाभूतान्यहंकारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च।
 इन्द्रियाणि दशैकज्ञ पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः ॥६॥
 इच्छा द्वेषः सुखं दुःखं संघातश्चेतना धृतिः।
 एतत् क्षेत्रं समासेन सविकारमुदाहृतम् ॥७॥

*mahā-bhūtānnyahaṅkāro / buddhir avyaktam eva ca
 indriyāṇi daśaikañ ca / pañca cendriya-gocarāḥ*

*icchā dveṣah sukham duḥkham / sanghātaś cetanā dhṛtiḥ
etat kṣetram samāsena / sa-vikāram udāhṛtam*

mahā-bhūtāni—the five great elements; *ahaṅkāraḥ*—‘I (am) the doer’, false ego; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *avyaktam eva ca*—and the unmanifest nature; *daśa*—the ten; *indriyāṇi*—senses; *ca*—and; *ekam*—the one (mind); *pañca ca indriya-gocarāḥ*—and the five sense objects (headed by sound and touch); *icchā*—desire; *dveṣah*—hate; *sukham*—happiness; *duḥkham*—unhappiness; *sanghātah*—the aggregate of all these (the body); *cetanā*—the functions of the mind for acquiring knowledge; *dhṛtiḥ*—patience; (all these) *sa-vikāram*—together with their transformations; *udāhṛtam*—are said; *samāsena*—in summary; (to be) *etat*—this; *kṣetram*—field.

The five great elements, the false ego, the intelligence, *prakṛti*, the eleven senses, the five sense objects, desire, hatred, happiness, misery, the body, knowledge and patience comprise a brief description of the *kṣetra*, along with its mundane transformations.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

Śrī Bhagavān is now explaining the nature of the *kṣetra*. Earth, water, fire, air and sky, their cause (the false ego), *buddhiḥ* (intelligence) in the form of scientific reasonings, *mahat-tattva* (the cause of the false ego), *prakṛti* (the cause of the *mahat-tattva*), the ten working and knowledge-acquiring senses, the mind and the five sense objects (such as sound and touch) are all referred to as the twenty-four elements. Desire, envy, happiness, misery, the body as a combination or result of the five *mahābhūtas* (great elements), consciousness as a state of mind in the form of knowledge, forbearance and determination are all functions of the mind, not the soul. Therefore, these characteristics are all part of the *kṣetra* and are also

indicative of qualities such as determination. In the *śruti* it is said that the functions of the mind are desire, determination, doubt, faith, lack of faith, forbearance, detachment, shyness, intellect and fear. These functions exhibit the qualities of *kṣetra* as described above. *Etat kṣetram savikāram.* “This *kṣetra* goes through six types of changes, such as birth and death.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

The constituents of the *kṣetra* are the twenty-four elements consisting of the five *mahābhūtas* (earth, water, fire, air and sky), the false ego, the *mahat-tattva* and its cause (*prakṛti*), the ten external senses (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin, speech, feet, hands, anus and genitals), the one internal sense (the mind), and the five objects of the senses (form, taste, smell, touch and sound). This is concluded from the statements of ṛṣis like Vasiṣṭha, Devala and Asita, from the Vedic mantras and from the *Vedānta-sūtras*. What the *kṣetra* is and why it is known as such, can be understood by analysing these twenty-four elements. Transformations of *kṣetra* are desire, envy, happiness, distress, all the activities of the body which is the interaction of the five material elements, the various states of the mind which are a semblance of the *cit* function (*cid-ābhāsa*) and forbearance. Therefore, it should be understood that they are a part of *kṣetra*. A chart depicting the twenty-four elements is given on the next page.

ŚLOKAS 8-12

अमानित्वमदभित्वमहिंसा क्षान्तिराजवम्।
 आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥ ८ ॥
 इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहङ्कार एव च।
 जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम् ॥ ९ ॥
 असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु।

नित्यञ्च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥१०॥
 मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी।
 विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि ॥११॥
 अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम्।
 एतज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥१२॥

*amānitvam adambhitvam / ahimsā kṣāntir ārjavam
 ācāryopāsanam śaucam / sthairyam ātma-vinigrahah
 indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam / anahaṅkāra eva ca
 janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi- / duḥkha-doṣānudarśanam
 asaktir anabhiṣvaṅgah / putra-dāra-gṛhādiṣu
 nityañ ca sama-cittatvam / iṣṭāniṣṭopapattiṣu
 mayi cānanya-yogena / bhaktir avyabhicāriṇī
 vivikta-deṣa-sevitvam / aratir jana-saṁsadi
 adhyātma-jñāna-nityatvam / tattva-jñānārtha-darśanam
 etaj jñānam iti proktam / ajñānam yad ato'nyathā*

amānitvam—freedom from the desire for honour; *adambhitvam*—being without pride; *ahimsā*—non-violence; *kṣāntih*—forgiveness; *ārjavam*—simplicity; *ācārya-upāsanam*—worship of the sad-guru; *śaucam*—internal and external cleanliness; *sthairyam*—steadiness of mind; *ātma-vinigrahah*—control over the body and senses; *vairāgyam*—detachment; *indriya-artheṣu*—from sense objects such as sound and touch; *anahaṅkāraḥ eva ca*—and freedom from false ego; *anudarśanam*—considering repeatedly in the light of the śāstra; *duḥkha-doṣa*—inconveniences caused by the sufferings; *janma*—of birth; *mṛtyu*—death; *jarā*—old age; *vyādhi*—and disease; *asaktih*—detachment (from sense pleasures); *anabhiṣvaṅgah*—detachment; *putra*—from sons; *dāra*—wife; *gṛha*—home; *ādiṣu*—etc.; *nityam*—always; *ca sama-cittatvam*—having equipoised mind; *upapattiṣu*—in the midst of the occurrences; *iṣṭa-aniṣṭa*—of desired and undesired events; *avyabhicāriṇī*—unfailing;

bhaktih—devotional service; *ananya-yogena*—with exclusive connection; *mayi*—to Me; *ca*—and; *sevitvam*—resorting; *vivikta-deśa*—to solitary places; *aratih*—being without attachment; *jana-saṁsadi*—to the association of people (sense-enjoyers); *adhyātma-jñāna-nityatvam*—always hearing about spiritual knowledge; *artha-darśanam*—investigating the (inner) purpose; (of) *tattva-jñāna*—the principles of self-realisation; *etat*—that; *iti*—which; *proktam*—I have spoken; (is) *jñānam*—knowledge; *ataḥ*—so; *yat*—what; *anyathā*—is otherwise; (is) *ajñānam*—ignorance.

Having no desire for honour; freedom from pride; non-violence; forbearance; simplicity; service to a qualified *guru*; purity both internally and externally; steadiness of mind; control of the body and senses; detachment from sense objects; absence of false ego; constantly perceiving the misery of birth, death, old age and disease; detachment from wife, children, home, etc.; not being absorbed in the happiness and misery of others; equanimity in attaining either favourable or unfavourable objects; one-pointed, steadfast and unswerving *bhakti* to Me; a liking for solitude; a distaste for the association of materialistic people; constant deliberation on knowledge of the self and on the purpose of *tattva-jñāna*, that is, *mokṣa*—I consider all these to be *jñāna*. Everything else is ignorance.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In the above five *ślokas*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the twenty means (*sādhanas*) to attain the goal. The first of these is humility. He also explains qualities of the *kṣetra-jñās*, the *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā*, who are to be known separately from the previously mentioned characteristics of *kṣetra*. Eighteen

of these qualities are general and apply to both the *jñānīs* and the *bhaktas*. According to the statement of Bhagavān: *mayi cānanya-yogena bhaktir avyabhicāriṇī*. It is obligatory for devotees to sincerely endeavour in *aikāntika-bhakti* in order to experience Him. The seventeen qualities, beginning with humility, manifest naturally within such devotees who practise *avyabhicāriṇī bhakti*, chaste devotion. They have no need to make separate endeavours to acquire these qualities. The last two qualities, however, are unique to the *jñānīs*. This is the opinion of the *bhakta sampradāya* (devotee community).

The meaning of the series of words beginning with *amānitvam* in this *śloka* is quite clear. In the *smṛti*, *śaucam* means internal and external cleanliness. Therein it is said, “Cleanliness is of two types, internal and external. External cleanliness is achieved by the use of earth, water, etc., and the cleanliness of consciousness or *bhāva* is called cleanliness of the mind, the internal sense.” The purport of the word *ātma-vinigrahah* is control of the body. To see the miseries of birth, death, etc., means to be constantly aware of them as a source of suffering. *Asaktih* means to give up attachment to son, family etc., and *anabhiṣvaṅgah* means not becoming absorbed in the happiness or misery of others. *Iṣṭāniṣṭopapattiṣu* means to remain equipoised upon receiving material objects deemed favourable or unfavourable.

Mayi means ‘in Me, in My form as Śyāmasundara’, and *ananya-yogena* means *bhakti* which is not mixed with *jñāna-yoga*, *tapa-yoga*, etc. The word *ca* (also) indicates *pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*, which is mixed with *jñāna*, etc. The *bhaktas* only perform the first type of *bhakti*, *ananya-bhakti*. *Jñānīs* adopt the second type of *bhakti*, *pradhānī-bhūtā bhakti*. This is the opinion of some *bhaktas*. Devotees say, “Just as *ananya-bhakti* is the means to attain *bhagavat-prema*, it also helps to give an experience of Paramātmā.” The glories of

avyabhicāriṇī bhakti (unswerving *bhakti*) have also been described in this final set of six chapters so as to explain this secret.

Jñānīs, however, have a different opinion. They say that *ananya-yogena* means to see the self everywhere and *avyabhicāriṇī* means to perform that *yoga* every day. According to Śrīpāda Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, the word *avyabhicāriṇī* means that which cannot be checked by anything. The word *adhyātma-jñāna* refers to the knowledge that is situated in the self. In order to purify the self, it should be practised constantly. *Tattva-jñānārtha-darśanam* means to have a vision (aim) of *mokṣa*, which is the *prayojana* (purpose) of *tattva-jñāna*, to deliberate upon it, and to discuss it, considering it to be one's cherished desire. These twenty are the general means to attain *jñāna*, basic knowledge of the *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā*. Advanced (specific) *Paramātmā jñāna* will be explained later. Symptoms of ignorance (*ajñāna*) such as *mānitva* (the desire for honour), are contrary to the above symptoms.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "Humility; lack of false pride; non-violence; forgiveness; simplicity; service to the spiritual master; cleanliness; stability; control of the body and mind; detachment from sense objects; lack of false ego; realisation of the miseries of birth, death, old age and disease; lack of attachment to son, family, etc.; indifference to the happiness and distress of others; even-mindedness under all circumstances; *avyabhicāriṇī-bhakti* (unalloyed and unswerving *bhakti* unto Me); residence in a solitary place; no interest in crowded places; firm belief that spiritual knowledge is eternal and deliberation upon *mokṣa* as the purpose of *tattva-jñāna*, are all considered by the ignorant to be twenty interactions (transformations) of the

kṣetra (body). In reality, they comprise knowledge which destroys the effect of the transformations on the *kṣetra*. One attains *viśuddha-tattva* (the supremely pure Absolute Truth) by taking shelter of them. They are not the transformations of the *kṣetra*; rather, they are the remedies that can destroy the transformations of the *kṣetra*. “Of these twenty, one should adopt *ananya-avyabhicāriṇī bhakti* unto Me.” The other nineteen characteristics are secondary fruits of *bhakti*. They purify the impure *kṣetra* (body) and ultimately, after destroying the impure *kṣetra* of the *jīva*, they help him to attain his eternal, perfect *kṣetra*. These nineteen characteristics, which are like the throne of Bhaktī-devī, should be understood as true *jñāna* (*vijñāna*). Everything else is *ajñāna*, ignorance.”

Ananya-avyabhicāriṇī bhakti is prominent among all types of *sādhana*. The above qualities naturally manifest upon taking shelter of *bhakti*. Therefore, pure devotees only accept *ananya-bhakti* which is the *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa* (intrinsic characteristic) of the *jīva*. The qualities which are known as *tatastha-lakṣaṇa* (marginal characteristics) then manifest concomitantly. This is described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.18.12):

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

All the *devatās* and their exalted qualities, such as *jñāna* and their performance of *dharma*, always reside in the heart of those who have *niṣkāma-bhakti* (selfless devotion) to Śrī Bhagavān. On the other hand, how can one who is not a *bhakta* of Bhagavān possess any of the good qualities of a *mahā-puruṣa*? Such a person is always hankering for petty worldly sense objects only.

Jñānīs practise good qualities such as saintly behaviour, non-violence and control of the mind and ego, but they do

not endeavour for *ananya-avyabhicāriṇī bhakti* to Śrī Bhagavān. They only perform *bhakti* to attain perfection in *jñāna* and *mukti*. Therefore, it should be understood to be *guṇī-bhūtā bhakti* (*bhakti* predominated by *jñāna* and *karma*), not *svarūpa-siddhā bhakti* or *śuddha-bhakti*. *Advaitavādīs* (impersonalists) fall into this category.

ŚLOKA 13

ज्ञेयं यत्तत् प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्जात्वामृतमश्नुते।
अनादि मत्परं ब्रह्म न सत्तन्नासदुच्यते॥१३॥

jñeyam *yat tat pravakṣyāmi / yaj jñātvā 'mṛtam aśnute
anādimat param brahma / na sat tan nāsad ucyate*

pravakṣyāmi—I shall explain; *tat*—that; *yat*—which; *jñeyam*—is worth knowing; *jñātvā*—understanding; *yat*—which; *aśnute*—one attains; *amṛtam*—immortality; *brahma*—*brahma*; (is) *anādi*—without beginning; *mat-param*—dependent on Me; *tat*—that; *ucyate*—is said; (to be) *na*—neither; *sat*—cause; *na*—nor; *asat*—effect.

Now I shall explain to you what is *jñeya* (that which is to be known), for by understanding the knowable one attains *mokṣa* (immortality). *Brahma*, who has no beginning and is dependent on Me, lies beyond the cause and effect of this creation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā* can be known by practising the various *sādhanas* mentioned previously. Of the two, *Paramātmā* alone has been indicated by the word *sarvagata*, meaning the all-pervading *brahma*. (Note: the word *sarvagata* is from Śrila Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's original Sanskrit commentary.) This *brahma* is the worshipable object of the *jñānīs* in His *nirviṣeṣa* aspect (without attributes), and

of the *bhaktas* in His *saviśeṣa* aspect (with attributes). Residing within the body, He is known as Paramātmā because He is meditated upon in His four-handed form.

First, *brahma* is explained in this *śloka* beginning with the word *jñeyam*. “*Anādi* means without a beginning, and since *brahma* is My *svarūpa*, He is eternal.” *Mat-param* means ‘I am the supreme (*param*) shelter of *brahma*. As will be said later on, *brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham*, “I am the foundation or basis of *brahma*.” But what is that *brahma*? Expecting this question, Śrī Bhagavān says that *brahma* is neither *asat* nor *sat*. In other words, He is beyond both cause and effect.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Previously, Śrī Bhagavān explained *jñāna-sādhana* (the means of attaining *jñāna*). Now, in the present *śloka*, He is explaining the knowable *para-tattva*, which is the *sādhyā* (goal) of that *jñāna*. The *jñānīs* think that the *para-tattva* is *nirviśeṣa-brahma*. They imagine this *para-tattva* to be bereft of name, form, qualities, activities, associates and so forth, a void that cannot be described by any adjectives such as energetic, variegated or active. *Suddha-bhaktas* who take shelter of *ananya-avyabhicāriṇī bhakti* see *parabrahma*, *para-tattva*, the Supreme Absolute Reality, as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of *cid-vilāsa* (transcendental sports), the basis of all *aprākṛta* qualities, energies and mellows, and who is devoid of petty material qualities. Although some places in *śruti* describe this *tattva* as *nirviśeṣa*, these statements only deny the material features of Śrī Bhagavān, not the transcendental qualities. The *sāstras* themselves have illuminated this deep secret:

yā yā śrutir jalpati nirviśeṣam / sā sābhidhatte sa-viśeṣam eva
 vicāra-yoge sati hanta tāsām / prāyo baliyah sa-viśeṣam eva
 Hayaśīrṣa-pañcarātra

Those very same Vedic *mantras* that first describe that *tattva* as *nirviśeṣa* (without qualities) alternatively establish it as *saviśeṣa* (with qualities). Both *nirviśeṣa* and *saviśeṣa* are indeed eternal aspects of Bhagavān, but deep deliberation reveals *saviśeṣa-tattva* to be superior. This is because one experiences only *saviśeṣa-tattva* in the material world, whereas there is no experience of *nirviśeṣa-tattva*.

The only knowable object of the *nirviśeṣa-jñānīs* is indicated in the present *śloka* by the word *mat-param*, meaning ‘sheltered in Me’.

*brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham / amṛtasyāvayayasya ca
śāśvatasya ca dharmasya / sukhasyaikāntikasya ca*

For I am the shelter of *nirviśeṣa-brahma* and the sole refuge of everlasting immortality, eternal dharma and transcendental bliss in the form of *prema* related with *aikāntika-bhakti*. (*Gītā* 14.27)

This subject will be described in detail in the commentary on the above *śloka*. Sometimes in *śāstra*, the *jīva* is also called *brahma*, but the *jīva* can never be called *parabrahma*, because he is different from *brahma* in every respect. The *jīva* has atomic consciousness and *parabrahma* is the infinite conscious entity.

The *jīva* is sometimes also called *brahma* because of his partial qualitative similarity of being conscious. Some people suffer from the misconception that the *jīva* becomes *brahma* because they do not understand the deep import of the *Gītā*'s use of words describing the *jīva* such as *brahma-bhūta* (*Gītā* 18.54) and *brahma-bhūyāya kalpate* (*Gītā* 14.26). This subject will be described in detail in the *śloka*: *brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā* (*Gītā* 18.54).

Both the *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā* are *jñeyam* (knowable), yet one can only attain the understanding that *jīva-tattva* is dependent on *Paramātmā* by continuous cultivation of

devotional service unto Paramātmā. The *jīva* is without beginning and, by constitution, devoted to Bhagavān. He is only partly endowed with the qualities of *brahma* and he is beyond *sat* and *asat* (cause and effect).

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Thākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Arjuna, I have explained the *tattva* of *kṣetra-jñā* to you. I have explained the nature of *kṣetra* (the body), its transformations, and the process by which one can become free from these transformations. I have also explained that the *jīvātmā* and Paramātmā are the knowers of this *kṣetra*. Now, please listen as I explain that *tattva* which is knowable by *vijñāna* (realisation). The knowable, *brahma*, is without beginning, dependent on Me (*mat-param*) and beyond both cause and effect. After knowing this knowable principle, one tastes the nectar of My *bhakti*.”

SLOKA 14

**सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत् सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम्।
सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति॥१४॥**

*sarvataḥ pāṇi-pādaṁ tat / sarvato’kṣi-śiro-mukham
sarvataḥ śrutimal loke / sarvam āvṛtya tiṣṭhati*

tat—His (*brahma*'s); *pāṇi*—hands; (and) *pādaṁ*—feet; *sarvataḥ*—are on all sides; *akṣi*—His eyes; *śirah*—heads; (and) *mukham*—faces; *sarvataḥ*—are on all sides; *śrutimat*—that person listens; *sarvataḥ*—on all sides; *tiṣṭhati*—He resides; *loke*—in the world; *āvṛtya*—covering; *sarvam*—everything.

His hands and feet are everywhere. His eyes, heads and faces permeate all the directions and He hears everything. Situated thus, *brahma* pervades the entire universe.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Will it not contradict the statements of śruti such as, *sarvam khalv idam brahma*, “All this is *brahma*,” (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 3.14.1) and *brahmaivedam sarvam*, “Everything is *brahma*,” to say that *brahma* is distinct from both cause and effect? Anticipating such a question, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining that, although by nature *brahma* is beyond both cause and effect, *brahma* is both the cause and the effect because the energy and the energetic are non-different. Therefore, He is saying that His hands and feet, etc., are everywhere. This means that *brahma* has unlimited hands and feet in the form of the hands and feet of every visible entity, extending from Lord Brahmā down to a minute ant. Similarly, His eyes, heads, mouths and ears are also everywhere.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the previous *śloka*, *brahma* was described as being beyond *sat* and *asat* (cause and effect). Now, the *Vedānta-sūtra*, *śakti-śaktimāt abhedah*, “The energy and the energetic are non-different,” can be quoted in response to one who questions the validity of such śruti statements as, *sarvam khalv idam brahma* and *brahmaivedam sarvam*. According to this *sūtra*, although the *svarūpa* of Śrī Bhagavān is beyond both cause and effect, the workings of *śakti* are indeed the work of *śaktimān* because *śakti* (energy) and *śaktimān* (the energetic) are non-different. One can thus, understand that all effects such as this visible world are the *svarūpa* of Bhagavān (non-different from Him), being transformations of *śakti*. The present *śloka* is being spoken to make this point clear. *Brahma* alone exists, pervading everything through the medium of the hands, feet etc., of all *jīvas* who are subject to Him and situated within Him. Since He is all-pervading He has unlimited hands, eyes, feet and ears. However, the *jīvātmā*

is neither all-pervading, nor can he have unlimited hands, heads, feet, etc. Paramātmā is omnipotent, but the *jīva* is not.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Just as the sun’s rays illuminate due to their dependence on the sun, in the same way, *brahma-tattva* has attained its infinite and all-pervading aspect by depending upon My potency. The existence of *brahma*, who is the foundation for unlimited *jīvas* beginning from Brahmā down to the ant, collectively encompasses unlimited hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouths, ears, etc., and is visible everywhere as His cosmic manifestation.”

ŚLOKA 15

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम्।
असक्तं सर्वभूच्चैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तु च॥१५॥

*sarvendriya-guṇābhāsam / sarvendriya-vivarjitaṁ
asaktam sarva-bhṛt caiva / nirguṇam guṇa-bhoktṛ ca*

ābhāsam—He is the source; *sarva-indriya*—of all senses; (and) *guṇa*—their functions; (yet) *sarva-indriya-vivarjitaṁ*—He is devoid of mundane senses; *asaktam*—He is detached; *ca*—yet; *eva*—indeed; *sarva-bhṛt*—He is the maintainer of all beings; *nirguṇam*—He is without (material) qualities; *ca*—yet; *guṇa-bhoktṛ*—He is the enjoyer of divine qualities.

That knowable *parabrahma* is the source of all senses and their functions, yet He is devoid of mundane senses. Although detached, He is the maintainer of all living beings, and although *nirguṇa*, He is the enjoyer of six transcendental qualities.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Moreover, He manifests all the sense objects and the senses. Śruti says: *tac cakṣuṣāś cakṣuḥ*, “He is the eye of the eye,”

(*Kena Upaniṣad* 1.2) and *sarvendriyair guṇaiḥ*, “He manifests the functions of the senses, such as sound.” Yet He is *sarvendriya-vivarjitam*, which means that He has no material senses because He has transcendental senses. Śruti also says: *apāṇi-pādo javano grahitā*. “Although He does not have material senses, such as hands and feet, He accepts, moves and sees” (*Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 3.19).

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.8) also states: *parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate svābhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca*. “It is heard that *brahma* has various types of transcendental energies (*parā śakti*). The *śaktis*: *jñāna* (knowledge), *bala* (strength) and *kriya* (action), are naturally inherent in Him. That famous form of His as described in the śruti is the source of all energy.”

He is devoid of attachment to the mundane plane and He maintains everyone in His expansion as Śrī Viṣṇu. He is *nirguṇa*, that is, He has a transcendental form which is free from the *guṇas* (such as *sattva*), and He is *guṇa-bhokṭṛ*, beyond the *guṇas*. He is addressed as *bhaga* because He is the enjoyer of six types of transcendental opulences.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

That *brahma* is the source of the functions of one’s senses as well as the sense objects. It is also seen in śruti: *tac cakṣuṣāś cakṣuh*. “He is the eye of the eye” (*Kena Upaniṣad* 1.2). Even though He is devoid of material senses, He has transcendental senses. Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (3.9) also states:

*apāṇi-pādo javano grahitā
paśyaty acakṣuh sa śṛṇoty akarṇah*

Although Bhagavān does not have material hands, feet, etc., He accepts and walks. Even without material eyes and ears, He sees and listens. In other words, He has transcendental hands, feet, eyes, ears, etc.

Therefore, *brahma* is not *nirviśeṣa*, but *saviśeṣa*. He is devoid of material qualities, yet He is endowed with six types of transcendental opulences and He is the enjoyer of them.

ŚLOKA 16

बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च।
सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत्॥१६॥

bahir antaś ca bhūtānām / acaram caram eva ca
sūkṣmatvāt tad avijñeyam / dūra-stham cāntike ca tat

(He is) *bahir*—outside; *ca*—and; *antah*—inside; *bhūtānām*—of all beings; *acaram*—non-moving; *ca eva*—and indeed; *caram*—moving; *sūkṣmatvāt*—because He is very subtle; *tat*—He; *avijñeyam*—is incomprehensible (by the gross senses); *tat*—He; *dūra-stham*—is situated far away; *ca*—and; *antike*—very near.

That Absolute Entity (*parabrahma-tattva*) dwells within and without all beings, and because of Him this world of moving and non-moving beings exists. He is very difficult to comprehend, being very subtle. He is simultaneously far away and ever-present.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

He is situated everywhere, both inside and outside all beings and elements of His creation, just as the sky is situated inside and outside the body. He is everything, all beings, both moving and non-moving, because He is the cause of the effect (the creation). Yet He is not the object of direct perception because His form and other attributes are different from material forms and qualities. Therefore, He is millions of miles away for ignorant people, but for those who are enlightened in transcendental knowledge He, as *Antaryāmī*, is more near to them than a person living in the same house, being situated in their bodies. He is farther away than the farthest and

nearer than the nearest. He is visible in the cave of the heart for those who can see. As it is said in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.1.7): *dūrāt sudūre tad ihāntike ca paśyātṣu ihaivam nihitam guhāyām*. “In this world, He is much farther away than the farthest thing, and for those who are observant, He is also seated secretly, very near in the midst of all.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

All moving and non-moving beings are born from Parameśvara, that supreme *tattva*. He is situated within the heart of all beings as *Antaryāmī*, and He exists outside in His all-pervading aspect as Parameśvara. Because this entire moving and non-moving world is an effect of His energy, He is therefore everything. Although He is described in *śruti* as, *sarvam khalv idam brahma*, “All this is *brahma*,” He has a personal form different from all others. Only He is equal to Himself. He is *asamorddhva*, meaning there is nobody who is equal to Him, what to speak of greater than Him. However, not everyone can know Him because He is very subtle. Only His *ananya-bhaktas* can know Him by the influence of *ananya-bhakti*. Therefore, He is very far away as well as very near. He is near to His *ananya-bhaktas*, and very far away from non-devotees.

tad ejati tan naijati / tad dūre tad v antike
 tad antar asya sarvasya / tad u sarvasyāsyā bāhyataḥ
 Īśopaniṣad 5

The Supreme Lord walks, but does not walk, is far away but very near, and He is within everything, yet outside everything.

ŚLOKA 17

अविभक्तज्य भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम्।
 भूतभर्तुं च तज्जेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च॥१७॥

*avibhaktañ ca bhūteṣu / vibhaktam iva ca sthitam
bhūta-bhartṛ ca taj jñeyam / grasiṣṇu prabhaviṣṇu ca*

ca—although; *avibhaktam*—He is undivided; *ca*—yet; *sthitam*—He is situated; *iva*—as if; *vibhaktam*—divided; *bhūteṣu*—within all beings; *tat*—He; *jñeyam*—should be known; *bhūta-bhartṛ*—as the sustainer of all beings; *ca*—as well as; *grasiṣṇu*—the annihilator; *ca*—and; *prabhaviṣṇu*—creator.

Although undivided, He is situated within every being as if divided. Know Him to be the sustainer, annihilator and the creator of all beings.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Situated as the cause in the moving and non-moving living entities, He is undivided or non-different, while as the effect, He is divided or different. Only He, as Śrī Nārāyaṇa, is the sustainer of all beings during the period of maintenance. As Grasiṣṇu, He is the destroyer during the time of annihilation, and at the dawn of creation He is Prabhaviṣṇu, the creator of various effects and forms.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Although He appears differently in all living beings, that *parama tattva* is situated in one undivided form. This is also stated in śruti: *ekah santam bahudhā dṛśyamānam*. “He is seen in various forms, although He is one.” Smṛti also says: *eka eva paro viṣṇuh sarvatrāpi na saṁśayah*. “Only one Paramātmā, Viṣṇu, exists everywhere. There is no doubt about this.” Just as the same sun appears differently to people in different places, He appears in various forms by His inconceivable potency, even though He is one. Only He exists as the individual Antaryāmī within the hearts of all *jīvas*, while externally He is all-pervading, the collective *puruṣa*, Parameśvara. He is also the sustainer and the annihilator of

all that exists. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (3.1) says: *yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena jātāni jīvanti yat prayanty abhisamviśanti tad vijijñāsasva tad brahma.* “You should understand *brahma* as He from whom all living beings are born, by whose help they live and progress throughout life, and in whom they again enter.”

ŚLOKA 18

**ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते।
ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य धिष्ठितम्॥१८॥**

*jyotiṣām api taj jyotis / tamasaḥ param ucyate
jñānam jñeyam jñāna-gamyam / hṛdi sarvasya dhiṣṭhitam*

ucyate—it is said; *tat*—He (is); *api*—also; *jyotih*—the illumination; *jyotiṣām*—of luminaries; *param*—transcendental; *tamasaḥ*—to ignorance; *jñānam*—knowledge; *jñeyam*—worthy of being known; *jñāna-gamyam*—accessible through knowledge; (and) *dhiṣṭhitam*—situated; *hṛdi*—in the heart; *sarvasya*—of all beings.

He is the source of light in all luminaries. He is transcendental to ignorance. He is true knowledge (*jñāna*), the true object of knowledge (*jñeya*), and He can be known through *jñāna* (*jñāna-gamya*). He dwells within the heart of all beings.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

He is even the light that emanates from luminaries such as the moon and sun. This is proven in *śruti*: *sūryas tapati tejasendrah.* “By His radiance, the sun becomes luminous and distributes heat.” The sun, moon, stars, etc., do not appear beautifully radiant before Him, what to speak of fire. Appearing effulgent, they all acquire their glow from His. It is

by His effulgence only that they acquire their own unique qualities of illumination. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (2.2.15) states:

na tatra sūryo bhāti na candra-tārakam
nemā vidyuto bhānti kuto 'yam agnih
tam eva bhāntam anu bhāti sarvam
tasya bhāṣā sarvam idam vibhāti

The sun, moon, stars or fire cannot illuminate lightning what to speak of that self-effulgent *parabrahma*. However, it is by that self-effulgent *brahma* alone that all luminous objects such as the sun give light. In fact, the whole universe exists only because of His existence.

Therefore, He is beyond darkness. It can never touch Him. Śruti also says, "His complexion is like the colour of the sun and is beyond darkness." His full manifestation in the faculty of pure intelligence is called *jñāna*. He Himself has become modified as form, etc., and is *jñeya* (the knowable) and *jñāna-gamyam*, accessible through knowledge. In other words, He is attainable by the previously described means of *jñāna-sādhana*, such as humility. He alone is situated as Paramātmā in the hearts of all beings.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Parameśvara, the complete *kṣetra-jña*, is the original illuminator of all luminaries such as the sun, moon and fire.

na tatra sūryo bhāti na candra-tārakam
nemā vidyuto bhānti kuto 'yam agnih
Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.2.15

The sun, moon, stars or fire cannot illuminate lightning, what to speak of that self-effulgent *parabrahma*.

This is also confirmed in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.25.42):

mad-bhayād vāti vāto 'yam / sūryas tapati mad-bhayāt
varṣatīndro dahaty agnir / mr̄tyuś carati mad-bhayāt

The wind blows and the sun shines out of fear of Me.

Furthermore, *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (2.3.3) states:

bhayād asyāgnistapati bhayāt tapati sūryah.

Out of fear of *parabrahma*, fire burns and the sun heats.

That *para-tattva* is *tamasah param* (beyond darkness) and supremely pure, being transcendental to material nature. Śruti also says: *āditya-varṇam tamasah parastāt*. “He is beyond *prakṛti* and has a golden effulgence (*āditya*).” He is knowledge (*jñāna*), the knowable (*jñeya*) and the knower (*jñātā*).

Jñāna-svarūpa: Śruti says He is *vijñāna ānanda-ghanam brahma*. “The specific attributes of *brahma* are that He is *jñāna-svarūpa*, intrinsically qualified as knowledge and *ghanībhūta ānanda-svarūpa*, the concentrated embodiment of bliss.”

Jñeya-svarūpa: He is *jñeya-svarūpa*, the very form of the knowable, therefore, He is the shelter of those who desire liberation.

*tarṁ ha devam ātma-buddhi-prakāśanṁ
mumukṣur vai śaraṇam aham prapadye*

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.18

Being desirous of liberation, I surrender unto the Supreme Lord who illuminates the *ātmā*’s intelligence.

According to this śruti statement, He is *jñāna-gamyā*, approachable by knowledge.

Jñātā: He is also *jñātā* (the knower) because He is situated in everyone’s heart as the witness, the controller and *Antaryāmī*. In this regard, one should refer to the śruti-ślokas of Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.6-7): *dvāsuparṇā, tam eva viditvā* and *antah-praviṣṭah sāstā*. “The *ātmā* and *Paramātmā* within the body are compared to two birds who are seated in the same tree.”

ŚLOKA 19

इति क्षेत्रं तथा ज्ञानं ज्ञेयञ्चोक्तं समाप्तः।
 मद्भक्तं एतद्विज्ञाय मद्भावायोपपद्यते॥१९॥

*iti kṣetram tathā jñānam / jñeyam coktaṁ samāptaḥ
 mad-bhakta etad vijñāya / mad-bhāvāyopapadyate*

iti—thus; *kṣetram*—the field; *jñānam*—knowledge; *ca tathā*—and also; *jñeyam*—the object of knowledge; *uktam*—have been spoken of; *samāptaḥ*—in summary; *vijñāya*—having fully comprehended; *etat*—this; *mat-bhaktaḥ*—My bhakta; *upapadyate*—attains; *mad-bhāvāya*—to My nature.

Thus the field, knowledge and the knowable have been described by Me in brief. By understanding these, My *bhakta* becomes qualified to attain My *prema-bhakti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here, in the *śloka* beginning with the word *iti*, Śrī Bhagavān is concluding His statements about knowledge of *kṣetra*, etc., with an explanation about who is qualified for this knowledge and its result. In this chapter, the word *kṣetra* has been explained from the *śloka*: *mahā-bhūtāny ahaṅkāro* (*Gītā* 13.6), to *adhyātma* in *Gītā* 13.12. *Jñāna* has also been described from *Gītā* 13.8, up to *adhyātma* in *Gītā* 13.12. *Jñeyah* and *jñānagamyam* have been described from the *śloka* beginning with *jneyam* in *Gītā* 13.13, up to the *śloka* beginning with *jyotiṣām* in *Gītā* 13.18. That very same Absolute Reality is known as *brahma*, *Paramātmā* and *Bhagavān*. This has been briefly described.

Mad-bhāvāya means he attains *sāyujya-mukti*. The word *mad-bhakta* refers to a *jñānī* who is endowed with *bhakti*. Or *mad-bhakta* means “My unalloyed servant (*aikāntika-*

dāsa), who knows ‘My Prabhu has so much *aiśvarya*,’ becomes qualified to attain My *prema*.” In other words, he becomes qualified to perform *prema-bhakti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān clearly states that *karmīs*, *jñānīs*, *yogīs*, *tapasvīs* and *nirviśeṣa-māyāvādīs* cannot understand the real essence (*tattva*) of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Only *bhaktas* of Bhagavān can understand it. This is the deep meaning of the word *mad-bhakta*. One should first become a *bhakta* to understand the *tattva* of *jñeya* (the knowable), *jñātā* (the knower) and *jñāna* (knowledge), as described in the *Gītā*. For this reason, one must practise *bhakti* (*anuśīlana*) by taking shelter of the lotus feet of a *sad-guru*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Arjuna, I have briefly described these three *tattvas*: *kṣetra*, *jñāna* and *jñeya*. *Vijñāna* is the *jñāna* of all three *tattvas* combined. *Bhaktas* who achieve this *jñāna* attain My unalloyed *prema-bhakti*. Those non-devotees who merely accept the shelter of useless monistic *saṃpradāyas* become bereft of real knowledge. *Jñāna* is nothing but the sitting place of Bhakti-devī. It is merely *sattva-śuddhi*, purification of the *jīvātmā*’s existence which is sheltered by *bhakti*.” This topic will be further clarified in Chapter Fifteen, wherein *puruṣottama-tattva* is described.

ŚLOKA 20

प्रकृतिं पुरुषञ्चैव विद्ध्यनादी उभावपि।
विकारांश्च गुणांश्चैव विद्धि प्रकृतिसम्भवान्॥२०॥

prakṛtiṁ puruṣañ caiva / viddhyanādī ubhāv api
vikārāṁś ca guṇāṁś caiva / viddhi prakṛti-sambhavān

viddhi—you should understand; *eva*—clearly; (that) *ubhau*—both; *prakṛtim*—material nature; *ca*—and; *puruṣam*—the living entity; (are) *anādī*—without beginning; *api*—also; *viddhi*—understand; *vikārān*—their transformations; *ca*—and; *guṇān*—the three qualities; *eva*—indeed; *prakṛti-sambhavān*—arise out of material nature.

Know both *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* (the *jīvā*) to be without beginning, and know their transformations and qualities to be born of *prakṛti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

After explaining Paramātmā, Śrī Bhagavān is now explaining the *jīvātmā* (the *puruṣa*), who is also *kṣetra-jñā*. “Why did the relationship between this *kṣetra-jñā* and *māyā* (*prakṛti*) occur, and when did it start?”

Expecting this question, Śrī Bhagavān answers with this śloka beginning with *prakṛti*. “*Prakṛti* (*māyā*, material nature) and *puruṣa* (the *jīva*) are both without beginning. That is, their cause has no beginning. Because they are the energy of Me, Īśvara, who am without beginning, they are also without beginning. Know it in this way.”

It is also said in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.4-5):

bhūmir āpo 'nalo vāyuḥ / khaṁ mano buddhir eva ca
 ahaṅkāra itīyam me / bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā
 apareyam itas tv anyām / prakṛtim viddhi me parām
 jīva-bhūtām mahā-bāho / yayedam dhāryate jagat

This material nature is divided into eight parts: earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and ego, but it is inferior to another nature of Mine. The *jīvas* are My superior energy. They accept this material world to enjoy the results of their actions (*karma*).

“According to this statement of Mine, because both *māyā* and the *jīva* are My energy, they are without beginning, and

therefore their relationship also is without beginning. But, although they are related to each other, they are in fact different." Śrī Bhagavān therefore says: *vikārāṁś ca*, "The body and the senses," and *guṇāṁś caiva*, "the transformations of *guṇas* such as happiness, distress, lamentation and illusion," are born from *prakṛti* (*prakṛti-sambhūtān*). The *jīva*, who is modified in the form of the *kṣetra*, is different from *prakṛti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

After Śrī Bhagavān explains both the *kṣetras*, the partial *kṣetra-jñā* (the *jīva*), the complete *kṣetra-jñā* (Parameśvara), *jñāna* and *jñeya*, He explains the transformations of *kṣetra* such as lust, anger, affection and fear, and how the relationship between the *kṣetra-jñā-jīva* and *māyā* has occurred. Both *prakṛti* (*māyā*) and the *jīva* are without beginning, being the energy of Parameśvara. This means that they are also eternal. Inert *prakṛti* is called *aparā*, and the *jīva* is called *parā prakṛti*.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta states in the teachings to Sanātana Gosvāmī:

jīvera 'svarūpa' haya—kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa'
kṛṣṇera 'taṭasthā-śakti' 'bhedābheda-prakāśa'
Madhya-lilā 20.108

sūryāṁśu-kiraṇa, yena agni-jvālā-caya
svābhāvika kṛṣṇera tīna-prakāra 'śakti' haya
Madhya-lilā 20.109

kṛṣṇera svābhāvika tīna-śakti-pariṇati
cicchakti, jīva-śakti, āra māyā-śakti
Madhya-lilā 20.111

kṛṣṇa bhuli' sei jīva anādi-bahirmukha
ataeva māyā tāre deya saṁsāra-duḥkha
Madhya-lilā 20.117

By his constitutional nature, the *jīva* is an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa's *taṭastha-śakti* (marginal potency) transforms into unlimited *jīvas*. Since *śakti* (energy) and *śaktimān* (the energetic) are non-different, atomic conscious *jīvas* which are transformations of *śakti*, are in some respects non-different from Kṛṣṇa. But they are also eternally different in various ways. Bhagavān is unlimitedly conscious, and the *jīva* is atomically conscious. Both are non-different from the perspective of consciousness, but Bhagavān is the complete conscious entity (*pūrṇa cid-vastu*) and the *jīva* is an atomic conscious entity (*aṇucid-vastu*). Bhagavān is the master of *māyā*, and the *jīva* is subject to *māyā*. Bhagavān is the cause of creation, sustenance and destruction, but the *jīva* is not. The example is given that just as unlimited atoms are visible in the rays coming from the sun, the rays of Kṛṣṇa's energy produce unlimited atoms in the form of the *jīvas*. Similarly, just as unlimited minute sparks come out of a fire, so unlimited atomic conscious *jīvas* are emanating from Bhagavān.

These are partial examples to explain the relationship between *sac-cid-ānanda* Bhagavān and the atomic conscious *jīva*. This means that their purpose is to make this reality understood by the principle of *śākhā-candra-nyāya*, showing the moon by first pointing towards the branch of a tree over which the moon is visible. In this material world, no example can fully describe *parabrahma*, but these examples give a partial understanding.

Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate limit of *para-tattva*. His inherent *parā śakti* (transcendental potency) is also known as *antaraṅga-śakti*, or *cit-śakti*. This *cit-śakti* is Kṛṣṇa's *svabhāvīkī* (naturally inherent) *svarūpa-śakti* and the actions of that *śakti*, manifest in three ways. When it manifests the conscious creation (*cit-jagat*), it is called *cit-śakti* (spiritual creative potency). When it manifests unlimited *jīvas*, it is called *jīva-śakti* and when it manifests the material universe, it is called

māyā-śakti. By the will of Bhagavān, the *jīvas* manifest from the *jīva-śakti* (marginal potency); thus, their constitutional nature is to be eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa. However, they can come under the influence of māyā because they are atomic by nature. The *jīvas* situated in this illusory world have misused their free will. Thus, they have forgotten their own *svarūpa* and Kṛṣṇa's *svarūpa*, due to their association with māyā since time immemorial. Having become trapped in the cycle of birth and death, they are suffering the various types of three-fold miseries. When the *jīvas* who have become bound in this material world attain *sādhu-saṅga* by some great fortune, they can realise their own constitutional nature. Following the process of *bhakti*, they engage in the service of Bhagavān, by which they become situated in their own *svarūpa*. This conclusion is confirmed in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.37):

bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniiveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo 'smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet tam
bhaktyaikayeśāṁ guru-devatātmā

The *jīva* is the eternal servant of Bhagavān, but by turning his face away from Bhagavān, he has forgotten his own *svarūpa*. Therefore, his eternal *svarūpa* (occupation), service to Kṛṣṇa, has become covered. By associating with māyā, he identifies himself with the body and, subsequently, always fears for the material body, house, etc. He undergoes various types of miseries, being bewildered by Kṛṣṇa's māyā. By some good fortune an intelligent person who takes shelter of *ananya-bhakti* and performs *bhajana* to Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of a *sad-guru* is able to cross over māyā.

Furthermore it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.7.9):

seyāṁ bhagavato māyā / yan nayena virudhyate
īśvarasya vimuktasya / kārpaṇyam uta bandhanam

Some conditioned souls maintain that Śrī Bhagavān is overcome by illusion and at the same time they proclaim Him to be unconditioned. This opposes all logic.

Bhagavān's *yogamāyā* is a special type of *śakti* that can make the possible impossible, and the impossible possible. This *śakti* of Bhagavān makes it possible for the *jīva* to attain liberation from the bondage of the material world, once he has attained the mercy of the ever-liberated (*vimukta*) Īśvara. It also makes the *jīva*'s bondage to this world possible. This fact cannot be understood merely on the strength of logic. Nor can the influence of Bhagavān's *acintya-śakti* be understood merely by argument. This *acintya-śakti* of Bhagavān makes the *jīva* become deluded by *māyā*, and he cannot realise Bhagavān's mercy.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "I am explaining the result of knowledge of *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jña*. Three *tattvas* manifest in the existence of the *jīva* bound by matter: *prakṛti*, *puruṣa* and *Paramātmā*. The *kṣetra* is known as *prakṛti*, the *jīva* as *puruṣa*, and My all-pervading manifestation in both of them as *Paramātmā*. *Prakṛti* and *puruṣa* are both without beginning. They exist even before cosmic time (*jaḍīya-kāla*). In material time, neither of them take birth. Rather, they have become manifest in spiritual time (*cinmaya-kāla*) by My *śakti* and they co-exist in My supreme existence. *Jāda-prakṛti* (material nature) merges into Me and again becomes manifest during creation under the cover of mundane time (*jaḍīya-kāla*). The *jīva* is a *tattva* who emanates from My eternal *taṭastha-śakti*. He has been enveloped by My *jāda-prakṛti*, material potency, because he has become averse to Me. In fact, the *jīva* is pure, conscious *tattva*, but because his quality is marginal, he has acquired a usefulness for *jāda-prakṛti*. This took place by the arrangement of My transcendental energy. That is, he tends to become affected

by material nature. How the conscious *jīva* became entangled in inert matter cannot be ascertained by human (conditioned) logic and knowledge because My *acintya-śakti* is not under the influence of your limited human intellect. It is important for you to know this much only: all of the perverted transformations and material modes of the *baddha-jīva* are born from material nature and are not a part of his *sva-dharma* (eternal constitution)."

ŚLOKA 21

कार्यकारणतृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते।
पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते॥२१॥

*kārya-kāraṇa-karttṛtve / hetuḥ prakṛtir ucyate
puruṣaḥ sukha-duḥkhānām / bhoktṛtve hetur ucyate*

prakṛtiḥ—material nature; *ucyate*—is said to be; *hetuḥ*—the cause; *karttṛtve*—in the workings; (of) *kāraṇa*—cause; *ca*—and; *kārya*—effect; (and) *puruṣaḥ*—the *jīva*; *ucyate*—is said to be; *hetuḥ*—the cause; *bhoktṛtve*—in the experiencing; *sukha-duḥkhānām*—of happiness and distress.

Prakṛti is said to be the source of the workings of material cause and effect, and *puruṣa* (the *baddha-jīva*) is said to be the cause of the experience of material happiness, distress, and so forth.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now Śrī Bhagavān is revealing the *jīva*'s relationship with *māyā*. *Kārya* (effect) refers to the body, *kāraṇa* (cause) refers to the senses, which are the means of happiness and misery, and *karttṛtva* (agent), refers to the presiding deities of the senses, the *devatās*. Due to ignorance, the *puruṣa* (*baddha-jīva*) imposes upon himself the feeling that he is the doer or agent, but in fact, *prakṛti* is the cause of such a

feeling in him. It is *prakṛti* alone which transforms into effect in contact with the *puruṣa*. The tendency of *māyā* (*avidyā* or ignorance) is to give illusory knowledge to the *jīva*. However, only the *puruṣa* (*jīva*) is the cause of the experiences of happiness and misery produced by *māyā*. Although *kārya* (effect), *kāraṇa* (cause), *kartṛtva* (agency), and *bhokṛtva* (enjoyment) are the characteristics of *prakṛti* (material nature), *prakṛti* predominates over the first three because she herself is predominated by inertness (*jada*). And due to his conscious nature, *puruṣa* (the *jīva*) predominates over *bhokṛtva* (the experience of happiness and distress). Something (an entity or activity) is designated or named according to its predominant aspects. According to this logic, *prakṛti* is said to be the cause of *kārya* (the body), *kāraṇa* (the senses) and *kartṛtva* (the devatās). *Puruṣa* (the *jīva*) is said to be the cause of *bhokṛtva*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Prakṛti is the source of mundane *kārya* (effect, the body), *kāraṇa* (cause, the senses), and *kartṛtva* (working agency, the presiding deities of the senses), while the *baddha-jīva* is said to be the cause of *bhokṛtva*, the experience of mundane happiness and misery. Here one should clearly understand that the *śuddha-jīva* (the *jīva* in his pure state) is not the enjoyer of material happiness, nor does he experience distress. However, because the *jīva* is born from the *taṭastha-śakti*, when he identifies himself with the body, which is generated by contact with *māyā*, an ego develops whereby he experiences material happiness and distress.

In this regard, Lord Kapiladeva says in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.26.8):

*kārya-kāraṇa-kartṛtve / kāraṇam prakṛtim viduh
bhokṛtve sukha-duḥkhānām / puruṣam prakṛteḥ param*

O Mother! Those who are *tattva-vit* accept *prakṛti* (material nature) to be the cause of *kārya* (the body), *kāraṇa* (the senses) and *karttṛtva* (the presiding deities of the senses, the *devatās*).

Through his pure ego, the *kūṭa-stha ātmā* (the soul in his constitutional position) is related to Paramātmā as His eternal servant, and therefore Paramātmā dominates the *jīva*'s existence. Thus, the *kūṭa-stha ātmā* is above all material designations and unchanged by the effects of *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* predominates because the *baddha-jīva* strongly identifies himself with the body, which is born from the transformation of *prakṛti*. Therefore, *pāṇḍitas* say that *prakṛti* is the cause of *karttṛtva* (the agency, the presiding deities of the senses), but in terms of experiencing the results of *karma* such as happiness and distress, the *puruṣa* (*taṭastha-śakti*), who is different from *prakṛti*, is said to be the cause. Although both *karttṛtva* and *bhoktṛtva* are under one ego (of the *baddha-jīva*), *prakṛti* is the dominant factor in them because the body and so forth are the effect of inert matter. The experience of happiness and distress is not possible without consciousness; therefore, *puruṣa* (the *baddha-jīva*), who is under the control of *prakṛti*, is the dominant factor here. However, it should also be understood that the *karttṛtva* (agency) of both *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* (the *jīva*) is under the control of the *karttṛtva* of Īśvara. Both *māyā* as well as the *jīva* are under Īśvara's control.

ŚLOKA 22

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्के प्रकृतिजान् गुणान्।
कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु॥२२॥

*puruṣah prakṛti-stho hi / bhuṅkte prakṛti-jān guṇān
kāraṇam guṇa-saṅgo'sya / sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*

hi—indeed; *puruṣah*—the *jīva*; *prakṛti-shah*—situated in material nature; *bhūnkte*—enjoys; *guṇān*—the sense objects; *prakṛti-jān*—born of material nature; (in) *guṇa-saṅgah*—association with the modes; (is) *kāraṇam*—the cause; *asya*—of his; *janmasu*—entering births; *sat-asat-yoni*—in higher or lower species.

Becoming situated in the *prakṛti*, the *puruṣa* (*jīva*) enjoys the sense objects born of *prakṛti*. The cause of his birth in higher and lower species is due to his association with the modes of nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

The *jīva* considers the qualities of *prakṛti* such as *kartṛtva* (the presiding deities of the senses) and *bhoktṛtva* (the experience of happiness and distress) to be his own because of false knowledge born of ignorance since time immemorial. This is the reason for his bondage to the material world. The *jīva* is situated within the body, which is the effect of *prakṛti*, and he is fully absorbed in identifying the body as his own self. Due to his false ego, he considers aspects of the mind such as lamentation, delusion and misery, which are *prakṛti-jān* (generated by the modes of *prakṛti*), to be his own and suffers because of them. This is all because of *guṇa-saṅga*, association with the modes of material nature. This means that his identification with the body, which is made of the *guṇas*, is an assumption based on ignorance because the *jīva* is in fact, free from this association. Where does he enjoy? Expecting this question, Śrī Bhagavān says, *satiṣu* (*sat-asad*). “In the species who have higher consciousness such as *sādhus* and *devatās*” and, *asatiṣu*, “in the species whose consciousness is lower such as animals and birds.” He takes birth and experiences happiness and distress according to his good and bad *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Having turned their faces away from Kṛṣṇa, the *jīvas*, who are of a marginal nature, consider the body to be the self. They accept the ego of being the doers and the enjoyers of inert (*jaḍa*) matter. Thus, they become bound to the material world and take birth in various species of life, thereby experiencing happiness and distress. Such *jīvas*, who are deluded by *māyā*, have fallen into the cycle of birth and death. Consequently, they suffer worldly miseries, sometimes taking birth in Svarga, sometimes in Naraka (hell), sometimes as kings and sometimes as subjects, sometimes as *brāhmaṇas* and sometimes as *śūdras*, and sometimes as worms, *asuras*, servants or masters. Sometimes they are happy, and sometimes distressed. The consciousness of the *jīva* is atomic and although he is a servant of Bhagavān, he becomes overpowered by *māyā* who is close by. This is because he harbours sensual material desires, which are the result of his aversion to Kṛṣṇa. Just as the intelligence of a person who is possessed by a hobgoblin or ghost becomes covered, similarly, the intelligence of the *jīvas* overpowered by *māyā* becomes covered. By the mercy of Bhagavān and His *bhaktas*, he attains *sat-saṅga* and becomes free from *māyā*. Becoming situated in his own *svarūpa*, he enjoys the bliss of *sevā* to Śrī Bhagavān.

kṛṣṇa bhūli' sei jīva anādi-bahirmukha
ataeva māyā tāre deya saṁsāra-duḥkha
kabhu svarge uṭhāya kabhu narake ḍubāya
danḍya-jane rājā yena nadite cubāya

Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā (20.117-118)

Because he has forgotten Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *jīva* has been absorbed in his attempts to enjoy the material energy since time immemorial. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa's *māyā-śakti* awards the *jīva* the various sufferings of *saṁsāra*. Sometimes he is elevated to Svarga-

loka, and at other times he is thrown in Naraka-loka. This is just like a man who is punished by the king by being tied to a wooden plank and dunked in a river. Sometimes he is immersed till he nearly drowns, and sometimes he is released for a few moments of apparent happiness.

ŚLOKA 23

**उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः।
परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः॥२३॥**

*upadraṣṭānumantā ca / bharṭtā bhoktā maheśvaraḥ
paramātmēti cāpy ukto / dehe'smin puruṣah parah*

asmin—in this; dehe—body; uktaḥ—it is said; iti—that; (there is) paraḥ puruṣah—a superior transcendental enjoyer; paramātmā—the Supersoul; (He is) upadraṣṭā—the witness; ca—and; anumantā—permitter; bharṭtā—master; bhoktā—enjoyer; ca api—and also; mahā-īśvaraḥ—the Supreme Controller.

In this body, there exists a superior *puruṣa*, the transcen-dental enjoyer. He is Paramātmā: the witness, the permitter, the supporter, the maintainer, and also the Supreme Controller.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

After explaining the *jīvātmā*, Śrī Bhagavān is now explaining Paramātmā in this śloka beginning with *upadraṣṭā*. From the śloka, *anādi mat-param brahma* (Gītā 13.13) to, *hṛdi sarvasya viṣṭhitam* (Gītā 13.18), Paramātmā was explained in both a general and specific manner. One fact in particular should be understood: although Paramātmā remains close to the *jīvātmā*, He is still separate from him. To clarify this, it is being stated that Paramātmā is situated within this body. *Para* refers to another *puruṣa* (enjoyer) within this body. That *puruṣa* is Maheśvara (the Supreme Proprietor), or Paramātmā.

The very word ‘Paramātmā’ is evidence that He is superior to the *ātmā*. In terms of absolute reality, the word *param* refers to *svāṁśa* (a personal expansion of Kṛṣṇa). Just to emphasise this, it is said that He is situated separately from the *jīva*, yet is very close (*upa*) to him and He is the seer (witness). *Anumantā* (the permitter) means that while residing close to the *jīva*, He is *anugrāhaka*, kind and facilitating. It is said in *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (Uttara 97): *sākṣī cetāḥ kevalo nirguṇaś ca*. “*Puruṣa* is *sākṣī* (the witness), *cetāḥ* (conscious), *kevalā* (exclusive) and *nirguṇa* (beyond the modes).” Similarly, *bhartā* means supporter and *bhoktā* means protector.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Paramātmā, who is situated as the witness in this body, is different from the *jīva*. The *advaita-vādīs* (monists) consider the *jīvātmā* and Paramātmā to be one, but it is clear from this *śloka* that within each body, Paramātmā, who is the witness and permitter, is different from the *jīvātmā*. Because He is superior to the *jīvātmā*, He is called Paramātmā, or the superior *ātmā*. This Paramātmā is an *amṛta* of an *amṛta* (portion of a portion) of Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Without His permission, the *jīvātmā* can do nothing. There are unlimited *jīvātmās*, and Paramātmā is eternally existing within each of them as their friend and supreme well-wisher. Although He lives with the *jīva*, Paramātmā is always the master of both the *jīva* and *māyā*.

Bhagavān has bestowed an invaluable treasure upon the *jīva* in the form of independence. By properly utilizing this independence, he can very easily relish the nectar of *prema-mayī sevā* to Bhagavān in His eternal *dhāma*. But by misusing this independence, he becomes bound by *māyā* and, while suffering from the three-fold miseries, he is trapped in the cycle of birth and death. Therefore, how can a *jīva* who is overpowered by *māyā* ever be Bhagavān, the master of *māyā*?

Such a conception is illusory and opposed to the conclusions of *śāstra*.

Paramātmā is very clearly described in *śruti* as different from the *jīvātmā*: *nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.13). He is the supreme eternal among all eternals, that is, He is the topmost eternal being and among all conscious beings He is the bestower of consciousness, the original consciousness. Moreover, it is said in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (4.6) and the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.1.1):

dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhyā / samānam vṛkṣam pariṣasvajāte taylor anyah pippalam svādv atty / anaśnann anyo 'bhicākaśiti
Kṣīrodakaśayī-puruṣa and the *jīva* live together in this temporary material world (the body) just like two friends in a *pippala* tree. One, the *jīva*, is tasting the fruits of the tree according to his *karma*, and the other, Paramātmā, is the witness. He is not enjoying the fruits, but watching His friend.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.11.6) also states:

*suparṇāv etau sadṛśau sakhyau
 yadṛcchaya itau kṛta-niḍau ca vṛkṣe
 ekas tayoḥ khādati pippalānnam
 anyo niranno 'pi balena bhūyān*

Two birds in the form of the *jīva* and Īśvara have a relationship, being equal in quality, that is consciousness. They are living in the nest (heart) of the tree (the body) by the will of providence. One bird (the *jīva*) is enjoying the fruits (*karma*) of that tree (the body). The other bird, Īśvara, is not enjoying the fruits and is ever satisfied in eternal bliss, being happily situated by the strength of His *śaktis* such as *jñāna*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “The *jīva* is My constant companion. He becomes close to Me when he becomes situated purely in his marginal nature. This

marginal nature is his independence. The perfection of *jaivadharma*, the eternal occupation of the *jīva*, is to achieve pure love for Me by using his marginal (independent) nature. When the *jīva* misuses that independent nature, he enters the material field. Even then, I become his companion as *Paramātmā*. Therefore, I alone am the witness, the permitter, the supporter and protector, and *Maheśvara*, the Supreme Controller of all the *jīvas'* actions. Thus, by the name of *Paramātmā*, I am always present in the body as *paramapuruṣa*. I award the result of whatever *karma* is performed by the *jīva* in his conditioned state.”

ŚLOKA 24

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिज्ञं गुणैः सह।
सर्वथा वर्त्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते॥२४॥

*ya evam vetti puruṣam / prakṛtiñ ca guṇaiḥ saha
sarvathā varttamāno'pi / na sa bhūyo'bhibijāyate*

sah—one; *yah*—who; *vetti*—understands; *evam*—through this process; *puruṣam*—*paramātma-tattva* and *jīva-tattva*; *ca*—and; *prakṛtim*—material nature (*māyā*); *saha*—together; *guṇaiḥ*—with her three modes; *na*—never; *abhibijāyate*—takes his birth; *bhūyo*—again; *sarvathā varttamāno'pi*—regardless of his present situation.

One who thus understands *puruṣa-tattva*, *māyā* with her three modes, and *jīva-tattva* does not take birth again, regardless of his present situation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *ya* to explain the result of this *jñāna*. “Although overpowered by sleep and disturbance of mind, those who know *puruṣa*

(Paramātmā), *prakṛti* (the material energy) and *jīva-śakti* (understood by the word *ca*) do not take birth again."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *sādhaka* becomes qualified to achieve *mukti* when he knows *bhakti-tattva*, *jīva-tattva*, *paramātmā-tattva* and their mutual relationships. Then, by the mercy of a *sad-guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas, and by following the path of *śuddha-bhakti*, he gradually attains the stages of *śraddhā*, *niṣṭhā*, *ruci*, *āsakti*, *bhāva* and finally *bhagavat-prema*, entering the abode of Bhagavān. It is certain that he never fell from *bhagavat-dhāma* and never will. The imaginary conception that the *buddha-jīvas* were first engaged in the service of Bhagavān in His *dhāma* and somehow or other fell into the material world is completely against the conclusion of all *śāstra*. But if this theory is accepted for the sake of argument, the question arises as to the significance (glory) of *bhakti* and *prema* if one again falls into the material world, after performing rigorous *sadhana* to attain Śrī Bhagavān's *dhāma*. The examples of King Citraketu and Jaya and Vijaya are not appropriate in this regard because they are *bhagavat-parikaras* (eternal associates of Bhagavān). They descended into this material world by the will of Bhagavān for the welfare of the *jīvas* and for the nourishment of Śrī Bhagavān's *līlā*. It is a grievous offense to consider them to be ordinary conditioned souls. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains this in *Mādhurya-kādambinī*. The *jīva* who attains *bhagavat-dhāma* never becomes bound in this material world, and if he ever does come here, it is as an associate of Bhagavān and by His will. He is not subject to material conditions. *Gītā* (15:6) states:

na tad bhāsayate sūryo / na śasāṅko na pāvakah
yad gatvā na nivartante / tad dhāma paramam mama

Neither sun, moon nor fire can illuminate that supreme realm, attaining which surrendered persons do not return to this world. That abode of mine is illuminating and self-effulgent.

ŚLOKA 25

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना।
अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे॥२५॥

*dhyānenātmani paśyanti / kecid ātmānam ātmanā
anye sāṅkhyena yogena / karma-yogena cāpare*

kecit—some; *paśyanti*—see; *ātmānam*—the Supersoul; *ātmani*—within their heart; *ātmanā*—by use of the mind; *dhyānena*—in meditation; *anye*—others see Him; *sāṅkhyena yogena*—through *sāṅkhya*-yoga; *ca apare*—and others; *karma-yogena*—by *niṣkāma-karma*-yoga.

By meditating on the Supreme Person, the *bhaktas* see Him within their hearts. The *jñānīs* try to see Him by *sāṅkhya*-yoga, the *yogīs* by *aṣṭāṅga*-yoga, and others by the process of *niṣkāma-karma*-yoga.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the various means to attain *ātma-jñāna*, knowledge of the self, in this śloka beginning with the word *dhyānena* and in the next śloka. By *dhyāna*, meditation on Bhagavān, some *bhaktas* see Him within their hearts. *Gītā* (18.55) *bhaktyā mām abhijānāti*, will explain this. “But I am not visible to any other types of worshippers. The *jñānīs* endeavour to see Me by *sāṅkhya* (the analytical study of conscious and inert matter), the *yogīs* by *aṣṭāṅga*-yoga, and *karma-yogīs* try to see Me by *niṣkāma-karma*-yoga.” Here, *sāṅkhya*-yoga, *aṣṭāṅga*-yoga and *niṣkāma-karma*-yoga are not the direct causes of receiving *darśana* of Paramātmā. This is

because they are all *sāttvic* and Paramātmā is *guṇatīta*, beyond the modes. It is also said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.19.1) *jñānam ca mayi sannyaset*. “One should surrender that *jñāna* to Me.” Moreover, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam states (11.14.21) *bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyah*. “I am attained only by *aikāntika-bhakti*.” It is clear from the above statements of Bhagavān that He is attained only by *bhakti* which is devoid of *jñāna*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this *śloka*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa further explains how one can attain *viśuddha-ātma-jñāna* (pure knowledge of the self), which was described in the previous *śloka*. Although Śāstra mentions various processes such as *sāṅkhya-yoga*, *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* and *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, one can attain this *viśuddha-jñāna* in a simple and natural way only by *bhakti-yoga*. In the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Uddhava in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.21), Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself says: *bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyah*. “I can be attained only by *kevala-bhakti*.” Furthermore, He says in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.6-8):

yogās trayo mayā proktā / nṛṇām śreyo-vidhitsayā
jñānam karma ca bhaktiś ca / nopāyo 'nyo 'sti kutracit
 nirviṇṇānām *jñāna-yogo / nyāsinām iha karmasu*
teṣv anirviṇṇa-cittānām / karma-yogas tu kāminām
yadṛcchayā mat-kathādau / jāta-śraddhas tu yaḥ pumān
na nirviṇṇo nāti-sakto / bhakti-yogo 'sya siddhi-dah

For the welfare of human beings, I have described three types of *yoga*: *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga*. There is no other way to achieve Me. Those who are completely detached from the material world become eligible for *jñāna-yoga*, but those who are neither too detached from worldliness nor too attached to it, and who, by the will of providence, have faith in hearing about

My *lilās*, are qualified to engage in *bhakti*. By following the path of *bhakti*, they attain perfection very quickly.

“*Bhakti-yoga* is the best of these three types of *yoga*. In fact, I am only fully attained by *bhakti*. This is a very deep secret. *Na sādhayati mām yogo*, (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.14.20). ‘I am not controlled by *sāṅkhya* etc.’ In other words, I do not become pleased by the processes of *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga*, *japa*, *tapa*, *yajña*, self-study and so forth. I am conquered only by *bhakti*.”

This is also said in *Gītā* (6.47):

*yoginām api sarveśāṁ / mad-gatenāntar-ātmanā
śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām / sa me yuktatamo mataḥ*

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*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Arjuna, with respect to the topmost goal (*paramārtha*), the *baddha-jīvas* are divided into two divisions: *bahir-mukha* (those averse to spiritual life) and *antar-mukha* (those inclined to spiritual life). Atheists, agnostics (those who are attached to inert matter), skeptics and moralists are counted among the *paramārtha-bahir-mukha* (those averse to the supreme transcendental goal). An inquisitive and faithful person, a *karma-yogī* and a *bhakta* are *antar-mukha*. Bhaktas are superior because they take shelter of *cit* which is beyond *prakṛti*, and meditate on Paramātmā within the self (*ātmatattva*). The *sāṅkhya-yogīs* who search after Īśvara (the Controller) are the next best. After deliberating on *prakṛti*, which consists of twenty-four elements, they come to know that the twenty-fifth element, the *jīva*, is a pure conscious entity. They gradually engage in *bhakti-yoga* to the twenty-sixth

element, Bhagavān. The *karma-yogīs* are inferior to them. By the process of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, they attain the facility to deliberate on and worship Bhagavān.”

ŚLOKA 26

अन्ये त्वेवमजानन्तः श्रुत्वान्येभ्य उपासते।
तेऽपि चातितरन्त्येव मृत्युं श्रुतिपरायणाः॥२६॥

*anye tv evam ajānantaḥ / śrutvānyebhya upāsate
te'pi cātitarantyeva / mṛtyum śruti-parāyanāḥ*

tu—but; *anye*—others; *ajānantaḥ*—do not know; *evam*—thus (what was just taught); *upāsate*—who worship; *śrutvā*—after hearing; *anyebhyāḥ*—from other (*ācāryas*); *śruti-parāyanāḥ*—being devoted to hearing; *te*—they; *api ca*—also; *atitaranti*—transcend; *mṛtyum*—death; *eva*—this is certain.

Others, however, who do not know this *tattva*, begin worshipping the Supreme after hearing from various *ācāryas*. By such devotion to hearing, they too can gradually transcend this mortal world. This is certain.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *anye* means those who hear the *kathā* (topics) related to Bhagavān here and there at different places.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In this *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining a very important process. “There are some people who are not atheists, nor are they skeptical, or *māyāvādīs*, or philosophers. Although they are only ordinary people in society, they are quite faithful because they have good past life impressions (*samskāras*). When they hear *bhagavat-kathā* in *sat-saṅga* and receive

instructions from various preachers, they try to worship Me somehow or other. Later, when they have attained the association of śuddha-bhaktas, they receive the opportunity to hear pure *hari-kathā*, and by entering *bhakti-tattva*, they ultimately achieve Me."

No education about *ātma-jñāna* is given in current so-called cultured society, but *Bhagavad-Gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* explain that the process of hearing about *ātma-jñāna* is very powerful. Specifically, in recent times, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu placed great emphasis on hearing and chanting *hari-nāma*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. His prime instruction is that by the influence of hearing, chanting and remembering *śrī-hari-nāma* and *bhagavat-kathā*, one can very easily attain service to Bhagavān. Four-headed Brahmā, Śrī Nārada Gosvāmī, Śrī Vedavyāsa, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, King Parīkṣit and Prahlāda Mahārāja all attained direct *darśana* of Bhagavān by following this process.

Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura was one of the associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Although he was born in a Yavana family, he used to chant three *lākhs* (300,000) of Śrī Hari's names every day. All types of people, both rich and poor, had great regard for him. Seeing this, Rāmacandra Khan, the famous landlord of that area, became envious of him. To defame Haridāsa, he lured a beautiful young prostitute by promising her great wealth, and one moonlit night he sent her to Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Sitting in a solitary place on the bank of Bhagavatī Gaṅgā, Haridāsa Ṭhākura, while keeping count of his rounds, loudly and attentively chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa *māhā mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. The Tulasī plant stood on a nearby

platform. The prostitute approached him and expressed her mind by her various bodily postures, but this had no influence on Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Finally, she openly propositioned him. He replied, "I have taken a vow to chant ten million names of Hari. I will fulfil all your desires within a very short period, when I have completed this number." Hearing this assurance, the prostitute sat nearby for the entire night, waiting for him to complete his chanting. In the morning, she went back to her house out of fear of being seen by other people. The next night, she again came and sat near Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He again told her that he was just about to complete his chanting. That night passed like the previous one. When she arrived on the third night, Haridāsa Ṭhākura again started chanting loudly. *Aho!* The effect of hearing *hari-nāma* from the mouth of a *śuddha-bhakta* was so wonderful that it changed the heart of that prostitute. She fell at his feet crying and asked to be forgiven. Haridāsa Ṭhākura was very pleased and said, "I would have gone to another place the very first day you came, but I remained here only for your sake. That your heart has changed is a matter of great pleasure to me. This is the unfailing glory of hearing and chanting *hari-nāma*. Now you should fearlessly remain in this *āśrama* and continuously chant the name of Hari. You should render service to Tulasī devī and Bhagavatī Gāṅgā." She followed these instructions and her life changed completely. Even great *bhaktas* started coming to her *āśrama* to have *darśana* of a *parama-vaiṣṇavī*. Remaining humble, lowly and without possessions, she performed *bhajana* of Hari, and went to the abode of Bhagavān within a very short time. In this way, even an ordinary person can attain Bhagavān by hearing and chanting.

ŚLOKA 27

यावत्संजायते किञ्चित् सत्त्वं स्थावरजन्मम्।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात्तद्विद्धि भर्तर्षभ॑॥२७॥

*yāvat samjāyate kiñcit / sattvam sthāvara-jaṅgamam
kṣetra-kṣetrajña-samyogat / tad viddhi bharatarśabha*

bharata-ṛśabha—O best amongst the lineage of Bharata; *viddhi*—understand; *tat*—this; *yāvat kiñcit*—whatever; *sattvam*—beings (exist); (either) *jaṅgamam*—moving; (or) *sthāvara*—non-moving; *saṃjāyate*—are produced; *saṃyogat*—from the combination; *kṣetra*—of the field; (and) *kṣetra-jña*—the knower of the field.

O best of the Bharatas, know that whatever moving and non-moving beings are born, all are produced from the combination of *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jña*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

The same subject matter which was described earlier is being explained in detail until the end of this chapter. *Yāvat* means either low or high, and *sattvam* means living beings. All are born from the combination of *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jña*.

ŚLOKA 28

समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम्।
विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति॥२८॥

*samam sarveṣu bhūteṣu / tiṣṭhantam parameśvaram
vinaśyatsv avinaśyantam / yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati*

(he) *yaḥ*—who; *paśyati*—sees; *parama-iśvaram*—the Supreme Person; *tiṣṭhantam*—seated; *samam*—equally; *sarveṣu*—in all; *bhūteṣu*—beings; *avinaśyantam*—imperishable; *vinaśyatsu*—amongst the perishable; *saḥ*—he; (actually) *paśyati*—sees.

Only one who sees Parameśvara equally in all beings as the imperishable seated within the perishable actually sees.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

To explain how Paramātmā is situated in all perishable bodies, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *samam*. “Know that Paramātmā is dwelling within all perishable bodies. Those who see in this way are real *jñānīs*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Those who are *jñānīs* in the real sense simultaneously experience the body, the embodied soul (the *ātmā*) and the friend of the *ātmā*, Paramātmā, by the influence of the association of a *tattva-darśī* (self-realised) *mahātmā*. On the contrary, those who are bereft of such saintly association are truly ignorant. They can only see the perishable body and consider it to be their self. When the body is destroyed, they think that everything is lost. A *jñānī*, however, experiences the existence of the *ātmā* and Paramātmā even after the body is destroyed. When one body is destroyed, the *ātmā* enters another body along with the senses and subtle body. His friend, Paramātmā, also remains situated with the *jīvātmā* as the witness. Those who actually understand this are, indeed, *jñānīs*.

ŚLOKA 29

समं पश्यन् हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम्।
न हिनस्त्यात्मनात्मानं ततो याति परां गतिम्॥२९॥

*samam paśyan hi sarvatra / samavasthitam īśvaram
na hinasty ātmanātmaṇam / tato yāti parām gatim*

paśyan—observing; *iśvaram*—the Lord, *Īśvara*; *samavasthitam*—situated; *samam*—equally; *sarvatra*—everywhere; (he) *hi*—certainly; *na hinasti*—does not degrade; *ātmānam*—himself; *ātmanā*—through his mind; *tataḥ*—thus; *yāti*—he goes; *parām*—to the supreme; *gatim*—destination.

One who sees Parameśvara dwelling equally everywhere in all beings, does not degrade himself by his mind. Thus he attains the supreme destination.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Ātmanā means the mind which leads one to degradation. Ātmānam means the *jīva* and *na hinasti* means it does not lead to degradation. They do not degrade themselves through the degrading mind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *baddha-jīva* is bound by various modes and actions of material nature, and for this reason he is put into various situations. But although Parameśvara is situated in the hearts of different *jīvas*, He exists everywhere equally. Those who understand this finally achieve the supreme destination. On the contrary, those whose minds do not meditate on the opulences, qualities and glories of Bhagavān remain absorbed in sense gratification. Being the killer of their own *ātmā* (self), they fall down. This is also described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.17) wherein Kṛṣṇa says:

nṛ-deham ādyam su-labham su-durlabham
plavam su-kalpam guru-karṇadhāram
mayānukūlena nabhasvateritam
pumān bhavābdhim na taret sa ātma-hā

O Uddhava, this human body is the basis of the attainment of all auspicious results, and although it is very rare, it has been obtained easily. It is like a strong boat in which to cross the ocean

of material existence. Simply by accepting the shelter of the *guru*, who becomes the captain and navigator of this boat, and blown by the favourable winds of remembrance of Me, it is propelled towards its destination. After acquiring this human body, a person who does not endeavour to cross this ocean of material existence, even after getting so much facility, is certainly considered the killer of his own *ātmā*.

ŚLOKA 30

**प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः ।
यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्त्तरं स पश्यति ॥३०॥**

*prakṛtyaiva ca karmāṇi / kriyamāṇāni sarvaśah
yah paśyati tathātmaṇam / akarttāram sa paśyati*

sah—he; *yah*—who; *paśyati*—sees; *karmāṇi*—activities; *kriyamāṇāni*—performed; *ca* *sarvaśah*—in every way; *prakṛtyā*—by material nature; *tathā*—and; *ātmaṇam*—himself; *akarttāram*—a non-doer; *eva*—actually; *paśyati*—sees.

One who sees that all activites are only performed by *prakṛti* and that the *ātmā* is not the doer, actually sees.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Prakṛtyaiva means that *prakṛti*, transformed into the body and senses, performs all work. The vision of those *jīvas* who think that they are the doers, because they identify the self with the inert body, is not real. They are in ignorance. But one who sees that he is not the doer of action sees properly.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *baddha-jīva* is impelled by the actions and modes of *prakṛti* because of the false ego which makes him think that

he is the doer of material actions. But in the true sense, he is not the doer. Bhagavān has explained this earlier. Parameśvara is also not the doer although He is situated in the hearts of all beings as Antaryāmī, He who gives inspiration. What to speak of Parameśvara, even the *jīvātmā* in the pure state does not have the ego of being the doer of material actions which are performed by the material senses. Those who know this are really in knowledge. It is also said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.28.15):

śoka-harṣa-bhaya-krodha- / lobha-moha-spṛhādayah
ahaṅkārasya dṛṣyante / janma-mṛtyuś ca nātmanah

O Uddhava, the material ego is the only cause of lamentation, happiness, fear, anger, greed, delusion, desire, birth and death. The pure *ātmā* has no connection with them.

It is also seen in the *Tantra-bhāgavata*: *ahaṅkārāt tu saṁsāro bhavet jīvasya na svataḥ*. “It is only due to material ego that this material existence of birth and death occurs for the *jīvas*. The pure *jīvas* have no relationship with such material ego.” However, in the *jīva*’s pure state he has the ego of being *kṛṣṇa-dāsa*, with a human-like spiritual body, name, form, qualities and activities which are all transcendental. He is not formless or without qualities.

ŚLOKA 31

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति।
तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा॥३१॥

yadā bhūta-pṛthag-bhāvam / eka-stham anupaśyati
tata eva ca vistāram / brahma saṁpadyate tadā

yadā—when; *anupaśyati*—he sees by following the guidance of previous authorities; *pṛthag-bhāvam*—the diverse nature; *bhūta*—of the living beings; (to be) *eka-stham*—situated in one

nature; *tataḥ tadā eva ca*—then at that very moment; *samṛdyate*—he attains; *brahma*—to realisation of *brahma*; *vistāram*—in a very extensive way (on all sides).

When he sees that the diverse natures of living beings abide in *prakṛti* alone, and understands them all to be born from that same *prakṛti*, he attains realisation of *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Those who truly perceive that, during annihilation, all moving and non-moving beings of various shapes merge into one *prakṛti*, and later, at the time of creation, again manifest from that same *prakṛti*, attain the state of *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Only because a person identifies himself with the body does he see the various forms or bodies of others as *devatās*, human beings, dogs, cats, *sūdras*, Hindūs, Muslims and so on. The cause of this mundane differentiation is ignorance, whereby a person falsely identifies himself with the body. Due to this ignorance, one forgets Bhagavān. When remembrance of Bhagavān appears within him by the influence of the association of *śuddha Vaiṣṇavas*, all his ignorance is dispelled and his materialistic ideas of differentiation are removed. At that time, he becomes situated in *brahma*, which is endowed with eight qualities. He perceives everything equally at all times and ultimately he attains *parā bhakti*. Sometimes in the *śāstra*, a *jīvātmā* endowed with these eight special qualities has been called *brahma* or *brahma-bhūta*. These eight qualities are:

ya ātmāpahata-pāpnā vijaro vimṛtyur viśoko vijighitso 'pi pāsaḥ satya-kāmaḥ satya-saṅkalpaḥ so'nveṣṭavyaḥ sa vijijñāsitavyaḥ

One should search for and know the *ātmā* who is completely free from: 1) the miseries arising from desires for sense objects, 2) the threefold miseries such as old age, 3) death, 4) lamentation, 5) an enjoying propensity and 6) mundane aspirations. That *ātmā* is 7) endowed with favourable desires to serve Kṛṣṇa (*satya-kāma*), and 8) able to attain perfection in whatever he desires (*satya-saṅkalpa*).

This is also explained in *Gītā* (18.54): *brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā*. “Ultimately, one who is a *brahma-bhūtātmā* achieves *parā bhakti*.” The *jīva*’s ultimate objective is to achieve *parā bhakti*. It is improper to say, ‘*Param brahma achieves parā bhakti*,’ because *parā bhakti* means to render service to the feet of *param brahma*.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying: “When a man of true wisdom sees that, during annihilation, all moving and non-moving *jīvas* of various shapes are situated in *prakṛti* only, and that at the time of creation those varieties again manifest from the same *prakṛti*, he becomes free from the tendency to differentiate between material designations. He then realises his real spiritual identity and his relationship with *brahma* (the Absolute Reality). Now I will explain how the *jīva*, having acquired this knowledge of qualitative oneness, perceives *Paramātmā*, who is present as the witness.”

ŚLOKA 32

अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात् परमात्मायमव्ययः।
शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते॥३२॥

*anāditvān nirguṇatvāt / paramātmāyam avyayaḥ
śarīra-stho'pi kaunteya / na karoti na lipyate*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *anāditvāt*—because He is without beginning; (and) *nirguṇatvāt*—because He is free from the three

material modes; *ayam*—this; *avyayaḥ*—imperishable; *paramātmā*—Supreme Soul; *api*—although; *śarīra-sthāḥ*—situated in the body; *na karoti*—does not perform *karma*; (and) *na lipyate*—is unaffected (by *karma*).

O Kaunteya, because He is without beginning (*anādi*) and free from the three modes (*nirguṇa*), this imperishable Paramātmā, though situated in the body, neither performs *karma* nor becomes entangled in the results of *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān said in *Gītā* (13.22): *kāraṇam guṇa-saṅgo 'sya sad-asad-yoni-janmasu.* “The *jīvātmā* and Paramātmā equally reside in the body, yet only the *jīvātmā* becomes materially conditioned by his implication in the *guṇas*. Paramātmā does not.” Someone may raise the question, ‘How is that?’ For this reason, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *anāditvān*. That which has no cause or origin is *anādi*. When a word ending in the fifth case (ablative) is used with the word *anuttama*, it will read *paramottama* (than whom no one is higher, the supreme). In the same way, here the word *anādi* means the supreme cause. Since, in the original *śloka*, *anāditvāt* is used in the fifth case, the meaning is: He is the Supreme Cause. *Nirguṇatvāt* means He who is free from the *guṇas*, or from whom all qualities such as creation emanate. He is that reality. Hence, Paramātmā is distinct from the *jīvātmā* and is *avyaya* (imperishable). That is, His knowledge and bliss never diminish. *Śarīra-stho 'pi* means that although He is situated in the body, He does not accept the characteristics of the body, and *na karoti* means that unlike the *jīva*, He does not become the doer (the enjoyer), nor does He become implicated by the qualities of the body, the modes of nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Being *avyaya* (imperishable), *anādi* (beginningless) and *nirguṇa* (free from the *guṇas*), Paramātmā, unlike the *jīva*, does not become implicated in the characteristics of the body even though He resides in the body. When the pure *jīva* attains the state of *brahma*, which is completely free from material vision (*brahma-bhūta*), he understands that the complete *kṣetra-jñā*, Antaryāmī, Parameśvara, is not at all tainted by material qualities. He, the *jīva*, then becomes totally aloof from the qualities of the body also, although he resides within it.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “When the *jīvas* have attained *brahma* realisation, they can understand that Paramātmā is *avyaya*, *anādi* and *nirguṇa*. Although He exists in the body along with the *jīvātmā*, He does not become implicated in the qualities of the body (the modes of nature) like the *baddha-jīva* does. Therefore, the *jīvas* who have attained the state of *brahma* no longer become implicated in material affairs. This is because they take shelter of this knowledge (about the qualities of Paramātmā). Hear from Me how the *jīva* who is not implicated by material qualities deals with this body.”

ŚLOKA 33

यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते।
सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथात्मा नोपलिप्यते॥३३॥

*yathā sarva-gatam sauksmyād / ākāśam nopalipyate
sarvatrāvasthito dehe tathātmā nopalipyate*

yathā—as; *sarva-gatam*—the all-pervading; *ākāśam*—sky; *sauksmyāt*—due to its subtle nature; *na upalipyate*—is untouched (by the things within it); *tathā*—so; *ātmā*—the Supersoul; (although) *avasthitah*—situated; *sarvatra*—throughout; *dehe*—the material body; *na upalipyate*—is unaffected (by it).

Just as the all-pervading sky does not mix with anything due to its subtle nature, in the same way, the *ātmā*, who has attained *brahma* realisation in the wake of Paramātmā, is unaffected by the qualities or faults of the material body, even though he pervades it.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here, Śrī Bhagavān speaks the *śloka* beginning with the words *yathā sarva-gatam*, in which He gives an example. The sky pervades mud and other material objects due to its subtle nature, yet it does not become contaminated or mixed with them. In other words, it remains untouched (*asaṅga*) by mud and so forth. Similarly, the *brahma-bhūta* realised *ātmā*, who follows the path of Paramātmā, does not become influenced by the qualities and defects related to the body although residing within it.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

The sky remains free from any contaminating association or influence even though it is all-pervasive. Thus, it remains aloof. Similarly, the pure *jīva* who has attained the state of *brahma* also does not become influenced by the qualities of the body even though he resides within it. He always remains unaffected.

ŚLOKA 34

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः।
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत॥३४॥

*yathā prakāśayaty ekaḥ / kṛtsnam lokam imam raviḥ
kṣetram kṣetri tathā kṛtsnam / prakāśayati bhārata*

bhārata—O scion of Bhārata; *yathā*—as; *ekaḥ*—the one; *raviḥ*—sun; *prakāśayati*—illuminates; *imam*—this; *kṛtsnam*—entire;

lokam—universe; *tathā*—so; *kṣetrī*—the Supersoul within the field (of the body); *prakāśayati*—illuminates; *kṛtsnam*—the entire; *kṣetram*—field (body).

O Bhārata, just as one sun illuminates the whole universe, in the same way, Paramātmā illuminates the entire body with consciousness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

How does an object with the quality of illumination remain unaffected by the qualities of the object it illuminates? To explain this with an example, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this śloka beginning with the word *yathā*. The sun is the illuminator, yet it is not affected by the qualities of the objects it illuminates. Similarly, *kṣetrī*, or Paramātmā, does not become affected by the qualities of *kṣetra* (the body).

It is also said in *Katha Upaniṣad* (2.2.11):

*sūryo yathā sarva-lokasya cakṣur
na lipyate cakṣusair bāhya-doṣaiḥ
ekas tathā sarva-bhūtāntarātmā
na lipyate loka-duḥkhena bāhyah*

The sun, like the eye of all beings, does not become affected by the defects of another's eye or any other external defect. In the same way, the one Paramātmā is not subject to the happiness or misery of anybody, even though He is situated in all beings.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Just as the one sun illuminates the whole universe even though it is situated in the one place, in the same way, the ātmā, which is situated in one part of the body, illuminates the entire body spreading consciousness throughout. *Brahma-sūtra* (2.3.25) also says: *guṇād vā lokavat*. “Although the jīvātmā is atomic, it pervades the whole body by its quality

of consciousness.” Here, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura translates the word *kṣetṛi* as Paramātmā, because Paramātmā is the complete *kṣetra-jñā* and the *jīva* is the partial *kṣetra-jñā*. The conscious *jīva* is *kṣetra-jñā* of a particular body, but Parameśvara is the complete *kṣetra-jñā* of all bodies simultaneously.

ŚLOKA 35

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोरेवमन्तरं ज्ञानचक्षुषा।
भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षज्य ये विद्यर्थान्ति ते परम्॥३५॥

*kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor evam / antaram jñāna-cakṣuṣā
bhūta-prakṛti-mokṣam ca / ye vidur yānti te param*

evam—in this way; *te*—they; *ye*—who; *viduh*—comprehend; *jñāna-cakṣuṣā*—with the eye of knowledge; *antaram*—the difference between; *kṣetra-kṣetrajñayoh*—the field and the knower of the field; *ca*—and; *prakṛti-mokṣam*—the liberation from material nature; *bhūta*—of the living beings; *yānti*—attain; *param*—the Lord’s supreme abode.

In this way, those with the eye of spiritual knowledge, who become conversant with the difference between *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jñā* and the *jīva*’s means of deliverance from *prakṛti*, attain the supreme abode.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Now, Śrī Bhagavān is concluding this chapter. Those who know *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jñā*, the *jīvātmā* and Paramātmā, and the process such as *dhyāna* (meditation) by which the living entities achieve *mokṣa* from *prakṛti*, attain the supreme destination.

Of the two *kṣetra-jñas*, the *jīvātmā* becomes bound when he enjoys the qualities (fruits) of *kṣetra*, but he becomes

liberated by the appearance of *jñāna*. This is the subject explained in the Thirteenth Chapter.

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

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

In concluding the subject of the *kṣetra* and *kṣeta-jñā*, Śrī Bhagavān says that an intelligent person should properly understand the distinguishing characteristics of the body and the knowers of the body who are the partial *kṣetra-jñā* (the *ātmā*), and the friend of the *ātmā* (*Paramātmā*), who is the complete *kṣetra-jñā*. Those who realise this attain the supreme destination.

Initially, faithful people should associate with *bhaktas* who are *tattva-darśis*. By hearing highly effectual *hari-kathā* in their association, they can easily attain knowledge of *bhagavat-tattva*, *jīva-tattva*, *māyā-tattva* and *bhakti-tattva*. Then, when their identification with the material body is removed, they attain the supreme destination.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “All effects of the material nature constitute *kṣetra*. There are two types of *tattva*, *paramātmā-tattva* and *ātmā-tattva*, and both are *kṣetra-jñā*. According to the process described in this chapter, those who understand the difference between *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jñā* with the eye of spiritual knowledge by following the process by which all living entities attain deliverance from mundane activities, very easily understand *para-tattva* Śrī Bhagavān, who is beyond both *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jñā*.”

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

CHAPTER FOURTEEN



Guṇa-Traya-Vibhāga-Yoga

The Yoga of Understanding the Three Modes of Material Nature

ŚLOKA 1

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम्।
यज्ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे परां सिद्धिमितो गताः ॥१॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
param bhūyah pravakṣyāmi / jñānānāṁ jñānam uttamam
yaj jñātvā munayah sarve / parām siddhim ito gatāḥ

śrī bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Supreme Lord said; *pravakṣyāmi*—I shall speak; *bhūyah*—further; *param*—the best; *jñānam*—knowledge; *uttamam*—transcendental; *jñānānām*—to all other forms of knowledge; *jñātvā*—having understood; *yat*—which; *sarve*—all; *munayah*—the sages; *gatāḥ*—have attained; *parām*—supreme; *siddhim*—liberation; *itāḥ*—from this (world of bondage to bodily identification).

Śrī Bhagavān said: I shall impart to you further supreme *jñāna* which transcends all other knowledge. The sages who have understood and followed these instructions have all attained *parā mukti* from this bondage to the body.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The three *guṇas* of *māyā* are indeed the cause of bondage. This is inferred just by their result. *Bhakti* is the cause of the symptoms which destroy the three *guṇas*. This is being explained in the Fourteenth Chapter.

The previous chapter (*Gītā* 13.22) stated: *kāraṇam guṇa-saṅgo 'sya sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*. “The cause of the *jīva*'s taking birth in auspicious and inauspicious species is his attachment to the *guṇas*.” What are the *guṇas*? How does one associate with them? What is the result of association with the different *guṇas*? What are the symptoms of a person who is influenced by the *guṇas*, and how can he become free from them? Expecting these questions, Śrī Bhagavān is making a declaration in this *śloka* beginning with the words *param bhūyah* in order to introduce the subjects on which He will later elaborate. The word *jñānam* means by which it is known, or instruction, and *param* means the best.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

It is clearly described in the Thirteenth Chapter that in saintly association even an ordinary person can become liberated from the bondage of material existence by knowing the *tattva* of the body, the *jīva* and *Paramātmā*. The *jīva* has become bound in this material world only by his association with the *guṇas* of material nature (*prakṛti*). In this chapter, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains to His *bhakta* Arjuna what the *guṇas* are in detail, how they function, how they bind the *jīva*, and how the *jīva* can attain *parama-gati* (the supreme destination) by becoming free from these *guṇas*. With this knowledge, many *rṣis* and *munis* have attained perfection and the supreme destination. Even ordinary people become transcendental to the *guṇas* after acquiring this knowledge and can attain the supreme status.

ŚLOKA 2

इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः।
सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च॥२॥

*idam jñānam upāśritya / mama sādharmyam āgatāḥ
sarge'pi nōpajāyante / pralaye na vyathanti ca*

upāśritya—taking refuge in; *idam*—this; *jñānam*—knowledge; *āgatāḥ*—they become; *sādharmyam*—endowed with a similar nature; *mama*—to Mine; *api*—even; *sarge*—at the time of creation; *na upajāyante*—they do not take birth; *ca*—and; *na vyathanti*—they are undisturbed; *pralaye*—at the time of devastation.

Taking refuge in this *jñāna*, the sages attain *sārūpya-dharma* and acquire a transcendental nature like My own. Thus, they do not take birth again, even at the time of creation, nor does death disturb them at the time of devastation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *sādharmyam* means *mukti* characterised by *sārūpya-dharma* (attaining a transcendental form like that of Śrī Bhagavān). *Na vyathanti* means they do not experience misery.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

After acquiring *ātma-jñāna* (transcendental knowledge of the self), the *sādhaka-jīva* acquires qualities similar to that of Bhagavān, that is, many of his qualities become partially equal to the qualities of Bhagavān. Even after attaining *mukti* and becoming free from the cycle of birth and death, his individual existence continues as an associate of Śrī Bhagavān. He remains eternally engaged in *prema-mayī sevā* to the lotus feet of Bhagavān, having become established in

his *svarūpa*. Therefore, the *bhaktas* do not give up their *svarūpa*, which is servitorship, even after *mukti*. The essence of all Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's instructions is that the *jīvātmā* does not completely become one with Paramātmā by merging with Him. Rather, the *jīva*'s *śuddha-svarūpa* (pure form) continues to exist separately from that of Śrī Bhagavān, and in this pure form the *jīva* always remains engaged in *prema-mayī sevā* to Him. Great personalities like Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura and Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī have accepted the meaning of *sādharma* as *sārūpya-mukti* only. In the fourth *prameya* of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa's commentary in the book called *Prameya-ratnāvalī*, he has written that the words *sāmya* in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.1.3) and *sādharma* in *Gītā* (14.2) should be understood to mean that, even in the liberated state of *mokṣa*, there is a difference between the *jīva* and Īśvara. He explains that the component *brahmaiva* in the *śloka*, *brahma-vid brahmaiva bhavati* means 'like brahma'. The word *eva* has been used in the sense of similarity. Therefore, *brahmaiva* means to acquire qualities like that of Bhagavān, that is, to become free from birth and death. But the *jīva* can never carry out such functions as the act of creation.

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comments on the present *śloka* as follows: "When the faithful *jīva* acquires the above-stated transcendental *jñāna* by the worship of *guru*, while performing the *sādhana* of *bhakti*, he attains qualitative equality with eight of Bhagavān's eternal qualities and becomes free from birth and death. The *śrutis* state that the *jīvas* retain their individuality even in the stage of *mokṣa*. They never merge. In other words, more than one *jīva* is seen there. *Tad viṣṇoḥ paramāṁ padam sadā paśyanti sūrayah*. "Liberated people in the stage of *mukti* constantly see the abode of Śrī Viṣṇu." The word *sāmya* is also seen in the *Muṇḍaka-śruti*, *yadā*

paśyāḥ paśyate rukma-varṇāṁ . . . nirañjanāḥ paramāṁ sāmyam upaiti, and in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.48), *tat-sāmyam āpuḥ*. “They achieve a position on the same level as Him (in His eternal spiritual abode).”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “*Jñāna* is generally *saguṇa*. *Nirguṇa-jñāna* is called *uttama-jñāna* (topmost knowledge). By taking shelter of this *nirguṇa-jñāna*, the *jīva* attains My *sādharmya*, that is, qualities similar to Mine. Less intelligent persons think that by giving up material qualities, material form and material existence, the *jīva* himself becomes bereft of all qualities, form and existence and loses his identity. They are not aware that, just as all objects in the material world are distinguished from each other by their unique attributes (*viśeṣa*), similarly, the purest unique attributes and qualities are situated in My *Vaikuṇṭha dhāma*, which transcends this material nature (*viśuddha-viśeṣa-dhāma*). That pure, unique quality (*viśuddha-viśeṣa*) makes an eternal arrangement of transcendental form and existence which is called My *nirguṇa-sādharmya* (*sārūpya* which is beyond the *guṇas*). By *nirguṇa-jñāna*, one initially transcends the *saguṇa* material world, and attains the state of *nirguṇa-brahma*. Transcendental qualities then become manifest. When this occurs, the *jīva* never takes birth again in the material world.”

ŚLOKA 3

**मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्मा तस्मिन् गर्भं दधाम्यहम्।
सम्भवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत॥३॥**

mama yonir mahad brahma / tasmin garbhāṁ dadhāmy aham
sambhavaḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ / tato bhavati bhārata

bhārata—O Bhārata; *mama*—My; *mahat*—great; *brahma*—spirit (in the form of material nature); (*is*) *yonih*—a womb; *tasmin*—

in that (womb); *aham*—I; *dadhāmi*—impregnate; *garbham*—an embryo; (and) *tataḥ*—thereby; *sambhavaḥ*—the birth; *sarva-bhūtānām*—of all living entities; *bhavati*—comes about.

O Bhārata, My *prakṛti* (*mahad brahma*) is the womb which I impregnate with the *jīvas* who are of the *taṭasthā* nature. All beings are born from this *mahad brahma* alone.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The cause of material bondage is association with the *guṇas*, which is the consequence of ignorance since time immemorial. To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān is describing how *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jñā* are born. “*Mahad brahma*, the great *brahma*, is My place of impregnation (*mama yonir*).” That which cannot be divided by time and place and whose limit cannot be ascertained is called *mahat* (great). Here *brahma* refers to *prakṛti* because the creation is an expansion of *brahma*. In this way, the word combination *mahad brahma* is formed.

In the śrutis, the word *brahma* is also sometimes used for *prakṛti*. *Dadhāmi* means ‘I place *garbha* (the seed in the form of the *jīva*) in that *prakṛti*, thereby impregnating it.’ *Itas tv anyāṁ prakṛtim viddhi me parām jīva-bhūtām* (Gītā 7.5). This statement mentions the source of the conscious entities, *jīva-prakṛti*, as the marginal potency (*taṭastha-śakti*), and as the life of all beings. The word *garbha* (conception) describes this. *Tataḥ* means, ‘All *jīvas* (*sarva-bhūtānām*) beginning from Brahma are born as a result of My impregnation.’

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this material world, everything happens by the combination of *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jñā* only, that is, by *deha* (the body) and *dehī* (the *jīvātmā*).

This combination of *prakṛti* (material nature) and *puruṣa* (the *jīva*) happens by the will of Parameśvara. The scorpion lays eggs in a pile of rice. People say that scorpions are born from rice, but, in fact, rice is not the cause of the scorpions' birth. Scorpions are actually born from eggs. In the same way, the birth of the *jīva* is not caused by material nature. Bhagavān places the *jīva* (seed) in *prakṛti*, but people think that the *jīva* is born from *prakṛti*. Every *jīva* gets a different type of body according to his past actions. *Prakṛti* simply creates various material bodies under the supervision of Bhagavān. The *jīvas* who identify themselves with their bodies enjoy happiness or undergo misery according to their past *karma*. It should be clearly understood that Parameśvara is the original cause of the manifestations of the *jīvas* and the universe.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “The original *tattva* of *prakṛti* (*mahat brahma*) is the source of the universe. I impregnate that *brahma* (*prakṛti*) and all beings are born from that *prakṛti*. The material aspect of My *parā prakṛti* (transcendental nature) is that *brahma* (material nature), into which I place the seeds of *taṭastha*, the *jīvas*. All the *jīvas* beginning from Brahmā are born in this way alone.”

ŚLOKA 4

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः सम्भवन्ति याः।
तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिरहं बीजप्रदः पिता॥४॥

*sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya / mūrtayah sambhavanti yāḥ
tāsāṁ brahma mahad yonir / aham bija-pradah pitā*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *mahat brahma*—the great material nature; (*is*) *yoniḥ*—the womb (mother); *tāsām*—for those; *mūrtayah*—bodies; *yāḥ*—which; *sambhavanti*—are born; *sarva-yoniṣu*—in all species of life; (*and*) *aham*—I (am); *bija-pradah*—the seed-giving; *pitā*—father.

O Kaunteya, the *mahad brahma* is the mother from whose womb all species of life are born, and I am the seed-giving father.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“It is not only at the time of creation that *prakṛti* is the mother of all beings and I am the father; *prakṛti* is always the mother and I am always the father. *Mahad brahma* (*prakṛti*) is the womb, or birth-giving mother, of all varieties of bodies which are born in moving or non-moving species from *devatās* to grass and creepers, and I am the seed-giver, the father who impregnates.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this *śloka*, it is clearly stated that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the primeval father of all *jīvas*. All the *jīvas* in this material world are born from the mother, *prakṛti*, through the seed-giving father, Bhagavān. The *jīvas* are everywhere, inside the earth and outside, in the water and in the sky, and also in the seven lower and seven upper planetary systems. There are *jīvas* everywhere; in Vaikuṇṭha, in Goloka and also in other abodes. In Vaikuṇṭha and so forth, there are *mukta-jīvas* who are the associates of Bhagavān, and within this universe, there are the *baddha-jīvas* who remain in various situations and states of consciousness such as covered (*ācchādita*), contracted (*saṅkucita*), budding (*mukulita*), bloomed (*vikasita*) and blossoming (*pūrṇa-vikasita*).

ŚLOKA 5

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसम्भवाः ।
निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥५॥

sattvam rajas tama iti / guṇāḥ prakṛti-sambhavāḥ
nibadhnnanti mahā-bāho / dehe dehinam avyayam

mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed Arjuna; *guṇāḥ*—the three binding forces; *sattvam*—goodness; *rajaḥ*—passion; (and) *tamaḥ*—ignorance; *iti*—which; *prakṛti-sambhavāḥ*—are born of material nature; *nibadhnanti*—bind; *avyayam*—the ageless; *dehinam*—embodied soul; *dehe*—within his body.

O Mahā-bāho, it is the three *guṇas*: *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, born of *prakṛti*, which bind the immutable *jīva* who dwells within the body.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

After explaining how all *jīvas* are born from *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, Śrī Bhagavān is now explaining what the *guṇas* are and how the *jīvas* become bound by their association. Śrī Bhagavān is saying *dehe*, meaning that the *jīva* who identifies himself as one with the functions of *prakṛti* is situated in the body and becomes bound by the *guṇas*. In fact the *jīva* is imperishable, immutable and free from any material contact, but the *guṇas* bind him because of his association with them. This association is caused by his ignorance since time immemorial.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

The three *guṇas*: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are born from *prakṛti* and are manifest to perform the three functions of creation, maintenance and annihilation of the universe. *Prakṛti* remains unmanifest when these three *guṇas* are in their state of equilibrium. At that time, creation, sustenance and annihilation do not take place.

*prakṛtir guṇa-sāmyam vai / prakṛter nātmano guṇāḥ
sattvam rajas tama iti / sthity-utpatty-anta-hetavaḥ*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.22.12

Nature exists originally as the equilibrium of the three modes, which pertain only to nature, not to the transcendental spirit

soul. These modes are the effective causes of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this universe.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.23) also states: *sattvam rajas tama iti prakṛter guṇāḥ*. “The jīvas who manifest from the taṭastha-śakti receive the association of material nature (*prakṛti*) due to becoming averse (*vimukha*) to Kṛṣṇa.” By constitutional nature, the jīvas are beyond māyā, but due to the ego of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ caused by association with māyā, they have fallen into the bondage of this material existence in bodies generated by *prakṛti*. Lord Kapiladeva clearly instructs His mother Devahūti in this way in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.26.6-7):

evam parābhidhyānena / karttṛtvam prakṛteḥ pumān
karmasu kriyamāneṣu / guṇair ātmāni manyate
tad asya saṁsṛtir bandhaḥ / pāra-tantryaṁ ca tat-kṛtam
bhavaty akartur iśasya / sākṣiṇo nirvṛtātmanah

Because of his forgetfulness, the transcendental jīva accepts the influence of the material energy as his field of activities, and thus actuated, he wrongly applies the activities to himself. Material consciousness is the cause of one’s bondage, in which the jīva is forced to accept the conditions placed by the material energy. Although the jīva does not do anything and is transcendental to such activities, he is thus affected by conditional life.

In this way, due to the jīva’s forgetfulness of the activities of *prakṛti*, he considers himself the performer of the activities (*karma*) born of the modes of nature. In fact the jīva is only a witness. He is not the performer of any action. He is the *parā śakti* of Īśvara called *iśa* and himself is bliss personified. He is in the clutches of this material existence of birth and death because he acquired the ego of being the doer or performer. He, thus, becomes bound and is controlled by sense objects due to this bondage.

sa esa yarhi prakṛter / guṇeṣv abhiviṣajjate
 ahaṅkriyā-vimūḍhātmā / kartāsmīty abhimanyate
 tena saṁsāra-padaवīm / avaśo 'bhyety anirvṛtah
 prāsaṅgikaiḥ karma-doṣaiḥ / sad-asan-miśra-yoniṣu
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.27.2-3

Sometimes the *jīva* becomes excessively absorbed in the modes of nature in the form of happiness, misery, etc. At that time, he becomes bewildered because of his false ego, and he identifies the body with the self, thinking, 'I am the doer.' The *jīva* helplessly wanders throughout the higher and lower species of life, such as *devatās*, humans and animals, because he has the ego of being the doer and because he performs improper actions caused by his association with material nature. Unable to become free from the experience of mundane happiness and misery caused by *karma*, he continuously receives bodies in the material world.

ŚLOKA 6

तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्त्वात् प्रकाशकमनामयम्।
 सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघा॥६॥

tatra sattvam nirmalatvāt / prakāśakam anāmayam
 sukha-saṅgena badhnāti / jñāna-saṅgena cānagha

anagha—O sinless Arjuna; *tatra*—of these; *nirmalatvāt*—because of its pure faultless nature; *sattvam*—the quality of goodness; (is) *prakāśakam*—illuminating; (and) *anāmayam*—free from vice; *badhnāti*—it binds; *sukha-saṅgena*—through attachment to happiness; *ca*—and; *jñāna-saṅgena*—through attachment to knowledge.

O Anagha, sinless one, of these three *guṇas*, *sattva-guṇa* is auspicious, illuminating and free from vice, due to its purity. It binds the *jīva* through his attachment to happiness and knowledge.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

This *śloka* beginning with the word *tatra* explains the characteristics of *sattva-guṇa* and how it binds the *jīva*. *Anāmayam* means calm, or free from agitation. Because the *jīva* becomes calm, attachment to the happiness of *sāttvika* activities causes him to possess an ego of being materially satisfied. And because he is illuminated, attachment to knowledge in the activities of *sattva-guṇa* causes the *jīva* to possess an ego of being knowledgeable. The happiness and knowledge in these designated states is due to ignorance which forces the *jīva* to have such conceptions based on the false ego. It is this ego alone which binds the *jīva*. “However, O Anagha, sinless one, you should not accept this *agha* (sin), this characteristic of the false ego, by which you think, ‘I am happy’ or ‘I am knowledgeable.’”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

It was described in the previous *śloka* how the *guṇas* of material nature (*prakṛti*) bind the *jīva* in the body. The present *śloka* explains how *sattva-guṇa* binds the *jīva*. Of the three *guṇas*, *sattva-guṇa* is relatively pure, illuminating and calm. It therefore binds the *jīva* to happiness and knowledge. Some consider that *mukti* can be achieved simply by taking shelter of *sattva-guṇa* because it is superior to the other two *guṇas*. But this is not true. In his commentary on this *śloka*, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa says that this mundane knowledge, the discrimination between matter and consciousness, comes from *sattva-guṇa*, as does the happiness of the satisfied body and mind. Due to attachment to such knowledge and happiness, one becomes engaged in activities which lead to that calm state of existence. However, the *jīva* has to accept another body to experience the result of these actions and becoming attached to that, he has to again

perform action (*karma*). In this way, the cycle goes on and he can never become free from the cycle of birth and death. An ego in *sattva-guṇa* is also sinful. This is the import of the word *anagha* (sinless) that is used to address Arjuna in this śloka. Therefore, Arjuna (the *sādhaka*) is advised not to accept a *sāttvika* ego.

ŚLOKA 7

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम्।
तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम्॥७॥

*rajo rāgātmakam viddhi / tṛṣṇā-saṅga-samudbhavam
tan nibadhnāti kaunteya / karma-saṅgena dehinam*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *viddhi*—know that; *rajaḥ*—the quality of passion; *rāga-ātmakam*—(is) characterised by attachment; *tṛṣṇā-saṅga-samudbhavam*—(and is) born of association with the desire for sense pleasure; *tan*—it; *nibadhnāti*—binds; *dehinam*—the embodied being; *karma-saṅgena*—with attachment to fruitive work.

O Kaunteya, know *rajo-guṇa* to manifest through attachment to sense objects and the desire to enjoy them. It binds the embodied *jīva* by attachment to fruitive actions.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Know *rajo-guṇa* to be that which gives mundane pleasure. To desire an object that one does not yet have is called *tṛṣṇā*, and attachment to objects that have been already attained is called *saṅga*. That *rajo-guṇa*, from which both *tṛṣṇā* and *saṅga* are born, binds the embodied soul by attachment to action knowingly or unknowingly, *drṣṭa* (seen) or *adrṣṭa* (unseen). Attachment to fruitive action is solely due to *tṛṣṇā* (desire) and *saṅga* (association).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Since it imbues the *baddha-jīva* with attachment to sense objects, it is called *rāja-guṇa*. The mutual attraction between male and female is the specific quality of *rāja-guṇa*. It generates a hankering in embodied beings to enjoy material objects. Such a person wants honour in society or nation, a beautiful wife, good progeny, and a happy family. Such are the characteristics of *rāja-guṇa*.

The reason why the whole universe has fallen into the bondage of *māyā* is attachment to sense pleasures through *rāja-guṇa*. The influence of *rāja-guṇa* is visible everywhere in modern society, but in ancient times *sattva-guṇa* predominated. Even a man in *sattva-guṇa* is unable to achieve *mukti*, what to speak of one covered by *rāja-guṇa*.

SLOKA 8

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम्।
प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्त्रिबध्नाति भारत॥८॥

*tamas tv ajñāna-jam viddhi / mohanam sarva-dehinām
pramādālasya-nidrābhis / tan nibadhnāti bhārata*

tu—however; *bhārata*—O scion of Bhārata; *viddhi*—know; *tamah*—the quality of darkness; (to be) *ajñāna-jam*—born of ignorance; *mohanam*—it brings about delusion; *sarva-dehinām*—for all embodied beings; *tat*—it; *nibadhnāti*—binds; *pramāda-ālasya-nidrābhiḥ*—through carelessness, laziness and sleep.

However, O Bhārata, know that *tamo-guṇa*, which is born of ignorance, is the cause of delusion for all *jīvas*. It binds the embodied soul through carelessness, laziness and sleep.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Ajñāna-jam means that *tamas* (darkness) is inferred or perceived only by its result, which is ignorance. Therefore, it is called *ajñāna-ja*, or *ajñāna-janaka*, meaning that it gives rise to ignorance. *Mohana* means that which causes delusion; *pramādah* means madness; *ālasyam* means lack of endeavour, and *nindrā* means depression of the mind. These are all symptoms of *tamo-guṇa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Tamo-guṇa is the lowest of the three *guṇas*. It is completely opposite to *sattva-guṇa*. A person in *tamo-guṇa* considers the body and bodily pleasures as the all-in-all. As a result, he loses all discrimination and becomes almost mad. Everyone comes to see that our father and grandfathers have died; we will die and our progeny will also die. That means that death is certain. Yet those in *tamo-guṇa* fail to search for the self within. Simply to satisfy their senses, they collect wealth by cheating, duplicity, violence and other similar acts. This is madness. The specific characteristic of *tamo-guṇa* is that it makes one mad like this. Symptoms of a person in *tamo-guṇa* are that he takes intoxicants, meat, fish, eggs, wine, etc. He remains inactive, lazy, careless and heedless, and he oversleeps. A *sādhaka* should totally abandon this mode.

ŚLOKA 9

सत्त्वं सुखे सञ्जयति रजः कर्मणि भारत।
ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे सञ्जयत्युत॥१॥

sattvam̄ sukhe sañjayati / rajaḥ karmaṇi bhārata
jñānamāvṛtya tu tamah / pramāde sañjayaty uta

bhārata—O scion of Bhārata; *sattvam*—the quality of goodness; *sañjayati*—binds one; *sukhe*—to happiness; *rajaḥ*—passion; *karmaṇi*—to fruitive work; *tu*—but; *tamaḥ*—darkness; *uta*—indeed; *āvṛtya*—by covering; *jñānam*—knowledge; *sañjayati*—binds one; *pramāde*—to madness.

O Bhārata, *sattva-guṇa* binds one to happiness and *rajo-guṇa* binds one to fruitive work, but *tamo-guṇa* covers all knowledge and binds one to madness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is briefly repeating what He has already said. *Sattva-guṇa* binds the *jīva* by creating attachment to happiness, which is the result of *sattva-guṇa*. *Rajo-guṇa* binds the *jīva* by attachment to *karma* (fruitive activity), and *tamo-guṇa* engages the *jīva* in illusion, covering *jñāna* and giving rise to ignorance.

SLOKA 10

रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत।
रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्तथा॥१०॥

*rajas tamaś cābhībhūya / sattvam bhavati bhārata
rajaḥ sattvam tamaś caiva / tamah sattvam rajas tathā*

bhārata—O scion of Bhārata; *eva*—certainly; *sattvam*—goodness; *bhavati*—becomes manifest; *abhibhūya*—overwhelming; *rajaḥ*—passion; *ca*—and; *tamaḥ*—darkness; *rajaḥ*—passion (manifests); (overwhelming) *sattvam*—goodness; (and) *tamaḥ*—darkness; *tathā*—also; *tamaḥ*—darkness; (overwhelms) *sattvam*—goodness; (and) *rajaḥ*—passion.

O Bhārata, when *sattva-guṇa* arises, it overwhelms *rajas* and *tamas*. When *rajo-guṇa* appears, it subdues *sattva* and *tamas*, and when *tamo-guṇa* manifests, it overpowers both *sattva* and *rajas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

How do the *guṇas* manifest their influence on their effects such as happiness, as previously mentioned? Expecting this question, Śrī Bhagavān says that *sattva-guṇa* manifests and overpowers *rajo-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa*. Similarly, *rajo-guṇa* manifests, overpowering *sattva* and *tamas*, and also *tamo-guṇa* manifests, overpowering *sattva* and *rajas*. All this takes place by *adṛṣṭa-vaśād*, which means the influence of the unseen.

ŚLOKA 11

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन् प्रकाश उपजायते।
ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याद्विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत ॥११॥

*sarva-dvāreṣu dehe�smi / prakāśa upajāyate
jñānam yadā tadā vidyād / vivṛddham sattvam ity uta*

yadā—when; *jñānam*—knowledge; *upajāyate*—appears; (there is) *prakāśaḥ*—illumination; *sarva-dvāreṣu*—in all the gates (knowledge-acquiring senses); *asmī*—in this; *dehe*—body; *tadā*—at that time; *vidyāt*—one should understand; *iti*—that; *sattvam*—the quality of goodness; *vivṛddham*—is predominating; *uta*—indeed.

When *jñāna* appears and there is illumination in all the gates of the body's knowledge-acquiring senses, and when happiness becomes manifest, one should know for certain that *sattva-guṇa* is predominating.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Previously it was said that, when a mode increases, it predominates over the other two weaker modes. Now, in three consecutive ślokas, the first beginning here with the word *sarva*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the symptoms of

the predominating mode. When the senses, such as the ears, begin to acquire perfect knowledge of Vedic sound and so forth, one should know that *sattva-guṇa* is predominating. The word *uta* is emphasising that illumination in the form of happiness is generated by the self.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The symptoms by which one can understand which *guṇa* is predominating are explained here. It is understood that *sattva-guṇa* is predominating when one is in proper knowledge of objects by the means of the senses (such as the ears and nose) and when a feeling of happiness manifests from the soul. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.13) also states:

*yadetaraū jayet sattvam / bhāsvaram viśadam śivam
tadā sukhena yujyeta / dharma-jñānādibhiḥ pumān*

Sattva-guṇa is illuminating, pure and peaceful. The *jīva* becomes qualified to have happiness, virtue and knowledge, etc., when this quality increases by the restraint of *rajo-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa*.

Furthermore, in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.9) it is said: *puruṣam sattva-samyuktam anumīyāc chamādibhiḥ*. “One should recognise that a person who can control his mind and who has other similar qualities is endowed with *sattva-guṇa*.”

“When *bhakti* to Me is mixed with the material modes, it is called *saguṇa-bhakti*.”

It is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.10):

*yadā bhajati mām bhaktyā / nirapekṣah sva-karmabhiḥ
tam sattva-prakṛtim vidyāt / puruṣam striyam eva vā*

Any person, male or female, who is situated in *sattva-guṇa* becomes indifferent towards prescribed *karma* and engages in the *bhajana* of Bhagavān.

Gītā (9.27) refers to *saguṇa-bhakti*:

yat karoshi yad aśnāsi / yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat
 yat tapasyasi kaunteya / tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam

O Kaunteya, offer to Me whatever activities you perform, whatever you eat or sacrifice, whatever charity you give, and whatever austerities you practise.

ŚLOKA 12

**लोभः प्रवृत्तिराम्भः कर्मणामशमः स्पृहा।
 रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतषभ्॥१२॥**

*lobhah pravṛttir ārambhah / karmaṇām aśamah spṛhā
 rajasy etāni jāyante / vivṛddhe bharatarṣabha*

bharata-ṛṣabha—O best of Bharata's line; *rajasi*—when passion; *vivṛddhe*—is in predominance; *etāni*—all these; *jāyante*—become manifest; *pravṛttiḥ*—activity; *lobhah*—greed; *ārambhah*—endeavour; *karmaṇām*—for fruitive activity; *aśamah*—restlessness; (and) *spṛhā*—desire.

O Bharata-ṛṣabha, when *rājo-guṇa* becomes prominent, the symptoms of greed, fervent endeavour and constant hankering for sense pleasure all appear.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Pravṛtti means various types of enterprises. *Karmaṇām ārambhah* means endeavours such as the building of a house, and *aśamah* means being unfulfilled in sense enjoyment.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŠIKĀ-VRTTI

This śloka lists a number of symptoms which indicate an increase in *rājo-guṇa*. *Lobha* means that even when wealth from different sources increases, one still hankers to collect more. *Pravṛtti* means the tendency to always engage in action.

Karmaṇām ārambhah means endeavours such as the building of mansions. Aśama means the cycle of resolution and rejection, “I will perform this work and then I will perform that other work.” Sṛṣṭhā means the desire to obtain good or bad sense objects as soon as one sees them (a thirst for sense enjoyment).

It is also said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.14):

yadā jayet tamaḥ sattvam / rajaḥ saṅgam bhidā calam
tadā duḥkhena yujyeta / karmaṇā yaśasā śriyā

When rajo-guṇa, which gives rise to attachment and separatism and which has a restless nature, overpowers sattva-guṇa and tamoguṇa, a person works hard to achieve fame and wealth but only receives misery.

Moreover, it is seen in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.9): kāmādibhī rajo-yuktam. “One should understand the predominance of rajo-guṇa by his desire for sense objects, etc.” While describing the guṇī-bhūtā bhakti of a person in rajo-guṇa Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.11) states: yadā āśīsa āśāsyā / māṁ bhajeta sva-karmabhiḥ / tāṁ rajaḥ prakṛtiṁ vidyāt. “When a person prays for sense objects through the worship of Bhagavān, he and his worship are in rajo-guṇa.”

ŚLOKA 13

अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च।
तमस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन॥१३॥

aprakāśo'pravṛttiś ca / pramādo moha eva ca
tamasy etāni jāyante / vivṛddhe kuru-nandana

kuru-nandana—O descendant of Kuru Mahārāja; *tamasi*—when darkness; *vivṛddhe*—predominates; (all) *etāni*—these; *jāyante*—are manifest; *aprakāśah*—lack of discrimination; *apravṛttih*—inertia; *pramādah*—madness; *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *mohah*—illusion.

O Kuru-nandana, when *tamo-guṇa* predominates, it gives rise to inertia, madness, illusion and a lack of discrimination.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Aprakāśah means lack of discrimination and to accept what *śāstra* forbids. *Apravṛttiḥ* means lack of endeavour. *Pramādaḥ* means to believe in the non-existence of objects which are immediately in front of oneself. *Moha* means to be absorbed in illusory objects.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the symptoms arising in *tamo-guṇa*. *Aprakāśa* means loss of discrimination or lack of knowledge. It is seen that in such a condition there is the tendency to perform activities that are forbidden in *śāstra*. *Apravṛtti* means to have no inclination to understand the duties recommended in the *śāstra*. One believes this is not his fate and he remains indifferent towards his duties. *Moha* means illusory absorption, that is, to become attached to temporary objects, considering them to be eternal. This is also stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.25.15):

*yadā jayed rajah sattvam / tamo mūḍham layam jaḍam
yujyeta śoka-mohābhyaṁ / nidrayā himsayāśaya*

Lamentation, delusion, sleep and the desire to commit violence are seen to dominate the *jīva* when *tamo-guṇa*, which covers discrimination and causes degradation, overpowers *rajo-guṇa* and *sattva-guṇa*.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.9) also states: *krodhādyais tamasā yutam*. “One can infer an excess of *tamo-guṇa* by symptoms such as anger.” While describing the symptoms by which a person in *tamo-guṇa* worships Bhagavān, *Śrīmad-*

Bhāgavatam (11.25.11) states: *himśām āśāsyā tāmasam*. “A person who worships Me with the desire to engage in violence is to be understood as *tāmasika*.”

SLOKA 14

यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे तु प्रलयं याति देहभृत्।
तदोत्तमविदां लोकानमलान् प्रतिपद्यते॥१४॥

yadā sattve pravṛddhe tu / pralayam yāti deha-bhṛt
tadottama-vidām lokān / amalān pratipadyate

yadā—when; *deha-bhṛt*—an embodied soul; *yāti*—enters; *pralayam*—dissolution (death); (while) *sattve*—goodness; *pravṛddhe*—is predominating; *tu*—indeed; *tadā*—at that time; *pratipadyate*—he attains; *amalān*—the pure; *lokān*—planets; *uttama-vidām*—of people who know transcendence.

When one leaves his body under the predominance of *sattva-guṇa*, he attains the pure, higher planets, which are the abodes of the great sages, the worshippers of Hiranyaagarbha, and which are free from the modes of *rajas* and *tamas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

After death, people in *sattva-guṇa* such as those who worship Hiranyaagarbha, who are the knowers of transcendence, go to the higher pleasure-giving planets.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

One takes another birth according to whatever mode predominates at the time of death. A person attains the pleasure-giving and spotless planets of the worshippers of Hiranyaagarbha, etc., if he dies when *sattva-guṇa* is predominant. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also states (11.25.22): *sattve*

pralīnāḥ svar yānti. “If a person dies when *sattva-guṇa* predominates, he attains Svarga-loka.”

ŚLOKA 15

रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा कर्मसञ्जिषु जायते।
तथा प्रलनस्तमसि मूढ्योनिषु जायते॥१५॥

*rajasi pralayam gatvā / karma-saṅgiṣu jāyate
tathā pralinas tamasi / mūḍha-yoniṣu jāyate*

gatvā—having entered; *pralayam*—dissolution (death); *rajasi*—when passion (predominates); *jāyate*—one takes birth; *karma-saṅgiṣu*—amongst fruitive workers; *tathā*—and; *pralīnāḥ*—one dying; *tamasi*—when ignorance (predominates); *jāyate*—takes birth; *mūḍha-yoniṣu*—in the womb of a foolish animal.

One who dies when *rajo-guṇa* is predominant takes a human birth among fruitive workers, while one who dies under the predominance of *tamo-guṇa* takes birth among ignorant animals.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Karma-saṅgiṣu means a person who is attached to *karma*, fruitive activities.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

If a person dies when *rajo-guṇa* is predominant, he takes birth in a family of those who are attached to fruitive activities. If a person dies when *tamo-guṇa* is extremely predominant, he takes birth in an animal species. Some think that once the soul has taken birth in a human species, he does not degrade to a lower species. But from the present śloka it can be understood that, even after receiving a human body, a person receives an animal body after death if he is governed by *tamo-guṇa* instead of *sattva-guṇa*. He even goes to

hell if he engages in activities such as violence. It is not sure when he will again take a human birth after returning from that place. Therefore, it is the duty of every human being to rise gradually from *tamo-guṇa* to *rajo-guṇa*, and from *rajo-guṇa* to *sattva-guṇa*. And even beyond that, one should become *nirguṇa*, free from the *guṇas*, by taking shelter of *śuddha-bhakti* in the association of *śuddha-bhaktas*. Only that *nirguṇa sādhaka* who takes shelter of *nirguṇa bhakti* directly sees Śrī Bhagavān. In this way, his life becomes perfect and successful. The specific rule is that a person achieves a destination which corresponds to his consciousness at the time of death: *marane yā matih sā gatiḥ*. “Whatever one’s mind goes towards at the time of death will determine one’s next destination and body.” Therefore, it is imperative to only remember Bhagavān at the time of death. One can make one’s life successful by attaining *nirguṇa bhakti* through remembrance of Bhagavān.

SLOKA 16

**कर्मणः सृकृतस्याहुः सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम्।
रजसस्तु फलं दुःखमज्ञानं तमसः फलम्॥१६॥**

*karmaṇah sukṛtasyāhuḥ / sāttvikam nirmalam phalam
rajasas tu phalam duḥkham / ajñānam tamasah phalam*

(the wise) *āhuḥ*—say; (that) *karmaṇah*—for one who acts; *sukṛtasya*—piously; (there is) *sāttvikam*—a good; (and) *nirmalam*—pure; *phalam*—result; *phalam*—the result; *rajasah*—of passion; (is) *duḥkham*—grief; *tu*—verily; (and) *phalam*—the fruit; *tamasah*—of darkness; (is) *ajñānam*—ignorance.

It is said by the wise that *sāttvika karma* brings pure and pleasing results, *rājasika karma* incurs only misery, and the only fruit of *tāmasika karma* is ignorance.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The result of virtuous *sāttvika karma* is *sāttvika*, pure and free from disturbance. *Ajñāna* refers to lack of consciousness, dullness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Those situated in *sattva-guṇa* remain engaged in the welfare of their personal life, society and people in general. Their actions are called *puṇya-karma* (pious activities). Those who perform *puṇya-karma* remain happy in this material world, and they have more possibility of gaining *sādhu-saṅga*. The *karma* performed by those in *rāgo-guṇa* causes misery. Actions performed for momentary sense pleasure are useless. The lives of such people are full of miseries, with no real happiness. The actions of a person predominated by *tamo-guṇa* are highly painful to him. After death, he has to take birth as a worm, bird, animal and so forth. To kill animals and eat their flesh is the chief symptom of those in *tamo-guṇa*. Those who kill animals do not know that in the future the same animal, in some form or other, will kill them. This is the law of nature. In human society, if a person kills another person, he is given the death penalty. This is the law of the state. But ignorant people do not know that Parameśvara is the original controller of the entire universe. He cannot tolerate even the killing of an ant in His kingdom; therefore, such people must certainly undergo punishment. To engage in the killing of animals just for the sake of satisfying the taste buds is a heinous offense. Among such actions, the killing of a cow is severely punishable. The cow and bull are like our mother and father. Therefore, in the *Vedas* and *Purāṇas*, the killing of cows is described as the most sinful act.

The cow with her milk is like a mother, and the bull by his labour in farming is like a father. Thus, they nourish us like

parents. Due to ignorance, the present so-called cultured human beings neglect this fact. In this way, they clear the path for their own degradation and for the degradation of society as a whole. Thus, they are heading towards destruction and taking all of society with them. In human society at present, there is a predominance of *rājo-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa*. This is dangerous for everyone. It is imperative for intelligent people to become situated in *sattva-guṇa* and take shelter of *bhagavad-bhakti* and *hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana* to protect humanity from this great danger. When one remembers Bhagavān in *sat-saṅga*, all one's ignorance is removed, his worldly sectarianism and mundane discrimination are all dispelled, and he sees Parameśvara everywhere.

ŚLOKA 17

सत्त्वात् सञ्जायते ज्ञानं रजसो लोभ एव च।
प्रमादमोहौ तमसो भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च॥१७॥

*sattvāt sañjāyate jñānam / rajasо lobha eva ca
pramāda-mohau tamaso / bhavato'jñānam eva ca*

eva—certainly; *jñānam*—knowledge; *sañjāyate*—is born; *sattvāt*—from goodness; *ca*—and; *lobhah*—greed; *rajasah*—from passion; *pramāda-mohau*—madness and delusion; *ca eva*—as well as; *ajñānam*—ignorance; *bhavataḥ*—become present; *tamasah*—from the quality of darkness.

Jñāna is born from *sattva-guṇa*, while *rājo-guṇa* gives rise to greed. Carelessness, delusion and ignorance are the products of *tamo-guṇa*.

ŚLOKA 18

ऊद्धर्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्था मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः।
जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्था अथो गच्छन्ति तामसाः॥१८॥

ūrddhvam gacchanti sattva-sthā / madhye tiṣṭhanti rājasāḥ
jaghanya-guṇa-vṛtti-sthā / adho gacchanti tāmasāḥ

sattva-sthāḥ—those situated in goodness; *gacchanti*—go; *ūrddhva*—upwards (to the upper planets); *rājasāḥ*—those in the quality of passion; *tiṣṭhanti*—remain; *madhye*—in the middle (planets); *vṛtti-sthāḥ*—those situated in activities; (that are) *jaghanya-guṇa*—abominable; *tāmasāḥ*—who are in the quality of darkness; *gacchanti*—go; *adhaḥ*—down (to the lower planets).

Those situated in *sattva-guṇa* go to the higher celestial planets. Those in *rajo-guṇa* remain within the earthly planets, and those absorbed in the abominable activities of *tamo-guṇa* descend into the lower hellish planets.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

According to this gradation, those in *sattva-guṇa* go up to Satya-loka, and those in *rajo-guṇa* remain in the middle, Manuṣya-loka. The word *jaghanya* means abominable, and its tendencies are gross ignorance, laziness, etc. Those who are thus situated go to hell.

ŚLOKA 19

नान्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्त्तरं यदा द्रष्टानुपश्यति।
गुणेभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति॥१९॥

nānyam guṇebhyah karttāram / yadā draṣṭānupaśyati
guṇebhyaś ca param vetti / mad-bhāvam so'dhigacchatī

yadā—when; *draṣṭā*—the seer (*jīvātmā*); *anupaśyati*—sees in pursuance of the Vedic teachings; *na*—no; *anyam*—other; *karttāram*—agent; (exists) *guṇebhyah*—other than the three qualities; *ca*—and; *vetti*—understands (the *ātmā* to be); *param*—transcendental; *guṇebhyah*—to those qualities; *sah*—he; *adhi-gacchatī*—attains; *mat-bhāvam*—My nature.

When the *jīva* sees no agent of action other than the three *guṇas*, and realises the *ātmā* to be transcendental to those modes, he develops *suddha-bhakti* to Me and attains to My spiritual nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

After describing the material world which consists of the *guṇas*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining *mokṣa* (pure devotion), which is quite distinct from the *guṇas*, in this *śloka* beginning with the word *nānyam* and in the next *śloka*. “When the *jīva* does not see any other active agent except for the *guṇas*, which have been modified to become the doer, the effect and the objects, he sees and realises that the *guṇas* alone are the active agents in every situation. He also realises that the *ātmā* is superior to the *guṇas* and different from them. Such a seer (the *jīva*) attains love for Me (*mad-bhāvam*) or *sāyujya* with Me. In other words, he attains to My spiritual nature. At that time, even after he has acquired this knowledge, he only attains Me by performing *bhakti*.” This will become clear from the meaning of the twenty-sixth *śloka* of this chapter.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

All *jīvas* in different species of life from rivers, mountains and ants, up to creepers, trees and human beings are working while helplessly bound by the *guṇas*. In reality, there is no other active agent in all their actions except the three *guṇas* of material nature. Parameśvara is completely beyond material nature and the *guṇas*, although He is their original controller. Those who know this truth also cross over *prakṛti* and the *guṇas* to attain the supreme destination, but no one can understand this merely by his own intelligence and discrimination. Therefore, it is of the utmost necessity to have

the association of *mahā-puruṣas* who are well-verses in transcendental knowledge. No matter how degraded a *jīva* may be, in the association of great *sādhus*, he very quickly and easily becomes transcendental to these three *guṇas*.

ŚLOKA 20

गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन् देही देहसमुद्भवान्।
जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैर्विमुक्तोऽमृतमश्नुते ॥२०॥

*guṇān etān atītya trīn / dehī deha-samudbhavān
janma-mṛtyu-jarā-duḥkhair / vimukto'mṛtam aśnute*

atītya—after transcending; *etān*—these; *trīn*—three; *guṇān*—qualities; (he) *aśnute*—attains; *amṛtam*—immortality; (and) *vimuktah*—becomes fully liberated; *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-duḥkhaiḥ*—from the miseries of birth, death and old age; *deha-samudbhavān*—which produce the body; *dehī*—the embodied being.

After transcending these three modes which produce the body, the *jīva* attains *mokṣa*, pure devotion, becoming free from birth, death, disease and old age.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

He then becomes free from the *guṇas* after attaining the state of seeing material nature as the only active agent. Śrī Bhagavān, therefore, speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *guṇān*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

A person who has attained the nature of *brahma* is not affected by the miseries of birth, death, old age and disease. Even *bhakti-miśra-jñānīs* who have attained perfection in *jñāna* give it up to attain *parā bhakti* unto the lotus feet of

Bhagavān. Remaining engaged in the bliss of that service, they finally taste the nectar of *prema*. In contrast, the *nirviśeṣa-jñānīs*, who simply engage in the cultivation of *jñāna*, achieve nothing. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.4) it is stated: *śreyah-sṛtiṁ bhaktim udasya*. “Only the *śuddha-bhaktas* of Śrī Bhagavān transcend the *guṇas* of material nature, not anyone else.”

ŚLOKA 21

अर्जुन उवाच—
कौर्लिङ्गस्त्रीन् गुणानेतानतीतो भवति प्रभो।
किमाचारः कथं चैतास्त्रीन् गुणानतिवर्त्तते॥२१॥

*arjuna uvāca
kair liṅgais trīn guṇān etān / atīto bhavati prabho
kim ācāraḥ katham caitāṁs / trīn guṇān ativarttate*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *prabho*—O master; *kaiḥ*—by which?; *liṅgaiḥ*—symptoms; *bhavati*—does someone become; *atītaḥ*—known as transcendental; *etān trīn guṇān*—to these three qualities; *kim*—what?; (is) *ācāraḥ*—his behaviour; *ca*—and; *katham*—how?; *ativarttate*—does he transcend; *etān*—these; *trīn*—three; *guṇān*—qualities.

Arjuna inquired: O Prabhu, what are the symptoms of one who is transcendental to these three *guṇas*? How does he behave? And how does he transcend the modes?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In the Second Chapter, Arjuna received an answer to the question: “What are the symptoms of one who is *sthita-prajñā*?” Now, however, he is questioning further, being eager for more specific knowledge about this subject: 1) “By which symptoms are those who have transcended the three

guṇas to be known?" 2) "What is their conduct?" and 3) "How can one transcend the three *guṇas*, thereby attaining the state of transcendence?" In the Second Chapter, when Arjuna asked, "What are the symptoms of one who is *sthita-prajñā*?" he did not ask, "How does he transcend the *guṇas*?" But here he is specifically asking this question.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

In this śloka, Arjuna has questioned Śrī Bhagavān about the symptoms of a person who is beyond the three *guṇas*. What is his conduct and by what means did he attain that stage? It is very important for every human being to ask these questions. These questions are essential for those who are really enthusiastic to follow the teachings of the Gītā. Their answers give instructions on how to transcend *tāmasika*, *rājasika* and *sāttvika* *guṇas* and achieve the state of *nirguṇa*. Then, by cultivating *bhagavad-bhakti*, one can attain the highest goal in the form of *bhagavat-prema*.

ŚLOKAS 22-25

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

प्रकाशञ्च प्रवृत्तिञ्च मोहमेव च पाण्डव।
 न द्वेष्टि संप्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति॥२२॥
 उदासीनवदासीनो गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते।
 गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येवं योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते॥२३॥
 समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकाज्यनः।
 तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः॥२४॥
 मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः।
 सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते॥२५॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
 prakāśaṁ ca pravṛttiṁ ca / moham eva ca pāṇḍava
 na dveṣṭi saṁpravṛttāni / na nivṛttāni kāṅkṣati
 udāśīna-vad āśīno / guṇair yo na vicālyate
 guṇā vartanta ity evam / yo'vatiṣṭhati neṅgate
 sama-duḥkha-sukhah sva-sthah / sama-loṣṭāśma-kāñcanah
 tulya-priyāpriyo dhīras / tulya-nindātma-saṁstutih
 mānāpamānayos tulyas / tulyo mitrāri-pakṣayoh
 sarvārambha-parityāgī / guṇātītah sa ucyate

śrī bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Supreme Lord said; pāṇḍava—O son of Pāṇḍu; sah—he; yaḥ—who; eva na dveṣṭi—certainly does not hate; saṁpravṛttāni—the appearance; prakāśam—of illumination; pravṛttim—activity; ca—and; moham—delusion; ca—and; na kāṅkṣati—does not hanker; (when) nivṛttāni—they disappear; āśīnah—seated; udāśīna-vat—as if neutral; yaḥ—who; na vicālyate—is unmoved; guṇaiḥ—by the qualities; iti evam—who considers that (in all situations); guṇāḥ—the three qualities; vartante—are following their cycles; avatiṣṭhati—remains; na iṅgate—unmoved; sama—equal; duḥkha-sukhah—in happiness and distress; sva-sthah—who is situated in his svarūpa; sama—who considers equally; loṣṭa-aśma-kāñcanah—dirt, stone and gold; tulya—who is equal; priyāpriyah—amidst pleasant and unpleasant events; dhīrah—intelligent; tulya—equipoised; ninda-ātma-saṁstutih—in hearing praise and defamation of himself; tulyah—equal; mānāpamānayoh—in honour and dishonour; tulyah—equal; mitrāri-pakṣayoh—to parties of friends and enemies; sarva-ārambha-parityāgī—who renounces all endeavours (except those for bare bodily maintenance); ucyate—is said (to be); guṇātītah—transcendental to the three qualities.

Śrī Bhagavān said: O son of Pāṇḍu, a person who is *guṇātīta*, transcendental to the three modes, is one who does not hate illumination, activity and

delusion when they occur, nor long for them when they cease, who is therefore indifferent to, and unmoved by, the *guṇas* such as happiness and misery, knowing that the modes alone are acting, who remains undisturbed and even-minded, who is situated in his *svarūpa*, who considers dirt, stone and gold to be the same, who is situated equally amidst pleasant and unpleasant events, who is intelligent, who remains equipoised both in criticism and glorification and in honour and dishonour, who treats friend and foe equally, and who has renounced all *karma* except that required to maintain the body.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

What symptoms indicate that one is *guṇātīta*? In response to this first question, Śrī Bhagavān says, “The effect of *sattva-guṇa* is that knowledge illuminates all the senses of the body. The effect of *rājo-guṇa* is passionate action, and the effect of *tamo-guṇa* is delusion. These symptoms indicate the influence of the three *guṇas*. When the *guṇas* perform their natural functions, a person who is *guṇātīta* has no animosity towards them, because he understands them to be miserable. Similarly, when the modes are not acting, one who is *guṇātīta* does not desire them with a yearning to attain happiness. This *śloka* (14.22) is related to 14.25. In response to the second question: *kim ācāraḥ*, “How do they behave?” Śrī Bhagavān speaks three *ślokas* beginning with the words *udāśīna-vat*. Those who are not disturbed by happiness and misery, which are the effects of the *gunas*, always remain fixed in their constitutional *svarūpa*. They consider the *guṇas* to be working in their respective functions, and have no relationship with them. After careful deliberation, such wise persons remain silent (*mauni*). Those who do not endeavour for any bodily sense gratification are called *guṇātīta*. A per-

son can only be called *guṇātīta* when all the symptoms of one who has transcended the modes are seen in his behaviour. But garrulous people who proclaim to have transcended the modes are not called *guṇātīta*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Upon hearing Arjuna's three questions, Śrī Bhagavān first explains the symptoms of a person who is *guṇātīta*. The function of *sattva-guṇa* is to illuminate, of *rajo-guṇa* is to engage in passionate action, and of *tamo-guṇa* is to bewilder. A *jīvātmā* is said to be *guṇātīta* when he is not averse to these three *guṇas* while they are engaged in their respective functions, seeing them as a cause of misery. Nor does he hanker for pleasure from them when their functions cease. What is his conduct? In response to this question, Śrī Bhagavān says that a person who is beyond the *guṇas* does not become disturbed in times of happiness or trouble, but remains indifferently situated. He is equally disposed to worldly happiness and misery, heat and cold, loss and gain, victory and defeat and, remaining neutral, understands that they have no relationship with the *ātmā*. With this conception, he remains busy only in the progressive development of the self (*ātmā*), and is not the least concerned about bodily activities.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "After hearing Arjuna's three questions, Śrī Bhagavān said, 'Your first question is 'What are the symptoms of a person who has transcended the *guṇas*?' The answer is freedom from envy and desire. As long as one is situated in this material world, the *baddha-jīva* is under the influence of the *guṇas* of material nature: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. These three *guṇas* are only destroyed when one attains complete *mukti*. But until, by the will of Bhagavān, one has attained *mukti* in the form of the destruction of the subtle body, one should know that

the process to become *nirguṇa* is to give up envy and desire (material hankерings). As long as one has a body, there will certainly be illumination, action and delusion (the functions of *sattva*, *rajo* and *tamo-guṇa*), but one should not yearn for them, nor should one try to renounce them out of aversion. Those in whom these two symptoms are visible are called *nirguṇa*. Those who engage in materialistic activities with effort because of the persistence of some selfish motive, or who practise forced renunciation, considering this material world to be illusory, are not *nirguṇa*.

“Your second question is “What is the conduct of a person who is *guṇātīta*?” His conduct is as follows: He thinks, “The *guṇas* themselves are working within this body.” He lets the *guṇas* perform their work, and does not become implicated in them. He remains separate from them, as an indifferent person who is nonetheless conscious. Misery, happiness, a clod of earth, stone, gold, favourable or unfavourable situations, criticism or glorification, all appear as a result of his bodily activities, but he keeps equal vision towards them and treats them equally, being situated in his own self or constitutional position. In his worldly dealings he thinks, “As a conscious entity, I have no relationship with honour and dishonour and the behaviour of enemies and friends.” Giving up all feelings of attachment and renunciation, he acquires the designation of *guṇātīta*.’

ŚLOKA 26

माज्च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते।
स गुणान् समतीत्यैतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते॥२६॥

*mañ ca yo'vyabhicāreṇa / bhakti-yogena sevate
sa guṇān samatītyaitān / brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

ca—and; *sah*—he; *yah*—who; *sevate*—serves; *mām*—Me; *avyabhicāreṇa*—with one-pointed; *bhakti-yogena*—devotional connection; *samatūtya*—fully transcends; *etān*—these; *guṇān*—three qualities; *kalpate*—and becomes eligible; *brahma-bhūyāya*—to realise *brahma*.

One who renders service with *aikāntika-bhakti* to Me, in My Śyāmasundara form, can transcend these *guṇas* and become qualified to attain realisation of *brahma*, My spiritual nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“How can one transcend these three *guṇas*?” In response to this third question, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the words *mām ca*. The word *ca* means ‘Me alone’. “Only those who render service to Me, Śyāmasundara, who am Parameśvara, become *brahma-bhūyāya* or qualified to experience My spiritual nature.” This is proven by the use of the adjective *ekayā* in the statement: *bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyah*. “I am attained only by *aikāntika-bhakti*.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.14.21)

According to *Gītā* (7.14): *mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etāṁ taranti te*. “Only those who surrender unto Me, cross over *māyā*.” It is also emphasised, by the use of the word *eva*, that *brahma* cannot be experienced by any means except with the help of *bhakti*. The import of the word *avyabhicāreṇa* (undeviating) is that in *bhakti-yoga* there should be no mixture of *karma*, *jñāna*, etc. Even *niṣkāma-karma* is to be given up. “Renounce even *jñāna* of Me.” In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.19.1), it is said: *jñanan ca mayi sannyaset*. “One should surrender unto Me both that knowledge and the means by which he achieved it.” According to this statement, *jñānīs* renounce their *jñāna* even when they have cultivated *jñāna* to its highest degree, but it is never said that *bhakti-yoga* has to be given up. There

are many types of *bhakti*, not all of which are *avyabhicāra*. Therefore, just as *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* is given up by a *jñānī*, a *jñānī* can become *guṇatīta* only when *jñāna-yoga* is given up and *avyabhicāra* (*kevala-bhakti*) is performed. There is no other means to attain the *nirguṇa* state. It is also said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.26): “A performer of action (*kartta*) who has taken shelter of Me, is *nirguṇa*. In other words, only *aikāntika bhaktas* are free from the modes.”

sāttvikah kārako 'saṅgī / rāgāndho rājasah smṛtah
 tāmasah smṛti-vibhraṣṭo / nirguṇo mad-apāśrayah
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.26

A person in *sattva-guṇa* is unattached. One who is in *rajo-guṇa* is extremely attached, and a person in the mode of *tamas* loses his memory and can no longer discriminate. But one who has taken shelter of Me is *nirguṇa*.

This śloka (11.25.26) describes the *karmī* and *jñānī* who are detached as *tat-sāhacarya-sādhakas* (*sāttvika sādhakas*), while those who have taken shelter of Bhagavān are described as *nirguṇa*. From this statement, it is understood that Kṛṣṇa’s *bhaktas* are the only real *sādhakas*.

After becoming perfect in *jñāna* and renouncing *sattva-guṇa*, a *jñānī* becomes *guṇatīta*, transcendental to the modes. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda says, “The word *ca* in this śloka is used to indicate a conclusion.” Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī writes, “Only those who serve Me alone, Īśvara Nārāyaṇa, with *avyabhicāra-bhakti-yoga*, exclusive devotion as described in the Twelfth Chapter, become *guṇatīta*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

How do the above-mentioned people who are *guṇatīta* cross beyond the three *guṇas*? In response to this third question, Śrī Bhagavān says, “My *bhaktas* easily cross over these *guṇas*

and become qualified to experience My *svarūpa* as a result of rendering service to Me in My Śyāmasundara form, with *avyabhicārī* or *aikāntikī bhakti-yoga*.” Those *bhaktas* who have taken shelter of Bhagavān become *nirguṇa*. This is verified in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.26): *nirguṇo mad-apāśrayah*. “Those who take exclusive shelter of Me are *nirguṇa*.” The word *mad-apāśrayah* means *mad-eka-śarano bhaktah*. “Only a devotee who takes exclusive shelter of Me is My *āśritah* (dependent on Me), and is *nirguṇa*.”

It is also seen in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.88.5):

harir hi nirguṇah sākṣat / puruṣah prakṛteḥ paraḥ
sa sarva-drg upadraṣṭā / tam bhajan nirguṇo bhavet

Certainly Śrī Hari Himself is directly *nirguṇa*, beyond the *guṇas* of material nature. He is the witness of everyone. Those who perform *bhajana* to Him also become *nirguṇa*.

Here, the word *brahma-bhūyāya* means to become qualified to realise *brahma-tattva* (the spiritual nature). *Brahma* cannot be realised by any practice other than *bhakti*, and this realisation requires that the person who will experience (the *jīva*) must be eternally distinct from that which is to be experienced (*parabrahma*). In other words, the *jīva* must have a separate existence. The *nirviṣeṣa-vādīs* (monists) do not accept that the *jīva* and *brahma* exist separately after *mukti*. Therefore, it is not possible for them to experience Him. On the contrary, only *bhaktas* are qualified to realise *brahma*. One gets the power to realise *brahma* (Śrī Bhagavān) through *bhakti* alone, by the mercy of Śrī Bhagavān. This has been stated very clearly in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.21): *bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyah*. “I can be attained only by *bhakti*.” One cannot attain *mukti* merely by *jñāna*. Only by the help of *bhakti*, in some way or another, can one achieve *mukti* through *jñāna*. This has been stated very clearly in many

ślokas in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, such as (1.5.12):

naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitaṁ
na śobhate jñānam alaṁ nirañjanam

Knowledge of self-realisation, even though free from all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of a conception of the Supreme Lord.

Even if that *jñāna* is *niṣkāma* (selfless) and *nirmala* (pure), it is not auspicious if it is bereft of *bhagavad-bhāva* (a service attitude to Bhagavān). In other words, it is useless. What then to speak of *kāmya-karma* (fruitive action), which is always miserable and insignificant. Such *jñānīs* fall down even after reaching the highest stage of *jñāna*: *sthānād bhraṣṭāḥ patanty adhaḥ* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.5.3). The following ślokas from the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam can be referred to in this regard: 10.2.32, 10.20.32, 11.14.21, 10.23.46 and 4.31.12.

Some people translate the word *brahma-bhūyāya* in the present śloka to infer that the *jīva* becomes one with *brahma*. But the *jīva* does not become one with *brahma* even after he has attained *mukti*. In the *Chandogya Upaniṣad*, a *brahma-bhūta* (realised person) is described as having eight characteristics:

*ātmā 'pahata-pāpnā vijaro vimṛtyur viśoko vijighatso 'pi pāsuh
satya-kāmāḥ satya-saṅkalpaḥ so 'nveṣṭavyaḥ*

These are:

- (1) *Apaḥata-pāpa*—He has no relationship with the sinful tendencies of *māyā*, such as *avidya*.
- (2) *Vijara*—He is free from old age, being eternally youthful.
- (3) *Vimṛtyu*—There is no possibility of him becoming degraded.
- (4) *Viśoka*—He is free from mundane happiness, misery, etc.
- (5) *Vijighatsa*—He has no desire to enjoy sense objects.

- (6) *Apipāsu*—He has no desire other than for *bhagavat-sevā*.
- (7) *Satya-kāma*—He is endowed with desires which are favourable for Kṛṣṇa *sevā*.
- (8) *Satya-saṅkalpa*—He attains perfection in whatever he desires.

According to the statement of Gītā (14.17): *sattvāt sañjāyate jñānam*, *jñāna* comes from *sattva-guṇa*, therefore *jñānīs* are *sāttvika*. After attaining perfection in *jñāna*, a *jñānī* gives up his *sāttvika* nature and becomes free from all *guṇas*, that is, he becomes *nirguṇa*. But the speciality of the *bhaktas* is that they are free from the *guṇas* from the beginning of their *sādhana*. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.29.34) states:

martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmā
niveditātmā vicikīrṣito me
tadāmr̥tatvarāṁ pratipadyamāno
mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai

A mortal person attains immortality and becomes most dear to Me at the very moment he fully surrenders to Me, having given up all types of *karma* (action), and having become *nirguṇa*.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments on the *ślokas*: *jñānam viśuddham paramārtham ekam*, “The non-dual Absolute Truth being devoid of material contamination gives us liberation” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.12.11), and *martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmā*, “That surrendered mortal having given up all fruitive desires and having offered Me his very life, achieves opulences like My own” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.29.34). He writes: “From the very beginning of the *sādhana* stage, when one takes shelter of *bhagavad-bhakti*, Bhagavān begins the treatment of the *śaranāgata* (surrendered) *bhaktas*. That is, He starts to make them *nirguṇa*.” The meaning is that a *sādhaka* while practising *bhakti* gradually becomes

situated in the stages of *niṣṭhā*, *ruci* and *āsakti*. Eventually, he attains *rati* and becomes completely *nirguṇa*. At that time, he has no relationship with illusory objects (body, house, etc.). “By the inconceivable power of *bhakti*, even while he is being instructed in *bhakti* by Me, the transcendental body, mind and senses of the *bhakta* are created in a way that is hidden or invisible.” In other words, it is unknown to the *jīva*. Similarly, his illusory body, mind and senses are removed in a hidden way. This shows the glory of *bhakti*. “At that time, after being situated in his own *svarūpa* in My *dhāma*, that pure *jīva* becomes qualified to taste the bliss of rendering service to Me.”

In many places, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has confirmed that a *bhakta* becomes free from the *guṇas* even during the *sādhana* stage. Although objects such as a leaf, flower, fruit, water and *candana* appear to be material ingredients in the eyes of the non-devotees, when offered to Bhagavān with devotion by the *bhaktas* they become *nirguṇa* and attain a transcendental nature (*aprākṛta-bhāva*). How much more then is this true of the *bhaktas* when they fully offer themselves? This is also confirmed in Caitanya-caritāmṛta, *Antya-lilā* (4.191):

*prabhu kahe—vaiṣṇava-deha ‘prākṛta’ kabhu naya
‘aprākṛta’ deha bhaktera ‘cid-ānanda-maya*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said “The body of a *bhakta* is never material. It is considered to be transcendental, full of spiritual bliss.”

ŚLOKA 27

**ब्रह्मणे हि प्रतिष्ठाहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च।
शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च॥२७॥**

*brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham / amṛtasyāvyayasya ca
śāśvatasya ca dharmasya / sukhasyaikāntikasya ca*

aham—I (am); *hi*—certainly; *pratiṣṭhā*—the shelter; *brahmaṇah*—for that (same) *nirviṣeṣa-brahma*; *ca*—and (the shelter); *avyayasya*—for everlasting; *amṛtasya*—immortality; *ca*—and; *śāśvatasya dharmasya*—for the eternal *dharma*; *ca*—and; *sukhasya*—for the happiness of *prema*; *eka-antikasya*—which is achieved through one-pointed (exclusive) devotion to Me.

I alone am the basis of that *nirviṣeṣa-brahma* and the sole refuge of everlasting immortality, eternal *dharma* and the transcendental bliss of *prema* arising from *aikāntika-bhakti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

One may raise the question: “How can Your *bhaktas* attain the state of *nirguṇa-brahma*, which is possible only by experiencing oneness with *brahma*?” In response, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *brahmaṇo*. “I am indeed the basis (*parama-pratiṣṭhā*) of that *brahma* and am famous as the supreme basis of everything. Since *brahma* depends upon Me, I am its shelter, or basis. The word *pratiṣṭhā* (basis) has the same meaning as this in all *śruti* statements such as *annamaya*. And furthermore, I am also the basis (*pratiṣṭhā*) of immortality (*amṛta*). Is this *amṛta* heavenly nectar? No! It means imperishable *mokṣa*: *śāśvatasya dharmasya*. I am also the basis (*parama-pratiṣṭhā*) of *bhakti*, the supreme eternal *dharma* (*sanātana-dharma*) which is eternally existing both in the practice (*sādhana*) and perfected (*siddha*) stages, and I am the *prema* which is attained by *aikāntika-bhakti*. Thus, since everything depends on Me, one can attain the platform of *brahma* (characterised by

merging with *brahma*) by performing My *bhajana* performed with a desire to attain *kaivalya*.” *Kaivalya* here refers to a unique state of spiritual existence devoid of physical and mental activities. While commenting on this *śloka*, Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “I am the *pratiṣṭhā* (basis) of *brahma*, which means that I am concentrated *brahma*. Although the sun is concentrated light, it is known as the shelter of light. In the same way, although I am the form of Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-svarūpa*), I am the basis (*brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham*) of *nirviṣeṣa-brahma*.” The Viṣṇu Purāṇa also proves this point. “That Viṣṇu is the shelter (*āśraya*) of all auspiciousness. He is the shelter of *citta* (consciousness) as well as of the all-pervading *ātmā*.” While commenting on this *śloka*, Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī also writes that Viṣṇu is the *parama-pratiṣṭhā* (supreme shelter, or basis) of *parabrahma*, the omniscient *ātmā*. “As Śrī Bhagavān says in Gītā, ‘I am the *pratiṣṭhā* (basis) of *brahma*.’”

In Viṣṇu-dharma it is said, “Among *prakṛti*, *puruṣa* and *brahma*, only *puruṣa*, Vāsudeva, is the Lord. This is the conclusion.” The same *śāstra* also states, “Just as Acyuta, *para-tattva* Śrī Bhagavān, is *parabrahma*, He is also Paramātmā.”

In His pastime of bringing back the sons of the *brāhmaṇa*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that *parabrahma* extends Himself as various manifestations (*vibhūtis*) throughout the entire universe. “O Arjuna, that concentrated effulgence should be considered to be My effulgent *svarūpa*” (*Hari-vamśa Purāṇa*, Viṣṇu-parva 114.11.12).

In *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.40) it is also said, “I perform *bhajana* to that primeval Lord Govinda. *Brahma*, who is born from His effulgence, divides the unlimited opulence in unlimited *brahmāṇḍas* (universes).”

Also in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (8.24.38), Bhagavān Matsya told King Satyavrata: “At that time, I will respond to your

questions, and by My mercy, My glory, popularly known as *parabrahma*, will manifest in your heart and you will be able to realise it completely.”

Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī’s writes in his commentary: “The following doubt may be raised: ‘How can Your *bhaktas*, having attained to Your *bhāva* (transcendental nature), become qualified to achieve that state of *brahma* if You are different from *brahma*?’ Anticipating this doubt, Śrī Bhagavān says: *brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham* (*pratiṣṭhā* implies ‘I alone am sufficient and complete’). ‘Since I am the basis of *brahma*, if someone realises Me, then his realisation is sufficient and complete, and the realisation of *brahma* is also included in that.’”

According to the *Amara-koṣa* dictionary, the word *paryāpti* means the complete Absolute Reality. Śrila Madhusūdhana Sarasvatī has composed a *śloka* to establish that *brahma* is *saviśeṣa*:

*parā-kṛta-mana-dvandvam param brahman narākṛtim
saundarya-sāra-sarvasvam vande nandātmajam aham*

I worship the effulgent form of the essence of all beauty, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, the *parabrahma* who has a human form, and who has put aside the duality of my mind.

The three *guṇas* alone create all the *anarthas* which are obstacles on the path of perfection. This perfection for the *jīva* is *ananya-bhakti*, which he can only achieve when he is free from the three *guṇas*. This is what has been explained in this chapter.

*Thus ends the Bhāvānuvāda of the Sārārtha-Varṣiṇī Tīkā,
by Śrila Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, on the Fourteenth 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 quotes Arjuna as saying, “If You say that the attainment of *brahma* is the ultimate goal of all types of *sādhana*, then how is it possible for persons who have realised *brahma* to enjoy Your *nirguṇa-prema*?” In response, Śrī Bhagavān says, “In My eternal *nirguṇa* state, in My *svarūpa* as Bhagavān, I place the conscious seed, the *jīva*, who is of the *taṭastha-śakti*, in the womb of My inert material energy (*jaṭa-śakti*). The *mahad brahma*, the self-effulgence of My body, is the first manifestation of My spiritual realm, and is My *brahma* feature. When a *baddha-jīva* advances to higher and higher stages by cultivation of *jñāna-yoga*, he ultimately attains My feature of *brahma*. This is the first step of the *nirguṇa* stage. Before attaining this step he is bewildered by a *nirviṣeṣa* (featureless) feeling due to having given up all attraction to mundane variety. This *nirviṣeṣa-bhāva* is removed by becoming situated in that *nirguṇa* stage and by taking shelter of *śuddha-bhakti-yoga*. He then realises the stage of *cid-viṣeṣa* (transcendental variety).

“Rṣis, such as Sanaka and Vāmadeva, who first deliberated on *nirviṣeṣa-brahma* by following the path of *jñāna*, later achieved nectar in the form of *nirguṇa-bhakti-rasa* by this process. Unfortunately, those who are forced by their lower desire to achieve *mokṣa* (salvation) cannot properly situate themselves in *brahma-tattva*, and therefore they do not attain *nirguṇa-bhakti* as their highest stage of attainment. In the form of *nirguṇa-saviṣeṣa-tattva* (the Supreme Personality of Godhead), I am indeed the shelter (*pratiṣṭhā*) of *brahma*, which is the supreme destination of the *jñānīs*. Immortality, imperishability, eternality, *prema* in the form of *nitya-dharma* (eternal occupation) and the ever-blissful state of *vraja-rasa* (the mellites of Vraja), are all attainable by taking shelter of My

kṛṣṇa-svarūpa, that *para-tattva* who is *nirguṇa* (beyond the material modes) and full of variety (*saviśeṣa*)."

Mukti-pradātā sarveśāṁ viṣṇur eva na saṁśayah. "Viṣṇu alone is the bestower of mukti." Śruti also says: tam eva veditvātimṛtyum eti. "Merely by knowing Him, one becomes free from the clutches of death" (Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 3.8). Padma Purāṇa also says: viṣṇor anucaratvāṁ hi mokṣam āhur maniṣinah. "The thoughtful sages who have realised the Absolute (those who are *tattva-darśī*), say that mokṣa means service to the lotus feet of Bhagavān." Skanda Purāṇa says: kaivalaya-dah param brahma visnur eva sanātanah. "Only Viṣṇu, who is the supreme brahma, is beyond impersonal oneness and is eternal."

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

CHAPTER FIFTEEN



Puruṣottama-Yoga

Yoga Through Understanding the Supreme Person

SLOKA 1

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम्।
छन्दाम्सि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित्॥१॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
ūrddhva-mūlam adhaḥ-śākham / aśvattham prāhur avyayam
chandām̄si yasya parṇāni / yaś tam veda sa veda-vit

śrī bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Supreme Lord said; prāhuh—
they (the sāstras) say; (there is) avyayam—an imperishable;
aśvattham—banyan tree; yasya—whose; ūrddhva-mūlam—roots
grow upwards; (and) adhaḥ-śākham—whose branches grow down-
wards; parṇāni—its leaves; (are) chandām̄si—the Vedic hymns;
saḥ yaḥ—he who; veda—knows; tam—that (tree); (is) veda-vit—
the knower of the Vedas.

Śrī Bhagavān said: The sāstras describe this ma-
terial world as an imperishable aśvattha tree, a
special type of banyan tree with its roots growing

upwards and its branches extending down, whose leaves are the Vedic hymns that establish fruitive activities. He who knows the *tattva* of this tree is the knower of the *Vedas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa cuts the bondage to material existence and is also detached (aloof) from it. The *ātmā*, or *jīva*, is an *āṁśa* (part) of Īśvara. Kṛṣṇa alone is the *puruṣa* who is beyond both perishable (*kṣara*) and imperishable (*akṣara*) entities. All of this is described in the Fifteenth Chapter.

In the last chapter it was said, “Those who worship Me with *ananya-bhakti* transcend the *guṇas* and become qualified to experience *brahma*” (Gītā 14.26). Now one may raise the question, “You have a human form, so how will one attain *brahma-bhāva* (a spiritual nature) through *bhakti-yoga* by worshipping You?” In response Śrī Bhagavān says, “In reality, I am indeed, a human being, but I am also the supreme shelter and support (*pratiṣṭhā*) of that *brahma*.” The Fifteenth Chapter begins with an explanation of this point. In Gītā (14.26) it was said, “After transcending the *guṇas*, they become qualified to realise *brahma*.” What then, is the nature of this material world consisting of the *guṇas*? From where has it been generated? Who are the *jīvas* who cross beyond this material world by the performance of *bhakti*? What is the meaning of *brahma* in the statement ‘They become qualified to realise *brahma*’? Who are You as the *pratiṣṭhā* (shelter and basis) of *brahma*? Expecting these questions, Śrī Bhagavān uses highly ornamental language to describe this material world by saying that it is a wonderful banyan (*aśvattha*) tree. Satya-loka is its topmost region. “The *mahat-tattva* is the first sprout of the seed impregnated by Me into the womb of *prakṛti*.¹

Adhah means that the branches of this tree are extended

downwards to such planets as Svarga, Bhuvah and Bhū, as unlimited *devatās*, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Asuras, Rākṣasas, Pretas, human beings and animals, such as cows, horses, birds, swans, insects and non-moving living entities. For the fruitive workers (non-devotees), this tree gives the fourfold objects of *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa* as its fruits. For this reason, it is called *uttama* (the best).

Another meaning of the word *aśvattha* is, that according to the perception of *bhaktas*, this material world will not exist in the future. In other words, for them it is temporary and subject to destruction. But for non-devotees, it is *avyayam*, eternal. Statements which establish fruitive activities are given in the *Vedas*. *Chandāṁsi* means that those people who desire opulence will perform *yajña* to Vāyu-deva (the *devatā* of air) by offering a white goat, and those who desire progeny will perform *yajña* to the eleven Indras. Since fruitive activities make the material world expand, they are like the leaves on the tree of the *Vedas*. The tree only appears beautiful due to its leaves. Those who know this are called the knowers of the *Vedas*. Also, it is said in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (2.3.1), “This material world is an eternal *aśvattha* (banyan) tree which has its roots upwards and branches downwards.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the previous chapter, it was explained that a *jīva* becomes qualified to experience *brahma* only by *bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is because only Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself is the shelter (*āśraya*) of *brahma*. In the present chapter, *puruṣottama-yoga* is being explained to clearly express information about Kṛṣṇa's *svarūpa*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the origin or root shelter of the material world, is the supreme *tattva*. His *vibhinnāṁśa* (separated parts), the *jīvas*, not recognising Him, have neglected His service, and from time immemorial are bound in the cycle of material existence, birth and death, while wandering

throughout various species of life, suffering the three-fold miseries. They are unable to get out of the cycle of material existence because they repeatedly become attached to the fruits of their actions. In this chapter, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by His causeless mercy, is giving instruction in a very pleasing way about the nature of this material world in order to bring these helpless *jīvas* out of the cycle of *karma* and create in them a feeling of renunciation towards the material world. He explains this subject very simply by comparing the material world to a banyan tree. Just as a banyan tree expands enormously with unlimited branches, sub-branches, leaves, flowers and fruits, in the same way, this material world also expands itself, its various branches being the *Rg*, *Sāma*, *Yajuh* and *Atharva* *Vedas*. Its leaves are the Vedic hymns which establish instantly pleasing fruitive activities. Thus, this tree of material existence appears as the bestower of the fruits of *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa* to the *baddha-jīvas* who are bound by the results of their *karma*. The sight of this tree is so instantly pleasing, that a *baddha-jīva* cannot know that its fruits are poisonous and he becomes attracted to it. However, *bhaktas* who realise that its fruits are poisonous, describe it as a tree that has to be cut with the weapon of renunciation. The name of this tree, *aśvatha*, means *na svah sthāsyāti* (it will not exist in the future). Those who have this understanding that the material world is temporary, are the knowers of the *Vedas*. Bhagavān has clearly refuted the *māyāvādi*'s understanding that this material world is false or a dream. All the statements of *sāstra* and Śrī Bhagavān clearly establish the fact that this material world is a reality, but that it undergoes changes and is periodically annihilated; therefore, it is perishable.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Śrī Bhagavān as say-

ing, “O Arjuna, if you think that it is better to take shelter of material life by following the statements of the *Vedas*, then listen. This material world, which is caused by *karma* (fruitive activities), is a special type of *aśvattha* tree. For those who take shelter of *karma*, this tree is imperishable (ever-existing) and its roots spread upwards. The statements of the *Vedas* which establish fruitive activities are its leaves, and its branches spread downwards. This means that this tree gives the results of the *jīva*’s *karma* through Me, the Supreme Absolute Reality. Those who know the temporary nature of this tree, indeed know its reality.”

ŚLOKA 2

अधश्चोद्धर्वप्रसृतास्तस्य शाखा गुणप्रवृद्धा विषयप्रवालाः।
अधश्च मूलान्यनुसन्तानि कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके॥२॥

*adhaś corddhvam̄ prasṛtās tasya śākhā
guṇa-pravṛddhā viṣaya-pravālāḥ
adhaś ca mūlāny anusantatāni
karmānubandhīni manusya-loke*

tasya—its; *śākhāḥ*—branches; *prasṛtāḥ*—are extended; *adhaḥ*—downwards; *ca*—and; *ūrddhvam*—upwards; *guṇa-pravṛddhāḥ*—nurtured by the three qualities; *viṣaya-pravālāḥ*—its twigs are the sense objects; *ca*—and; *mūlāni*—its roots; (also) *anusantatāni*—extend; *adhaḥ*—downwards; *karmānubandhīni*—generating fruitive activities; *manuṣya-loke*—in human society.

The leaves on the branches of this tree of the material world, in the form of various sense objects, are nurtured by the three *guṇas*. Its branches spread to the lower species of life, such as human beings and animals, as well as to the higher species, such as the

devas. The roots of this banyan tree are the desires for sense enjoyment, which spread downwards to generate the flow of *karma* in human society.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The branches of this tree of the material world are spread everywhere. *Adhaḥ* means in the lower species, such as animals, and *ūrddhvā* means in the higher species, such as the *devatās*. As a tree is nourished by pouring water on it, this tree of the material world is nourished by the different tendencies of the *guṇas*, such as *sattva-guṇa*. Sense objects, such as sound, are its shoots. Moreover, some believe that a great treasure is hidden beneath the original roots of the tree. Like the banyan tree, this tree also has branches and external tangles. Although the origin of the roots is in Brahma-loka, its other roots are in human society. These roots, which take support from *karma* (fruitive activities), are ever-expanding. After undergoing the result of his actions by receiving a body in any of the species, a *jīva* again engages in *karma* in the human form of life.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “The many branches of this tree take support from *tamo-guṇa*, and spread downwards. Many branches are nourished by *rajo-guṇa* and are situated in the intermediate state, meaning that they spread outward. And many branches are supported by *sattva-guṇa* and spread upwards. Material sense pleasures are the shoots of these branches. The external long tangles of this *aśvattha* tree, like that of the banyan tree, search for the fruit of *karma* and spread downwards.”

ŚLOKAS 3-4

न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते नान्तो न चादिर्च संप्रतिष्ठा।
 अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरुद्धमूलमसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्वा॥३॥
 ततः पदं तत् परिमार्गितव्यं यस्मिन् गता न निवर्त्तन्ति भूयः।
 तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी॥४॥

*na rūpam asyeha tathopalabhyate
 nānto na cādir na ca saṃpratiṣṭhā
 aśvattham enam su-virūḍha-mūlam
 asaṅga-śastreṇa dṛḍhenā chittvā
 tataḥ padam tat parimārgitavyam
 yasmin gatā na nivarttanti bhūyah
 tam eva cādyam puruṣam prapadye
 yataḥ pravṛttih prasṛtā purāṇī*

rūpam—the form; *asya*—of this (tree); *tathā*—as described above; *na upalabhyate*—is not perceivable; *ihā*—within this world; *na*—nor; (*is*) *antaḥ*—its end; *na*—nor; *ādīḥ*—its beginning; *na*—nor; *saṃpratiṣṭhā*—its foundation; *ca*—and; *chittvā*—having cut down; *enam*—this; *su-virūḍha-mūlam*—very firmly rooted; *aśvattham*—banyan tree; *dṛḍhena*—with the intense (sharp); *asaṅga-śastreṇa*—axe of detachment; *tataḥ*—then; *parimārgitavyam*—one must search out; *tat*—that; *padam*—place; *yasmin*—whence; *gatāḥ*—having gone; *na nivartanti*—they never return; *bhūyah*—again; *ca*—and; *eva*—indeed; *prapadye*—surrender; *tam*—to that; *ādyam*—primeval; *puruṣam*—person; *yataḥ*—whence; *prasṛtā*—has been expanded; *purāṇī*—this ancient; *pravṛttih*—cycle of birth and death.

The actual form of this tree of material existence, as described above, is not perceivable within this world. Its beginning, end and foundation can not be ascertained. After cutting down this deeply rooted tree of material existence (*aśvattha*) with the sharp

axe of intense detachment, it is imperative to search out the lotus feet of that primeval person, Śrī Bhagavān, which are the root of this beginningless tree of *samsāra*, and take shelter of Him. Having surrendered to and attained Him, from whom the cycle of birth and death in the material world has expanded, one never returns to this *samsāra*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

In this mortal world, the *svariūpa* (actual form) of this tree, as described above, certainly cannot be understood. Many opinions on this tree are found: ‘It is true’; ‘It is false’; ‘It is eternal.’ Because this tree has no limit, it is endless, and because it has no beginning, it is beginningless. It also has no substratum or support. What then, is its basis, or foundation? What is it? A person bereft of *tattva-jñāna* cannot understand it. However, whatever it may be, knowing *asaṅga*, detachment, to be the only remedy for the *jīva*’s endless misery, one should cut down this tree with the weapon of detachment and search for the great wealth present at its roots. Hence, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* describing the *aśvattha* tree. Here the word *asaṅga* in the third *śloka* means detachment from everything. Cutting down this tree with the axe of detachment, one should search for *brahma*, which is the great wealth and root (origin) of the tree.

“What is the nature of that origin?” In response to this, Śrī Bhagavān says, “Having attained that destination, that original state, one never returns to this temporary material world.”

“How is one to search for this?” In response, He says, “One must take shelter of that primeval *puruṣa* and engage in *bhajana* to Him from whom this material world, which is without beginning, has expanded. Therefore, it is imperative to search for Him with *bhakti*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Ordinary people cannot understand the reality of this tree of material existence. That is, they are unable to ascertain its beginning, end and foundation. Even after understanding the sequence of how this material world was created from the *mahat-tattva* to *ahaṅkāra* (the false ego), etc., they still remain unaware of the fact that the original support of material nature is Parameśvara, the actual shelter of everyone. Because the *jīva* is averse to Bhagavān, he is bewildered by *māyā* and is bound to material existence consisting of the three *guṇas*. Impelled by these *guṇas*, he wanders to the lower and higher regions of this material world, and becomes completely helpless and exhausted. He feels the need to cut this tree of material existence, but he cannot find its root. It is only possible to cut attachment to the material world by practising *bhakti* in *sat-saṅga*; this enables one to develop intense detachment from the world. With this understanding, a fortunate *jīva* surrenders to the lotus feet of *paramatattva* Śrī Hari and begins to perform *bhajana* to Him. As a result, he becomes free from the clutches of the material world and attains eternal service to Śrī Bhagavān in His abode. This is also described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.18):

tasyaiva hetoh prayateta kovid
na labhyate yad bhramatām upary adhah
tal labhyate duḥkhavad anyataḥ sukhan
kālena sarvatra gabhīra-ramhasā

Intelligent people should endeavour only for that transcendental happiness of the self, which cannot be attained by wandering from Brahma-loka in the upper planets to Sutala-loka in the lower planets. However, as far as sense pleasures are concerned, they are automatically obtained in due course of time, just as in the course of time we receive miseries, even though we do not desire them.

Moreover, in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.37) it is said:

bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo 'smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet tam
bhaktyaikayeśam guru-devatātmā

The *jīva* has lost his memory due to his aversion to Parameśvara. This aversion has directed the *jīva* to be absorbed in sense objects. In other words, he misidentifies his own self with the body in the external illusory energy consisting of the three *guṇas*. The *guṇas* arouse fear in him because of this absorption. Conditioned *jīvas* are bound by *māyā*. Learned persons should, therefore, take shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Guru, and perform *bhajana* with *ananya-bhakti* unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In this way, they can cross over *māyā*.

ŚLOKA 5

**निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः।
द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञैर्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत्॥५॥**

nirmāna-mohā jita-saṅga-doṣā
adhyātma-nityā vinivṛtta-kāmāḥ
dvandvair vimuktāḥ sukha-duḥkha-saṁjñair
gacchānty amūḍhāḥ padam avyayam tat

amūḍhāḥ—those who are unbewildered (liberated personalities); *nirmāna-mohāḥ*—who are free from pride and delusion; *jita-saṅga-doṣāḥ*—who have conquered degrading attachments; *adhyātma-nityāḥ*—who are always engaged in spiritual practices following the examples of saintly persons; *vinivṛtta-kāmāḥ*—who have abandoned the pursuit for sense pleasure; *vimuktāḥ*—who are fully liberated; *dvandvaiḥ*—from the dualities; *sukha-duḥkha-saṁjñaiḥ*—known as happiness and distress; *gacchānti*—enter; *tat*—that; *avyayam*—imperishable; *padam*—abode.

Only those liberated personalities—who are free from pride and delusion, who have overcome the degradation of false attachment, who are engaged in searching for Paramātmā, who are freed from the desire to enjoy the senses and the dualities of happiness and misery—attain that unchangeable, eternal abode.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

What are the symptoms of people who attain the abode of the primeval *puruṣa*, Śrī Bhagavān, having attained *bhakti* to Him? In response to this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *nirmāna-mohā*. *Adhyātma-nityāḥ* means that those who are concerned with understanding what is eternal and what is temporary remain engaged in deliberation upon Paramātmā and the search for Him.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Here the word *padam avyayam* means the eternal position of bliss. *Prema-mayī sevā* to the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān is the only eternal position. To obtain service to the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān in any one of the *rasas* in His *dhāma*, it is first compulsory to surrender to His lotus feet. But it is not easy to surrender to Him. As long as a *jīva* remains intoxicated by the false ego related to the subtle and gross body, he thinks himself to be the controller of *prakṛti*. In such a state, he disregards Śrī Bhagavān and His *bhaktas*, and does not accept their instructions. But when, by the mercy of Bhagavān or His *bhakta*, the *jīva* is punished by material nature in the form of various miseries, he begins to realise that Parameśvara is the master of *prakṛti* and that he himself is completely powerless and helpless. Birth and death, loss and gain, fame and infamy are all under the control of Parameśvara alone, and the *jīva* is just like a puppet in His hands. Realizing this fact, he surrenders to the feet of

Bhagavān. At that time, his path of *bhakti* becomes blessed and excellent. The present day non-devoted person thinks that this land, country and earth belong to him, and that human society is their controller, but this is an illusory conception. Such an illusory conception is the root cause of bondage and of all miseries. Śaraṇāgati (surrender) alone is the doorway to spiritual life, the realm of *bhakti*.

ŚLOKA 6

न तद्वासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावकः।
यदगत्वा न निवर्त्तन्ते तद्वाम परमं मम॥६॥

na tad bhāsayate sūryo / na śaśāṅko na pāvakaḥ
yat gatvā na nivarttante / tad dhāma paramam mama

na—neither; *sūryah*—the sun; *na*—nor; *śaśāṅkah*—the moon; *na*—nor; *pavakah*—fire; *bhāsayate*—can illuminate; *tat*—that; *paramam*—supreme; *dhāma*—abode; *mama*—of Mine; *tat*—that (place); *yat*—whence; *gatvā*—having gone; *na nivarttante*—one does not return.

Sun, moon and fire cannot illuminate that supreme realm, which is self-effulgent and illuminates everything else. When surrendered persons attain that abode of Mine, they do not return to this world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

“What is the nature of that supreme realm?” In response to this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *na tad*. That place is free from miseries, such as heat and cold, and is self-luminous. “That supreme *dhāma* of Mine is topmost, conscious and beyond the scope of the material senses. It is *tejah*, all-illuminating.” It is said in the *Hari-vamśa Purāṇa* that *parabrahma*, who is superior to *brahma*, has divided the universe and made it appear in various forms. “O

Bhārata! You must know about that concentrated effulgence of Mine (*brahma*).” It is also said in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (2.2.15):

*na tatra sūryo bhāti na candra tārakam
nemā vidyuto bhānti kuto ‘agni*

What to speak of fire, the effulgence of the sun, the light of the moon and stars, and the splendour of lightning, all do not exist there. Everything is illuminated by His self-effulgence only.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *svarūpa* of Bhagavān’s *dhāma* is explained in the present *śloka*. After reaching that abode, one does not have to come back again to the material world. That abode is not illuminated by the sun, moon, fire or lightning. It is self-effulgent. That supreme abode is called Goloka, Kṛṣṇa-loka, Vraja, Gokula or Vṛndāvana. Svayam Bhagavān, Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, eternally performs blissful pastimes in His supreme *dhāma* along with His associates. One can only obtain that *dhāma* by the cultivation of *prema-bhakti*, that is, *rāgānuga-bhakti* which specifically follows the footsteps of the Vraja gopīs. It is impossible to achieve it by any other means. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has indicated that very *dhāma* by the words *paramam mama*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Sun, moon or fire cannot illuminate that immutable *dhāma* of Mine. After reaching that *dhāma*, the *jīva* attains eternal bliss. In reality, the *jīva* is either *baddha* (bound) or *mukta* (liberated). Due to falsely identifying the body with the self, the *jīva* in his bound state desires to associate with matter. In the liberated state, the pure *jīva* always tastes the nectar of My blissful *sevā*. To attain this state, it is imperative for a person situated within this world to cut the *aśvattha* tree in the form of the material world with *asaṅga*, the weapon of detachment.

Attachment to mundane objects is called *saṅga*. The nature of those who are able to give up attachment, even while situated within this mundane world, is *nirguṇa*, and only they achieve *nirguṇa-bhakti*. *Sat-saṅga* is also called *asaṅga*. Therefore, a *jīva* who is bound in this material world should give up attachment to mundane objects and, with the help of *sat-saṅga* (the association of *bhaktas*), cut his bondage to the material world at the very root. The mundane existence of those who pretend to practise *vairāgya* (detachment) by merely accepting the dress of a *sannyāsī* does not cut their material entanglement. When a *jīva* adopts My supremely blissful *bhakti* and gives up all desires that are separate from Me, a secondary result is that he attains *mukti*, or the destruction of his bondage to the material world. Therefore, that *bhakti* which I have described (in the Twelfth Chapter) is the ultimate goal of the *jīvas* who desire eternal auspiciousness.”

In the previous chapter, it was explained that all types of empirical *jñāna* are *saguṇa*, and that only pure *jñāna* which acts as an assistant to *bhakti* is *nirguṇa*. In this chapter, it is shown that all types of *vairāgya* are *saguṇa*, except for that *vairāgya* which arises as a concomitant result of *bhakti*. That *vairāgya* is *nirguṇa*.

ŚLOKA 7

**ममैवाशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।
मनः षष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥७॥**

*mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke / jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ
manah ṣaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi / prakṛti-sthāni karṣati*

eva—certainly; *mama*—My; *sanātanaḥ*—eternal; *aṁśah*—separated part and parcel; *jīva-bhūtaḥ*—who experiences conditioned life; *jīva-loke*—in the world of conditioned living beings; *karṣati*—struggles; *manah*—with the mind; (and) *ṣaṣṭhāni*—the

six; *indriyāṇi*—senses; *prakṛti-sthāni*—which are subject to the influences of material nature.

The eternal *jīvas* in this material world are certainly My separated parts and parcels (*vibhinnāṁśa*). Bound by material nature, they are attracted by the six senses including the mind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“What is the nature of the *jīvas* who, by performing Your *bhakti*, cross beyond this material world and obtain Your *dhāma*?” In response to this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *mamaivāṁśah*. In the Varāha Purāṇa it is said, “The *amṛtas* of Bhagavān are of two types, *svāṁśa* (a personal expansion or part) and *vibhinnāṁśa* (a separated expansion or part). The *jīvas* are *vibhinnāṁśa*, separated parts.” The *jīvas* are eternal, but while living in material bodies, they are bound by mundane attraction through the mind and the five senses. Due to such an ego whereby they think, ‘All these things are mine,’ they become attracted to worldliness as if pulled by a chain bound to their feet.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the present śloka, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining *jīva-tattva*. The *jīva* is an *amṛta* (part) of Bhagavān, but what type of *amṛta* should be understood. Śrī Bhagavān’s *amṛtas* are of two types: *svāṁśa* and *vibhinnāṁśa*. Within the *svāṁśa* category is *viṣṇu-tattva*. Avatāras such as Matsya, Kūrma, Nṛsiṁha and Rāma are *svāṁśa-tattva*. *Jīvas* are *vibhinnāṁśa-tattva*. When *sac-cid-ānanda* Bhagavān is parted from all other energies and is only endowed with His *taṭastha-śakti*, His separated parts are called *vibhinnāṁśa-tattva*.

This is also explained in the following manner: The *jīvas*

who are generated from the *jīva-śakti* or *taṭastha-śakti*, which is non-different from Bhagavān, are *vibhinnāṁśa-tattva*. Some of their characteristics are qualitatively the same as Bhagavān's, and other qualities are different. Hence, their relationship with Bhagavān is inconceivably and simultaneously one and different, *acintya-bheda-abheda-tattva*.

Jīvas have two states: bound and liberated. In the liberated state, the *jīva* is free from illusory designations and remains engaged in service to Bhagavān, but in the bound state, he remains entangled in the material world, being covered by the illusory designations of gross and subtle bodies. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.11.4), this has been explained in the following way:

*ekasyaiva mamāṁśasya / jīvasyaiva mahā-mate
bandho 'syāvidyayānādir / vidyayā ca tathetarah*

O most intelligent Uddhava, the *jīvas* are the separated parts of Me, who am *advitīya-svarūpa* (one without a second, the non-dual Absolute Reality). Due to *avidyā*, they have become bound, and by *vidyā* they attain *mukti*.

And moreover, it is stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.7.5): *yayā sammohito jīvah*. “Due to this external energy, the *jīva*, although transcendental to the *guṇas*, thinks himself a material product and, thus, undergoes the reactions of material suffering.

By speaking this *śloka*, *mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke*, “The *jīva* is My separated part,” Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa herein refutes the illusory conception of those who say that the *jīva* himself is *brahma*.

Besides this, by using the word *sanātanaḥ* (eternal), Śrī Bhagavān refutes the opinion of the *māyāvādīs*. They say that, when *brahma* accepts the shelter of *māyā*, *brahma* is known as the *jīva*, and when freed from *māyā*, he again becomes *brahma*. From this *śloka*, it is clear that the *jīva* is

an eternal entity, *sanātana-tattva*. He can never merge into the existence of anything else, or be destroyed. The existence of the *jīva* is eternal, both in his liberated and in his bound state. The *jīva* always remains a *jīva*. He never becomes *brahma*. This fact has been established in *Gītā* (2.23-24). If the *jīva* had ever been *brahma*, or if he were non-different from *brahma* in all respects, he would not have had to become bound in the material world. In other words, he would not have to suffer material miseries. *Satyam jñānam anantam*. “The Absolute Reality is truth, knowledge and limitless.” According to this statement of *śāstra*, it is impossible for *brahma* to be in illusion or ignorance. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, therefore told the famous *advaita-vādī*, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, “Parameśvara is the controller of *māyā*, and the *jīvas* are under the control of *māyā*. This has been established in *śāstra*. But you are saying that the *jīva* and Īśvara are the same, which is completely against the injunctions of *śāstra*.”

The śruti-s very clearly declare that the *jīva* is not *brahma*: *vasanti yatra puruṣāḥ sarve vaikuṇṭha-mūrtayah* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.15.14). “People who are free from *māyā* can acquire a form suitable to reside in Vaikuṇṭha and serve Śrī Nārāyaṇa, the master of Vaikuṇṭha.” In other words, after obtaining *sārūpya-mukti* (a spiritual nature and form) they serve Śrī Nārāyaṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s words in the present *śloka* such as *jīva-bhūtah*, *mamāṁśah* and *sanātanah* also show the futility of the opinion of those who say that this material world is false, and that the *jīva* and *brahma* are one.

Other *māyāvādīs* (*pratibimba-vādīs*) accept the *jīva* and inert matter to be a reflection of *brahma*, but this conception is also speculative and futile for the following reasons. 1) If *brahma* is all-pervading, what possibility is there of His having a reflection? 2) Who is the person who sees the re-

lection, and where exactly is He reflected? If the *jīva* is considered to be the seer, and *avidyā* (ignorance) the place of reflection, one has to accept the existence of two objects which are separate from *brahma*, that is, the *jīva* and *māyā* in the form of ignorance. How, then, can *brahma* be *ekam evādvitīyam*, ‘one without a second’, and how can He be all-pervading? 3) *Brahma* is not the object of perception, in other words, He is without energy, transformation or qualities and is *nirguna-tattva*. How can transcendental *brahma* be divided if even the material element sky, cannot be divided? Therefore, the *māyāvāda* philosophy, that *brahma* has divided into parts as the *jīva* (*pariccheda-vāda*), is also completely baseless. *Śāstra* says that *brahma* is *avikārī*, without any transformations. This means He cannot be transformed into a *jīva* or into matter. We see, therefore, that both the concepts of the *māyāvādīs*: *pratibimba-vāda* (that the *jīva* and inert matter are a reflection of *brahma*) and *pariccheda-vāda* (that *brahma* has divided into parts as the *jīva*) are illusory. One may argue that this assertion contradicts Vedic statements such as *sarvam khalv idam brahma*, “Everything is *brahma*,” and *tat tvam asi*, “You are that” (meaning that the *jīva* is *brahma*). However, all *śāstras*, including the *Upaniṣads* and *Vedānta*, explain that it is Bhagavān’s *śakti*, and not Bhagavān Himself, which has transformed into the *jīvas* and the universe. Bhagavān (*brahma*) is non-different from His *śakti*, so the *jīva* and this material world, which are transformations of the *śakti* of *brahma*, are also non-different from *brahma*. That there is a difference between the *jīva*, *brahma* and Bhagavān has been established from the statements of the *śrutis*, such as *nityo nityānām cetanāś cetanānām*, and in various statements in *Gītā*. For example, *Gītā* (15.18) states: “I am *puruṣottama-tattva*, the Supreme Person, beyond both perishable and imperishable entities.”

Thus, everything consists of *brahma*, but *parabrahma* is Śrī

Kṛṣṇa Himself, and is indeed beyond everything. The *māyāvādīs* falsely assert that the statement *tat tvam asi* in the *Upaniṣads* means ‘you are that’, but this speculation is against the injunctions of *śāstra*. The real import of this statement is, ‘you belong to Him; you are the servant of Bhagavān.’ All Vedic statements have established this to be the meaning of *tat tvam asi*.

Śaṅkarācārya explains the following two statements:

*ṛtam pibanto sukṛtasya loke guhāṁ
praviṣṭau parame parārdhe*

Kaṭha Upaniṣad 1.3.1

Having entered within the cave of the heart, both Paramātmā and the *vijñānātmā* (self-realised soul) drink the nectar of the truth for a very long time.

And:

*guhāṁ praviṣṭāv ātmānau hi tad-darśanāt
Brahma-sūtra 1.2.113*

Certainly the two souls have entered the cave so that the Supreme Lord may reveal His glories to the *jīvātmā*.

Śaṅkarācārya, what to speak of others, has accepted the existence of two separate *puruṣas* due to the grammatical construction of the word *ātmānau*. These two *puruṣas* are *vijñānātmā* (the *jīva*) and Paramātmā. In various places in the *śrutis*, the difference between the *jīva* and *brahma* has been shown by explaining that Parameśvara is *vibhu* (all-pervading), and the *jīva* is *aṇu* (atomic). Some examples of this are as follows:

- (i) *yathāgneḥ kṣudrā visphulingā* (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.1.20*). “...just as tiny sparks from a fire fly in all directions.”
- (ii) *bālāgra-śata-bhāgasya śatadhā kalpitasya ca* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 5.9*). “A particle one hundredth the size of the tip

of a hair and again divided by one hundred is considered to be the size of the *jīva*, and such *jīvas* are declared to be eternal.”

(iii) *eṣo 'nur ātmā cetasā veditavyo* (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 3.1.9). “This tiny *ātmā*, who reposes on the five kinds of vital airs, should be understood through the mind. The entire consciousness of the living beings is extended throughout by those life airs, and in the fully pure state of consciousness, that *ātmā* becomes manifest.”

(iv) *yathā samudre vahavaś tarāṅgā* (*Tattva-muktāvali* 10). “... as in the ocean there are many waves.”

(v) *aṇu hi jīvarṇ prati-deha-bhinnam* (*Daśa-ślokī* by Nimbarka). “The *jīvātmās* are certainly of atomic dimensions and are situated in every body.”

(vi) *hlādinyā saṁvidāśliṣṭah sac-cid-ānanda iśvarah / svāvidyā-samvṛto jīvah saṅkleśa nikarākaraḥ* (*Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī*). “The Supreme Lord, who is the embodiment of eternity, cognisance and bliss, is embraced by full cognisance of His pleasure potency.”

(vii) *yah sarveṣu bhuteṣu tiṣṭhan sarvebhyo bhūtebhyo'ntaro* (*Bṛhad-Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 3.7.15). “The *jīvātmā*, being immersed in ignorance of his true nature, experiences helplessness amidst a multitude of sufferings.”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “If you doubt how the *jīvas* attain these two states, then listen. I am Bhagavān, the complete *sac-cid-ānanda*. I have two types of *amṛta*: *svāṁśa* and *vibhinnāṁśa*. As *svāṁśa*, I perform *līlās* in forms such as Rāma and Nṛsiṁha. As My *vibhinnāṁśa*, I have manifested *jīvas*, who are My eternal servants. In *svāṁśa-tattva* the ego of My Supreme Lordship fully exists (*ahaṁ-tattva*). In My *vibhinnāṁśa*, however, I do not have *ahaṁ-tattva*, the ego of being Parameśvara, and therefore a separate, individual *ahaṁ-tattva* ego appears. This *jīva*, *vibhinnāṁśa-tattva*, has

two states: *mukta* (liberated) and *baddha* (bound). In both states, the *jīva* is eternal. In the liberated state, the *jīva* is completely dependent upon Me and has no relationship with the material nature. In the bound state the *jīva* accepts the six senses (the mind and the five external senses) as his own and identifies with them while being situated in the material body (*prakṛti*), which is his designation.”

ŚLOKA 8

शरीरं यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युक्त्रामतीश्वरः ।
गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुगन्धानिवाशयात् ॥८॥

*śarīram yad avāpnoti / yac cāpy utkrāmatiśvarah
gr̥hītvaitāni samyāti / vāyur gandhān ivāśayat*

iva—just as; *vāyuḥ*—the wind; (takes) *gandhān*—scents; *āśayāt*—from a container (of flowers); *iśvarah*—the lord (of the senses of the material body, *jīvātmā*); *yat* *yat*—from whatever (object of contemplation); *utkrāmati*—passes over (at death); *āpnōti*—he accepts; (a new) *śarīram*—body; *ca*—and; *gr̥hītvā*—taking; *etāni*—these (the mind and the six senses); *samyāti*—he travels.

Just as the wind carries the aroma of flowers, so the embodied *jīva* carries the six senses and their desires from whichever body he abandons to whichever body he achieves.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“What does he do when he is attracted by the senses?” Expecting this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *śarīram yad avāpnoti*. Whatever gross body is attained by the *jīva*, the master of the body and senses, is controlled by *karma*. From whichever body he leaves, he carries these senses along with the subtle elements from his previous body. He then enters a new body, just as the wind

carries an aroma along with subtle elements from its source, such as a flower garland or sandalwood, to another place.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrī Bhagavān is explaining how a *baddha-jīva* achieves another body. After death, his bound state does not cease. Until a *jīva* becomes free from the material world by performing *bhagavad-bhajana*, he has to take repeated births according to the impressions of his previous actions. By using an example, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining how he gets a new body. *Vāyu* (the wind) carries the aroma from flowers but does not carry the flower, which remains where it is. Similarly, the *jīva* gives up his gross body at the time of death and accepts the shelter of another gross body, carrying the mind with its desires and the senses along with him. In this way, he repeatedly accepts different bodies according to the actions he performs, based on his desires. This is also described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.22.36):

*tan mamākhyāhi govinda / durvibhāvyam anātmabhiḥ
na hy etat prāyaśo loke / vidvāṁsaḥ santi vañcitāḥ*

It is only the mind which has the impressions of *karma*, and along with the five senses, travels from one body to another. The *ātmā* is different from that, but he follows the mind because of *ahaṅkāra*, the false ego.

This is also stated by Kapiladeva in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.31.43):

*dehena jīva-bhūtena / lokāl lokam anuvrajan
bhuñjāna eva karmāṇi / karoty avirataṁ pumān*

Due to his particular type of body, the conditioned *jīva* wanders from one planet to another, following his material desires. In this way, he involves himself in fruitive activities and enjoys the result incessantly.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “It is not that one’s bound state of life ends after death. The *jīva* gets another gross body according to his past actions, and in due course of time, he will also give that up. While going from one body to another, he carries with him desires for activities related to the body. Just as the wind travels to another place carrying the aroma from its source, such as flowers or sandalwood, the *jīva* travels from one gross body to another gross body along with the subtle elements and the senses.”

ŚLOKA 9

श्रोत्रञ्चक्षुः स्पर्शनञ्च रसनं व्याणमेव च।
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते॥९॥

śrotrañ caksuh sparśanañ ca / rasanam ghrāṇam eva ca
adhiṣṭhāya manaś cāyam / viṣayān upasevate

adhiṣṭhāya—while taking shelter; *śrotram*—of ears; *caksuh*—eyes; *sparśanam*—the sense of touch; *rasanam*—the tongue; *ghrāṇam*—the nose; *ca*—and; *eva*—especially; *manah*—the mind; *ayam*—this (*jīvātmā*); *upasevate*—enjoys; *viṣayān*—sense objects.

Taking shelter of the ears, eyes, tongue, nose, sense of touch and also the mind within different bodies, the *jīva* enjoys various sense objects.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“What does the *jīva* do after reaching the next body?” In response to this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *śrotram*. Taking shelter of the senses such as the ears and mind, he enjoys sense objects such as sound.

ŚLOKA 10

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुज्जानं वा गुणान्वितम्।
विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥१०॥

*utkrāmantam sthitam vāpi / bhuñjānam vā guṇānvitam
vimūḍhā nānupaśyanti / paśyanti jñāna-cakṣuṣah*

vimūḍhāḥ—fools; *na anupaśyanti*—do not perceive in accordance with *śāstra*, *sādhu* and *guru*; (*the jīvātmā*) *utkrāmantam*—leaving (the body); *sthitam*—situated (in the body); *vā api vā*—or even; *bhuñjānam*—while enjoying; *guṇānvitam*—through his senses; (but) *cakṣuṣah*—those who have eyes; *jñāna*—of divine knowledge; (actually) *paśyanti*—see.

The foolish, who are bereft of discrimination, cannot perceive with their senses the *jīva* when he leaves the body, while he dwells in the body, or even while he enjoys through his senses. Those who are wise, however, can see all this.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

If Arjuna says, “I have not understood properly the *tattva* of how the *jīva* leaves his body, how he dwells in it, and how he enjoys the sense objects while staying in it,” in response, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *utkrāmantam*. “People bereft of wisdom cannot understand the *ātmā* along with the senses, either when he leaves the body, while he lives in the body, or while he enjoys the sense objects. But those with the eyes of knowledge, *jñāna-cakṣu*, can realise the bound state of the *jīva*.

ŚLOKA 11

यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम्।
यतन्तोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः॥११॥

*yatanto yoginaś cainam / paśyanty ātmany avasthitam
yatanto'py akṛta-ātmānō / nainaṁ paśyanty acetasaḥ*

yatantaḥ—endeavouring; *yogināḥ*—persons engaged in *bhakti*; *ca*—indeed; *paśyanti*—perceive; *enam*—him (the *ātmā*); *avasthitam*—situated; *ātmani*—in the body; *akṛta-ātmānah*—those whose minds are not purified; (and) *acetasaḥ*—are unconscious; *api*—even though; *yatantaḥ*—endeavouring; *na paśyanti*—do not perceive; *enam*—him.

Endeavouring *yogīs* can perceive this *ātmā* which is situated within the body, but those whose thoughts are impure and who are bereft of wisdom cannot see the *ātmā*, even though striving to do so.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Only the striving *yogīs* who have wisdom know the *ātmā*; not those with impure hearts.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Endeavouring *yogīs* who have wisdom can experience or perceive the *ātmā* situated within the body by practising *bhakti-yoga* in the form of hearing and chanting. But those whose thoughts are impure and who are bereft of *bhagavad-bhakti* cannot know *ātma-tattva*, the science of the self. This is incomprehensible to them.

ŚLOKA 12

यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्वासयतेऽखिलम्।
यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम्॥१२॥

*yad āditya-gatam tejo / jagad bhāsayate'khilam
yac candramasi yac cāgnau / tat tejo viddhi māmakam*

tejah—the splendour; *yat*—which; *āditya-gatam*—comes from the sun; (and which) *bhāsayate*—illuminates; *akhilam*—the entire; *jagat*—universe; *tat*—that; *tejah*—splendour; *yat*—which; *candramasi*—is in the moon; *ca*—and; *yat*—which; *agnau*—is in fire; *viddhi*—you must understand; (to be) *māmakam*—Mine.

Know that the splendour of the sun which illuminates the entire universe, as well as the splendour of the moon and fire are coming from Me alone.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“I alone favour the *jīva* in his bound state, in the form of the sun, moon and so forth, enabling him to obtain all his necessities.” This is explained here beginning with the words *yad āditya-gatam*, and further explained in the following two *Gītā* *ślokas*. “Being the splendour of the rising sun in the morning from the Udaya mountain, I illuminate the universe for the commencement of *karma* (action), which fulfils the *jīvas’* overt and latent desires for sense enjoyment. The splendour of the moon and fire is also Mine. I, Myself, have the names Sūrya, Candra, etc. They have been counted as My *vibhūtis* because they are parts of My splendour.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

A person who is bereft of *bhakti*, and is thus ignorant, mistakes the body for the self. He cannot understand that

Parameśvara is the original cause behind the existence or manifestation of all entities, feelings, elements, actions and qualities of this world. He thinks that the root cause of all existence is earth, water, fire, air, sky, moon, sun, electricity and so on. Here Śrī Kṛṣṇa clearly says that the sun, moon, fire and electricity manifest from Him alone. Bhagavān alone is the bestower of enjoyment and liberation upon the *jīva*. He creates seen and unseen varieties of enjoyment for the *jīvas* by making His partial splendour enter the sun, moon, etc.

A *jīva* can easily comprehend the above *tattva* by practising *bhakti-yoga*. In this way, He can understand this aspect of Śrī Bhagavān's splendour (*vibhūti-yoga*) that He is explaining. However, a *jīva* who is bewildered by *māyā* can never realise this reality. Being overpowered by the mundane false ego, he endeavours in vain to establish his control over all things, such as water, air, sun, moon and wind, in order to exploit them for his own material enjoyment. It is best for him to give up these futile endeavours and follow the process of *bhakti* by surrendering to Bhagavān. By this simple and easy process, he can attain eternal peace and happiness, otherwise not.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "If you say, 'A *jīva* situated in this material world is unable to deliberate on anything except matter, so how is it possible for him to deliberate on conscious reality?' then the answer is that the splendour of My spiritual existence is also in this material world. By taking support from it, it is possible to gradually attain a pure spiritual state which results in the destruction of the material state. The splendour in the sun, moon and fire which illuminates the whole world is indeed only Mine."

ŚLOKA 13

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा।
पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः॥१३॥

*gām āviśya ca bhūtāni / dhārayāmy aham ojasā
puṣṇāmi cauṣadhiḥ sarvāḥ / somo bhūtvā rasātmakaḥ*

ca—and; *ojasā*—by My potency; *āviśya*—infusing; *gām*—the earth; *aham*—I; *dhārayāmi*—sustain; (all) *bhūtāni*—beings; *ca*—and; *bhūtvā*—becoming; *rasa-ātmakaḥ*—the nectarean; *somah*—moon; *puṣṇāmi*—I nourish; *sarvāḥ*—all; *auṣadhiḥ*—plant life.

By infusing the earth with My potency, I alone sustain all living beings. Becoming the nectar-filled moon, I supply nourishment to all plant life.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“By infusing the earth with My *śakti*, I support all moving and non-moving living entities. I alone become Candra, the moon, nourishing all plant life.”

ŚLOKA 14

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः।
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यत्रं चतुर्विधम्॥१४॥

*aham vaiśvānaro bhūtvā / prāṇinām deham āśritah
prāṇā-pāna-samāyuktaḥ / pacāmy annam catur-vidham*

āśritah—taking shelter; *deham*—of the bodies; *prāṇinām*—of living entities; (and) *bhūtvā*—becoming; *vaiśvānaraḥ*—the fire of digestion; *prāṇa-apāna-samāyuktaḥ*—conjointly with the out-going and in-coming airs; *aham*—I; *pacāmi*—digest; *catuḥ-vidham*—the four kinds; *annam*—of food.

As the fire of digestion in the bodies of the living entities,
I combine with the out-going and in-coming airs to digest
the four types of foodstuffs.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“I, in the form of the digestive fire combined with its stimulator, the *prāṇa* and *apāna* airs, digest the four types of foodstuffs that are chewed, drunk, licked and sucked.” Foods that are broken with the teeth, such as chickpeas, etc., are called chewed. Sugar candy is licked, sugar cane is sucked and sugar cane juice is drunk.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

All embodied beings, from the worm to humans, do not even have the independent power to digest their foodstuffs. Śrī Bhagavān says, “In the form of the fire of digestion, I digest the food in the body of the *jīvas*.” What, therefore, is one who is even unable to digest his food capable of doing? It is essential that one surrender to the lotus feet of Bhagavān and give up the false ego of depending on his own strength and intelligence. It should also be understood that it is only Parameśvara who enters the earth and sustains all living entities by His potency. Nothing is possible without His potency.

ŚLOKA 15

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टो मत्तः स्मृतिर्जानमपोहनञ्च।
वेदैश्च सर्वेरहमेव वेद्यो वेदान्तकृद्विविदेव चाहम्॥१५॥

*sarvasya cāham hṛdi sanniviṣṭo
mattah smṛtir jñānam apohanañ ca
vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyo
vedānta-kṛd veda-vid eva cāham*

*aham—I; sanniviṣṭah—am situated; hṛdi—in the hearts;
sarvasya—of all; ca—and; mattah—from Me come; smṛtiḥ—*

remembrance; *jñānam*—knowledge; *ca*—and; *apohanam*—forgetfulness; *sarvaiḥ*—by all; *vedaiḥ*—the Vedas; *eva*—only; *aham*—I; *vedyāḥ*—am to be known; *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *aham*—I (am); *vedānta-kṛt*—the compiler of the *Vedānta-sūtras*; *ca*—and; *veda-vit*—the knower of the *Vedas*.

I am situated as *Antaryāmī* in the hearts of all living entities. From Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness. By all the *Vedas* I alone am to be known. Indeed, I am the originator and the compiler as well as the knower of *Vedānta*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Just as I am *vaiśvānara*, the digestive fire in the stomach, I, *Antaryāmī*, have entered the hearts of all moving and non-moving living entities as the principle of memory. From Me, one remembers those objects he has previously experienced, and when the senses contact sense objects, knowledge comes. Loss of memory and knowledge also occur because of Me.” After Śrī Bhagavān explains the assistance He provides to the *jīva* in his bound state, He goes on to explain how He arranges for the *jīva* to attain the liberated state. “I am the compiler of *Vedānta* through My *avatāra* *Veda-Vyāsa*, therefore, I alone know the meaning of the *Vedas*. In other words, nobody except Me knows the meaning of the *Vedas*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “I am situated as *Īśvara* in the hearts of all *jīvas*. According to the results of the *jīvas’* past actions, they acquire memory, knowledge to continue their deeds, and also forgetfulness of their past lives. Therefore, I am not only *brahma*, who pervades the whole universe, I am also *Paramātmā*, situated in the hearts of the *jīvas*, giving them the fruit of their *karma*.

Furthermore, I am not just the *jīva*'s worshipable *brahma* and Paramātmā, but I am also the instructor of the *jīvas*, bestowing eternal auspiciousness upon them through the Vedas. I am Bhagavān, and I alone am to be known by all the Vedas. I am the compiler and knower of *Vedānta*. Therefore, I manifest as *brahma* for the highest eternal auspiciousness of all *jīvas*, and as Īśvara or Paramātmā, I reside within their hearts and also pervade *prakṛti*. As Bhagavān, I bestow the supreme transcendental goal. In these three manifestations, I deliver the *buddha-jīvas*."

ŚLOKA 16

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च।
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते॥१६॥

*dvāv imau puruṣau loke / kṣaraś cākṣara eva ca
kṣarah sarvāṇi bhūtāni / kūṭa-stho'kṣara ucyate*

loke—in this world; (*there are*) *eva*—only; *imau*—these; *dvau*—two; (*kinds of*) *puruṣau*—persons; *kṣarah*—the fallible; *ca*—and; *akṣarah*—the infallible; *ca*—and; *ucyate*—it is said; *sarvāṇi*—all; *bhūtāni*—living entities; (*are*) *kṣarah*—fallible; (*and*) *kūṭa-stah*—the unchangeable (*brahma* or Paramātmā); (*is*) *akṣarah*—infallible.

In the fourteen planetary systems, two *puruṣas* are famous: *kṣara* (the fallible) and *akṣara* (the infallible). All moving and non-moving living entities are called *kṣara*, and the immutable *puruṣa* (*kūṭa-stha*) is called *akṣara*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

"Since I alone am the knower of the Vedas, I will speak the essence of the Vedas briefly. Listen carefully." To explain

this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this and the next two *ślokas* beginning here with the words *dvāv imau*. In this universe consisting of the fourteen planetary systems, there are two conscious *puruṣas* (beings). Who are they? In answer to this, Śrī Bhagavān says, “One who fails to act according to his constitutional identity is *kṣara* (the fallible) *jīva*, and He who never falls from His own *svarūpa* is *akṣara* (the imperishable) *brahma*.” Śruti says, “Brāhmaṇas, the knowers of *brahma*, call Him *akṣara*.” Also in *smṛti*, only *brahma* is called *akṣara*: *akṣaram brahma paramam*. Again, to specifically explain the meanings of the words *kṣara* and *akṣara*, Śrī Bhagavān says: *sarvāṇi bhūtāni*. Only the *jīva* fails to act according to his original, spiritual identity due to ignorance since time immemorial. Being bound by his *karma*, he wanders throughout all species of life beginning from Brahmad, the aggregate self, down to the non-moving beings. However, the second *puruṣa* is *akṣara* (infallible), and is *kūṭa-stha*, that is, in His same infallible *svarūpa*, He is all-pervasive. According to the *Amara-koṣa* dictionary, *kūṭa-stha* means one who is all-pervading, who does not change His eternal *svarūpa* and who remains in one form.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “If you say that *prakṛti* is one, then you, Arjuna, have understood. But if you have not understood how many conscious *puruṣas* there are, then listen. In reality, there are only two types of *puruṣas* in this world: *kṣara* and *akṣara*. The conscious *jīvas* emanating as the *vibhinnāṁśa* are *kṣara-puruṣa*. The *jīva* is called *kṣara-puruṣa* because his nature is *taṭastha*; hence, he has the tendency to fall down from his constitutional position. The *svāṁśa-tattva*, who never fall from Their *svarūpa*, are called *akṣara-puruṣa*.” Another name for *akṣara-puruṣa* is *kūṭa-stha* (the unchangeable) *puruṣa*. The *kūṭa-stha* *puruṣa* manifests in three ways:

(1) That *akṣara-puruṣa* who pervades the whole universe, and is the negative aspect of the manifested universe, is *brahma*. Therefore, *brahma* is a *tattva* only related with the universe. It is not an independent *tattva*.

(2) The partial manifestation of transcendence, the refuge and indwelling witness of the conscious *jīva* in the universe, is *Paramātmā*. He is also a *tattva* relative only to the universe, and is thus not an absolute *tattva*.

(3) The third manifestation of *kūṭa-stha* is *bhagavat-tattva*, Śrī Bhagavān Himself. This will be explained in the eighteenth *śloka*.

ŚLOKA 17

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥१७॥

*uttamah puruṣas tv anyah / paramātmety udāhṛtaḥ
yo loka-trayam āviṣya / bibharti avyaya iśvarah*

tu—however; (*there is*) *anyah*—another; *uttamah*—transcendental; *puruṣah*—personality; *udāhṛtaḥ*—described; (*by the sages*) *iti*—as; *parama-ātmā*—the Supersoul; (*He is*) *iśvarah*—controller; *avyayah*—the immutable; *yah*—who; *āviṣya*—entering; *loka-trayam*—the three worlds; *bibharti*—maintains (*them*).

There is, however, another superior *akṣara-puruṣa* known as *Paramātmā*. He is *Īśvara*, the unchanging controller who enters and sustains the three worlds.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

After explaining *brahma*, the worshipable reality of the *jñānīs*, in this *śloka* beginning with the word *uttamah*, Śrī Bhagavān explains *Paramātmā*, the worshipable object of the *yogīs*. The word *tu* (but) indicates a characteristic which is distinctly different from the previously described *akṣara-*

puruṣa (brahma). It was said in Gītā (6.46) that yogīs are superior to jñānīs: *jñānibhyo'pi mato 'dhikah karmibhyaś cādhiko yogī*. From this statement, it is understood that the Absolute Reality manifests in a superior and specific way according to the advancement and speciality of the worshipper.

Paramātma-tattva is being explained as He who is Īsvara, the controller, and who is *avyayaḥ*, without transformation, who enters, supports and maintains the three worlds. This is Paramātmā.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “The second akṣara (infallible) *puruṣa*, Paramātmā, is superior to the first akṣara-puruṣa, *brahma*. He is Īsvara. Entering the three worlds, He is situated as their maintainer.”

ŚLOKA 18

यस्मात् क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।
अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥१८॥

yasmāt kṣaram atīto'ham / akṣarād api cottamah
ato'smi loke vede ca / prathitah puruṣottamah

yasmāt—because; *aham*—I; (*am*) *atītaḥ*—transcendental; *kṣaram*—to the fallible; *ca*—and; *api*—even; *uttamah*—transcendental; *akṣarāt*—to the infallible; *ataḥ*—therefore; *asmi*—I am; *prathitah*—renowned; *ca*—both; *loke*—in the world; (*and*) *vede*—in the Vedas; (*as*) *puruṣa-uttamah*—the Supreme Person.

Since I am beyond *kṣara-tattva* (the fallible *jīva*), and even excel *akṣara-tattva* (the two fold *puruṣa, brahma* and Paramātmā), I am well known both in this world and in the Vedas as Puruṣottama, the Supreme Person.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

After explaining Paramātmā, the worshipable object of the yogīs, Śrī Bhagavān describes *bhagavat-tattva*, the worshipable Deity of the *bhaktas*. Of the *bhagavat-tattva* forms, only His own Kṛṣṇa *svarūpa* is renowned as Puruṣottama. Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *yasmāt* to explain the term Puruṣottama and His supremacy. This *svarūpa-tattva*, the reality of His form, is transcendental to the *kṣara* (fallible) *puruṣa*, the *jīvātmā*. He is also superior to *akṣara-brahma*, and to the immutable, *nirvikāra* Paramātmā. According to Gītā (6.47): *yoginām api sarveṣāṁ / mad-gatenāntarātmanā*. “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.” The advancement of the *sādhaka*’s worship is established by the superiority and speciality of his worshipable Deity. Since Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the supreme manifestation of Absolute Reality, one who worships Him is the topmost yogī. Among all supermost worshipable realities (*bhagavat-tattva*), the superiority of Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is established over Vaikuṇṭha-nātha Nārāyaṇa by the word *ca*. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.3.28) Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī says: “Some personalities are His portions and parts of His portions, but Kṛṣṇa alone is Svayam Bhagavān.” According to this statement of Sūta Gosvāmī, Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Reality.

Although the three words *brahma*, Paramātmā and Bhagavān explain the one Transcendental Reality, who is *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, there is no difference in Their *svarūpa*, true constitutional nature. Also, in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.9.35), it is said: *svarūpa-dvayābhāvāt*, “You do not have two *svarūpas*.” Yet, due to the differences in *sādhana* and in the results obtained by those who worship *brahma*, Paramātmā and Bhagavān, there seems to be a difference in that one transcendental reality. *Jñāna*, *yoga* and *bhakti* are the respective means for the *jñānīs*, *yogīs* and *bhaktas*.

to attain their particular goals of *brahma*, Paramātmā and Bhagavān. In fact, the result of *jñāna* and *yoga* is only *mokṣa*, whereas the result of *bhakti* is to become a loving associate of Bhagavān. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.12), it is said: “*Brahma-jñāna* in the form of *naiṣkarmya* (freedom from material affinity) does not appear very beautiful or auspicious when it is bereft of *bhakti* to Bhagavān.” And in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.5), it is said: “O great personality, in the past there were many *yogīs* in this world who offered all their activities to Your lotus feet when they could not achieve You by the processes of *yoga* and so forth. Only then could they achieve *bhakti* to You, by which they realised Your *svarūpa*, and very easily attained Your supreme abode.”

From these statements, it is understood that without *bhakti* one cannot attain *mokṣa* by the processes of *jñāna* and *yoga*. It is imperative for the worshippers of *brahma* and Paramātmā to perform *bhagavad-bhakti* in order for them to achieve perfection in the results of their respective practices. There is no need, however, for the worshippers of Bhagavān to worship *brahma* or Paramātmā to attain perfection in their goal. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.31), it is said: “The processes of *jñāna* and *vairāgya* in this world are not considered as the means to attain the highest perfection for a person who is engaged in *bhakti-yoga* to Me.” Furthermore, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.32-33) states: “Whatever results one attains by the performance of such processes as *karma*, *tapasyā*, *jñāna* and *vairāgya*, My *bhaktas* can easily attain by the process of *bhakti*, be it *Svarga*, *mokṣa*, My *Vaikuṇṭha-dhāma*, or whatever. A person who takes shelter of Śrī Nārāyaṇa achieves the four goals of human life (*dharma*, *artha*, *karma* and *mokṣa*) without performing separate *sādhanas* to achieve them.”

It is seen that by the worship of Bhagavān, one can achieve the results of Svarga, *mukti* or *prema*, but one cannot attain *prema* by the worship of *brahma* and Paramātmā. Even though *brahma* and Paramātmā do not differ from Bhagavān on the basis of *tattva*, only the supremacy of Bhagavān is being glorified here.

A flame, a lamp and a big fire are all luminous objects and thus, non-different in nature, yet the large fire is the most effective in removing the miseries of those suffering from cold. And superior to the big fire is the sun. Similarly, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the topmost Absolute Reality. *Mokṣa*, in the form of *nirvāṇa*, attained by perfectly worshipping *brahma*, is granted by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to even those people who are envious of Him and who are highly sinful, such as Aghāsura, Bakāsura and Jarāsandha. Therefore, Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has appropriately commented on the statement, “I am the support of *nirviśeṣa-brahma*.” Śrīla Madhusūdana Sarasvatī has also established the supremacy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa through the following statements: “Sādhakas who want to begin their eternal good fortune should constantly perform the *bhajana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra, whose form is described in the śrutis as *sac-cid-ānanda*, whose complexion is the hue of fresh rainclouds, who is the very garland of the Vraja *gopīs*, who is the means for intelligent people to cross over the ocean of the material world, and whose *avatāras* perform *līlās* to remove the burden of the earth. I do not know any other reality superior to lotus-eyed Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who has a face like a full moon, who is adorned with a flute in His hands, who wears yellow garments, and whose lips are reddish like the *bimba* fruit. Various śāstras give evidence of the wonderful glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Those who cannot tolerate this are fools and destined for hell.” By these statements, Śrīla Madhusūdana Sarasvatī has

established the excellence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, it is improper to voice one's disagreement with this explanation of these three Gītā ślokas beginning from *dvāv imu* (15.16).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

This subject has been described more clearly in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.11):

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvam / yaj jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmeti / bhagavān iti śabdyate*

Those who are *tattva-vit* call the Absolute Reality *advaya-jñāna*, non-dual knowledge. Some know that very *advaya-jñāna* as *brahma*, some call Him Paramātmā, and some call Him Bhagavān.

Jñānīs experience that same *para-tattva* as *brahma* through their practice of *jñāna-yoga*. *Yogīs* realise the same reality as Paramātmā, and by *bhakti-yoga*, *bhaktas* see Him as Bhagavān. By *aiśvarya-mayī bhakti* (majestic devotion), *bhaktas* realise and render service unto that *para-tattva* as Vaikuṇṭha-nātha Nārāyaṇa, and by *mādhurya-mayī-prema bhakti*, the process of worship in the moods of Vraja (*vraja-bhāva*), they see Him as Svayam Bhagavān Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara. Realisation of *brahma*, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān is not the same. There is a gradation. By constitutional nature, water, ice and mist are one (water), although water is not called ice or mist, nor is ice called mist or water. In the same way, Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the pinnacle of *para-tattva*. The first realisation of that *para-tattva* is *brahma*, the second realisation is Paramātmā, and the third realisation is Svayam Bhagavān. These three perceptions are not the same. Therefore, in *sāstra*, *parabrahma* is described as superior to *brahma*. This has been very clearly explained in Gītā (14.27): *brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham*. “I alone am the basis of that *nirviśeṣa-brahma*.” The adjective *param* before *brahma* and before *ātmā*

establishes the superiority of *parabrahma* and *Paramātmā* over *brahma* and the *ātmā* respectively. But the adjective *param* is never used before the word *Bhagavān*. Therefore, *Svayam Bhagavān* alone is the topmost limit of *para-tattva*; *Paramātmā* and *brahma* are just His two manifestations. The bodily effulgence of Kṛṣṇa is called *brahma*, and the portion of His portion is called *Paramātmā*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “The third and topmost *akṣara-puruṣa* is called *Bhagavān*. I am that very *bhagavat-tattva*. I am transcendental to *kṣara-puruṣa* (the *jīva*), and even superior to the two other *akṣara-puruṣas*: *brahma* and *Paramātmā*. I am, therefore celebrated as *Puruṣottama*, both in this world and in the *Vedas*. This *siddhānta* should be understood: there are two *puruṣas*, *kṣara* and *akṣara*. *Akṣara-puruṣa* has three manifestations. The general manifestation is *brahma*, a higher manifestation is *Paramātmā*, and the supreme manifestation is *Bhagavān*.”

ŚLOKA 19

यो मामेवमसंमृद्धो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम्।
स सर्वविद्वज्ञति मां सर्वभावेन भारत॥१९॥

*yo mām evam asammūḍho / jānāti puruṣottamam
sa sarva-vid bhajati mām / sarva-bhāvena bhārata*

bhārata—O scion of *Bhārata*; *sah*—he; *yah*—who; (is) *asam-mūḍhaḥ*—undeluded; (and) *jānāti*—knows; *mām*—Me; *evam*—thus; (as) *puruṣa-uttamam*—the Supreme Person; (is) *sarva-vit*—a knower of all (truths); (and) *bhajati*—he worships; *mām*—Me; *sarva-bhāvena*—wholeheartedly.

O *Bhārata*, one who is not deluded by various opinions knows Me in this way as *Puruṣottama*. Such a person is the knower of everything, and he, therefore, engages wholeheartedly in *bhajana* to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

If someone disagrees with the meaning that Śrī Bhagavān has established, in response He says, “They argue because they are bewildered by My *māyā*. *Sādhus*, however, are not deluded.” To explain the characteristics of such saintly persons, He speaks this *sloka* beginning with the words *yo mām*. *Asammūḍhah* means those who are not deluded by the opinions of different philosophers. “Although those who know Me as Puruṣottama, the Supreme Person, may not have studied the *śāstras*, they know everything (*sarva-vid*) because they know the actual meaning and *tattva* of all *śāstra*. However, those who study all the *śāstras* and teach it to others, without understanding Me in this way, are deluded and completely foolish. Only those who actually know Me as Puruṣottama engage in My *bhajana* with every part of their being. Others are not really engaged in My *bhajana*, although it seems that they are.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

After explaining *paramātmā-tattva*, the worshipable object of the *yogīs*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself now explains His Puruṣottama-tattva and its glories. He is well-known as Puruṣottama, being transcendental to *kṣara-puruṣa* (the *jīva*), and also superior to the other two *akṣara-puruṣas*; *brahma* and *Paramātmā*. He is therefore the shelter of both the *jīvātmā* and of *Paramātmā*. This has been established in different places in the *Gītā*. The supremacy of the worshipable Deity (*upāsya*) is established by the excellence of the worshipper (*upāsaka*). *Gītā* (6.47) also states: *śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām sa me yuktatamo mataḥ*. “Those *bhakti-yogīs* who engage in the *bhajana* of Bhagavān with faith are said to be superior to all types of *yogīs*.” Therefore, the supremacy of Bhagavān, the worshipable object

of the *bhaktas*, is established over the others. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.3.28) also it is said: *ete cāṁśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*. “Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead.”

Also in Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu it is said that, although from the point of view of *tattva* there is no difference between the *svarūpa* of Śrī Nārāyaṇa and that of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, from the perspective of *rasa*, the *svarūpa* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is superior.

siddhāntatas tva abhede ‘pi śrīśa-kṛṣṇa svarūpayaḥ
rasenotkṛṣyate kṛṣṇa-rūpam eṣā rasa-sthitih
Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu, Eastern Division 2.32

Although in *siddhānta* there is no difference between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Nārāyaṇa, from the point of view of *rasa* the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is superior. This is the glory of *rasa*.

ŚLOKA 20

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयानघा।
एतद्बुद्ध्वा बृद्धिमान् स्यात् कृतकृत्यश्च भारत॥२०॥

iti guhyatamam śāstram / idam uktam mayānaghā
etad buddhvā buddhimān syāt / kṛta-kṛtyaś ca bhārata

anagha bhārata—O sinless Bhārata; *iti*—thus; *idam*—this; *guhyatamam*—most confidential; *śāstram*—śāstra; *uktam*—has been spoken; *mayā*—by Me; *syāt*—one becomes; *buddhimān*—enlightened; *ca*—and; *kṛta-kṛtyaḥ*—fulfilled; *buddhvā*—having understood; *etat*—this.

O sinless Bhārata, I have hereby revealed the most confidential secret of *śāstra*. One with pure intelligence becomes fully enlightened and blessed by knowing this.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is concluding this chapter with this *śloka* beginning with the word *iti*. Śrī Bhagavān says, “In these twenty *ślokas*, I have fully expounded the most secret doctrine of *sāstra*.” This chapter establishes the distinction between spirit and matter, and shows that among the three-fold manifestations of the *akṣara puruṣas*, the *svarūpa* of Puruṣottama *puruṣa* Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Reality.

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

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In concluding this subject, Śrī Bhagavān has said that Puruṣottama-yoga as described in this chapter, is that part of *sāstra* which contains the most confidential knowledge. The import of this statement is that no one except the *bhaktas* can comprehend knowledge of this *tattva*. Since Arjuna is a very dear *bhakta* of Bhagavān, Śrī Bhagavān is revealing knowledge of this most confidential reality only to him. By the mercy of the *bhaktas*, the lives of those who are able to attain knowledge of this confidential *tattva* are blessed.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O sinless one, this Puruṣottama-yoga is, indeed, the most confidential instruction in *sāstra*. After knowing this, an intelligent *jīva* becomes enlightened and blessed. O Bhārata, all impurities in connection with *āśraya* (the abode, the *jīva*) and *viṣaya* (the object of *bhakti*) are dispelled upon understanding this *yoga*. *Bhakti* is the blissful activity of the *ātmā*. To correctly execute the process of *bhakti*, two factors are most necessary: the purity of the *jīva* who is its *āśraya*, and the

complete manifestation of Bhagavān, who is its *viṣaya*. As long as the *jīva* has the conception that *brahma* and *Paramātmā* are equal to Bhagavān (*bhagavat-tattva*), he cannot attain the process of *viśuddha-bhakti* (the function of his unalloyed existence). The process of *bhakti* is executed in its purest form only when he realises Puruṣottama-tattva as *para-tattva*.

“During the *sādhana* stage of *bhakti-yoga*, three great *anarthas* (unwanted things) are to be removed by the power of *sādhu-saṅga* and by surrendering to the limbs of *śuddha-bhajana*. The *jīva*’s first weakness of heart is the desire to enjoy *māyā* by misusing the freedom which was bestowed upon him in his pure stage by Bhagavān. Later on, while wandering in the material world, he developed his second weakness of heart, which is the attachment for sense objects. Among these weaknesses of the heart, *hṛdaya-daurbalya*, attachment to the material world is the third *anartha*. All the other *anarthas* are generated from these three weaknesses of heart.”

The first five *ślokas* explain that pure renunciation is the symptom that destroys the above weaknesses. Deliberation on Puruṣottama-tattva along with *yukta-vairāgya* generated from *bhakti* is given from the sixth *śloka* to the end of this chapter. This chapter describes the difference between inert matter and spirit, and the deliberation on different manifestations of conscious reality.

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

CHAPTER SIXTEEN



Daivāsura Sampada-Yoga

The Yoga of Discerning the Divine and Demonic Qualities

ŚLOKAS 1-3

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।
दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥१॥
अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।
दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं हीरचापलम् ॥२॥
तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।
भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥३॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
abhayam sattva-saṁśuddhir / jñāna-yoga-vyavasthitih
dānam damaś ca yajñaś ca / svādhyāyas tapa ārjavam
ahimsā satyam akrodhas / tyāgaḥ sāntir apaiśunam
dayā bhūteṣv aloluptvam / mārdavaṁ hrīr acāpalam
tejah kṣamā dhṛtiḥ śaucam / adroho nāti-mānitā
bhavanti sampadam daivīm / abhijātasya bhārata

śrī bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Supreme Lord said; bhārata—O scion of Bhārata; abhaya—freedom from fear; sattva-saṁśuddhiḥ—purification of one's existence; jñāna-yoga-vyavasthitih—the steadfast study of divine knowledge; dāna—charity; damah—subduing the external senses; ca—and; yajñah—performance of sacrifice; ca—and; svādhyāyah—reading the Vedas; tapah—austerity; ārjavam—simplicity; ahimsā—non-violence; satyam—truthfulness; akrodhah—freedom from anger; tyāgah—giving up possessiveness towards wife, sons and so forth; śāntih—peacefulness; apaiśunam—avoiding fault-finding; dayā—mercy; bhūteṣu—to all beings; aloluptvam—freedom from greed; mārdavam—gentleness; hriḥ—modesty; acāpalam—without fickleness; tejah—vigour; kṣamā—forgiveness; dhṛtiḥ—determination; śaucam—cleanliness (both internal and external); adrohah—absence of hatred; na atimānitā—freedom from conceit; bhavanti—these (qualities) manifest; abhijātasya—for one born; daivīm—having divine; sampadam—qualities.

Śrī Bhagavān said: Fearlessness, joyfulness of heart, steadfastness in the process of acquiring knowledge, charity, control of the senses, performance of yajña, study of sāstra, penance, simplicity, non-violence, truthfulness, lack of anger, detachment from wife and family, peacefulness, avoidance of fault-finding, kindness to all beings, freedom from greed, gentleness, modesty, lack of fickleness, vigour, forgiveness, patience, internal and external cleanliness and complete absence of hatred and conceit—these are the *daivika* qualities, O Bhārata, which become manifest in a person who appears in this world at an auspicious moment, that is, one who is born with divine qualities.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In the Sixteenth Chapter, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes *daivika* (divine) and *āsurika* (demonic) qualities. He also

describes the disposition of two sorts of created beings which correspond to these two qualities, the *deva* and the *asura*.

The first *śloka* of the Fifteenth Chapter, *ūrdhvā-mūlam adhah-śākham*, describes the *aśvattha* tree of the material world, but does not mention its fruits. Considering this, in the present chapter Śrī Bhagavān explains the tree's two types of fruits: one which liberates and one which binds. In the first three *ślokas*, Śrī Bhagavān explains the fruit that gives *mokṣa*.

"How will I maintain my life alone in a solitary forest without my wife and family?" Being free from this type of fear is called fearlessness. Happiness of the *citta* (heart) is called *sattva-saṁśuddhiḥ*. *Jñāna-yoga-vyavasthitih* means being steadfast in the process of acquiring knowledge, not being proud, for example, of one's learned status. *Dānam* means offering one's own foodstuffs to others after dividing it properly. *Damah* means to control the external and internal senses. *Yajñah* means worship of the Deity and the *devas*. *Svādhyāyah* means study of the *Vedas*. *Tyāgah* means to give up possessiveness towards wife and family. *Aloluptvam* means being free from greed. The meaning of the rest of the words is clear.

These twenty-six qualities, beginning with fearlessness, indicate a *sāttvika* disposition. They are attained by a person who takes birth at a time that illuminates that *sāttvika* nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

The *daivika* and *āsurika* qualities and propensities that were described briefly in the previous chapter are now being explained in detail. Being trapped in the network of *māyā*, persons of an *āsurika* nature take birth in various *āsurika* species of life which results in misery and pain. On the other hand, those of a *daivika* nature, being endowed with divine

qualities, cross over the miserable ocean of birth and death, and gradually advance on the most auspicious path through the process of *bhagavad-bhakti*. Finally they taste the bliss of service to Bhagavān in His *dhāma*. Such liberated persons never again become bound by this material world. The host of divine qualities mentioned herein can only manifest in exalted persons who take birth at an auspicious time from parents who have auspicious qualities, and who underwent the *garbhādhāna-saṁskāra*, the process of conceiving progeny according to Vedic injunctions. This is the secret meaning of the word *abhijātasya* in the above *śloka*. Parents should at least not produce children as cats and dogs do. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has said in the *Gītā* that He is that sex life which gives rise to good children. Therefore, sex life is not forbidden, but when it is only for sense enjoyment like that of the animals, it is of a hellish nature.

In the *varṇāśrama* system, a *sannyāsī* is considered to be the foremost *guru* of society's four *varṇas* and *āśramas*. The *brāhmaṇa* is the *guru* of the other three *varṇas*: *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, and *śūdra*. Only a real *sannyāsī* who possesses all divine qualities is the *guru* of the *brāhmaṇa*.

All such good qualities are visible in *śuddha-bhaktas*. A surrendered *sādhaka* of *bhakti* must be fearless and have the firm conviction, "Bhagavān is my protector and He is always with me. He sees and knows everything and He sustains me." When a devotee develops faith like this, he remains completely fearless wherever he may live, in the home or in the forest. Prahlāda Mahārāja, Draupadī, the five Pāñḍavas and Haridāsa Ṭhākura are examples of this. Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura remained fearless, even while being beaten by low-class, cruel persons in twenty-two market places in Navadvīpa, which was under the strict rule of fanatical Muslims. After beating him, they threw him in the Gaṅgā, but he emerged from there with a healthy body

and returned to his *bhajana-kuṭīra*. Seeing this, the Kāzī and others became amazed. Therefore, the *bhakti-sādhaka* should always be fearless.

Sattva-saṁśuddhi means the purity of the *ātmā*. The conduct of the *bhakti-sādhaka* is pure. The *sannyāsīs* and *brahmacārīs* in particular, who have given up home, wife and family, should not keep intimate relationships with women. It is forbidden for them to joke with or even talk with a woman in a solitary place. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was very strict in this regard. This does not mean that He felt malice towards women in general; He made this restriction for *sannyāsīs* and *brahmacārīs* who have renounced their family lives. For men, the association of women is forbidden, and for women, the association of men is forbidden. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave up His dear Choṭa Haridāsa forever because he associated with a woman. In one sense, to look at any object with the desire to enjoy it is considered associating with women (*strī-saṅga*). Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Enjoyer of everyone, and everyone is meant for His enjoyment. A *sādhaka* should always remain pure and consider himself to be Kṛṣṇa *dāsa*.

To remain engaged in the cultivation of *tattva-jñāna* is called *jñāna-yoga-vyavasthitih*. *Sankīrtana-yajña* has been accepted as the foremost of all *yajñas*. *Himsā* means violence to the *jīva*. To not cause pain to any *jīva*, either by body, mind or words is *ahimsā*. Specifically, one should not be violent to animals. It is violence to block any *jīva*'s progress to the higher levels of consciousness. When an embodied being experiences an untimely death, he has to take birth again in the same species of life and, after completing his remaining period in that body, he enters another species. One should not stop the progress of any living entity for the satisfaction of the tongue or any other selfish purpose. This is non-violence.

The twenty-six qualities described above are called *daivika*. By developing these qualities, one can gradually reach the highest platform of self-realisation.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes, “Now, Arjuna may doubt the validity of various statements of śāstra that one should attain *jñāna* while cultivating *sāttvika* qualities. To dispel this doubt Śrī Bhagavān says, ‘The *aśvattha* tree in the form of the material world has two fruits. One fruit strongly binds the *jīva* to the material world, and the other gives liberation from it. *Sattva-saṁśuddhi*, the purification of one’s existence, is the only fearless path for the *jīva*. The *jīva*’s very existence is composed of *śuddha-sattva*, but in the bound state his *śuddha-sāttvika* nature is dominated by the three *guṇas*. All śāstras indicate that the cultivation of *jñāna-yoga* purifies one’s existence. *Sattva-guṇa* is conducive for the cultivation of knowledge which leads to liberation. All these qualities are a divine opulence (*daivī-sampad*) and assist the *jīva* in realizing his pure existence. That which blocks the *jīva*’s *sattva-saṁśuddhi* is called *āsuri-sampad* (demonic qualities). Fearlessness, purity of existence (*sattva-saṁśuddhi*), *jñāna-yoga*, charity, control of the senses, *yajña*, penance, simplicity, study of the *Vedas*, non-violence, truthfulness, lack of anger, renunciation, peacefulness, giving up criticism of others, kindness, absence of greed, gentility, shyness, lack of fickleness, vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, cleanliness and lack of envy and pride are the twenty-six qualities called *daivī-sampad*. If one takes birth at an auspicious moment, he receives these qualities.”

ŚLOKA 4

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च।
अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम्॥४॥

*dambho darpo'bhimānaś ca / krodhah pāruṣyam eva ca
ajñānam cābhijātasya / pārtha sampadam āsurīm*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *eva*—certainly; *dambhah*—hypocrisy; *darpah*—arrogance; *abhimānah*—conceit; *ca*—and; *krodhah*—anger; *pāruṣyam*—heartlessness; *ca*—and; *ajñānam*—lack of discrimination (are manifest); *abhijātasya*—for one born; *āsurīm*—having demonic; *sampadam*—qualities.

O Pārtha, hypocrisy, arrogance, conceit, anger, hard-heartedness and lack of discrimination are found in those born with *āsurika* qualities. Those who are born at an inauspicious moment receive these *āsurika* qualities.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the fruits that bind one to material existence. To pose as a religious person while being irreligious is called *dambha*, hypocritical. Pride in wealth and education is called *darpah*, or arrogance. Desire to be respected by others and attachment to wife and family is called *abhimānah*, conceit. The meaning of the word *krodha* (anger) is clear. *Pāruṣyam* means being hard-hearted. *Ajñānam* means lack of discrimination. *Āsurī-sampad* also indicates *rākṣasī-sampad*. One who takes birth at a time that gives rise to *rājasika* and *tāmasika* qualities receives such qualities accordingly.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

Those who are born at an extremely inauspicious time, having not undergone auspicious purificatory rites (*saṃskāras*), have an *āsurika* nature. It is people of such a nature who make a show of religion and advancement in spiritual life. Thus, they cheat simple and innocent people. They consider that acquiring wealth, women and prestige is the perfection of life. They do not follow the instructions of

śāstra, yet they have great pride. They become angry over petty matters. There is not a scent of humility in them. They are hard-hearted and devoid of discrimination. All these qualities are āsurika. One should always remain at a distance from such qualities.

ŚLOKA 5

दैवी सम्पद्विमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता।
मा शुचः सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव॥५॥

*daivī sampad vimokṣāya / nibandhāyāśurī matā
mā śucah sampadam daivīm / abhijāto'si pāṇḍava*

daivī—the divine; *sampat*—qualities; *matā*—are considered; *vimokṣāya*—to lead to liberation; *āsurī*—the demonic; *nibandhāya*—to bondage; *mā śucah*—do not lament; *pāṇḍava*—O son of Pāṇḍu; *asi*—you are; *abhijātaḥ*—born; *daivīm*—having divine; *sampadam*—qualities.

Daivika qualities are the cause of *mokṣa*, and *āsurika* qualities are the cause of bondage. O son of Pāṇḍu, do not lament, for you are born with *daivika* qualities.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now in this *śloka* beginning with *daivī*, Śrī Bhagavān is showing how these two natures function. First of all, if Arjuna laments, “Alas! Alas! I must possess *āsurika* qualities such as hard-heartedness and anger, for I desire to kill my relatives with arrows,” Śrī Bhagavān says *mā śucah*, “Do not lament,” to give him solace. “You are born in a dynasty of *kṣatriyas*. *Dharma-śāstra* approves of you being hard-hearted and angry while at war. However, to be violent in other circumstances is *āsurika*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “It is only by *daivika* qualities that one can attain *mokṣa*, and it is by *āsurika* qualities that one becomes bound to this world. O Arjuna, by cultivating *jñāna-yoga* while following *varṇāśrama dharma*, one achieves *sattva-saṁśuddhi* (the purification of one’s existence). You are blessed with *daivī-sampad* (divine qualities), being born in a noble *kṣatriya* caste. It is not *āsurika* to kill one’s relatives in a *dharma* battle by shooting them with arrows, and engaging in other aggressive activities in accordance with the injunctions of *śāstra*. Having heard this instruction, you should give up your grief.”

ŚLOKA 6

द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन् दैव आसुर एव च।
दैवो विस्तरशः प्रोक्त आसुरं पार्थ मे शृणु॥१६॥

dvau bhūta-sargau loke'smin / daiva āsura eva ca
daivo vistaraśah prokta / āsuram pārtha me śṛṇu

pārtha—O son of Pr̥thā; *asmin*—in this; *loke*—world; (there are) *eva*—certainly; *dvau*—two; *bhūta-sargau*—created beings; (the) *daivah*—divine; *ca*—and; (the) *āsurah*—demonic; *daivah*—the divine; *proktah*—have been spoken of; *vistaraśah*—at length; *śṛṇu*—now hear; *me*—from Me; *āsuram*—of the demonic.

O Pārtha, in this world there are two types of created beings: the *daivika* and the *āsurika*. The *daivika* qualities have been described at length. Now hear from Me about the *āsurika* nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is giving a detailed description of *āsurika* qualities to the despondent Arjuna, even though Arjuna was

born with *daivika* qualities. The *daivika* qualities have been described in detail in the series of *ślokas* beginning with *abhayaṁ sattva-saṁśuddhi*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is giving a detailed description of *āsurika* qualities so that after knowing them, one can completely give them up. The *Padma Purāṇa* states:

dvau bhūta-sargau loke 'smiñ daiva āsura eva ca
viṣṇu-bhaktah smṛto daiva āsuras tad-viparyayaḥ

Bhaktas who perform *bhajana* to Bhagavān are called *devatās*. Conversely, those who are envious of Bhagavān and His *bhakta*s are called *asuras*. Those who follow the instructions of *śāstra*, becoming free from mundane attachment and hatred, and who engage in *bhagavad-bhakti*, should be considered as *devatās*. Those who violate the instructions of *śāstra* due to being guided by material attachment and envy, and who engage in *adharma* activities, are called *asuras*.

SŁOKA 7

प्रवृत्तिञ्च निवृत्तिञ्च जना न विदुरासुराः।
न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते॥७॥

pravṛttiñ ca nivṛttiñ ca / janā na vidur āsurāḥ
na śaucam nāpi cācāro / na satyam teṣu vidyate

āsurāḥ—demonic; janāḥ—persons; na viduh—do not comprehend; *pravṛttim*—the tendency to virtue; *ca*—and; *nivṛttim*—refraining from vice; *na*—neither; śaucam—cleanliness; *na*—nor; *api*—even; ācāraḥ—good conduct; *na*—nor; *satyam*—truthfulness; *vidyate*—exists; *teṣu*—in them.

Those who are *āsurika* do not comprehend virtue, nor indeed how to abstain from vice. Cleanliness, proper conduct and truthfulness are not to be found in them.

ŚĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *pravṛtti* means inclination to virtue (*dharma*), and *nivṛtti* means abstaining from vice.

ŚLOKA 8

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम्।
अपरस्परसम्भूतं किमन्यत् कामहेतुकम्॥८॥

*asatyam apratiṣṭham te / jagad āhur anīśvaram
aparaspara-sambhūtam / kim anyat kāma-hetukam*

te āhuḥ—they say; *jagat*—the world; (is) *asatyam*—unreal; *apratiṣṭham*—without a basis; *anīśvaram*—without a controller; *aparaspara-sambhūtam*—born of sexual union; (and) *kim*—what?; *anyat*—other; *kāma-hetukam*—cause than lust.

Asuras describe the world as unreal, without basis, and godless. They say it is the product of sexual union, or that it is self-generated. Not only this, they even say that it is the result of selfish desires.

ŚĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is describing the philosophy of the asuras. “They say that the material world is *asatyam*, unreal, and a result of illusion. That which has no basis is called *apratiṣṭha*. They say that just as a flower in the sky has no basis, in the same way this material world has no basis.” *Anīśvaram* means that since the world is unreal, it has not been created by Īśvara; rather, it has come about accidentally without any mutual union, like living entities born from perspiration. “Not

only this, they say that this world is only the result of *kāma*, the selfish desire of the creator, if there is one. Since they claim that this world is unreal, they feel that they have licence to give speculative explanations about it.” Furthermore, some say that the evidence given in the *Vedas* and *Purāṇas* is false. The *asuras* say: *trayo vedasya karttāro muni-bhaṇḍaniśācarāḥ*. “Thinkers, jesters and demons who are selfish and whose views differ, have composed the *Vedas*.”

Apratiṣṭha means that *dharma* and *adharma* are not defined in the *Vedas* and that they are the result of illusion. *Anīśvaram* means that even *Īśvara* has been concocted as a result of illusion. “If somebody says that this material world seems to manifest from the union of male and female, then in response the *asuras* say, *aparaspara-sambūtam*, there is no such cause and effect behind it, and that the birth of a child from parents is also an illusion. They say that when a potter makes a pot from mud, he knows what he is doing, but when parents procreate a child, they do not know how it happens, therefore, the process of begetting a child is also illusion. O Arjuna, what more can I say? Asuras say that the only cause of the universe is selfish desire. According to their logic, atoms, *māyā*, *Īśvara*, or whatever are the cause behind the creation of the world.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

In the present *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the philosophy of those who possess an *āsurika* nature. The essence of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa’s commentary on this *śloka* is as follows:

1) According to the opinion of the *māyāvādīs*, this material world is *asatya*, *apratiṣṭhita* and *anīśvara*. They say it is *asatya* because it is an illusion, just as a rope can be taken for a snake; *apratiṣṭhita* because it has no basis, like a flower in the sky,

and *anīśvara*, because Īśvara is not the cause behind creation.

2) According to the *svabhāva-vādī* Buddhists, the material world is *aparaspara-sambūtam*, that is, not born of mutual union between male and female, but comes from *svabhāva*, and that the natural and necessary action of substances according to their inherent properties produce and sustain the universe.

3) According to Cārvāka, this material world is *kāma-haitukam*, born from the flow of lust between male and female.

4) According to the Jains, *kāma* (selfish desire) is the cause of this world. On the basis of their speculative logic, they disregard the authoritative Vedic literatures and engage in useless endeavour to ascertain the cause of this material world.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's statement, *mayādhyaṅṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram* (*Gitā* 9.10), very clearly explains that this entire material world, consisting of moving and non-moving beings, has been created by *prakṛti* under His supervision. Since this world has been created by the will of *satya-saṅkalpa* Bhagavān (He whose desires must come to pass), this world is also real, but changeable and perishable. The *asuras* imagine various types of temporary atheistic conclusions because they are bereft of pure and perfect wisdom.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "Those of an *āsurika* temperament call this world *asatya*, *apratiṣṭhita* and *anīśvara*. Their philosophy is that there is no purpose in accepting the existence of Īśvara, since the relationship of cause and effect is not the basis of the creation of the universe. Some say that Īśvara does exist, but, when He created the world, He was influenced by His selfish desires, therefore He is not qualified to be the object of our worship."

ŚLOKA 9

एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः।
प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्मणः क्षयाय जगतोऽहिताः॥१९॥

*etām dṛṣṭim avaṣṭabhy / naṣṭātmāno'lpā-buddhayah
prabhavanty ugra-karmāṇah / kṣayāya jagato'hitāḥ*

ahitāḥ—the harmful *asuras*; *alpa-buddhayah*—who are of meagre intelligence; *naṣṭa-ātmānah*—without knowledge of *ātma-tattva*; *avaṣṭabhy*—taking shelter; *etām*—of this; *dṛṣṭim*—philosophy; *ugra-karmāṇah*—absorbed in violent acts; *prabhavanti*—take birth; *kṣayāya*—for the destruction; *jagataḥ*—of the world.

Asuras are bereft of *ātma-tattva*. They take shelter of this atheistic view and, thinking their bodies to be their real selves, engage in violent acts. They are the personification of inauspiciousness and take birth solely to destroy this world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

In this way, some of these *asuras* have completely lost themselves. Some have very little intelligence, and others engage in wicked acts, are frivolous and destined for hell. For this reason, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking eleven consecutive *ślokas*, the first of which begins here with the word *etām*. *Avaṣṭabhy* means taking shelter.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

*Asuras are bereft of *ātma-jñāna*. They invent various types of machines on the pretext of advancing human civilization. Many weapons and machines are being devised to kill the maximum amount of people in the minimum amount of time, even if they are in distant continents. The *asuras* are very proud of such inventions. Due to these weapons, this world can*

be destroyed at any moment. Because *āsurika* society has no faith in Īśvara and the *Vedas*, they are working to destroy the world.

ŚLOKA 10

काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूरं दम्भमानमदान्विताः।
मोहाद् गृहीत्वाऽसद् ग्राहान् प्रवर्तन्ते शुचिव्रताः॥१०॥

*kāmam āśritya duṣpūram / dambha-māna-madānvitāḥ
mohād gr̥hitvā 'sad-grāhān / pravarttante 'śuci-vratāḥ*

āśritya—taking shelter; *duṣpūram*—of insatiable; *kāmam*—lust; *anvitāḥ*—filled with; *dambha*—hypocrisy; *māna*—pride; *mada*—and arrogance; *mohāt*—out of delusion; *gr̥hitvā*—accepting; *asat-grāhān*—temporary objects; *aśuci-vratāḥ*—taking a vow of depravity; *pravarttante*—they engage (in the worship of the insignificant *upadevatās*).

Driven by insatiable desires and filled with hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, the deluded *asuras* always hanker after temporary objects. Sworn to depravity, they engage in the worship of insignificant *devatās*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Asad-grāhān pravarttante means that they become inclined to follow bogus ideology, and *aśuci-vratāḥ* refers to those who have given up pure conduct and behave in an abominable manner.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Those of an *āsurika* temperament, who do not accept Īśvara and the Vedic conclusions, consider that the success of human life is only to accumulate wealth and fulfil their selfish desires. For this reason, they remain attached to impure activities such as drinking wine, eating meat, having illicit sex and

gambling. They deride the Vedic *siddhānta*, being completely intoxicated by false prestige and the false ego. These are the only people glorified in modern atheistic society. Although they are pushing society to the threshold of destruction, they proudly consider themselves to be highly intelligent.

SLOKAS 11-12

चिन्तामपरिमेयाज्ज्वं प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिताः ।
कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिताः ॥११॥
आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः ।
ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसञ्चयान् ॥१२॥

*cintām aparimeyāñ ca / pralayāntām upāśritāḥ
kāmopabhoga-paramā / etāvad iti niścitāḥ
āśā-pāśa-śatair baddhāḥ / kāma-krodha-parāyaṇāḥ
ihante kāma-bhogārtham / anyāyenārtha-sañcayān*

upāśritāḥ—engaged; *aparimeyām*—in unlimited; *cintām*—anxiety; *pralaya-antām*—until the dissolution of the body; *etāvat*—such; *niścitāḥ*—is their determination; *iti*—that; *paramāḥ*—the highest (goal of life); *kāma-upabhoga*—is to delight the senses; *ca*—and; *baddhāḥ*—bound; *śataiḥ*—by hundreds; *pāśa*—of ropes; *āśā*—of desire; *parāyaṇāḥ*—absorbed; *kāma-krodha*—in lust and anger; *ihante*—they endeavour; *anyāyena*—by unjust means; *sañcayān*—for accumulation; *artha*—of wealth; *artham*—for the purpose; *kāma-bhoga*—of sensual pleasures.

They are beset with unlimited anxieties until the time of death, believing that sense enjoyment is the highest purpose of life. Bound by the ropes of unlimited desires, and always overpowered by lust and anger, they endeavour to secure wealth by any unjust means for the sake of indulging in sensual pleasures.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Pralayāntām means until death. *Etāvad iti* refers to those who have concluded from *śāstra* that the senses should remain drowned in sense enjoyment. ‘Why should we worry for anything else?’

ŚLOKA 13

इदमद्य मया लब्धमिदं प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम्।
इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम्॥१३॥

*idam adya mayā labdham / idam prāpsye manoratham
idam astīdam api me / bhaviṣyati punar dhanam*

adya—today; *idam*—this; *labdham*—has been obtained; *mayā*—by me; (and) *prāpsye*—I shall realise; *idam*—this; (*other*) *manoratham*—desire; *idam*—this; *asti*—is (mine); (and) *api*—also; *idam*—this; *punah*—increase; *dhanam*—of wealth; *bhaviṣyati*—will be; *me*—mine.

Asuras think, “Today I have attained so much and I will fulfil my cherished desires. So much wealth is now mine, and it will increase in the future more and more.”

ŚLOKA 14

असौ मया हतः शत्रुहनि ये चापरानपि।
ईवरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान् सुखी॥१४॥

*asau mayā hataḥ śatrur / haniṣye cāparān api
īśvaraḥ ahaṁ bhogī / siddhaḥ ahaṁ balavān sukhī*

asau—this; *śatruḥ*—enemy; *hataḥ*—has been slain; *mayā*—by me; *ca*—and; *haniṣye*—I shall slay; *aparān*—the others; *api*—also; *aham*—I (am); *īśvaraḥ*—the lord; *aham*—I (am); *bhogī*—the enjoyer; *aham*—I (am); *siddhaḥ*—perfect; *balavān*—powerful; (and) *sukhī*—happy.

"I have killed this enemy and I will kill others. I am the lord and the enjoyer. I am perfect, powerful and happy."

ŚLOKA 15

आऽध्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया।
यक्ष्ये दास्यामि मोदिष्य इत्यज्ञानविमोहिताः ॥१५॥

*ādhyo'bhijanavān asmi / ko'nyo'sti sadṛśo mayā
yakṣye dāsyāmi modiṣya / ity ajñāna-vimohitāḥ*

asmi—I am; *ādhyah*—wealthy; *abhijanavān*—of noble birth; *kah*—who?; *anyaḥ*—else; *asti*—is there; *sadṛśah*—compared; *mayā*—with me; *yakṣye*—I shall sacrifice; *dāsyāmi*—I shall give in charity; *modiṣye*—I shall enjoy; *iti*—thus (are); *ajñāna-vimohitāḥ*—persons illusioned by ignorance.

"I am wealthy and of noble birth. Who is there to compare with me? I will perform *yajña*, I will give in charity and thus I will enjoy great happiness." Deceived by ignorance, they speak in this way.

ŚLOKA 16

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः।
प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ॥१६॥

*aneka-citta-vibhrāntā / moha-jāla-samāvṛtāḥ
prasaktāḥ kāma-bhogeṣu / patanti narakeśucau*

vibhrāntāḥ—perplexed; *aneka*—by many; *citta*—anxieties; *samāvṛtāḥ*—caught; *jāla*—in a net; *moha*—of delusion; *prasaktāḥ*—addicted; *kāma-bhogeṣu*—to sense enjoyments; *patanti*—they fall; *aśucau*—into an unclean; *narake*—hell.

Perplexed by many desires and anxieties, entangled in a net

of delusion, and excessively addicted to sense enjoyment, they fall into situations that are impure and hellish.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Aśucau narake means in the hells such as Vaitaranī.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Āsurika persons consider themselves to be Īśvara, even though they are agitated by various useless anxieties and bound in a net of delusion. They become instructors and teach their followers, “You yourself are Īśvara. You can do whatever you like. Only a fool believes in any other Īśvara. There is no such entity.” These people imagine that they can manufacture a special airplane by which they can go to any higher planet. They do not have faith in Vedic *yajñas* and rituals or in the process of *bhakti*. Among such *asuras*, Rāvaṇa was prominent. He had a plan to build a staircase to Svarga, by which even an ordinary person could go there without performing any Vedic *yajña*. But he was killed by Śrī Rāmacandra, and his plan was thus thwarted.

At present, those with an āsurika disposition are endeavouring to reach higher planets in various types of spacecraft. They do not know they are on a path of destruction. Here the words *moha-jāla-samāvṛtāḥ* mean that, due to the intense greed of the tongue, a fish becomes caught in a net and loses its life. In the same way, those with an āsurika nature fall into a network of delusion, from which there is no escape. Thus, they are destroyed.

ŚLOKA 17

आत्मसम्भाविताः स्तव्या धनमानमदान्विताः।

यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम् ॥१७॥

*ātma-sambhāvitāḥ stabdhā / dhana-māna-madānvitāḥ
yajante nāma-yajñais te / dambhenāvidhi-pūrvakam*

ātma-sambhāvitāḥ—those overwhelmed by self-esteem; *stabdhāḥ*—arrogance; *māna-mada-anvitāḥ*—filled with intoxication of personal honour; *dhana*—due to wealth; *te*—they; *yajante nāma-yajñaiḥ*—perform sacrifices in name only; *dambhena*—ostentatiously; *avidhi-pūrvakam*—without following the *vidhi* (injunctions prescribed in *śāstra*).

Full of their own self-importance, arrogant, and intoxicated with false prestige due to wealth, these *asuras* perform ostentatious *yajñas* in name only, disregarding all the injunctions of *śāstra*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Ātma-sambhāvitāḥ means that they consider themselves to be worshipable; therefore, they are *stabdhāḥ*, not humble, but arrogant. However, no *sādhu* gives them respect. *Nāma-yajñaiḥ* means acts which are *yajñas* in name only.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Having understood the symptoms and activities of those with *daivika* and *āsurika* natures, Arjuna asked Kṛṣṇa, “Some people give up the rules and regulations of *śāstra* and whimsically worship some insignificant *devatās* according to their own speculative ideas. In which category is their worship?” At the present time, the majority of persons worshipping the *devatās* and other personalities do so according to their own speculative whims, disregarding the injunctions of *śāstra*. In this regard, we must hear the instructions given by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

ŚLOKA 18

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधञ्च संश्रिताः।
मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः॥१८॥

*ahaṅkāram balam darpaṁ / kāmam krodhañ ca samśritāḥ
mām ātma-para-deheṣu / pradviṣantō’bhyasūyakāḥ*

samśritāḥ—taking shelter; *ahaṅkāram*—of the false ego; *balam*—false (physical) strength; *darpaṁ*—insolence, pride; *kāmam*—selfish desires; *ca*—and; *krodham*—anger; *pradviṣantah*—they hate; *abhyasūyakāḥ*—and envy (attributing faults to the good qualities of the *sādhus*); *mām*—Me; *deheṣu*—in the bodies; *ātma-para*—of those who are dedicated to the Supreme Soul.

Bewildered by false ego, bodily strength, pride, lust and anger, they direct their envy and criticism towards Me through the devoted *sādhus* within whose hearts I, (Paramātmā), always dwell.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“They envy Me, Paramātmā, by disregarding Me. They despise Me, who am situated in the body of *ātma-paraḥ sādhus* devoted to Paramātmā, because to envy a *sādhu* is indeed to envy Me.” *Abhyasūyakāḥ* means to see the good qualities of *sādhus* as faults.

ŚLOKA 19

तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान् संसारेषु नराधमान्।
क्षिपाम्यजस्मशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु॥१९॥

*tān aham dvīṣataḥ krūrān / saṃsāreṣu narādhamaṇ
kṣipāmy ajasram aśubhān / āsurīśv eva yoniṣu*

aham—I; *ajasram*—forever; *kṣipāmi*—cast; *tān*—those; *dviśataḥ*—envious of *sādhus*; *krūrān*—who are cruel; *aśubhān*—inauspicious; *nara-adhamān*—degraded men; *eva*—certainly; *samsāreṣu*—into materialistic; *āsurīsu*—demonic; *yoniṣu*—wombs (species).

Those who are envious of *sādhus*, cruel-hearted and malevolent, are the most degraded of human beings. I perpetually cast them into mundane existence among the various species of *asuras*.

ŚLOKA 20

आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि।
मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम्॥२०॥

*āsurīm yonim āpannā / mūḍhā janmani janmani
mām aprāpyaiva kaunteya / tato yānty adhamām gatim*
kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *mūḍhāḥ*—those fools; *āpannāḥ*—receiving; *āsurīm*—demonic; *yonim*—births; *janmani janmani*—birth after birth; *eva*—certainly; *aprāpya*—not attaining; *mām*—Me; *tataḥ*—then; *yānti*—go; *adhamām*—to the vilest; *gatim*—destination.

O Kaunteya, accepting birth after birth in the *āsurika* species, such fools can never attain Me. Thus, they descend further into the lowest and most vile forms of life.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

“*Mām aprāpyaiva* means that by not attaining Me, they fall into a degraded species. However, when I appear at the end of the Dvāpara-yuga in the twenty-eighth *catur yuga* of Vaivasvata *manvatara*, those who envy Me, such as Karṇa, attain *mukti* when they come before Me. I, who am an ocean of unlimited

compassion, bestow that rare *mukti* attained in the matured stage of *bhakti-miśra-jñāna* (*jñāna* mixed with *bhakti*), even to sinners such as Kāṁsa. It is said in the prayers of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.87.23): ‘O Prabhu! Simply by constantly thinking of You, even Your enemies have attained the same Supreme Absolute Reality as the *munis* who are fixed in *yoga* and who worship You by controlling their breath, mind and senses.’ Therefore, My supremacy, as described earlier, is established.” This is also found in a *śloka* from the *Laghu-Bhāgavatāmrta*, which states that, as long as those who envy Kṛṣṇa do not attain Him, they remain in a degraded species of life. This is very clear.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the nineteenth *śloka*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said that He throws people who are envious of *sādhus*, who are cruel and the most degraded of human beings, into a miserable *āsurika* species of life. From this statement, someone may question such behaviour of Bhagavān, saying that it is not equanimous but an indication of partiality. However, although Īvara is able to do anything and everything, *karttum akarttum anyathā karttum samarthaḥ* ('The Lord is able to do or undo anything He wishes'), usually the *jīva* only gets the result of his own *karma* (action). Therefore, in order to undergo the result of their own *karma*, sinful people who are opposed to the *Vedas*, *bhaktas* and Bhagavān again and again enter the *āsurika* species of life. Due to repeated demonic births, they do not get a chance to become free from their offences. If the offences and sins that are committed in human life are not atoned for in human life, a person does not get the chance to clear them when he goes to lower species, such as birds and beasts. A birth in all species, except the human species, is only meant for reaping the results of past *karma* (*bhogayoni*). In this regard, Śrīla Madhusūdana Sarasvatī writes:

*ihaiva naraka-vyādheś cikitsāṁ na karoti yaḥ
gatvā nirauṣadham sthānam sarujah kim kariṣyati*

If a person cannot cure the disease of sinking to hellish life while living in this human body, what will he do when he goes where there is no remedy, namely, a lower species of life?

Īśvara is never partial. This was explained in detail earlier. Here, one should note that those such as Hiranyaśipu, Hiranyakṣa, Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa, Śiśupāla and Dantavakra took birth in kṣatriya dynasties because they were cursed to do so, and directly opposed Bhagavān's *avatāras* such as Śrī Nṛsiṁha, Śrī Varāha, Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, considering Them to be their enemies. But because they were killed by these *avatāras*, they attained a virtuous destination and gave up their *āsurika* life. Those who were killed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa specifically attained the highest destination. Furthermore, it should be noted that they all had faith in the *Vedas* and Vedic activities, and had performed Vedic *yajñas*. They indirectly believed in a supreme controller, *kāla-sakti* (the potency of time), and in the Supreme Lord.

The supremacy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the glory of His supreme *tattva* and His specific quality of bestowing *mukti* upon those whom He kills is established by studying these *avatāras*. When the *asuras* who are envious of Bhagavān are killed by *avatāras* other than Kṛṣṇa Himself, they attain immense enjoyment in Svarga and other places, or birth in a high family. But when they are killed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, who is the source of all *avatāras*, they attain *mukti*: *sārūpya*, *sālokya*, *sārṣṭi* or *sāmīpya*. They may even attain service to Bhagavān as one of His associates. Therefore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is said to be the fountainhead of all *avatāras*: *ete cāṁśa-kalā puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.3.28). "All the *avatāras* mentioned are either

plenary portions, or portions of the plenary portions of Svayam Bhagavān, the original Personality of Godhead.” Kṛṣṇa even gave Pūtanā the position of acting as a nurse to Him. When He descended in the form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He even bestowed *bhagavat-prema* on Jagāi, Madhāi and the Chānd Kāzī.

In the phrase *mām aprāpyaiva*, Kṛṣṇa Himself is expressing this deep secret by the word *eva*, which means certainly. “It is certain that as long as a person does not attain Me, Kṛṣṇa (or the path which leads to Me), there is no chance of him being completely liberated from miserable material life.”

ŚLOKA 21

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः।
कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत्॥२१॥

*tri-vidham narakasyedam / dvāram nāśanam ātmanah
kāmah krodhas tathā lobhas / tasmād etat trayam tyajet*

idam tri-vidham—there are three kinds; *dvāram*—of gates; *narakasya*—to hell; *kāmah*—lust; *krodhah*—anger; *tathā*—and; *lobhaḥ*—greed; *nāśanam*—they cause the destruction; *ātmanah*—of the soul; *tasmāt*—therefore; *tyajet*—one should give up; *etat*—these; *trayam*—three.

There are three gates leading to hell: lust, anger and greed. They cause the destruction of the *ātmā*, and therefore, one should completely abandon them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The *āsurika* qualities have now been explained in detail. “O Arjuna, do not grieve, since you have been born with *daivika* qualities” (*Gītā* 16.5). This statement is certainly

correct. These evil effects (lust, anger and greed) are natural only for the *asuras*, therefore, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *tri-vidham*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *āsurika* qualities described above are both self-destructive and the gateways to hell. Three of these qualities—lust, anger and greed—are the root of all other *āsurika* qualities. Therefore, every human being who desires his own welfare should give them up completely. Despite their various endeavours, it is not even possible for the *karmīs*, *jñānīs* or *yogīs* to control these tendencies, but a *suddha-bhakta*, by the influence of *sādhu-saṅga*, easily engages these three enemies in the service of Śrī Hari, and displays an extraordinary example of controlling them.

ŚLOKA 22

एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिन्नः ।
आचरत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥२२॥

*etair vimuktaḥ kaunteya / tamo-dvārais tribhir naraḥ
ācaraty ātmanah śreyas / tato yāti parām gatim*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *naraḥ*—a man; *vimuktaḥ*—liberated; *etaih*—from these; *tribhiḥ*—three; *tamo-dvāraih*—gates to hell; *ācarati*—practises; *śreyah*—welfare work; *ātmanah*—for the soul; *tataḥ*—thereafter; *yāti*—he enters; *parām*—the supreme; *gatim*—destination.

O Kaunteya, one who is liberated from these three gateways to hell acts for the welfare of his own *ātmā*. Thereafter, he attains the supreme destination.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “Becoming free from these three gateways to darkness, a person should act for the upliftment of his ātmā. Only then will he achieve the supreme destination.” The import is that by practising *dharma* and following a regulated life as a means of self-purification, one attains *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, the supreme destination. The *jīva* can only attain a fearless position as a result of his purified existence (freedom from material bondage) when there is a proper relationship between pure work (*karma*) and pure knowledge as a means and an end, as described in *śāstra*. This is how *mukti* functions as a maid-servant of Bhakti-devī.”

ŚLOKA 23

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सूज्य वर्तते कामचारतः।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम्॥२३॥

*yah śāstra-vidhim utsṛjya / varttate kāma-cārataḥ
na sa siddhim avāpnoti / na sukham na parām gatim*

sah—he; *yah*—who; *utsṛjya*—puts aside; *śāstra-vidhim*—the codes of *śāstra*; *varttate*—behaving; *kāma-cārataḥ*—by the influence of desire; *na avāpnoti*—neither attains; *siddhim*—perfection; *na*—nor; *sukham*—happiness; *na*—nor; *parām*—the supreme; *gatim*—destination.

He who discards the injunctions of *śāstra*, and acts according to his whimsical desires, attains neither perfection, happiness, nor the supreme destination.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

To be devoted to Bhagavān is most auspicious. For this purpose, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the

word *yah*. *Kāma-cārataḥ* means to act whimsically, and it leads one to hell. Only the theists are *sādhus* and only they attain the supreme destination. Those who are atheists go to hell. This is the essence of this chapter.

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

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Unrestrained people who disregard the codes of *śāstra* cannot attain the highest destination. It is stated in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.101):

śruti-smṛti-purāṇādi-pañcarātra-vidhim vinā
aikāntikī harer bhaktir utpātāyaiva kalpate

Although engaged in *aikāntika-bhakti* to Śrī Hari, if one transgresses the regulations mentioned in the *śruti*, *smṛti*, *Purāṇas*, and the *Nārada-Pañcarātra*, great misgivings (*anarthas*) are produced.

ŚLOKA 24

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्यकार्यव्यवस्थितौ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि॥२४॥

tasmāc chāstram pramāṇam te / kāryākārya-vyavasthitau
jñātvā śāstra-vidhānoktam / karma karttum ihārhasi

tasmāt—therefore; *śāstra*—*śāstra* (is); *te*—your; *pramāṇam*—authority; *vyavasthita*—related to; *kārya*—proper; (and) *akārya*—improper duty; *jñātvā*—by knowing; *uktam*—what is spoken; *vidhāna*—concerning the precepts of spiritual practice; *śāstra*—in the Vedic scriptures; *arhasi*—you should; *karttum*—perform; *karma*—your work; *ihā*—in this world.

Śāstra, therefore, is the only authority concerning what is correct and incorrect behaviour. Regarding your *dharma*, you should perform all your actions in realisation of the essence of *śāstra*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Having learned the injunctions of *śāstra*, it is proper for those who desire eternal auspiciousness to cultivate *bhakti* to Śrī Hari under the guidance of the *guru-varga*, according to their respective *adhikāra*. It is not spiritually favourable for an intelligent person to act against the codes of *śāstra*, and consider as authoritative the imaginary ideas of so-called instructors who are glorified by non-devotees. Only the *śrutis* are authoritative in verifying what is correct or incorrect behaviour, because they are *apauruṣeyā* (not composed by any human being), and are free from the four defects such as *bhr̄ama* (illusion) and *pramāda* (negligence). The instructions of a person who has the four defects, of illusion, negligence, imperfect senses and the desire to cheat others are not authoritative.

Special Instruction: The root offence of the *jīva* is the misuse of his free will, and his subsequent aversion to the service of Śrī Bhagavān. Therefore, *māyā*, who is like a maidservant of Bhagavān, causes the *jīva*'s bondage. Being bound by *māyā*, the *jīva* gives up that *sāttvika* nature which enables him to understand Bhagavān. Thus, by accepting *tāmasika* qualities, the *jīva* becomes *āsurika*. At that time, many offences manifest, such as criticising *sādhus*; maintaining the conception that there are many gods, or that there is no God; disobeying the *guru*; disregarding the *śāstra*; thinking that the glory of *bhakti* as described in *śāstra* is false; proposing that *karma* and *jñāna* are *bhakti*; not having faith in *bhakti*; and instructing *bhakti* to unqualified people.

This chapter teaches that, after giving up this *āsurika* nature, it is obligatory to engage in the practice of the nine types of *bhakti* with faith, following the principles described in *śāstra*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Therefore, only *śāstra* is authoritative in determining correct and incorrect behaviour. The conclusion of *śāstra* is that one should perform *bhakti*. Knowing this, you will become qualified to lead an active devotional life. Theists attain the supreme destination by having faith in Bhagavān, and the faithless atheist goes to hell. This is the meaning of this chapter.”

*Thus ends the Sārārtha-Varṣiṇī Prakāśikā-vṛtti,
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja,
on the Fourth Chapter of Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā.*

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN



Śraddhā-Traya-Vibhāga-Yoga

Yoga Through Discerning the Three Types of Faith

ŚLOKA 1

अर्जुन उवाच—

ये शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः।
तेषां निष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सत्त्वमाहो रजस्तमः॥१॥

arjuna uvāca

*ye śāstra-vidhim utsṛjya / yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ
teṣām niṣṭhā tu kā kṛṣṇa / sattvam āho rajas tamah*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *kṛṣṇa*—O Kṛṣṇa; *kā*—what?; *tu*—indeed (is); *niṣṭhā*—the attachment; *teṣām*—of those; *ye*—who; *utsṛjya*—giving up; *śāstra-vidhim*—the injunctions of *śāstra*; *yajante*—worship; *śraddhayā anvitāḥ*—with faith; (is it?) *sattvam*—goodness; *rajaḥ*—passion; *āho*—or; *tamah*—darkness.

Arjuna inquired: O Kṛṣṇa, what is the position of those who ignore the injunctions of *śāstra*, but still perform worship with faith? Are they *sāttvika*, *rājasika* or *tāmasika*?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this Seventeenth Chapter, Śrī Bhagavān gives an explanation about that which is *sāttvika*, *rājasika* and *tāmasika*, in response to Arjuna's question. Arjuna says, "After You described the nature of the *asuras*, You said that those who transgress the injunctions of *śāstra* and act whimsically do not attain perfection, happiness, or the supreme destination (Gītā 16.23). Now I have a question. What is the *niṣṭhā* (basis of faith) of those who stop following the injunctions of the *śāstra* and whimsically perform *yajñas* such as *tapa*, *jñāna* and *japa*, with a mood that is free from enjoyment and endowed with faith? What is their *niṣṭhā*? Is it *sāttvika*, *rājasika* or *tāmasika*? Please explain this."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura comments that upon hearing the conclusion of the last chapter, Arjuna said, "O Kṛṣṇa, I have a doubt. Previously (in Gītā 4.39), You said that only men with faith achieve *jñāna*. Then (in Gītā 16.23), You said that those who give up following the injunctions of *śāstra* and engage in *karma*, impelled by mundane desires, do not attain perfection, happiness, or the supreme goal. My question is: what is their position if the faith they cultivate is opposed to *śāstra*? Do people whose faith is so whimsical achieve *sattva-saṁśuddhi* (the purification of their existence), which is the result of *jñāna-yoga* and other yogic processes? Please tell me clearly about the *niṣṭhā* of those who give up the injunctions of *śāstra*, but who worship with faith. Is it *sāttvika*, *rājasika* or *tāmasika*?"

ŚLOKA 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

**त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावजा।
सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु॥२॥**

śrī bhagavān uvāca
 tri-vidhā bhavati śraddhā / dehinām sā svabhāva-jā
 sāttvikī rājasī caiva / tāmasī ceti tām śṛṇu

śrī bhagavān uvāca—the all-opulent Supreme Lord said; śraddhā—the faith; dehinām—of embodied beings; bhavati—is; tri-vidhā—of three kinds; (in) sāttvikī—goodness; rājasī—passion; ca—and; eva—certainly; tāmasī—ignorance; sā—that (faith); (is) svabhāva-jā—born of one's own nature; ca—and; śṛṇu—now hear; iti—about; tām—that.

Śrī Bhagavān said: The faith of embodied beings is of three types: *sāttvika*, *rājasika* or *tāmasika*. It is determined by past life impressions. Now hear about this.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“O Arjuna, first hear about the *niṣṭhā* of those who perform *bhajana* in accordance with the codes of *śāstra*. I will then speak about the *niṣṭhā* of those whose worship is in violation of those rules. The word *sva-bhāva-jā* means śraddhā which is born of past impressions. It is also of three types.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Some think that it is painful and difficult to follow the injunctions of *śāstra*, while others give up following them out of laziness and whimsically worship various *devas* with *laukika-śraddhā* (mundane faith) which has arisen from past life impressions. The faith of these people is of three types: *sāttvika*, *rājasika* and *tāmasika*. However, faith which is aimed at cultivating *bhagavad-bhakti* under the guidance of *śuddha-bhaktas*, who are well versed in *śāstra*, is *nirguṇa*. There is something to consider in this regard. In the initial

stages, the faith of a *bhakti-sādhaka* may be in *sattva-guṇa*, but by the influence of *sādhus*, it very quickly becomes firmly fixed as *nirguṇa-śraddhā*. At that time, while meticulously following the rules and regulations of *śāstra*, if one engages with strong faith in *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana* and *smarana* of *hari-nāma* and *hari-kathā*, he begins his progress on the path of *bhakti*.

SLOKA 3

सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत।
श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥३॥

sattvānurūpā sarvasya / śraddhā bhavati bhārata
śraddhā-mayo'yaṁ puruṣo / yo yac-chraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ

bhārata—O scion of Bhārata; *śraddhā*—faith; *bhavati*—is (determined); *anurūpā*—in accordance; *sattva*—with the state of existence; *sarvasya*—of all beings; *ayam*—the; *puruṣaḥ*—person (soul); (is known as) *śraddhā-mayaḥ*—filled with faith; (he) *yah*—who; (has) *yat-śraddhaḥ*—whichever object of faith; *sah*—he; (has) *eva saḥ*—that very same (nature).

O Bhārata, everyone's faith is determined by the disposition of his mind. All people possess faith, and in whatever worshipable object they place that faith, they develop a corresponding disposition.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Sattvam refers to the internal sense, *citta* (the heart). It is of three types: *sāttvika*, *rājasika* and *tāmasika*. The faith of a person whose *citta* is *sāttvika* is also *sāttvika*; the faith of one whose *citta* is *rājasika* is *rājasika*, and one whose *citta* is *tāmasika* has *tāmasika* faith. *Yac-chraddhaḥ* means that one's nature develops according to his worshipable object. This

means that a person's nature corresponds with the nature of those he worships, be they *devas*, *asuras* or *rākṣasas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

A *jīva*'s inherent asset is the *śraddhā* or *rati* he has in his *śuddha-svarūpa* (constitutional position). That inherent *śraddhā* in his *svarūpa* is related to Bhagavān only, and is unquestionably *nirguṇa*. However, in the bound state, the constitutional nature of the *jīva* becomes distorted. When the *jīva* associates with *prakṛti*, the result is that he performs either auspicious or inauspicious activities. That distorted faith, known as *sāttvika*, *rājasika* or *tāmasika*, corresponds to whichever worshipable deity his faith is directed toward.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "O Bhārata, everyone has faith. A person expresses his faith according to the disposition of his mind, and his nature develops according to the nature of the deity he has placed his faith in. The reality is that because the *jīva* is constitutionally My *amṛta* (part), he is therefore, *nirguṇa*. That *jīva* who has forgotten his relationship with Me has become *saguṇa* (bound by the *guṇas*). He has acquired that *saguṇa* nature as a result of his aversion to Me since time immemorial. It is this aversion which forms the nature or disposition of his *citta* (heart). This *citta* is called *sattva*, and when it is purified, fearlessness results. The faith of the purified *citta* is the seed of *nirguṇa-bhakti*. The faith of the impure heart is *saguṇa*, bound by the modes. As long as this faith does not become *nirguṇa* or aim at *nirguṇa* (Bhagavān), it is called *kāma*, or passion, which is *saguṇa*. I am now explaining *saguṇa-śraddhā* (faith within the *guṇas* symptomised by material desires). Please listen."

ŚLOKA 4

यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान् यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः।
प्रेतान्भूतगणांश्चान्ये यजन्ते तामसा जनाः॥४॥

*yajante sāttvikā devān / yakṣa-rakṣāṁsi rājasāḥ
pretān bhūta-gaṇāṁś cānye / yajante tāmasā janāḥ*

sāttvikāḥ—those in goodness; *yajante*—worship; *devān*—the devas; *rājasāḥ*—those in passion; (worship) *yakṣa-rakṣāṁsi*—witches and demons; *janāḥ*—persons; *ca*—and; *anye*—others; *tāmasāḥ*—in darkness; *yajante*—worship; *pretān*—ghosts; (and) *bhūta-gaṇān*—spirits.

Persons in *sattva-guṇa* worship the *devas*, who are of a similar mode. Those in *rajo-guṇa* worship the *yakṣas* and *rākṣasas*, who also have similar passionate natures, and those in *tamo-guṇa* worship ghosts and spirits, who are similar in nature to themselves.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the *guṇas* in detail. Previously, He only briefly mentioned them. Those with a *sāttvika citta* (mind) are endowed with *sāttvika śraddhā* and worship the *sāttvika devatās* according to the injunctions of *sāttvika sāstras*. They have faith in the *devas* and for this reason they are also called *devatās* (because they develop the same nature and qualities). The same principle applies to those whose minds are *rājasika* and *tāmasika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the varieties of *laukikī* (mundane) *śraddhā* of persons who worship the various *devas*. According to *sāstra*, Śrī Bhagavān is the only worshipable entity. However, the faith of those who wor-

ship various devas and other entities is impelled by various types of *laukikī* desires, and is of three kinds: *sāttvika*, *rājasika* and *tāmasika*. Those who have *sāttvika* śraddhā worship devas such as Brahmā, Śiva, Indra, Candra and Sūrya. Similarly, those whose śraddhā is *rājasika* worship Durgā, yakṣas, rākṣasas and so on, and those who possess *tāmasika* śraddhā worship ghosts and spirits. Sometimes it is seen that the three types of people in the three different modes worship the same *deva*. For example, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi's worship of Lord Śiva at the time of devastation was *sāttvika*. Kāgabhuṣuṇḍiji's worship of Śiva was also *sāttvika*. As a result of their *sāttvika* worship, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi remained alive for one *kalpa* and acquired knowledge of the creation of the universe, etc., and Kāgabhuṣuṇḍi attained *bhakti* unto Bhagavān Śrī Rāmacandra. The worship of Lord Śiva performed by Bāṇāsura and Rāvaṇa, etc., is *rājasika*, and the worship by Bhasmāsura, etc., is *tāmasika*. Durgā devī is also worshipped by those with *sāttvika*, *rājasika* or *tāmasika* śraddhā. However, by the influence of saintly association, *tāmasika* śraddhā can be transformed into *rājasika* śraddhā, *rājasika* into *sāttvika* and *sāttvika* into *nirguṇa* śraddhā.

The śraddhā of *nirviśeṣa-vādīs* is also *sāttvika*. They consider *brahma* to be formless and featureless. Therefore, they accept the forms of five *devatas* to be imaginary and worship them. In this way, they endeavour to purify their *citta* and attain *jñāna*.

ŚLOKAS 5-6

अशास्त्रविहितं घोरं तप्यन्ते ये तपो जनाः।
दम्भाहङ्कारसंयुक्ताः कामरागबलान्विताः॥५॥
कर्शयन्तः शरीरस्थं भूतग्राममचेतसः।

माज्जैवान्तःशरीरस्थं तान् विद्ध्यासुरनिश्चयान् ॥६॥

aśāstra-vihitam ghoram / tapyante ye tapo janāḥ
dambhāhaṅkāra-saṁyuktāḥ / kāma-rāga-balānvitāḥ

karśayantah śarīra-stham / bhūta-grāmam acetasaḥ
māñ caivāntah śarīra-stham / tān viddhy āsura-niścayān

janāḥ—persons; *ye*—who; (*are*) *saṁyuktāḥ*—engaged; *dambha-ahaṅkāra*—in pride and false ego; (*and*) *anvitāḥ*—absorbed in; *kāma*—desire; *rāga*—attachment; *bala*—strength; *acetasaḥ*—who are not discriminating; *tapyante*—perform; *ghoram*—terrible; *tapah*—austerity; *aśāstra-vihitam*—not enjoined in *sāstra*; *karśayantah*—they inflict pain; *bhūta-grāmam*—on the elements; *śarīra-stham*—situated within the body; *ca*—and; *mām*—to Me; *antaḥ śarīra-stham*—situated within the body; *eva*—certainly; *viddhi*—you should know; *tān*—those; (*to be*) *āsura-niścayān*—certified as demons.

Out of pride and egotism, some people perform severe austerities which are not recommended in *sāstra*. Motivated by lust, mundane attachment and desire for power, they inflict pain not only on the elements of the body, but also upon Me situated within. Such persons are to be recognised as *asuras*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Kṛṣṇa said, “O Arjuna! You have asked about the status of those who discard the injunctions of *sāstra*, yet perform worship endowed with *śraddhā*; are they *sāttvika*, *rājasika* or *tāmasika*? Now hear My reply in the two *ślokas* beginning with the word *aśāstra*. Faith and the renunciation of selfish desires are visible in those who perform severe, tortuous austerities, which create fear within all living beings, and other acts such as unauthorised *japa-yajña*, but such people are

bereft of *tattva-jñāna*. Those who are proud and egotistical will surely violate the rules of *śāstra*. *Kāma* refers to desires such as remaining young forever, being immortal and desiring a kingdom. *Rāga* means attachment to one's austerities, and *bala* means the capacity to perform austerities like Hiranyakasipu. From the very beginning of their austerities, such persons torture the *bhūta-grāmam* (group of elements such as earth) which are situated in the body, and cause unnecessary pain to Me as well as to My *amśa*, the *jīva*. Such persons have *āsurika* dispositions."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here Śrī Kṛṣṇa is telling Arjuna that those who disregard *śāstra* and perform severe austerities, such as fasting to fulfil their material desires, are not included amongst those who perform the *sāttvika*, *rājasika* and *tāmasika* activities explained previously. Such people are very unfortunate. Being influenced by the association of pretenders, they perform severe austerities which intimidate common people, and which are not recommended in the *śāstra*. Austerities such as worthless, painful fasts, offering one's body or flesh in *yajña*, offering a human being in *yajña* (*nara-bali*), offering animals in *yajña* (*paśu-bali*) and other such violent acts cause pain to one's self (*ātmā*) and also to Paramātmā. Such people who possess a cruel nature should be considered *āsurika*. At the present time, some people observe fasts which are not recommended in *śāstra* out of selfish or political interests. The provision for fasts given in the *śāstra* is only for the purpose of attaining the transcendental goal, and not for political or social purposes. On *ekādaśi*, there is a provision to fast from everything, even from water (*nirjala-vrata*), and to remain awake performing *hari-kirtana* throughout the night (*rātri-jāgarāṇa*). Nowadays, people perform *rātri-jāgarāṇa* by eating flesh, drinking wine

and singing vulgar and contemptible songs. In this way, they violate the rules of *sāstra*. Such *rātri-jāgaraṇa* is not included within the three types of *śraddhā*, and is miserable. These fasts and *jāgaraṇas* do not benefit anyone. In fact, such activities are performed out of the pride and ego born from excessive attachment to material desires and sense enjoyment. They also cause unnecessary pain to the body and disturb one's inner peace as well as the peace of others. Sometimes persons even die from performing these fanatical austerities and fasts. While wandering repeatedly in the *āsurika* species of life, they receive only misery. But, if by the will of providence, they receive the association of a *śuddha-bhakta*, they can receive some benefit. Examples of this are Nalakūvera and Maṇigrīva.

SLOKA 7

**आहारस्त्वपि सर्वस्य त्रिविधो भवति प्रियः ।
यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु ॥७॥**

*āhāras tv api sarvasya / tri-vidho bhavati priyah
yajñas tapas tathā dānam / teṣāṁ bhedam imam śṛṇu*

tu—indeed; *api*—even; *āhāraḥ*—the food; *sarvasya*—of all living beings; *bhavati*—is; *priyah*—dear; *tri-vidhah*—according to the three qualities; (this is) *tathā*—also; (true of) *yajñah*—sacrifice; *tapah*—austerity; (and) *dānam*—charity; *śṛṇu*—now hear; *imam*—this; *bhedam*—division; *teṣām*—of them.

The food which different people like is of three kinds, depending on their qualities. The same is true of sacrifice, austerity and charity. Now hear of the distinctions between them.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Those who discard the injunctions of *śāstra* and act whimsically enter the *āsurika* species of life. This was mentioned in the previous chapter. Those of an *āsurika* nature who worship *yakṣas*, *rākṣasas* and spirits, also enter the *āsurika* species of life as stated in this chapter. One can categorise people as divine or demoniac according to the type of food they eat. This will be explained in thirteen consecutive *ślokas* beginning here with the words *āhāras tu*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Having explained the three categories of *śraddhā*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes specific food, *yajñas* and so forth corresponding to each of them. Those who are of a particular mode are inclined to food, sacrifices, austerities and charities in the same mode. Nowadays, some people imagine that food has no relationship with *dharma*, while others think that protecting and maintaining the body is the basis of all *dharma*: *śarīram ādyam khalu dharma sādhanam*. Hence, one should note that those who accept sense enjoyment as the only purpose of human life feel great satisfaction in drinking wine and eating meat, eggs and even cow-flesh. Fortunately, some people have understood that the tendency for sense enjoyment has caused the *jīvas'* bondage to *māyā*, and because of it they are undergoing so much misery, life after life. For those who want to become free from all miseries, it is imperative that they give up their desire to indulge in sense enjoyment. Only people who have developed such awareness in this human life understand the need to accept pure, *sāttvika* food. In order to cross beyond the three *guṇas* of *māyā*, they first try to overcome *tamo-guṇa* with *rajo-guṇa*, then *rajo-guṇa* with *sattva-guṇa*, and finally mundane *sattva-guṇa* with *nirguṇa* (*śuddha-sattva*).

Sādhu and śāstra state that control of the mind is indeed the root of all dharma. The body's nearest relative is the mind, and thus one's inclination of mind becomes good or bad depending on the type of food one takes. This is visible everywhere. Most people in the world today consume inedible and āsurika foodstuffs and indulge in acts of illicit sex, cheating, duplicity and violence. At present, proper moral conduct (*sad-ācāra*) is rarely seen. Therefore, after careful consideration, those who are wise should only accept such foodstuffs which nourish the body and the function of the pure intelligence. For this reason, Śrī Bhagavān has described the three types of foodstuffs which represent the three modes. Those who aim to adopt *sattva-guṇa*, are seen to become disinterested in *rājasika* and *tāmasika* food and interested in *sāttvika* foods only.

While commenting on this *śloka*, Śrī Rāmānujācārya has cited two evidences from *śruti*. 1) *Annamayam hi saumyamanah*. "One who eats grains will have a peaceful mind." 2) *Āhāra-śuddhau sattva-śuddhiḥ*. "If one's food is pure, then one's existence becomes purified." The *śrutis* have also cautioned us that the purity of the mind depends upon the purity of the food. This can be easily understood by these proofs. We must, therefore, give up all food which *śāstra* prohibits. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has explained this very clearly in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.28):

*pathyam pūtam anāyas tam / āhāryam sāttvikam smṛtam
rājasam cendriya-preṣṭham / tāmasam cārtti-dāśuci*

Food which is wholesome, pure and obtained without difficulty is *sāttvika*. That which is very pungent, sour and salty and meant only for the gratification of the senses is *rājasika*, and food which is impure is *tāmasika*. But that food which is approved of by *śāstra* and offered to Me is *nirguṇa*.

From the word *ca* in this *śloka* (11.25.28), both Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī have concluded that food which is offered to Bhagavān is *nirguṇa*. Those who violate these instructions and accept any type of impure food based on their fancy must be in the āsurika class.

ŚLOKA 8

आयुःसत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्द्धनाः ।
रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्या आहाराः
सात्त्विकप्रियाः ॥८॥

āyuh-sattva-balārogya / sukha-prīti-vivarddhanāḥ
rasyāḥ snigdhāḥ sthirā-hṛdyā / āhārāḥ sāttvika-priyāḥ

āhārāḥ—foods; *vivarddhanāḥ*—which augment; *āyuh*—life; *sattva*—enthusiasm; *bala*—strength; *ārogya*—good health; *sukha*—happiness; *prīti*—satisfaction; (and which are) *rasyāḥ*—tasty; *snigdhāḥ*—fattening; *sthirāḥ*—sustaining; (and) *hṛdyāḥ*—heartening; (are) *sāttvika-priyāḥ*—dear to those situated in goodness.

Foods which augment life, enthusiasm, strength, good health, happiness and satisfaction, which are tasty, fattening, substantially nourishing and agreeable to the heart and stomach, are dear to *sāttvika* people.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

In this world, it is a well-known fact that by eating *sāttvika* food, one's duration of life increases. The word *sattvam* means enthusiasm. *Rasyā* refers to substances like *guḍa* (*gur*) which although tasty (*rasyā*) are dry. Śrī Bhagavān then refers to foods like milk and cream, which are both tasty (*rasyā*) and

fatty (*snigdhā*) but not solid (*sthirāḥ*). He then refers to foods that are *rasyā*, *snigdhā* and *sthirāḥ*, such as jackfruit. Although jackfruit fits into the above categories, it is not good for the heart and stomach; therefore, Śrī Bhagavān specifically mentions food that is beneficial for the heart as well as the belly. Cow products like milk and yogurt, as well as wheat, sugar and rice have the characteristics of *sattva* and are liked by *sāttvika* people. This should be understood. *Sāttvika* people do not like impure food, even if it has the above-mentioned characteristics, so the adjective *pavitra* (pure) applies to this *śloka*. In *Gītā* (17.10), the adjective *amedhya* (impure) is used for people who like food in *tamo-guṇa*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the present *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān is informing Arjuna that according to the grade of foodstuffs consumed, there is a corresponding *guṇa*. Generally, a person who desires his own welfare accepts only *sāttvika* food. *Sāttvika* food is favourable for the execution of *dharma* because it is pure. It is not only good for the health but it increases the duration of life. Such pure food is auspicious in every respect as it purifies the body and mind. It is easy to distinguish the difference between the effect on the mind of drinking milk and that of drinking wine. People are giving up taking *sāttvika* food due to bad association, improper knowledge and lack of proper *saṃskāras*.

ŚLOKA 9

कट्वम्ललवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरुक्षविदाहिनः ।
आहारा राजसस्येष्टा दुःखशोकामयप्रदाः ॥१९॥

*kaṭv-aṁla-lavaṇāty-uṣṇa- / tīkṣṇa-rukṣa-vidāhināḥ
āhāra rājasasyeṣṭā / duḥkha-śokāmaya-pradāḥ*

āhārāḥ—foods; (that are very) *kaṭu*—bitter; *amla*—sour; *lavaṇa*—salty; *aty-uṣṇa*—very hot; *tīkṣṇa*—pungent; *rukṣa*—dry; *vidāhināḥ*—burning; *pradāḥ*—they give; *duḥkha*—pain; *śoka*—grief; (and) *āmaya*—disease; *iṣṭāḥ*—dear; *rājasasya*—to the person in passion.

Foods which are very bitter, sour, salty, spicy, pungent, dry and burning, and which give rise to pain, grief and disease, are liked by people of a *rājasika* nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *ati* (very) is used with seven words, the first being *kaṭu*. Foods that are very bitter (like neem), very sour, very salty, very spicy and very pungent (like radish), spices such as black pepper or those which are very dry (like asafoetida), or very burning (like roasted black gram) are the cause of pain, disease and grief. Here, the word *duḥkha* (pain) refers to the instant misery caused to the eyes, throat and so forth while eating, and the word *śoka* (grief) refers to the anxiety about reactions to come. The word *āmaya* means disease.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

One immediately gets a burning sensation in the tongue, throat and belly by eating *rājasika* foodstuffs, and wind and indigestion follow. Later, the mind becomes restless due to unpleasant thoughts and anxiety, and various types of diseases develop. In this way, life becomes miserable. Aside from this, the mind becomes distracted from *dharma* activities and disinterested in them as a result of eating these *rājasika* foodstuffs. People of a *sāttvika* nature, therefore, do not accept such food.

ŚLOKA 10

यातयामं गतरसं पूति पर्युषितज्ज्व यत्।
उच्छिष्टमपि चामेध्यं भोजनं तामसप्रियम्॥१०॥

*yātayāmam gata-rasam / pūti paryuṣitañ ca yat
ucchiṣṭam api cāmedhyam / bhojanam tāmasa-priyam*

bhojanam—food; *yat*—which; (*is*) *tāmasa-priyam*—dear to those in the quality of darkness; (*is*) *yāta-yāmam*—spoiled; *gata-rasam*—without taste; *pūti*—putrid; *paryuṣitam*—stale; *ca*—and; *ucchiṣṭam*—partly eaten; *api ca*—and also; *amedhyam*—impure.

Tāmasika people like food which is cooked more than three hours before being eaten and which is cold, tasteless, putrid, stale, partly eaten or rejected and impure.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

The word *yāta-yāmam* means food that has been cooked three hours prior to being eaten and that has become cold. *Gata-rasam* means that which has lost its natural taste, or that from which the juice has been extracted, like the peel or stone of a mango. *Pūti* means putrid. *Paryuṣitam* means that which was cooked the previous day. *Ucchiṣṭam* means someone's remnants. This does not refer to the remnants of highly respected people such as those in the *guru-varga*. *Amedhya* means that which is not fit to be consumed, like meat or tobacco. Therefore, those who are concerned about their own welfare should eat only *sāttvika* food. Vaiṣṇavas, however, should not even accept *sāttvika* food if it is not offered to Bhagavān. It is understood from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam that food which is offered to Bhagavān is *nirguṇa*. This alone is dear to the *bhaktas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

The purpose of food is to keep the body healthy and strong, make the mind pure, increase the lifespan and engage a person in his spiritual welfare. In ancient times, those who were learned and wise would accept only food that kept them healthy and increased their life span. Milk, yogurt, sugar, rice, wheat, fruit and vegetables are dear to *sāttvika* people.

Many people think that there is no harm in eating foods such as meat and wine that they have offered in their worship of the *devatās*. Although *śāstra* makes provision for such acts, people do not perform them in accordance with these provisions. The provision in *śāstra* for killing animals or drinking wine in *yajña* is actually for extremely *tāmasika* people who are completely attached to sense indulgence. It is a temporary arrangement to expertly bring them to the platform of abstention from such acts. This is also confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.11):

loke vyavāyāmiṣa-madya-sevā
nityā hi jantor na hi tatra codanā
vyavasthitis teṣu vivāha-yajña
surā-grahair āsu nivṛttir iṣṭā

It is seen that people in the material world have a natural inclination towards drinking wine, eating meat and having sex. Yet *śāstra* never encourages these activities. To some extent, provision has been granted for sex-life within a sanctified marriage, and for eating meat and drinking wine in a *yajña* called *śautrāmaṇi*. The purpose is to control such people's unrestrained natures, and fix them within the boundary of morality. The actual, deep import of the *Vedas* is to encourage people to completely give up these activities.

Furthermore, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.13) says:

yad ghrāṇa-bhakṣo vihitāḥ surāyāḥ

tathā paśor ālabhanam na himsā

Śāstra ordains the smelling of wine at the time of a *yajña*, but not the drinking of it, and only for the above-mentioned purpose of gradually attaining complete renunciation. In the same way, śāstra does not authorise anyone to kill an animal and eat meat. It permits one to touch the animal only and then release it.

Some people think that, although it is sinful to eat meat, no sin is incurred in eating fish because fish are like the flowers or fruits of the water. However, *Manu-saṁhitā* completely forbids the eating of fish:

*yo yasya māṁsam aśnāti / sa tan-māṁsād ucyate
matsyādaḥ sarva-māṁsādas / tasmān matsyān vivarjayet*

Those who eat the meat of a particular animal are known as eaters of that particular animal, but those who eat fish eat the meat of everything, because a fish eats the meat of all living entities such as cows and pigs. It even consumes rotten things. Those who eat fish actually eat the meat of all beings.

Eating fish should, therefore, be abandoned entirely.
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.14) further states:

*ye tv anevam-vido 'santah / stabdhāḥ sad-abhimāninaḥ
paśūn druhyanti visrabdhāḥ / pretya khādanti te ca tān*

Intoxicated by their false ego, those who are ignorant of dharmika principles are not perceptive. Such *tāmasika* people who fearlessly eat animals after killing them will be eaten by those same animals in their next life.

Regarding the meaning of the word *māṁsa* (meat), *Manu-saṁhitā* says:

*māṁ sa bhakṣayitāmutra / yasya māṁsam ihādmy aham
etan māṁsasya māṁsatvam / pravadanti maniṣināḥ*

The word *māṁsa* means: ‘That which I am eating here, will eat

me in my next life.' For this reason, the learned say that meat is called *māṁsa* (a repeated act: I eat him; he eats me).

Here it should also be understood that eating *sāttvika* food enhances one's *sattva*, goodness. But even this mode is not completely free from sin, because there is also life in creepers, vegetables, plants and trees. A touch of sin also remains in the preparation of vegetarian food because, to some degree, it involves violence. For this reason, *śuddha-bhaktas* accept only food which has been offered to Bhagavān (*mahāprasāda*). *Mahāprasāda* is the only food fit to be eaten, because it is *nirguṇa* and completely free from sin. Food that has not been offered should be shunned totally. This is also written in the *Brahma-vaivarta* and the *Padma Purāṇa*: *annam viṣṭhā jalāṁ mūtram yad viṣṇor anivedanam*. "Taking food and water which is not offered to Śrī Viṣṇu is compared to eating stool and drinking urine."

ŚLOKA 11

**अफलाकार्मभिर्ज्ञो विधिदिष्टो य इज्यते।
यष्टव्यमवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्त्विकः॥११॥**

aphalākārṅksibhir yajño / vidhi-diṣṭo ya ijyate
yaṣṭavyam eveti manah / samādhāya sa sāttvikah

sah—that; *yajñah*—sacrifice; *yah*—which; *ijyate*—is performed; *samādhāya*—resolving; (in) *manah*—the mind; *iti*—that; *yaṣṭavyam*—sacrifice is obligatory; *vidhi-diṣṭah*—which is directed by the injunctions of *śāstra*; (and) *aphala-akārṅksibhiḥ*—without desires for results; (is) *eva*—certainly; *sāttvikah*—in goodness.

The performance of *yajña* is obligatory. With such resolution of mind, *yajña* which is executed according to the direction of *śāstra*, and without expectation of reward, is *sāttvika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now Śrī Bhagavān is describing the three types of *yajña*. If one questions how one will engage in *yajña* without expecting the results, then Śrī Bhagavān says, “He performs the *yajña* by concluding that because it is his duty and is also prescribed in the *sāstra*, its performance is imperative.”

ŚLOKA 12

अभिसन्धाय तु फलं दम्भार्थमपि चैव यत्।
इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ तं यज्ञं विद्धि राजसम्॥१२॥

*abhisandhāya tu phalam / dambhārtham api caiva yat
ijyate bharata-śreṣṭha / tam yajñam viddhi rājasam*

tu—however; *bharata-śreṣṭha*—best of Bharata’s line; *viddhi*—you should understand; *tam*—that; *yajñam*—the sacrifice; *yat*—which; *ijyate*—is performed; *abhisandhāya*—with attachment; *phalam*—for the results; *api ca*—and also; *dambhaartham*—out of pride; (*is*) *eva*—certainly; *rājasam*—in the quality of passion.

O best of the Bharata dynasty, that *yajña* which is executed with the desire for its fruit, and which is pretentiously and pompously performed, is *rājasika*.

ŚLOKA 13

अभिसन्धाय तु फलं दम्भार्थमपि चैव यत्।
इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ तं यज्ञं विद्धि राजसम्॥१३॥

*vidhi-hīnam asṛṣṭānnam / mantra-hīnam adakṣiṇam
śraddhā-virahitam yajñam / tāmasam paricakṣate*

yajñam—that sacrifice; *vidhi-hīnam*—disregarding the precepts of *sāstra*; *asṛṣṭa*—where there is no distribution; *annam*—of grains

(*prasādam*); *mantra-hīnam*—without the utterance of mantras; *adakṣiṇam*—where no gifts are given to the priests; *śraddhā-virahitam*—which (is performed) without faith; *paricakṣate*—is condemned; *tāmasam*—in the quality of darkness.

That *yajña* which disregards the injunctions of *śāstra*, where no *prasādam* is distributed, no Vedic mantras are chanted, no gifts are given to the priests, and which is performed without *śraddhā*, is condemned by the learned as *tāmasika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Asṛṣṭānnam means without distribution of *prasādam*.

ŚLOKA 14

देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवम्।
ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते॥१४॥

deva-dvija-guru-prājña- / *pūjanam* *śaucam* *ārjavam*
brahmacaryam *ahiṁsā ca* / *sārīram* *tapa ucyate*

tapah—austerity; *sārīram*—of the body; *ucyate*—is said to be; *pūjanam*—worship; *deva*—of the gods; *dvija*—the *brāhmaṇas*; *guru*—the spiritual preceptors; *prājña*—the wise; *śaucam*—cleanliness; *ārjavam*—simplicity; *brahmacaryam*—celibacy; *ca*—and; *ahiṁsā*—non-violence.

Austerities related to the body include worship of the *devatās*, the *brāhmaṇas*, *gurus*, persons with a thorough understanding of the Absolute, and observance of cleanliness, simplicity, celibacy and non-violence.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Tapasyā is of three types. To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān first explains *sāttvika tapasyā* in three consecutive ślokas, the first beginning with *deva-dvija*.

ŚLOKA 15

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितञ्च यत्।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते॥१५॥

*anudvega-karam vākyam / satyam priya-hitañ ca yat
svādhyāyābhyasanam caiva / vāñ-mayam tapa ucyate*

vākyam—speech; *yat*—which; *anudvega-karam*—does not cause agitation; *satyam*—which is true; *ca*—and; *priya-hitam*—beneficial; *ca*—also; *abhyasanam*—the practice; *svādhyāya*—of recitation of the *Vedas* (and related *sāstra*); *eva*—certainly; *ucyate*—is said to be; *tapah*—austerity; *vāñ-mayam*—of speech.

Words which cause no agitation and which are truthful, pleasing and beneficial, as well as the practice of reciting the *Vedas*, are all said to be austeries of speech.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

Anudvega-karam means speech which does not cause agitation to others.

ŚLOKA 16

मनःप्रसादः सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः।
भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत्पो मानसमुच्यते॥१६॥

*manah-prasādaḥ saumyatvam / maunam ātma-vinigrahaḥ
bhāva-saṁśuddhir ity etat / tapo mānasam ucyate*

etat—the; *tapah*—austerity; *mānasam*—of the mind; *ucyate*—is said to be; *iti*—as follows; *manah-prasādaḥ*—satisfaction of the mind; *saumyatvam*—gentleness; *maunam*—silence; *ātma-vinigrahaḥ*—discipline of the mind; *bhāva-saṁśuddhiḥ*—purity of behaviour.

Austerities of the mind consist of satisfaction, gentleness, gravity, mental discipline and purity of behaviour.

ŚLOKA 17

श्रद्धया परया तप्तं तपस्तत्रिविधं नरैः।
अफलाकारभियुर्कौः सात्त्विकं परिचक्षते॥१७॥

śraddhayā parayā taptam / tapas tat tri-vidham naraiḥ
aphalākāñkṣibhir yuktaih / sāttvikam paricakṣate

iha—in this world; *tat*—this; *tri-vidham*—threefold; *tapah*—austerity; *taptam*—executed; *naraiḥ*—by men; *yuktaih*—connected with the Supreme Lord; *aphala-akāñkṣibhiḥ*—without desire for results; *parayā*—through transcendental; *śraddhayā*—faith; *paricakṣate*—is said to be; *sāttvikam*—in the quality of goodness.

This threefold austerity performed by men with transcendental faith, who are free from the desire for any mundane reward, is said to be *sāttvika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

The word *tri-vidham* refers to austerities of body, speech and mind endowed with the symptoms described above.

ŚLOKA 18

सत्कारमानपूजार्थं तपो दम्भेन चैव यत्।
क्रियते तदिह प्रोक्तं राजसं चलमध्यवम्॥१८॥

satkāra-māna-pūjārtham / tapo dambhena caiva yat
kriyate tad iha proktam / rājasam calam adhruvam

tat—that; *tapah*—austerity; *yat*—which; *kriyate*—is performed; *dambhena*—with pride; *ca*—and; *artham*—for the purpose of

achieving; *satkāra*—recognition; *māna*—honour; (and) *pūjā*—adoration; *eva*—certainly; *proktam*—is declared; (to be) *rājasam*—in the quality of passion; (it is) *calam*—temporary; (and) *adhruvam*—unstable.

That austerity which is performed with pride for the sake of recognition, honour and adoration is called *rājasika*. It is both temporary and uncertain.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

The word *satkāraḥ* means to worship someone by flattery, by telling them that they are saintly, or honouring them with flowery words. *Māna* means bodily worship, such as standing up to greet a person when he arrives and following him to the door when he leaves. *Pūjā* means *mānasī pūjā* i.e. when someone accepts one as a *sadhu* within his mind, seeing his austerities and thus worships him by offering wealth, gifts, etc. The austerities which are performed for these purposes with pride, are *rājasika*. The word *calam* means that which stays only for a short period, and *adhruvam* means that which is temporary.

ŚLOKA 19

मूढग्राहेणात्मनो यत्पीडया क्रियते तपः।
परस्योत्सादनार्थं वा तत्तामसमुदाहृतम्॥१९॥

*mūḍha-grāheṇātmano yat / pīḍayā kriyate tapah
parasyotsādanārtham vā / tat tāmasam udāhṛtam*

tat—that; *tapah*—austerity; *yat*—which; *kriyate*—is performed; *mūḍha-grāheṇa*—foolishly; *pīḍayā*—by giving pain; *ātmanah*—to one's self; *vā*—or; *artham*—with the purpose; *utsādana*—of bringing ruin; *parasya*—to another; *udāhṛtam*—is said to be; *tāmasam*—in the quality of darkness.

That austerity which is performed foolishly, which gives pain to the self, or is intended to cause another's ruin, is known as *tāmasika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Mūḍha-grāheṇa means foolishly performed. *Parasya utsādan-ārtham* means that the *tapasyā* which is performed to destroy others is *tāmasika*.

ŚLOKA 20

दातव्यमिति यदानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे।
देशे काले च पात्रे च तदानं
सात्त्विकं स्मृतम्॥२०॥

dātavyam iti yad dānam / dīyate'nupakāriṇe
deṣe kāle ca pātre ca / tad dānam sāttvikam smṛtam

dānam—charity; *dātavyam*—should be given; *iti*—thus; *tat*—that; *dānam*—charity; *yat*—which; *dīyate*—is given; *anupakāriṇe*—to one who gives nothing in return; *deṣe*—at a (proper) place; *ca*—and; (proper) *kāle*—time; *ca*—and; *pātre*—to a worthy recipient; *smṛtam*—is considered; *sāttvikam*—in the quality of goodness.

‘Charity should be given as a matter of duty.’ With this resolve, charity given with no expectation of return, at a holy place, at an auspicious time and to a worthy person, is considered to be *sāttvika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *dātavyam* means charity given out of a sense of duty to a qualified person at the proper time. Charity given with expectation of return is not charity.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the present *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān explains the three types of charity. He says that charity is *sāttvika* if it is given out of duty and without expectation of any reward to a person who is selfless and who never performs activities for his own welfare, or who does not have the ability to perform welfare for others. In this regard, it is also necessary to consider the proper time, place, and person.

ŚLOKA 21

यत् प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः।
दीयते च परिक्लिष्टं तदानं राजसं स्मृतम्॥२१॥

*yat tu pratyupakārārtham / phalam uddiśya vā punah
dīyate ca parikliṣṭam / tad dānam rājasam smṛtam*

tu—but; *tat*—that; *dānam*—charity; *yat*—which; *dīyate*—is given; *artham*—with the purpose; *pratyupakāra*—of getting a return; *vā*—or; *uddiśya*—demanding; *phalam*—some benefit; *ca*—and; *punah*—furthermore; *parikliṣṭam*—begrudgingly; *smṛtam*—is said to be; *rājasam*—in the quality of passion.

But that charity which is offered with the expectation of gaining some return or benefit, or which is given begrudgingly, is said to be *rājasika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Parikliṣṭam means that after giving in charity a person repents, ‘Why have I given so much?’ It also means to give on the order of superiors, such as the *guru*, although not willing to give. Here the word *parikliṣṭam* means that a charitable object or act which is tainted by such unbeneficial feelings is *rājasika*.

ŚLOKA 22

अदे काले यहानमपात्रेभ्य च दीयते।

असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम्॥२२॥

adeśa-kāle yad dānam / apātrebhyaś ca dīyate
asat-kṛtam avajñātām / tat tāmasam udāhṛtam

tat—that; *dānam*—charity; *yat*—which; *dīyate*—is given; *adeśa-kāle*—at an improper place and time; *ca*—and; *apātrebhyaḥ*—to unworthy recipients; *asat-kṛtam*—without respect; (and) *avajñātām*—with contempt; *udāhṛtam*—is said to be; *tāmasam*—in the quality of darkness.

Charity given at an impure place and an improper time to an unworthy recipient, in a mood of contempt and disrespect, is said to be *tāmasika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Asat-kāraḥ means the result of disrespect.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Charity which is given at an impure place and improper time to an unqualified person, like a dancer or prostitute, to one who does not need it, or to a sinful person, is *tāmasika*. Charity which is respectfully given to a worthy person is also *tāmasika*.

ŚLOKAS 23-24

ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः।

ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदा च यज्ञा च विहिताः पुरा॥२३॥

तस्मादोमित्युदाहृत्य यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः।

प्रवर्तन्ते विधानोक्ताः सततं ब्रह्मवादिनाम्॥२४॥

om tat sad iti nirdeśo / brahmaṇas tri-vidhaḥ smṛtaḥ

*brāhmaṇāḥ tena vedāś ca / yajñāś ca vihitāḥ purā
tasmād om̄ ity udāhṛtya / yajña-dāna-tapah-kriyāḥ
pravarttante vidhānoktāḥ / satatam brahma-vādinām*

smṛtaḥ—it is considered; *iti*—that; *om̄ tat sat*—*om̄*, *tat* and *sat*; (are) *tri-vidhāḥ*—a threefold; *nirdeśāḥ*—indication; *brahmaṇāḥ*—of Supreme *brahma*; *purā*—in ancient times; *brāhmaṇāḥ*—the *brāhmaṇas*; *vedāḥ*—the *Vedas*; *ca*—and; *yajñāḥ*—sacrifices; *vihitāḥ*—were created; *tena*—by this utterance; *tasmāt*—therefore; *brahma-vādinām*—for those who preach the Vedic version; *kriyāḥ*—activities; *yajña*—of sacrifice; *dāna*—charity; *tapah*—and austerity; *vidhāna-uktāḥ*—as proclaimed according to ancient precept; *iti*—thus; *satatam*—always; *pravarttante*—take place; *udāhṛtya*—while uttering; *om̄*—*om̄*.

It is said that *om̄*, *tat* and *sat* are the three words used to indicate *brahma*, the Supreme Absolute Reality. *Brāhmaṇas*, the *Vedas* and *yajñas* were originally created from these three words. Therefore, dedicated followers of the *Vedas* always commence the performance of sacrifices, charities, austerities and activities prescribed in *sāstra* by uttering the sacred syllable *om̄*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

It is generally explained that every human being can perform one of the three types of *yajña*, *tapasyā*, etc., according to his *adhikāra*. Those who are *sāttvika* and those who are *brahma-vādīs*, begin their performance of *yajña* with an invocation to *brahma*. Therefore, Śrī Bhagavān says that the *sādhus* remember and honour Him by the threefold invocation of *brahma*: *om̄*, *tat*, *sat*. The renowned sacred syllable *om̄* is prominent amongst these invocations in all the *Vedas*,

and is certainly the name of *brahma*. *Tat* (*brahma*) is well known as the cause of the universe and it also removes *atat* (*māyā*). *Sat* is described in the *śruti* (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2.1) as follows: “O gentle one, in the beginning there was only *sat* (The Supreme Absolute Eternal Reality).” The *brāhmaṇas*, *Vedas* and a host of *yajñas* were created solely from *brahma* who is represented by the names *oṁ*, *tat* and *sat*.” Consequently, the current followers of the *Vedas* perform *yajñas* by uttering the sacred syllable *oṁ*.

ŚĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Please listen as I explain the import of these *ślokas*. *Tapasyā*, *yajña*, *dāna* and food are each of three types: *sāttvika*, *rājasika* and *tāmasika*. The faith with which the conditioned *jīvas* perform these activities may be first, second or third class, but it remains contaminated by the modes and is worthless. These activities only become purposeful in attaining the stage of fearlessness (the purification of *sattva*, existence) when they are performed with *nirguṇa-śraddhā*, that is, with that *śraddhā* which gives rise to *bhakti*. It is ordained throughout *śāstra* that prescribed duties should be performed with such transcendental *śraddhā*. In *śāstra* there are three principles which indicate *brahma*: *oṁ*, *tat* and *sat*. These three names, which are indicative of *brahma*, also describe the *brāhmaṇas*, the *Vedas* and *yajñas*. *Śraddhā* in which one neglects the codes of *śāstra* is *saguṇa* (contaminated by the modes). It does not aim at *nirguṇa-brahma* in any way and will only give a material result. Therefore, the essence of *śāstra* is transcendental *śraddhā*. Your doubt about *śāstra* and *śraddhā* is born of ignorance. Followers of the *Vedas* perform all their activities as prescribed in *śāstra*, such as *yajña*, *tapasyā* and *dāna*, by chanting the sacred syllable *oṁ* which indicates *brahma*.”

ŚLOKA 25

तदित्यनभिसन्धाय फलं यज्ञतपःक्रियाः।
दानक्रिया च विविधाः क्रियन्ते
मोक्षकाङ्क्षिभिः॥२५॥

*tad ity anabhisandhāya / phalam yajña-tapah-kriyāḥ
dāna-kriyāś ca vividhāḥ / kriyante mokṣa-kāṅkṣibhiḥ*

iti—thus; (*uttering*) *tat*—*tat*; *mokṣa-kāṅkṣibhiḥ*—those desirous of liberation; *vividhāḥ*—various kinds; *kriyāḥ*—of practices; *yajña-tapah*—of sacrifice, austerities; *ca*—and; *dāna-kriyāḥ*—charity; *kriyante*—are done; *anabhisandhāya*—without attachment; *phalam*—to the fruit.

Thus uttering the word *tat*, those desirous of attaining *mokṣa* perform various types of *yajña*, *tapasyā* and *dāna*, renouncing the fruits of their activities.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The activities of *yajña*, etc., should be performed by uttering the word *tat* as described in the previous *śloka*. The word *anabhisandhāya* means that one should perform various prescribed duties without desiring their fruits.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The word *idam* refers to this visible world, and *tat* refers to *brahma* (reality) which is beyond this world. *Yajñas* must only be performed for the purpose of attaining *para-tattva*.

ŚLOKA 26

सद्ग्रावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत् प्रयुज्यते।
प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्थ युज्यते॥२६॥

*sad-bhāve sādhu-bhāve ca / sad ity etat prayujyate
praśaste karmaṇi tathā / sac-chabdah pārtha yujyate*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *etat*—this (word); *sat*—*sat*; *prayujyate*—is used; *iti*—thus; *sat-bhāve*—in the sense of *brahma* (the Supreme Absolute Truth); *ca*—and; *sādhu-bhāve*—in the sense of the *sādhu*, the devotee of *brahma*; *tathā*—also; *sat-śabdah*—the word *sat*; *yujyate*—is used; *praśaste*—in auspicious; *karmaṇi*—activities.

O Pārtha! The word *sat* (eternity) refers to the Supreme Absolute Truth and to the worshippers of *brahma*. In the same way, the word *sat* is also used in connection with auspicious acts.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

The word *sat* represents *brahma*, and is used in auspicious or praiseworthy acts. It can also be used in all auspicious acts which are material as well as transcendental. Śrī Bhagavān is speaking these two *ślokas*, the first beginning with the word *sad-bhāve* to explain this. *Sad-bhāve* (having the nature of eternal reality) is an appropriate meaning for *brahmatva* (spiritual quality) and *brahmavāditva* (worshippers of *brahma*).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The sacred syllable *oṁ* is the name of *para-tattva brahma*. He is also called *tat*. In the same way, the word *sat* indicates that He exists eternally and that He is the cause of everything. He alone is *sad-vastu*, or the real entity. This is also stated in the *Vedas*: *sad eva saumya idam agra āśīta*. “O gentle one, previously this material world existed in the form of *sat*, one without a second, and before the creation there was only *sat*” (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2.1). *Sādhus* are those in whose

hearts only this *sat* exists. It is also said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.25.25): *satāṁ prasaṅgān*. Here also the word *sat* is used for those *bhaktas* of Śrī Bhagavān who have realised the Absolute Truth. In general, auspicious acts in this material world are also known as *sat-kārya*, blessed acts. In *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*, Śrīla Gopālā Bhaṭṭā Gosvāmī, a prominent Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Ācārya and the protector of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava conceptions, defines *sat* as follows: “The one-pointed *bhaktas* of Śrī Govinda are devoted to *sat* thoughts. Since all their activities are performed for the pleasure of Bhagavān, their activities are called *sat*. All other activities are *asat*, and are forbidden.”

In this regard, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is explaining the meaning of the word *sat* in these two *ślokas*, the first beginning with the word *sad-bhāve*. “O Pārtha, the word *sat* is used for *sad-bhāva* (that which aims at *brahma*) and *sādhu-bhāva* (the supremely virtuous nature and activities of the one-pointed surrendered *bhaktas* of Kṛṣṇa). In the same way, the word *sat* is also used for auspicious acts.”

The word *sat* is used for *brahma*. Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is omnipotent, the cause of all causes and the support and basis of all *rasa*, is Himself the complete *sat* entity. The word *sat* is also used for His associates, His *dhāmas*, all His *avatāras*, the *dhāmas* of those *avatāras*, His *aikāntika-bhaktas*, the presiding Deity of the *gāyatrī-mantra*, *brāhmaṇas*, *bhakti* and so forth. It is also used for Śrī Bhagavān’s *nāma*, *guṇa*, *rūpa*, *līlā*, etc. Om tat *sat* is uttered while giving *dīkṣā* to a faithful person, or while giving him the sacred thread. Śrī Gurudeva who bestows the *gāyatrī-mantra* and *hari-nāma* is also called *sat* (*sad-guru*). The disciple who accepts these *mantras* is called *sat-śiṣya*, and the process of *dīkṣā* is called *sat* (*sad-anuṣṭhāna*), meaning spiritual rite or ceremony. In this way, *śāstra* approves the use of the word *sat* in all objects, services, activities and manifestations.

of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

ŚLOKA 27

यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिः सदिति चोच्यते।
कर्म चैव तदर्थीयं सदित्येवाभिधीयते॥२७॥

*yajñe tapasi dāne ca / sthitih sad iti cocyate
karma caiva tad-arthīyam / sad ity evābhidhīyate*

sthitiḥ—steadiness; *yajñe*—in sacrifice; *tapasi*—austerity; *ca*—and; *dāne*—charity; *ca ucyate*—is also described; *iti*—as; *sat*—*sat*; *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *karma*—action; *tat-arthīyam*—for the sake of *tat* (the Supreme Lord); *eva abhidhīyate*—is certainly described; *iti*—as; *sat*—*sat*.

Being steadfast in the performance of *yajña*, *tapasyā* and *dāna*, and knowing their real purpose, is called *sat*. And activities such as cleaning the temple to please *brahma* (Śrī Bhagavān), are also called *sat*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Sthitiḥ means being steadfast in the performance of *yajña*, etc., after knowing their real purpose. *Tad-arthīyam karma* means activities such as cleaning the temple as service to *brahma* (Śrī Bhagavān).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “The import of the word *sat* can also be applied to *yajña*, *tapasyā* and *dāna*, because all these activities become *sat* when they are performed for the satisfaction of *brahma*, otherwise, they are all *asat* (useless). All mundane activities are contrary to the *svarūpa* of the *jīva*. When one resolves to serve the very cause of *brahma*, one engages in those activities which arouse *parā bhakti*. They then become useful in purifying the *jīva*’s existence, *sattva-*

samśuddhi. In other words, they become useful in bestowing *kṛṣṇa-dāsyam* upon the *jīva*. This is the perfection of his *svarūpa*."

ŚLOKA 28

अश्रद्धया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतञ्च यत्।
असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्प्रेत्य नो इह॥२८॥

aśraddhayā hutam dattam / tapas taptam kṛtañ ca yat
asad ity ucyate pārtha / na ca tat pretya no iha

tapah—austerity; *taptam*—undergone; (sacrifice) *hutam*—offered; (charity) *dattam*—given; *aśraddhayā*—without faith; *ucyate*—is described; *iti*—as; *asat*—impermanent; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *ca*—and; *tat*—that (has benefit); *no*—neither; *iha*—in this world; *na*—nor; *pretya*—in the next.

Yajña, dāna, tapasyā or any other actions performed without faith are called *asat*, O son of Pṛthā. Such activities have no benefit, either in this world or the next.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

"I have heard about *sat-karma*, but what is *asat-karma*?" Expecting this question from Arjuna, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this śloka beginning with the word *aśraddhayā*. All fire *yajñas* (*hutam*), charity (*dattam*), penances (*tapah*), and anything else which is done without *śraddhā*, is *asat*. This means that although *yajña* may be performed, it is not actually a *yajña*; charity may be given, but it is not charity; *tapasyā* may be performed, but it is not *tapasyā*, and whatever else may be done is in fact useless, if performed without faith. It does not even give good results in this world, what to speak of it fructifying in the other world: *tat na pretya no iha*.

Various types of prescribed activities that are performed with *sāttvika śraddhā* lead to *mokṣa*. This is explained in the present chapter.

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

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

All activities performed with the purpose of serving Bhagavān, *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, such as collecting alms, digging wells and ponds, making flower and Tulasī gardens, planting trees and building temples are *tad-arthīyam karma*, activities done for His satisfaction, and they are *sat*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Arjuna, all activities, *yajñas, dāna, tapasyā*, etc., that are performed without *nirguṇa-śraddhā* are *asat* (temporary and useless). Such activities never bring any benefit either now in this world, or in the future, in the next world. Therefore, *śāstra* instructs us in *nirguṇa-śraddhā*. If one discards the injunctions of *śāstra*, it means that he has given up *nirguṇa-śraddhā*. *Nirguṇa-śraddhā* is the only seed of the *bhakti-latā*.”

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

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN



Mokṣa-Yoga

The Yoga of Liberation

ŚLOKA 1

अर्जुन उवाच—

सन्न्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम्।
त्यागस्य च हर्षीकेश पृथक्केशिनिषूदन॥१॥

arjuna uvāca

*sannyāsasya mahā-bāho / tattvam icchāmi veditum
tyāgasya ca hṛṣīkeśa / pṛthak keśi-niṣūdana*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *mahā-bāho*—O mighty-armed; *hṛṣīkeśa*—O Master of the senses; *keśi-niṣūdana*—O slayer of the asura Keśi; *icchāmi*—I desire; *veditum*—to know; *tattvam*—the truth; *pṛthak*—distinctly; *sannyāsasya*—of the renounced order; *ca*—and; *tyāgasya*—of renunciation.

Arjuna said: O Mahā-bāho, O Hṛṣīkeśa, O Keśi-niṣūdana, I wish to know the true nature of both *sannyāsa* and *tyāga*, and the distinction between the two.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

This chapter describes the following subjects: the three types of *sannyāsa*, *jñāna* and *karma*, the conclusive understanding of *mukti*, and the most confidential essence of *bhakti*.

In the previous chapter, Śrī Bhagavān said, “After becoming free from all material desires, those who seek *mokṣa* perform various types of *yajña*, give in charity and engage in penances while uttering the word *tat*” (*Gītā* 17.25). Śrī Bhagavān uses the word *mokṣa-kāṇkṣī* (a seeker of *mokṣa*) in this statement to indicate the *sannyāsī* only. But, if this word refers to someone other than the *sannyāsī*, then who is that person? Śrī Bhagavān says in *Gītā* (12.11): *sarva-karma-phala-tyāgam tataḥ kuru yatātmavān*. “Being situated in the self, you should engage in your prescribed duties, renouncing the fruits of action.” Arjuna is now inquiring, “The words *sarva-karma-phala-tyāgam* (in *Gītā* 12.11), refer to *tyāga* (renunciation). I wish to know about the symptoms of a *tyāgī* (renunciant). I also want to know about the symptoms of *sannyāsa* (the renounced order of life) that are found in *sannyāsīs* (those who have formally taken the renounced order).” Arjuna is inquisitive and intelligent, and he spoke this *śloka* beginning with *sannyāsasya* in order to understand these topics clearly. Arjuna has used the word *pṛthak* to mean, “If *sannyāsa* and *tyāga* have different meanings, then I wish to know their true separate natures. Even if they have the same meaning in Your opinion, or in the opinion of others, I still wish to understand the difference between the two. O Hṛṣikeśa, You alone are the prompter of my intelligence, therefore, this doubt has arisen only by Your inspiration. O Keśi-niṣūdana, killer of the *asura* Keśi! Kindly destroy this doubt of mine in the same way that You killed the *asura* Keśi. O Mahā-bāho! You are supremely powerful,

whereas I have a minute amount of power. I have a friendly relationship with You because we have some similar qualities, but my qualities cannot equal Your qualities, such as omniscience. I am only able to ask You this question without hesitation because You have bestowed upon me a little of Your *sakhyā-bhāva*."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In some parts of the *Gītā*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has given instructions pertaining to *karma-sannyāsa* (the renunciation of activities), and in other parts He has instructed Arjuna not to completely abandon *karma* (action), but to renounce the desire for the fruits of all types of *karma*. From a superficial perspective, there seems to be a contradiction between these two instructions. Arjuna wants Kṛṣṇa to remove the doubts of people whose intelligence is mundane, so he is asking these questions about the real meaning of *tyāga* and *sannyāsa*, about the difference between them, and about their unique characteristics. The names Keśiniśūdana, Hṛṣikeśa and Mahā-bāho used by Arjuna in this *śloka* have specific meanings. Kṛṣṇa killed an *asura* called Keśi who had a furious *āsurika* nature; therefore, He is called Mahā-bāho, supremely powerful. For this reason, Arjuna says, "O Śrī Bhagavān, You are fully capable of annihilating the *asura* of my doubts. This doubt has arisen in my heart only by Your inspiration because You, Hṛṣikeśa, are the prompter and master of all my senses. Only You can completely remove all my doubts and illuminate *ātmataṭṭva*, *bhagavat-tattva* and *bhakti-tattva* within my heart." This is the hidden meaning behind these three terms of address. If, like Arjuna, a person surrenders to Bhagavān and prays to Him for transcendental knowledge (*prema-bhakti*), then Śrī Bhagavān will surely fulfil his desire.

ŚLOKA 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच

**काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं सन्यासं कवयो विदुः।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः॥२॥**

śrī bhagavān uvāca

kāmyānām karmaṇām nyāsam / sannyāsam kavayo viduh
sarva-karma-phala-tyāgam / prāhus tyāgam vicakṣaṇāḥ

śrī bhagavān—the all-opulent Supreme Person; *uvāca*—said; *vicakṣaṇāḥ*—perceptive; *kavayah*—sages; *viduh*—understand; *nyāsam*—the renunciation; *kāmyānām*—of fruitive; *karmaṇām*—activities; *sannyāsam*—as *sannyāsa*; (and) *tyāgam*—the renunciation; *sarva-karma-phala*—of the fruit of all activities; *prāhuḥ*—they declare; (to be) *tyāgam*—renunciation.

Śrī Bhagavān said: According to expert *paṇḍitas*, complete renunciation of *kāmya-karma* (fruitive activities) is called *sannyāsa*, whereas the renunciation of the results of all activities is called *tyāga*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

This explanation is based on the opinion presented by Śrī Bhagavān to Arjuna in previous chapters. He begins by explaining the different meanings of the two words *sannyāsa* and *tyāga* in this *śloka* beginning with *kāmyānām*. The term *sannyāsa* applies to one who completely gives up all *kāmya-karma*, such as performing a *yajña* to fulfil the desire of having a son or attaining *Svarga*, but who does not give up *nitya-karma* (obligatory activities), such as *sandhyā-upāsanā* (remembering *gāyatrī mantras*, etc.). The term *tyāga* applies to one who dutifully performs all *kāmya-karma* (fruitive activities) and *nitya-karma* (obligatory activities) while renouncing the fruits of these activities, but who does not abandon

the activities themselves. The results of performing *nitya-karma* are expounded throughout the *śrutis*. For example, it is stated therein that one attains *pitr-loka* (the planet of the forefathers) by performing prescribed *karma*, and one becomes free from sins by performing particular *dharmika* activities. Therefore, *tyāga* means to perform all activities without desiring the fruits. The word *sannyāsa* refers to one who performs all *nitya-karma* without desiring the results and gives up *kāmya-karma* altogether. This is the difference between these two terms.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Bhagavān gives the opinion of the *tattva-vit mahā-puruṣas* on the above subject matter. *Sannyāsa* refers to one who does not abandon *nitya-karma* (obligatory duties) or *naimittika-karma* (occasional *dharmika* duties incurred by specific circumstances), but who completely gives up *sakāma-karma*. And *tyāga* is performed when one does not abandon *sakāma-karma* and *nitya-naimittika-karma*, but gives up their fruits. Various places in *śāstra* describe both these understandings. This chapter reveals the opinion of Śrī Bhagavān and His *tattva-vit bhaktas* regarding this subject. One will only be able to perfectly reconcile these concepts after properly understanding their opinion.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructs Uddhava, who is the instrument for His teachings. He describes the three types of *yoga*, namely *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti*, according to the eligibility (*adhikāra*) of different individuals. He instructs *karma-yoga* for those who are attached to *karma* and its results, and He instructs *jñāna-yoga* for those who have completely renounced the results of *karma*. But He gives instructions on *bhakti-yoga* for those moderate persons who are not overly attached to the results of *karma*, nor are they dry renunciants.

Generally, in the initial stage of *yoga* practice, a *baddha-jīva* only has sufficient *adhikāra* to perform *karma*. Śrī Bhagavān then gives instructions about giving up the results of *karma* (*tyāga*) and about the renunciation of *karma* (*sannyāsa*), in order to bestow upon him the *adhikāra* to enter into the path of *jñāna*. In the early stages, while practising to completely give up *sakāma-karma*, he should renounce the fruits of *nitya* and *naimittika-karma*. A person's heart is purified after performing this practice for some time and he becomes situated on the higher platform of *jñāna*. His *adhikāra* to only perform *karma* ceases at this stage. In other words, he rises above *karma*. In that state, it is possible for him to give up all *karma* completely. According to the statement, *jñānam ca mayi sannyaset* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.19.1), even *jñāna* should be renounced upon achieving perfection in it. When they attain perfection in these practices, the *karmīs* have to renounce *karma* and the *jñānīs* have to renounce *jñāna*. The *sādhakas* of *bhakti* however, do not need to renounce *bhakti* upon attaining perfection in it. Rather, it is then that they start to execute *bhakti* in its purest, most developed manner. Therefore, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has made the following statements: *tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta*, "As long as one has not satiated his fruitive desires, or awakened his taste for *bhajana*, one has to follow the Vedic injunctions" (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.20.9), *jñāna-niṣṭho virakto vā*, "The conduct of those dedicated to cultivating transcendental *jñāna*, as well as My liberated *bhaktas*, is beyond the range of rules and regulations" (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.18.28); *yas tv ātma-ratir eva syād*, "A person who delights in the self, however, who remains contented and satisfied in the self, has no duties to perform" (Gītā 3.17), and: *sarva-dharmāṇ parityajya*, "Completely abandoning all bodily and mental *dharma*, such as *varṇa* and *āśrama*, take exclusive shelter of Me alone" (Gītā 18.66). The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* also states: *na*

karmāṇi tyajeta yogī karmabhist yajyate hy asāv iti. “A yogī should not give up *karma* because the *karma* itself will renounce the yogī when he has attained an elevated level.” Generally, *śāstra* does not instruct *baddha-jīvas* to give up *karma*; rather, it suggests that they give up *kāmya-karma* or the results of *karma*. This is because generally the *jīva* in his bound state is very much attached to performing *sakāma-karma*. If he is instructed to give up *karma* completely in the beginning stage of his practice, he will not be able to do it. Therefore, such instructions are given to gradually bring the *jīva* to a higher platform.

The heart becomes purified by following this gradual process in which one initially practises renouncing the fruits of *karma*. It is only possible to give up *karma* completely when one achieves *ātma-rati* (the happiness of the self). For this reason, Bhagavān gives the instruction: *na buddhi-bhedam janayet* (*Gitā* 3.26). “One should not instruct less intelligent people, who are attached to *karma*, to give it up. Due to their immature intelligence, they will become confused and deviate from the spiritual path.” But it should be noted that only a person who develops the *adhikāra* to engage in *kevala-bhakti* can give up all *karma*—*nitya*, *naimittika* and *kāmya*. The *śloka*, *sarva-dharmāṇ parityajya*, is spoken at the end of this chapter for this reason only. In his commentary on this *śloka*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes, “When a person acquires the qualification to perform *ananya-bhakti*, there is no possibility of sin or fault if he does not perform any *nitya-karma*. This is the result of his good fortune which has come about through the mercy of the great saints. However, in that state, if he continues to engage in *nitya* and *naimittika-karma*, he incurs sin because he is not following My instruction. In other words, the performance of *nitya-naimittika-karma* is unfavourable to the execution of *kevala-bhakti*.” Here, *nitya-karma* refers to daily obligatory activities

such as the worship of various *devas* and *devīs*, as described in the *karma-mārga* section of the *Vedas*. *Naimittika-karma* means occasional religious activities such as the worship of the forefathers and *devas* in the *śrāddha* ceremony. A person enters into the realm of *ananya-bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa only when one completely abandons these activities. By studying *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*, by Śrīmad Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, the great Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava ācārya and protector of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava conceptions, we can understand that there are no injunctions in any authoritative *śāstra* for the *aikāntika-bhaktas* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to worship the forefathers and *devas*, regardless of which *varna* or *āśrama* these *bhaktas* belong to. Rather, if the *ananya-bhaktas* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa engage in the worship of the forefathers or *devas*, it becomes *sevāparādha* and *nāmāparādha*. Śrīmad Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī uses evidence from *śāstra* to prove that, when Kṛṣṇa is pleased by a person's *ananya-bhakti*, that *bhakta* does not incur any sinful reaction, even if he gives up all other *karma*. Such *aikāntika-bhaktas* attain an auspicious position, whether they are situated in this universe or beyond it.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura quotes Śrī Kṛṣṇa as saying, "Sannyāsa means to give up all *kāmya-karma* completely and perform *nitya* and *naimittika-karma* without desiring the fruits. Tyāga means to give up the fruits of all types of *karma*—*nitya*, *naimittika* and *kāmya-karma*. Learned people explain this to be the difference between *sannyāsa* and *tyāga*."

ŚLOKA 3

**त्याज्यं दोषवदित्येके कर्म प्राहुर्मनीषिणः।
यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे॥३॥**

tyājyam doṣa-vad ity eke / karma prāhur maniṣināḥ
yajña-dāna-tapah-karma / na tyājyam iti cāpare

eke—some; *manīṣināḥ*—thinkers; *prāhuḥ*—say; *iti*—that; *karma*—action; (is) *doṣavat*—filled with faults; (and) *tyājyam*—should be renounced; *ca*—and; *apare*—others (say); *iti*—that; *yajñā-dāna-tapah-karma*—sacrifice, charity, austerity and action; *na tyājyam*—should not be given up.

Some thinkers, such as the *sāṅkhya-vādīs*, propound that, since every action is faulty, action should be relinquished. Others, like the *mīmāṁsakas*, hold the opinion that acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity should never be given up.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is again discussing the different opinions regarding *tyāga* in this śloka beginning with the word *tyājyam*. Some *sāṅkhya-vādīs* have the opinion that *karma* should be completely given up because it possesses faults, such as violence. Others, like the *mīmāṁsakas*, say that activities such as *yajña* are not to be relinquished, because they are prescribed in *śāstra*.

ŚLOKA 4

निश्चयं श्रूणु मे तत्र त्यागे भरतसत्तमा।
त्यागे हि पुरुषव्याघ्र त्रिविधः संप्रकीर्तिः ॥४॥

niścayam śṛṇu me tatra / *tyāge bharata-sattama*
tyāgo hi puruṣa-vyāghra / tri-vidhah samprakīrttitah

bharata-sattama—O best of Bharata's line; *śṛṇu*—hear; *me*—from Me; *niścayam*—positively; *tatra*—on this point; *tyāge*—concerning renunciation; *puruṣa-vyāghra*—O foremost among men; *tyāgah*—renunciation; (is) *hi*—indeed; *saṁprakīrttitah*—declared (to be); *tri-vidhah*—of three kinds.

O best of the Bharatas, hear My definite opinion about *tyāga*. O foremost among men, *tyāga* is said to be of three kinds.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Now Śrī Bhagavān is stating His opinion in this *śloka* beginning with the word *niścayam*. *Tyāga* is of three kinds: *sāttvika*, *rājasika* and *tāmasika*. Śrī Bhagavān says in *Gītā* (18.7) that it is not appropriate to renounce *nitya-karma*. The *tyāga* of those who give up *nitya-karma* due to bewilderment is described as *tāmasika*. In *Gītā* (18.7), *tyāga* is referred to as *sannyāsa*. Therefore, according to the opinion of Śrī Bhagavān, *tyāga* and *sannyāsa* are synonymous.

ŚLOKA 5

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत्।
यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम्॥५॥

*yajña-dāna-tapah-karma / na tyājyam kāryam eva tat
yajño dānam tapaś caiva / pāvanāni maniṣiṇām*

karma—action; (in the form of) *yajña*—sacrifice; *dāna*—charity; *tapah*—and austerity; *na tyājyam*—should not be given up; *tat*—they; *eva kāryam*—should be performed; *eva*—indeed; *yajñah*—sacrifice; *dānam*—charity; *ca*—and; *tapah*—austerity; *pāvanāni*—are purifiers; (*even*) *maniṣiṇām*—of the wise.

Action in the form of sacrifice, charity and austerity should, by no means, be relinquished because they are obligatory duties. Sacrifice, charity and austerity purify the hearts of even those who are thoughtful and wise.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

According to the opinion of Śrī Bhagavān, even within *kāmya-karma*, the *sāttvika* acts of *yajña*, *dāna* and *tapasyā* should all be performed, without desiring their results. He says that the performance of *yajña* and so forth is obligatory because they purify the heart.

ŚLOKA 6

एतान्यपि तु कर्मणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च।
कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥६॥

*etāny api tu karmāṇi / saṅgam tyaktvā phalāni ca
karttavyānīti me pārtha / niścitaṁ matam uttamam*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *etāni*—these; *karmāṇi*—activities; *karttavyānī*—should be performed; *api tu*—however; *tyaktvā*—giving up; *saṅgam*—attachment; *phalāni*—to the results; *iti*—such; (is) *me*—My; *niścitaṁ*—definite; *ca*—and; *uttamam*—supreme; *matam*—opinion.

O Pārtha, one should perform all of these activities having given up the ego of being the doer and abandoning attachment to the fruits. This is My definite and supreme opinion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is now explaining how these activities can purify the heart, in this *śloka* beginning with *etāny api*. The word *saṅgam* means that one should perform prescribed duties without any fruitive desires, and without maintaining the false ego of being the doer. *Tyāga* is when both the fruitive desires and the ego of being the doer are relinquished. It is also called *sannyāsa*.

ŚLOKA 7

नियतस्य तु सन्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते।
मोहातस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तिः ॥७॥

*niyatasya tu sannyāsaḥ / karmaṇo noपपद्यते
mohātasya parityāgas / tāmasaḥ parikīrtitah*

tu—certainly; *sannyāsaḥ*—renunciation; *niyatasya*—of obligatory; *karmaṇaḥ*—work; (*is*) *na*—not; *upapadyate*—to be done; *parityāgaḥ*—renunciation; *tasya*—of that (work); *mohāt*—out of delusion; *parikīrttaḥ*—is described; *tāmasaḥ*—as governed by the quality of darkness.

But the renunciation of *nitya-karma* (obligatory work) is not proper. To renounce such work out of delusion is described as *tāmasika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Of the three types of *tyāga*, *tāmasika tyāga* is being explained here in relation to this subject. *Mohāt* refers to the performance of *tyāga* without knowing the purport of *śāstra*. Such *tyāga* is called *tāmasika tyāga*. A *sannyāsī* can give up *kāmya-karma* (fruitive activities), thinking them to be unnecessary, but it is not proper for him to give up *nitya-karma*. This is implied by the word *tu*. *Mohāt* means out of ignorance. The result of *tāmasika tyāga* is also ignorance, and the desired *jñāna* is not achieved.

ŚLOKA 8

दुःखमित्येव यत्कर्म कायक्लेशभयात्यजेत्।
स कृत्वा राजसं त्यागं नैव त्यागफलं लभेत्॥८॥

*duḥkham ity eva yat karma / kāya-kleśa-bhayāt tyajet
sa kṛtvā rājasam tyāgam / naiva tyāga-phalam labhet*

sah—one; *tyajet*—may give up; *karma*—work; *iti*—as; *duḥkham*—misery; *yat kāya-kleśa-bhayāt*—out of fear of bodily suffering; *kṛtvā*—having performed; *tyāgam*—renunciation; *rājasam*—in the quality of passion; *na eva labhet*—he certainly does not obtain; *tyāga-phalam*—the result of renunciation.

If one considers *nitya-karma* to be a source of misery and relinquishes it out of fear of bodily discomfort,

then his *tyāga* is *rājasika* and he fails to obtain its result.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Nitya-karma is compulsory. Its performance incurs only good; no fault is incurred. Despite knowing this, some persons think, “But why should I unnecessarily give pain to my body?” The *tyāga* of such persons is *rājasika*; *jñāna* is not the result of their *tyāga*.

ŚLOKA 9

कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियते ऽर्जुन।
सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलञ्चैव स त्यागः सात्त्विको
मतः ॥१९॥

*kāryam ity eva yat karma / niyatam kriyate 'rjuna
saṅgam tyaktvā phalañ caiva / sa tyāgaḥ sāttviko mataḥ*

arjuna—O Arjuna; *eva*—certainly; *niyatam*—obligatory; *karma*—work; *yat*—which; *kriyate*—is performed; *iti*—as; *kāryam*—a duty; *tyaktvā*—giving up; *saṅgam*—attachment; *ca*—and; *phalam*—the result; *sah*—that; *tyāgaḥ*—renunciation; (*is*) *eva*—certainly; *mataḥ*—considered; *sāttvikaḥ*—in the mode of goodness.

O Arjuna, the *tyāga* of one who performs *nitya-karma* simply as a matter of duty, and who renounces all attachment to the fruits of action as well as to the ego of being the doer, is considered to be *sāttvika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

‘It is imperative to do this.’ The *nitya-karma* performed with such a disposition is *sāttvika*. Such people attain *jñāna*, which is the desired result of their *tyāga*.

ŚLOKA 10

न द्वेष्ट्यकुशलं कर्म कुशले नानुषज्जते।
त्यागी सत्त्वसमाविष्टो मेधावी छिन्नसंशयः॥१०॥

*na dveṣṭy akuśalam karma / kuśale nānuṣajjate
tyāgī sattva-samāviṣṭo / medhāvī chinna-saṁśayah*

medhāvī—the intelligent; *tyāgī*—renunciant; *sattva-samāviṣṭah*—absorbed in the quality of goodness; *chinna-saṁśayah*—whose doubts are dispelled; *na dveṣṭi*—does not hate; *akuśalam*—troublesome; *karma*—work; *na*—nor; *anuṣajjate*—is he attached; *kuśale*—to work that gives happiness.

The *tyāgī* who is endowed with *sattva-guṇa*, whose intelligence is steady and who is free from all doubts, neither hates work which is troublesome nor becomes attached to work which gives happiness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the characteristics of a person who is steadfast in *sāttvika tyāga* in this *śloka* beginning with the words *na dveṣṭy*. *Akuśalam* means that they do not dislike painful activities, such as taking a morning bath in winter, and *kuśale* means they do not become attached to activities which give pleasure, such as taking a bath in cold water during the summer time.

ŚLOKA 11

न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्मण्यशेषतः।
यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागीत्यभिधीयते॥११॥

*na hi deha-bhṛtā śakyam / tyaktum karmāṇy aśeṣataḥ
yas tu karma-phala-tyāgī / sa tyāgīty abhidhīyate*

hi—certainly; *na śakyam*—it is not possible; *deha-bhṛtā*—by an embodied being; *tyaktum*—to renounce; *karmaṇi*—activities; *aśesataḥ*—completely; *tu*—however; *sah*—he; *yah*—who; *karma-phala-tyāgī*—renounces the results of his activities; *abhidhīyate*—is known; *iti*—as; *tyāgī*—a renunciant.

An embodied being cannot entirely relinquish action, but he who gives up the fruits of all actions is truly a *tyāgī*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Since it is impossible for the embodied *jīva* to completely renounce all activity, the activities that *śāstra* prescribes should not be given up. To emphasise this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks the *śloka* beginning with the words *na hi*. It is not possible to give up all activities. Śrī Bhagavān says earlier in *Gītā* (3.5): *na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api jātu tiṣṭhaty akarma-kṛt*. “One cannot exist even for a moment without performing work.”

ŚLOKA 12

अनिष्टमिष्टः मिश्रज्ज्व त्रिविधं कर्मणः फलम्।
भवत्यत्यागिनां प्रेत्य न तु सन्न्यासिनां
क्वचित्॥१२॥

*aniṣṭam iṣṭam miśrañ ca / tri-vidham karmaṇah phalam
bhavaty atyāginām pretya / na tu sannyāsinām kvacit*

atyāginām—for those who are not renounced; *tri-vidham*—the threefold; *phalam*—results; *karmaṇah*—of action; *bhavati*—exist; *pretya*—after death; *aniṣṭam*—undesired (hell); *iṣṭam*—desired (heaven); *ca*—and; *miśram*—mixed (the middle planets such as earth); *tu*—but; *na kvacit*—never; *sannyāsinām*—for the renounced.

Those who do not perform *tyāga* as previously described attain three types of destinations after giving up the body: a hellish existence (hell), a place where the *devas* reside (celestial planets), or as humans in this world. *Sannyāsīs*, however, never attain such results.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

When a person does not perform *tyāga* like this, he incurs fault. It is due to the lack of such *tyāga* that one receives misery in hell (*anıştam*), temporary happiness in the higher planets (*iştam*), or the combined happiness and misery of human life (*mişram*). This happens only to those who are not *tyāgīs*. It does not happen to the *tyāgīs* (renunciants). *Pretya* means the next world.

ŚLOKA 13

पञ्चैतानि महाबाहो कारणानि निबोध मे।
सांख्ये कृतान्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम्॥१३॥

*pañcaitāni mahā-bāho / kāraṇāni nibodha me
sāṅkhye kṛtānте prōktāni / siddhaye sarva-karmanām*

mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed Arjuna; *nibodha*—be informed; *me*—from Me; *etāni*—these; *pañca*—five; *kāraṇāni*—causes; *siddhaye*—for the accomplishment; *sarva-karmanām*—of all actions; (they are) *proktāni*—described; *sāṅkhye*—in *sāṅkhya* philosophy; *kṛta-ante*—for ending action and reaction.

O Mahā-bāho! Now hear from Me about the five causes which are involved in the accomplishment of any action. They are described in *Vedānta-sāstra* (*sāṅkhya* philosophy), which explains how to stop the reactions of *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

How can a person who performs *karma* not receive the result of that *karma*? Expecting this question, Śrī Bhagavān is now speaking five *ślokas* to establish that people who are free from *ahāṅkāra*, the false ego of being the doer, do not become implicated in the results of *karma*. The first of these *ślokas* begins with the word *pañcaitāni*. “Hear from Me about the five causes of action which are responsible for the completion of all activities.” That which fully explains Paramātmā is called *sāṅkhya*. *Sāṅkhya* (*sañ*—completely; *khyā*—describes) is also known as *Vedānta-śāstra*, which explains how to nullify the reactions of actions that have already been performed.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

It is impossible for the embodied *baddha-jīvas* to give up all work. Furthermore, it is detrimental for those who are unqualified to give up all types of work out of obstinacy. Therefore, those in the initial stage of *yoga* practice, who only have the *adhikāra* to engage in *karma*, are instructed to give up *akarma* and *vikarma* and perform *nitya* and *naimittika-karma*. When a person’s attachment to the fruits of *karma* has gradually ceased, it is beneficial and auspicious for him to perform the *karma* prescribed in *śāstra* as a matter of duty, without desiring the results. According to Kṛṣṇa, the symptom of a *sannyāsī* and a *yogī* is that they perform *karma* only as a duty, without desiring to enjoy the results. Such persons are real *sannyāsīs* and *yogīs*. Upon obtaining the association of Vaiṣṇavas, such individuals can enter the realm of *bhakti* very quickly and attain the supreme destination.

ŚLOKA 14

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणञ्च पृथग्विधम्।
विविधाश्च पृथक् चेष्टा दैवञ्चैवात्र
पञ्चमम्॥१४॥

*adhiṣṭhānam tathā karttā / karaṇaḥ ca pṛthag-vidham
vividhāś ca pṛthak ceṣṭā / daivaḥ caivātra pañcamam*

adhiṣṭhānam—the place (body); *tathā*—also; *karttā*—the doer (the soul and dull matter bound together by false ego); *karaṇam*—the senses; *pṛthag-vidham*—the various; *ca*—and; *vividhāḥ*—manifold; *pṛthak*—distinct; *ceṣṭāḥ*—endeavours (such as the actions of the in-coming and out-going breaths); *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *ca atra*—amidst these other causes; (is) *pañcamam*—the fifth; *daivam*—Antaryāmī.

The body, the agent (doer), the senses, the various types of endeavours and the indwelling prompter (Antaryāmī) are the five causes of the success of *karma* which are mentioned in *Vedānta*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān now enumerates those causes. *Adhiṣṭhānam* means the body, and *karttā* (the agent or doer) refers to the false ego in the form of a knot which ties the conscious (*cit* or soul) to the inert (*jaḍa* or dull matter). *Karaṇam* means the senses such as the eyes and ears, *pṛthag-vidham* means various types of endeavours, that is, the function of the life-airs such as *prāṇa* and *apāna*, and *daivam* means Antaryāmī, the indwelling prompter of everyone. These are the five causes of action.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The five causes of action mentioned in the previous *śloka* are explained here in detail. It should be understood that the word *adhiṣṭhānam* in this *śloka* means this body, because action can only be performed when a *baddha-jīva* becomes situated in this body. The *ātmā* situated in this body is called the doer, because it is he who performs the

action (*karma*). The pure *ātmā* has nothing to do with this *karma*, but he becomes the enjoyer of the results of *karma* due to his false ego of being the doer. Therefore, the *ātmā* itself is called both the knower and the doer. This is also mentioned in the *śruti*s: *eṣa hi draṣṭā sraṣṭā*, “It is actually the soul who sees and is the doer” (*Praśna-Upaniṣad* 4). The *Vedānta-sūtra* also states, *jñō' ta eva*. “It is truly the soul who is the knower” (*Brahma-sūtra* 2.3.17), and: *karttā śāstrārtha-vattvāt*, “The *jīvātmā* is understood as the doer because this fact is confirmed in the *śāstra*” (*Brahma-sūtra* 2.3.31) and so on. All these statements substantiate the above conclusion. The senses are the instruments used to perform *karma*. The *ātmā* accomplishes various types of work only with the help of these senses. There is a separate endeavour for each activity, but every activity depends on the sanction of Parameśvara, who is situated within everyone’s heart as a witness, friend and controller. Thus, Parameśvara alone is the supreme cause. Those persons who are inspired by a *śāstrā-vit*, *tattva-vit mahā-puruṣa*, and also by Parameśvara, who is situated within their hearts, are able to ascertain what is obligatory for them and what is not. Thus, they engage in the performance of *bhakti* and very quickly attain the supreme destination. They are not bound by the reactions of their good or bad *karma*.

ŚLOKA 15

शरीरवाङ्मनोभिर्यत् कर्म प्रारभते नरः।
न्यायं वा विपरीतं वा पञ्चैते तस्य हेतवः॥१५॥

*śarīra-vāñ-manobhir yat / karma prārabhate naraḥ
nyāyam vā viparītam vā / pañcaite tasya hetavah*

ete—these; *pañca*—five; (are) *hetavah*—the causes; *tasya*—for; *yat*—whatever; *nyāyyam*—virtuous; *vā*—or; *viparītam*—improper; *karma*—activity; *narah*—a man; *prārabhate*—undertakes; *śarīra-vāk-manobhiḥ*—with his body, words or mind.

These are the five causes behind whatever virtuous or improper actions a person may perform by body, speech or mind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śarīra-vān-manobhiḥ. There are three types of action (*karma*): that performed by the body (*kāyika*), that performed by speech (*vācika*), and that performed by the mind (*mānasika*). Karma is of another two types: *dharmika* (virtuous) and *adharma* (unvirtuous). Their causes are the above-mentioned five factors.

ŚLOKA 16

तत्रैवं सति कर्त्तर्मात्मानं केवलन्तु यः।

पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वात्र स पश्यति दुर्मतिः ॥१६॥

tatraivam sati karttāram / ātmānam kevalan tu yaḥ
paśyaty akṛta-buddhitvān / na sa paśyati durmatih

tatra—then; *evam sati*—such being the case; *sah durmatih*—that foolish person; *yaḥ*—who; *paśpati*—sees; *ātmānam*—himself; (to be) *kevalam*—the only; *karttāram*—doer; *tu*—indeed; *na paśyati*—does not see; *akṛta-buddhitvāt*—due to impure intelligence.

As such, a foolish person who ignores these five factors and considers the *ātmā* alone to be the doer of all these works cannot see things as they are due to his impure intelligence.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān says that although these five causes are behind all *karma*, he who sees the pure *ātmā* (the *jīva* who has no association with matter) as the only doer is to be understood to be *durmatih*, foolish. He does not see properly because he lacks purified intelligence. Such an ignorant person, is indeed, blind.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

An ignorant person cannot understand that a separate, individual entity, known as Paramātmā, is situated in his heart as a witness, controller and friend, and is regulating all his activities. The body, the doer, the various endeavours and the senses are all material causes of action. The prominent cause, however, is Paramātmā. Thus, one should see that Paramātmā, who is situated within the heart, is the supreme cause of action; one should not just consider that these four material causes accomplish an action. Those who are unable to see in this way think of themselves as the only doers; thus, they always remain agitated.

ŚLOKA 17

यस्य नाहङ्क्तो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते।
हत्वापि स इमाँलोकान् हन्ति न निबध्यते॥१७॥

yasya nāhaṅkṛto bhāvo / buddhir yasya na lipyate
hatvāpi sa imāl lokān / na hanti na nibadhyate

api—even though; *hatvā*—killing; *sah*—he; *yasya*—whose; *bhāvah*—consciousness; (*is*) *na ahaṅkṛtaḥ*—not taken by false ego; (*and*) *yasya*—whose; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *na lipyate*—is unattached; *na hanti*—does not slay; *imān*—these; *lokān*—people; *na*—nor; *nibadhyate*—is he bound.

Even if he kills living beings, he who is free from the ego of being the doer, and whose intelligence is not attached to the fruits of *karma*, does not in reality kill, nor does he become bound by the result of his actions.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Who, then, has purified intelligence and who actually sees?” In response to this, Śrī Bhagavān speaks the *śloka* beginning with the words *yasya nāhaṅkṛto bhāvah*. “Those who do not possess the false ego of being the doer do not become attached to thinking, ‘This is pleasing; this is not pleasing.’ Such persons do not become bound by the results of *karma*. What more can I say in this regard? Whether the work they perform is auspicious or inauspicious, in reality, they are not the doers of that work. From a material perspective, it may seem that they kill all of these people, but from the spiritual perspective they do not actually kill because they are free from any selfish motivations. Therefore, they do not become bound by the results of *karma*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

People who know themselves to be subservient to Parameśvara, and who perform *karma* without fruitive desire and without the false ego of being the doer, are certainly intelligent. The results of *karma* cannot bind them.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Arjuna, you were only in illusion about this battle because of the false ego. If you had been aware that the five factors I have described are the cause of all *karma*, then you would not have become so bewildered. Therefore, those whose intelligence is not implicated by the false ego of being the doer do not kill, even if they kill all of humanity; nor do they become bound by the result of such killing.”

ŚLOKA 18

**ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना।
करणं कर्म कर्त्तृति त्रिविधः कर्मसंग्रहः ॥१८॥**

*jñānam jñeyam parijñātā / tri-vidhā karma-codanā
karaṇam karma kartteti / tri-vidhah karma-saṅgrahaḥ*

jñānam—knowledge; *jñeyam*—the knowable; (and) *parijñātā*—the knower; (are) *tri-vidhā*—the three-fold; *karma-codanā*—impulses of action; *karaṇam*—the instrument; *karma*—the activity; (and) *karttā*—the agent; (are) *iti*—thus; *tri-vidhah*—the three-fold; *karma-saṅgrahaḥ*—basis of action.

Knowledge, the knowable and the knower constitute the impulse to perform *karma*. The instrument, the activity and the agent form the three-fold basis of *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Hence, in the opinion of Śrī Bhagavān, *sannyāsa* in the form of renunciation (*tyāga*) in *sattva-guṇa* is instructed for the *jñānīs*, but for *bhaktas*, complete renunciation of *karma-yoga* is recommended. In Śrimad-Bhāgavatam (11.11.32), Śrī Bhagavān says, “O Uddhava, those who have carefully analysed the positive and negative aspects of *dharma* and *adharma*, but give up their *sva-dharma* prescribed by Me in the *Vedas* to engage in *bhajana* to Me, are indeed *sattamah*, the best among men.” Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has explained the meaning of this *śloka* as follows: “Those who perform *bhajana* to Me, completely giving up their *sva-dharma* as instructed by Me in the *Vedas*, are *sattamah*, the best.” Here a question arises. “If someone gives up his prescribed *sva-dharma* out of ignorance or an atheistic propensity, will he still be considered *sattamah*?” In response, Śrī Bhagavān says,

“No. Those who are *sattamah* understand that favourable qualities such as purity of existence resulting from the performance of *dharma* activities (prescribed duties according to *varṇa* and *āśrama*), and discrepancies caused by the neglect of such activities, distract one from meditating upon Me. Those who understand this are *sattamah*. They possess the firm determination that everything can be achieved by performing *bhakti* to Me, and they solely engage in *bhajana* to Me, giving up all other *dharma* activities.”

The words, *dharmaṁ santyajya* in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *śloka* quoted above (11.11.32), does not mean to give up the results of *dharma*, but to give up *dharma* itself. One should understand that there is no discrepancy involved in giving up the results of *dharma*. This opinion is given in the statements of Śrī Bhagavān and is supported by those who have explained those statements. *Jñāna* certainly requires purification of the heart. The performance of *niṣkāma-karma* enables one to achieve different levels of such purification, and *jñāna* rises in proportion to the degree that the heart is purified. There is no other way for *jñāna* to appear. Therefore, it is imperative for even the *sannyāsīs* to practise *niṣkāma-karma* for complete *jñāna* to appear in their hearts. When the performance of *karma* has completely purified the heart, at that time *karma* is no longer required. As it is also said in Gītā (6.3), “*Karma* is the *sādhana* for those who desire *jñāna-yoga*, but for those who are already situated on the stage of *jñāna*, the means is renunciation of this *karma*, as it causes a distraction.” However Gītā (3.17) says, “There is no prescribed *karma* for those who derive pleasure from the self and who are satisfied and happy in the self alone.” But *bhakti* is supremely independent and extremely powerful. It does not depend upon purity of heart. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.33.39) states: “Those who with transcendental faith hear

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes with the *gopīs* of Vraja, attain *parā bhakti* to Him, and thus very quickly become free from the disease of the heart, which is mundane lust." How can this happen? First *parā bhakti* enters into the heart of a person who is suffering from material lust and purifies it; consequently, the lust and *anarthas* of such a qualified person are destroyed." Śrimad-Bhāgavatam (2.8.5) further states: "Kṛṣṇa enters into the lotus-like hearts of the *bhaktas* through the ear, and removes all their impurities, just as the autumn season purifies the rivers."

Why then, should the *bhaktas* engage in *karma* if the heart becomes purified by performing *bhakti* alone? To clarify this point, the present *śloka* is now spoken. Simply knowing that the *ātmā* is separate from the body does not comprise *jñāna*. Rather, one is to understand *ātma-tattva*, the truth of the *ātmā*. The only real *jñānīs* are those who have taken shelter of such knowledge. But the three constituents of *jñāna*, namely knowledge (*jñāna*), the knowable (*jñeya*), and the knower (*jñātā*) also have a relationship with *karma*. To understand this is the duty of the *sannyāsīs*. For this purpose, Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *jñānam*. Here the word *codanā* means injunction or process. Śrīla Gopala Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī says that the words *codanā*, *upadeśa* (instruction) and *vidhi* (rules and regulations) are synonymous.

Now Bhagavān Himself is explaining the second half of this *śloka*, starting with the words *karaṇam karma*. *Jñāna* is that which helps us to know something. According to this definition: *jñāna* is the instrument, *jñeya*, the knowable (*jīvātma-tattva*) is the object, and one who knows this truth about the *jīvātma* is *jñātā*, the subject. The instrument (*karaṇa*), the object (*karma*) and the subject (*karttā*) are the three factors known as *karma-saṅgrahāḥ* that are related to

niṣkāma-karma. This is the explanation of the compound word *karma-codanā*. In other words, the performance of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* is based on these three: the principle of knowledge (*jñāna*), the knowable (*jñeya*) and the knower (*jñātā*).

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The *ātmā* is a *nirguṇa* entity, devoid of any material qualities. The inspiration for *karma* (*karma-preranā*), the basis of *karma* (*karma-āśraya*) and the result of *karma* (*karma-phala*) are all products of the three *guṇas*. Therefore, they have no constitutional relationship with the *ātmā*. Aikāntika-bhaktas of Śrī Bhagavān, who are completely surrendered to Him, know the *ātmā* perfectly. Although they perform all activities either by the will of Kṛṣṇa or for His pleasure, they are never called *karmīs* (materialists). The only designation which adorns them is that of *bhakta*; thus, they do not get entangled in the web of *karma*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “Knowledge (*jñāna*), the knowable (*jñeya*) and the knower (*jñātā*) are the three impulses of action known as *karma-codanā*. The instrument (*karaṇa*), the object (*karma*) and the doer (*karṭtā*) are the three-fold basis of *karma* known as *karma-saṅgrahāḥ*. Whatever action a person performs has two states: *codanā* (inspiration) and *saṅgrahāḥ* (basis). The process which precedes *karma* is called *codanā*. Inspiration is the subtle existence of action, and it is the faith that exists in the mind before the gross state of action manifests. The stage which precedes action is divided into three parts: 1) knowledge of the instrument of action; 2) the knowable object of action and; 3) the performer of action. The execution of action has three divisions: 1) *karaṇatva* (the instrument), 2) *karmatva* (the object), and 3) *karṭtṛtva* (the subject).”

ŚLOKA 19

ज्ञानं कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिधैव गुणभेदतः।
प्रोच्यते गुणसंख्याने यथावच्छृणु तान्यपि॥१९॥

jñānam karma ca karttā ca / tridhaiva guṇa-bhedataḥ
procycate guṇa-saṅkhyāne / yathāvac chṛṇu tāny api

guṇa-saṅkhyāne—in the śāstra which describes the three qualities of material nature; jñānam—knowledge; karma—action; ca—and; karttā—the agent; procycate—are declared to be; tridhā—three-fold; guṇa-bhedataḥ—according to the divisions of the material qualities; eva—certainly; api śṛṇu—you should also hear; tāni—of these; yathāvat—as they are.

Sāṅkhya śāstra describes the different modes of nature, knowledge, action and the performer of action. Each is said to be of three types: sāttvika, rājasika and tāmasika. Now hear of them from Me.

ŚLOKA 20

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते।
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्जानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम्॥२०॥

sarva-bhūteṣu yenaikam / bhāvam avyayam iksate
avibhaktam vibhakteṣu / taj jñānam viddhi sāttvikam

viddhi—you should understand; sāttvikam—the quality of goodness; (is) tat—that; jñānam—knowledge; yena—by which; iksate—one sees; ekam—one; avyayam—imperishable; avibhaktam—undivided; bhāvam—nature; vibhakteṣu—among the divided; sarva-bhūteṣu—living beings.

Sāttvika jñāna is that knowledge by which one sees that the jīvātmās in various bodies such as humans, devatās, animals and birds are indivisible

and imperishable, and that they all possess the same quality of consciousness, although they are experiencing various types of fruits.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining *sāttvika jñāna*. *Ekam bhāvam* means that the same *jīvātmā* sequentially accepts different forms, such as those of *devatās*, human beings, and lower species, such as animals and birds, in order to undergo the various results of his *karma*. Although the *ātmā* lives in the midst of that which is perishable, he is not perishable. Although the various *jīvātmās* are different (*vibhakteṣu*), they are one (*eka-rūpam*) because they possess the same conscious nature. *Sāttvika jñāna* is that *jñāna* arising from *karma* by which one perceives in this way.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

This *śloka* has a very deep meaning. The cause of all causes, the controller of all controllers, and the source of everyone is the primeval Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Although He is one, He manifests in this universe as various *avatāras*. They are all one in Their essence (*svarūpa*) and in Their *tattva*. There is some gradation of *vaiśiṣṭya* (unique characteristics) amongst Them based on *rasa* and *vilāsa* (pastimes). Yet They are one. The *jīvas* manifest from Him as *vibhinnāṁśa* (separated parts) and are very subtle entities. They are unlimited in number. Śvetāśvatara *Upaniṣad* (5.9) states:

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

It is said that the size of the *jīva* is one-hundredth the tip of a hair which is again divided into a hundred parts. Such *jīvas* are declared to be eternal.

As explained earlier, these *jīvas* are of two types: *baddha* (bound) and *mukta* (liberated). Although they are unlimited in number, they are all one in *tattva* in regard to their conscious nature (*cit-tattva*). They are all Kṛṣṇa *dāsa* by constitutional nature, although they take birth in various species such as *devas*, humans, animals and birds. To establish this *siddhānta*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is explaining that through *sāttvika jñāna* one sees that unlimited *jīvas* exist in various bodies such as *devas*, *asuras*, humans, animals and birds in order to experience the various fruits of their *karma*. From the perspective of *cit-tattva* (conscious reality), by *sāttvika jñāna*, one also perceives them as indivisible, immutable and without any difference in nature.

ŚLOKA 21

पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ञानं नानाभावान् पृथग्विधान्।
वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्जानं विद्धि राजसम्॥२१॥

*pṛthaktvena tu yaj jñānam / nānā-bhāvān pṛthag-vidhān
vetti sarveṣu bhūteṣu / taj jñānam viddhi rājasam*

tu—however; *tat*—that; *jñānam*—knowledge; *yat*—by which; (*one*) *vetti*—considers; *pṛthaktvena*—variously; *nānā-bhāvān*—many natures; *pṛthag-vidhān*—of distinct varieties; *sarveṣu bhūteṣu*—in all living entities; (*is*) *rājasam*—governed by the quality of passion.

However, that knowledge by which one sees different types of *jīvas* in different bodies, such as *devas* and humans, and by which one perceives the *jīvas* as belonging to different classifications and existing for different purposes, is known as *rājasika jñāna*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Here Śrī Bhagavān is explaining *rājasika jñāna*. In the opinion of the *asuras*, there are characteristic differences between the *jīvātmās* in all beings. They also say that the *ātmā* is destroyed when the body is destroyed. Thus, they see that there are separate types of *ātmās* in different bodies. By the influence of *rājasika jñāna*, one may conclude that the soul is the cause of happiness and distress, or that happiness and misery are without any basis. In other words, one sees that their occurrence is merely accidental. The *jñāna* by which one sees the oneness of all conceptions of existence, such as the inert, the conscious, the all-pervading, or the atomic particles, is known as *rājasika jñāna*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Rājasika jñāna determines different understandings. This means that those who do not believe in the existence of a transcendental world say that the body itself is the *ātmā*. The Jains say that although the *ātmā* is different from the body, it is limited by the body, that is, it has no existence separate from it. The Buddhists say that the *ātmā* is conscious for a limited period of time. The logicians say that the *ātmā* is the basis of nine types of special qualities, that is, it is different from the body, and is not inert. The *jñāna* by which these various understandings arise in relation to the *ātmā* is *rājasika jñāna*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “Those who have *rājasika jñāna* say that the *jīvātmās* which exist in different species, such as humans, animals and birds, belong to different classes and that their constitutional natures are also different.”

ŚLOKA 22

यत् कृत्स्नवदेकस्मिन् कार्यं सक्तमहैतुकम्।
अतत्वार्थवदल्पञ्च तत्त्वामसमुदाहृतम्॥२२॥

*yat tu kṛtsna-vad ekasmin / kārye saktam ahaitukam
atattvārtha-vad alpañca / tat tāmasam udāhṛtam*

tu—but; *tāmasam*—knowledge governed by the quality of darkness; *udāhṛtam*—is said to be; *tat*—that knowledge; *yat*—by which; (one is) *kṛtsna-vat*—completely; *saktam*—attached; *ahaitukam*—without any reason; *ekasmin*—to one; *kārye*—work (bodily maintenance); *atattva-artha-vat*—which is without an understanding of the purpose of reality; *ca*—and; (is) *alpam*—meagre (like that of an animal).

And *tāmasika jñāna* is that knowledge which causes one to be absorbed in activities related to the temporary body, such as bathing and eating, considering them to be the ultimate perfection. This is irrational, devoid of any spiritual substance or reality, and meagre like that of the animals.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Now Śrī Bhagavān is explaining *tāmasika jñāna*. *Tāmasika jñāna* is that knowledge which is devoid of any spiritual basis, and which only fosters attachment to the natural acts of the body, such as bathing, eating, drinking, and enjoying women, as well as to the various ways of attaining such enjoyment. Nor does it foster attachment to Vedic activities such as *yajña* and *dāna*. *Tāmasika jñāna* also lacks any essential meaning in relation to *tattva* and is insubstantial and unimportant like the knowledge or instincts of animals. In brief, knowledge of the Absolute Reality, which is beyond the body (*tat-padārtha*), is *sāttvika*; knowledge of *nyāya-sāstras*, for example, which are full of various arguments and counter-arguments, is *rājasika*; and materialistic knowledge, which is simply related to the demands of the body, such as bathing and eating, is *tāmasika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “The *jñāna* of those who consider bodily activities such as bathing and eating to be most important, and which encourages attachment to such activities, is inferior and is called *tāmasika jñāna*. Although this *jñāna* is improper and does not contain any essential *tattva*, it appears to be natural and of value. The conclusion is that knowledge of *tat-padārtha* (the Absolute Reality), which is separate from the body, is called *sāttvika jñāna*. Knowledge of various *śāstras* such as *nyāya*, which establish different argumentative philosophies, is called *rājasika jñāna*. And the knowledge which deals with bodily activities, such as bathing and eating, is called *tāmasika jñāna*.”

SLOKA 23

नियतं सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम्।
अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत्तत् सात्त्विकमुच्यते॥२३॥

niyatam saṅga rahitam / arāga-dveṣataḥ kṛtam
aphala-prepsunā karma / yat tat sāttvikam ucyate

tat—that; *karma*—work; *yat*—which; (*is*) *kṛtam*—performed; *niyatam*—steadily; *saṅga-rahitam*—with detachment; *arāga-dveṣataḥ*—free from desire and hate; *aphala-prepsunā*—without desiring the result; *ucyate*—is said to be; *sāttvikam*—governed by the quality of goodness.

The obligatory duty (*nitya-karma*) which a person performs without fruitive desires and attachment, and which is free from any personal attraction or aversion, is called *sāttvika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Having explained the three types of *jñāna*, Śrī Bhagavān explains the three types of *karma*. When that *karma* which is described in *śāstra* as *nitya-karma*, is performed without attachment or absorption, that is, without feelings of attraction or aversion and without any desire for its fruits, it is called *sāttvika*.

ŚLOKA 24

यतु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहङ्कारेण वा पुनः।
क्रियते बहुलायासं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम्॥२४॥

*yat tu kāmepsunā karma / sāhaṅkāreṇa vā punah
kriyate bahulāyāsaṁ / tad rājasam udāhṛtam*

tu—but; *tat*—that; *karma*—work; *yat*—which; *kriyate*—is performed; *bahula-āyāsaṁ*—with great trouble; *sa-ahaṅkāreṇa*—with conceit; *vā punah*—and also; *kāma-ipsumā*—with fruitive desire; *udāhṛtam*—is said to be; *rājasam*—governed by the quality of passion.

However, that *karma* which is performed with great trouble by a conceited person who seeks to fulfil his fruitive desires, is called *rājasika karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Kāmepsunā means having little false ego, and *sāhaṅkāreṇa* means having an immense false ego.

ŚLOKA 25

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसामनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम्।
मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यत्तामसमुच्यते॥२५॥

*anubandham kṣayam hiṁsām / anapekṣya ca pauruṣam
mohād ārabhyate karma / yat tat tāmasam ucyate*

tat—that; *karma*—activity; *yat*—which; *ārabhyate*—is undertaken; *mohāt*—out of delusion; *anapekṣya*—without considering; *pauruṣam*—one's own ability; *anubandham*—the consequent; *kṣayam*—destruction (of virtue); *ca*—and; *hiṁsām*—gives misery (to others or oneself); *ucyate*—is said to be; *tāmasam*—governed by the quality of darkness.

That activity performed out of delusion, without considering one's own ability, which will bring misery in the future, and which causes the destruction of *dharma* and *jñāna* as well as loss to one's self or trouble to others, is called *tāmasika karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

In the word *anubandham*, *anu* means that which will come in the future, after the *karma* has been performed. In other words, it means its consequential results. *Bandha* means the bondage enforced by people such as state police or Yamadūtas. Any materialistic endeavour (*karma*) which is commenced out of delusion, without properly considering resultant future miseries, loss of *dharma* and *jñāna*, or loss to one's own self, is called *tāmasika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the above three *ślokas*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the three types of *karma*. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.23), it is also said:

*mad-arpaṇam niṣphalam / vā sāttvikam nija-karma tat
rājasam phala-saṅkalpaṁ / himsā-prāyādi tāmasam*

Only that *nitya-karma* which is selflessly performed as an offering to Bhagavān is called *sāttvika*. Karma performed with the desire to enjoy its fruits is *rājasika*, and that *karma* which is performed with violence and out of envy is *tāmasika*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “*Tāmasika karma* is that activity which is only a materialistic endeavour; which is performed in a bewildered state of mind, without properly considering the future misery it may cause, the loss to *dharma* and *jñāna* it may incur; or which is violent (meaning at a loss to one’s self).”

ŚLOKA 26

मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्यर्थर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥२६॥

*mukta-saṅgo 'nahaṁ-vādī / dhṛty-utsāha-samanvitah
siddhy-asiddhyor nirvikārah / karttā sāttvika ucyate*

karttā—the performer of action; *mukta-saṅgah*—who is free from attachment; *anahaṁ-vādī*—free from false ego; *samanvitah*—endowed; *dhṛti*—with determination; *utsāha*—and enthusiasm; *nirvikārah*—who is unaffected; *siddhi-asiddhyoh*—by success and failure; *ucyate*—is said to be; *sāttvikaḥ*—governed by the quality of goodness.

That *karttā* (performer of action) who is free from fruitive desire and conceit, endowed with fortitude and enthusiasm, and who remains unaffected by the success or failure of his actions, is said to be *sāttvika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

First, Śrī Bhagavān explained the three types of *karma*, and now He is explaining the three types of *karttā*, performers of action.

ŚLOKA 27

रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः ।
हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तिः ॥२७॥

*rāgī karma-phala-prepsur / lubdho hiṁsātmako 'śuciḥ
harṣa-śokānvitah karttā / rājasah parikīrttitah*

karttā—a performer of action; *rāgī*—who is very attached; *prepsuh*—who very much hankers; *karma-phala*—for the results of his work; *lubdhah*—who is greedy; *hiṁsa-ātmakah*—envious; *aśuciḥ*—unclean; *anvitah*—absorbed in; *harṣa*—jubilation; *śoka*—and tribulation; *parikīrttitah*—is described; (to be) *rājasah*—governed by the quality of passion.

That *karttā* who is attached to action and hankers for the fruits, who is addicted to sense objects, who is always ready to indulge in violence, who is unclean, and is carried away by elation and sorrow, is said to be *rājasika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

Rāgī means attached to action. *Lubdhah* means addicted to sense objects.

ŚLOKA 28

अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तव्यः शठो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः ।
विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते ॥२८॥

*ayuktaḥ prākṛtaḥ stabdhah / śaṭho naiṣkṛtiko 'lasah
viṣādī dīrgha-sūtrī ca / karttā tāmasa ucyate*

karttā—the performer of action; *ayuktaḥ*—who is not connected (through *sādhu*, *sāstra* or *guru*); *prākṛtaḥ*—identifies with his material nature; (is) *stabdhah*—obstinate; *śaṭhaḥ*—deceptive;

naiṣkṛtikāḥ—insulting to others; *alasaḥ*—lazy; *vīśādī*—despondent; *ca*—and; *dīrgha-sūtrī*—procrastinating; *ucyate*—is said to be; *tāmasaḥ*—governed by the quality of darkness.

That *karttā* who always neglects the injunctions of *sāstra* and endeavours according to his own acquired nature, who is obstinate, deceptive, insulting to others, lazy, despondent and procrastinating, is said to be *tāmasika*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Ayuktāḥ means one who performs improper acts. *Prākṛtaḥ* means one who is situated in his own acquired nature. Such persons act according to the dictates of their minds. They do not even follow the orders of their *guru*. *Naiṣkṛtikāḥ* means one who insults others. “*Jñānīs*, therefore, should perform *sāttvika tyāga* which possesses the characteristics described earlier. One should only take shelter of the *jñāna* that arises when one is fixed in *sāttvika karma*. Indeed, *sāttvika karma* is obligatory. One should be a *sāttvika karttā*. This is the *sannyāsa* of the *jñānīs*. This is the *jñāna* of the *jñānīs*. It is related to the self, and is the essence of this subject matter.”

“However, the *jñāna* of the *bhaktas* is *tri-guṇatīta*, beyond the three *guṇas*. The *karma* which is performed for Me is *tri-guṇatīta* and is called *bhakti*, and its doer (*karttā*) is also *tri-guṇatīta*.” As Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.24) states, “*Kaivalya-jñāna*, knowledge of the self, is *sāttvika*; *jñāna* which is based on duality or manifold variety is *rājasika*; mundane *jñāna* which is related to the body is *tāmasika*; and that *jñāna* which is fixed in Me is *nirguṇa*.” This *nirguṇa-jñāna* is said to be the characteristic of *nirguṇa-bhakti-yoga* as stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.29.12). “Pure *bhajana* is exhibited by one whose mind is at once attracted to hearing an uninterrupted flow of

hari-kathā, just as the Gaṅgā flows to the ocean.” Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.26) states: “That *karttā* who is unattached is *sāttvika*, he who is attached is *rājasika*, and he who has lost his sense of discrimination is *tāmasika*, but that *karttā* who is surrendered to Me is *nirguṇa*.” Furthermore, not only the *jñāna*, *karma* and *karttā* related to *bhakti* are *nirguṇa*, but, from the perspective of *bhakti*, anything related to *bhakti* is *nirguṇa*. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.27), there is also a statement concerning *śraddhā*: “Śraddhā related to ātma-jñāna is *sāttvika*, śraddhā which is based on *karma* is *rājasika*, and śraddhā based on *adharma* is *tāmasika*, but śraddhā in service to Me is *nirguṇa*.” Concerning residence, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.25) states: “To live in the forest is *sāttvika*, to live in the village is *rājasika*, and to live in the gambling house (the city, which is the centre of various deceitful activities) is *tāmasika*, but My residence (the place of My worship) and the association of My *bhaktas* is *nirguṇa*.” Concerning happiness, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.29) states: “The happiness arising from the self is *sāttvika*, that arising from sense objects is *rājasika*, that arising from delusion and mean-spiritedness is *tāmasika*, while the happiness that results from surrendering unto Me is *nirguṇa*.”

“Therefore, the personal happiness that My *guṇātīta-bhaktas* derive from that *jñāna*, *karma* and *śraddhā* which are related to *bhakti* is *guṇātīta*. Everything related to the *jñāna* of *sāttvika jñānīs* is *sāttvika*. Everything related to *rājasika karmīs* is *rājasika*, and everything related to unrestrained *tāmasika* people is *tāmasika*.” This is discerned from the statements of Bhagavad-gītā and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The Fourteenth Chapter also states that the *jñānīs* ultimately attain freedom from the material *guṇas* by the performance of *kevala-bhakti*, which manifests only after *jñāna* has been relinquished.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25-26) also describes the performer of action (*karttā*) to be of three types:

sāttvikah kārako 'saṅgī / rāgāndho rājasah smṛtaḥ
tāmasaḥ smṛti-vibhraṣṭo / nirguṇo mad-apāśrayah

That *karttā* who is detached is *sāttvika*, he who is excessively attached to *karma* and its results is *rājasika*, he who has no discrimination is *tāmasika*, and he who is surrendered unto Me is *nirguṇa*.

ŚLOKA 29

बुद्धेर्भेदं धृतेशचैव गुणतस्त्रिविधं शृणु।
प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनञ्जय॥२९॥

buddher bhedam dhṛteś caiva / guṇatas tri-vidham śṛṇu
procyamānam ašeṣena / pṛthaktvena dhanañjaya

dhanañjaya—O winner of wealth; *eva*—indeed; *śṛṇu*—now hear; *tri-vidham*—the threefold; *bhedam*—division; *buddheḥ*—of intelligence; *ca*—and; *dhṛteḥ*—of determination; *procyamānam*—described; *pṛthaktvena*—individually; *ašeṣena*—and completely; *guṇataḥ*—according to the qualities of material nature.

O Dhanañjaya, please listen, the three divisions of intelligence and determination pertaining to the different *guṇas*, are being described individually and completely.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Everything related to the *jñānīs* is *sāttvika* and therefore, beneficial. Śrī Bhagavān is now describing the three divisions of intelligence and determination in this *śloka* beginning with *buddheḥ*.

ŚLOKA 30

प्रवृत्तिज्ञ निवृत्तिज्ञ कार्यकार्यं भयाभये।
बन्धं मोक्षज्ञ या वेति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी॥३०॥

*pravṛttiñ ca nivṛttiñ ca / kāryākārye bhayābhaye
bandham mokṣam ca yā vetti / buddhiḥ sā pārtha sāttvikī*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *sā*—that; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *yā*—which; *vetti*—understands; *pravṛttim*—when to engage; *ca*—and; *nivṛttim*—when to disengage; *kārya-akārye*—what is proper and improper action; *bhaya-abhaye*—what is to be feared and what is not to be feared; *bandham*—what is bondage; *ca*—and; *mokṣam*—what is liberation; (*is*) *sāttvikī*—governed by the quality of goodness.

O Pārtha, intelligence is *sāttvika* if it is able to distinguish between proper and improper engagement, between what is to be feared and what is not to be feared, and between what is binding and what is liberating.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

Bhayābhaye refers to the cause of entanglement in the material world, and liberation from it.

ŚLOKA 31

यया धर्मधर्मज्ञ कार्यज्ञाकार्यमेव च।
अयथावत् प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी॥३१॥

*yayā dharmam adharmañ ca / kāryañ cākāryam eva ca
ayathāvat prajānāti / buddhiḥ sā pārtha rājasī*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *sā*—that; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *yayā*—by which; *prajānāti*—one discerns; *ayathāvat*—imperfectly;

dharma—virtue; *ca*—and; *adharma*—vice; *kāryam*—that which is to be done, duty; *ca*—and; *akāryam*—that which is not to be done; (is) *eva*—certainly; *rājasī*—governed by the quality of passion.

O Pārtha, intelligence is *rājasīka* if it distinguishes imperfectly between *dharma* and *adharma*, and between that which is to be done and that which is not to be done.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Ayathāvat means imperfectly.

ŚLOKA 32

अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृत्ता।
सर्वार्थान् विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थं तामसी॥३२॥

*adharmam dharmam iti yā / manyate tamasāvṛtā
sarvārthān viparītāṁś ca / buddhiḥ sā pārtha tāmasī*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *sā*—that; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *yā*—which; *manyate*—considers; *adharmam*—irreligion; (to be) *dharma*—religion; *ca*—and; *iti*—thus; (considers) *sarvārthān*—all things; *viparītān*—perversely; *tāmasī*—is governed by the quality of darkness.

O Pārtha, that intelligence is *tāmasīka* which considers *adharma* to be *dharma*, and which endeavours in a perverse manner, being covered by ignorance and illusion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Yā manyate refers to an intelligence which sees that an axe cuts independently. In other words, a person who only perceives the external function (e.g., the axe cutting) cannot

enter the internal understanding that the *ātmā*, he who is wielding the axe, is the actual performer of the act of cutting, not the instrument, the axe.

ŚLOKA 33

धृत्या यया धारयते मनःप्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः।
योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी॥३३॥

*dhṛtyā yayā dhārayate / manah-prāṇendriya-kriyāḥ
yogenāvyabhicāriṇyā / dhṛtiḥ sā pārtha sāttviki*

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *sā*—that; *dhṛtiḥ*—determination; *dhṛtyā*—by determining; *yayā*—which; *dhārayate*—one sustains; *kriyāḥ*—the activities; *manah*—of the mind; *prāṇa*—life airs; *indriya*—and senses; *avyabhicāriṇyā*—through undeviating; *yogena*—practice of union with the Supreme Lord; (is) *sāttviki*—governed by the quality of goodness.

O Pārtha, the unswerving determination which is attained by the practice of *yoga* and by which a person controls the functions of the mind, life air and senses is called *sāttvika dhṛti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Now Śrī Bhagavān is describing the three types of *dhṛti* (determination or fortitude).

ŚLOKA 34

यया तु धर्मकामार्थान् धृत्या धारयतेऽजुनं।
प्रसङ्गेन फलाकांशि धृतिः सा पार्थ राजसी॥३४॥

*yayā tu dharma-kāmārthān / dhṛtyā dhārayate 'rjuna
prasaṅgena phalākāṅkṣī / dhṛtiḥ sā pārtha rājasī*

pārtha arjuna—O Arjuna, son of Pṛthā; *tu*—but; *sā*—that; *dhṛtiḥ*—determination; *phala-akāṅkṣī*—to enjoy the results; *dhṛtyā*—by

determining; *yayā*—which; *dhārayate*—one sustains; *prasaṅgena*—through strong attachment; *dharma-kāma-arthañ*—the activities of *dharma*, sense gratification and economic development; *rājasī*—is governed by the quality of passion.

O Pārtha, O Arjuna, the determination by which one adheres to *dharma*, sense gratification and economic development, driven by attachment to enjoy the fruits, is called *rājasika dhṛti*.

ŚLOKA 35

यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च।
न विमुञ्चति दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा तामसी मता॥३५॥

*yayā svapnam bhayaṁ śokam / viṣādaṁ madam eva ca
na vimuñcati durmedhā / dhṛtiḥ sā tāmasī matā*
sā—that; *durmedhā*—unintelligent; *dhṛtiḥ*—determination; *yayā*—by which; *na vimuñcati*—one cannot surpass; *svapnam*—sleep; *bhayaṁ*—fear; *śokam*—lamentation; *viṣādaṁ*—depression; *ca madam*—and madness; (*is*) *eva*—certainly; *matā*—considered; *tāmasī*—governed by the quality of darkness.

But the unintelligent determination which cannot go beyond sleep, fear, lamentation, depression and madness, is called *tāmasika dhṛti*.

ŚLOKA 36

सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ।
अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्तज्ज्य निगच्छति॥३६॥
*sukham tv idānīm tri-vidhaṁ / śṛṇu me bharatarṣabha
abhyāsād ramate yatra / duḥkhāntajjya ca nigacchati*

bharata-ṛṣabha—O best of Bharata’s line; *tu*—but; *idānīm*—now; *śṛṇu*—hear; *me*—from Me; *tri-vidham*—the three kinds; *sukham*—of happiness; *yatra*—which; *ramate*—one relishes; *abhyāsāt*—through (constant) cultivation; *ca*—and; *nigacchati*—brings one; *duḥkha-antam*—to the end of suffering (is happiness in the quality of goodness).

O best of the Bharata dynasty, now hear from Me about the three types of happiness. The happiness which a *jīva* relishes by constant cultivation, and which brings an end to the misery of material existence, is known as *sāttvika* happiness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINI

Śrī Bhagavān is describing *sāttvika* happiness, its nature and how, by constant cultivation, one becomes attached to it. This differs from the happiness which is derived from sense objects and which appears due to the excitement of sensual stimulation. *Duḥkhāntam ca nigacchati* means being attached to that by which one can cross over the misery of material existence.

SLOKA 37

यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम्।
तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम्॥३७॥

yat tad agre viṣam iva / pariṇāme 'mr̥topamam
tat sukham sāttvikam proktam / ātma-buddhi-prasāda-jam

tat—that; *sukham*—happiness; *yat*—which; (is) *iva*—like; *viṣam*—poison; *agre*—in the beginning; (and) *amṛta-upamam*—like nectar; *pariṇāme*—in the end; *jam*—which is generated; *prasāda*—from purity; *buddhi*—of intelligence; *ātma*—directed to the self; *tat*—that; *proktam*—is declared; (to be) *sāttvikam*—governed by the quality of goodness.

That happiness which is like poison in the beginning, but nectar in the end, and which is generated from the purity of intelligence related to the self, is *sāttvika* happiness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Viṣam iva indicates that, in the beginning, it is quite troublesome to control the senses and the mind.

ŚLOKA 38

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्यतदग्रेऽमृतोपमम् ।
परिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥३८॥

*viṣayendriya-saṁyogād / yat tad agre 'mr̥topamam
pariṇāme viṣam iva / tat sukham rājasam smṛtam*

tat—that; *sukham*—happiness; *yat*—which; (*is*) *saṁyogāt*—from the contact; *indriya*—of the senses; *viṣaya*—with the sense objects; (and which is) *amṛta-upamam*—like nectar; *agre*—in the beginning; (and) *iva*—like; *viṣam*—poison; *pariṇāme*—in the end; *tat*—that (happiness); *smṛtam*—is considered; *rājasam*—governed by the quality of passion.

Rājasika happiness is produced by the contact of the senses with the sense objects. It is like nectar in the beginning, but poison in the end.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

Yad amṛta-upamam refers to the happiness experienced while enjoying with women other than one's wife and so forth.

ŚLOKA 39

यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः ।
निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥३९॥

*yad agre cānubandhe ca / sukhaṁ mohanam ātmanah
nidrālasya-pramādotthaṁ / tat tāmasam udāhṛtam*

tat—that; *sukham*—happiness; *yat*—which; (is) *mohanam*—delusion; *ātmanah*—for the *ātmā*; (both) *agre*—in the beginning; *ca*—and; *anubandhe*—in the end; *ca*—and; *uttham*—is born out of; *nidra*—sleep; *ālasya*—laziness; (and) *pramāda*—carelessness; *udāhṛtam*—is said; (to be) *tāmasam*—governed by the quality of darkness.

That happiness which covers the nature of the self from beginning to end, and which arises from sleep, laziness, negligence and indifference, is called *tāmasika* happiness.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Happiness is also of three types. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.29) states:

*sāttvikam sukham ātmothaṁ / viśayotthaṁ tu rājasam
tāmasaṁ moha-dainyotthaṁ / nirguṇaṁ mad-apāśrayam*

Happiness derived from realisation of the self is *sāttvika*; happiness derived from sense pleasure is *rājasika*; happiness that arises from a deluded, wretched condition is *tāmasika*; and the happiness that comes from the performance of *kīrtanam*, *śravaṇam*, etc., of Śrī Bhagavān is *nirguṇa*.

ŚLOKA 40

न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः।
सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः॥४०॥

*na tad asti pṛthivyāṁ vā / divi deveṣu vā punaḥ
sattvaṁ prakṛti-jair muktam / yad ebhiḥ syāt tribhir guṇaiḥ*

pṛthivyām—on the earth; *vā*—or; *punah*—even; *deveṣu*—amongst the gods; *divi*—in Svarga; *tat*—there; *na asti*—does not exist; *sattvam*—a being; *yat*—who; *syāt*—can be; *muktam*—free; *ebhiḥ*—from these; *tribhiḥ*—three; *guṇaiḥ*—binding qualities; *prakṛti-jaiḥ*—born of material nature.

Among humans and other earthly species, or even among the *devas* in Svarga, no object or entity anywhere in this creation is free from these three *guṇas*, which are born of material nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is concluding this subject by explaining what He has not yet described. *Tat sattvam* means that no living being or object in the creation is free from the three *guṇas*, which are born of material nature. Therefore, everything is composed of the three *guṇas* of material nature, and only that which is *sāttvika* is useful; that which is *rājasika* or *tāmasika* is not. This is the purport of this topic.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Bhagavān is concluding this subject by stating, “Everything that is related to this material world is composed of the three *guṇas* of material nature. The superiority of that which is *sāttvika* has been established. One is instructed to ardently take shelter of and accept only what is *sāttvika*. However, in order to become free from the bondage of this material world, it is necessary to take shelter of that which is *nirguṇa*. Bhagavān, *bhakta*, *bhakti*, and all the instruments, *bhāvas* and so forth, for *sevā*, are *nirguṇa*. Without adopting them, a *jīva* cannot achieve his ultimate benefit. Therefore, it is the supreme duty of all intelligent individuals to endeavour to rise above the three *guṇas* of material nature by the influence of *sādhu-saṅga*. Being thus situated in their *nirguṇa*

nature, they should enter into the *nirguṇa-prema-mayī sevā* of Bhagavān. A table of subjects and their *guṇas* is given on the next page by which the *sādhaka* will be able to easily understand the *guṇas* and, thus, comprehend *nirguṇa-tattva*.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.30-31) describes the above-mentioned subjects that are within the three *guṇas* and beyond them. Śrī Bhagavān says to Uddhava:

dravyam̄ deśah phalam̄ kālo / jñānam̄ karma ca kārakah
śraddhāvasthākṛtir niṣṭhā / trai-guṇyah sarva eva hi
sarve guṇa-mayā bhāvāḥ / puruṣāvyakta-dhiṣṭhitāḥ
dṛṣṭam̄ śrutam anudhyātam̄ / buddhyā vā puruṣarṣabha

Various objects, places, results of activities, *kāla* (time), *jñāna*, *karma*, the performers of action, *śraddhā*, form and allegiance, all consist of the three *guṇas* of material nature. O best among men, all that is seen, heard or conceived of within the mind is situated within *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, and is, therefore, composed of the three *guṇas*.

How can one conquer the three *guṇas*? In this regard, Śrī Bhagavān says in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.32):

etāḥ saṁsṛtayah pūṁso / guṇa-karma-nibandhanāḥ
yeneme nirjītāḥ saumya / guṇā jīvena citta-jāḥ
bhakti-yogena man-niṣṭho / mad bhāvāya prapadyate

O gentle one, because the *jīva* mistakes the body for the self, he is bound by the *guṇas* and by *karma*. Thus, he wanders throughout the various species of life. Those who are influenced by the association of *bhaktas*, practise *bhakti-yoga*. Consequently, they conquer the material modes that manifest in the mind as the false ego (considering the body to be the self) and they become firmly devoted to Me. Thus, they attain *bhagavat-sevā* to Me in My *dhāma*.

Śrī Bhagavān is *nirguṇa-tattva*. The *bhaktas* who take shelter of Him are also *nirguṇa*. Ananya-bhakti and its

associated limbs are also *nirguṇa*. The various objects and moods that the *bhaktas* accept as useful instruments in *bhakti*, and with which they engage in the service of Bhagavān, become *nirguṇa* by His inconceivable power. This principle has been established in various places throughout śāstras, such as Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

ŚLOKA 41

**ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणाज्च परन्तप।
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गणैः ॥४१॥**

*brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-viśām / śūdrāṇāñ ca parantapa
karmāṇi pravibhaktāni / svabhāva-prabhavair guṇaiḥ*

parantapa—O chastiser of the foe; *karmāṇi*—the activities; *brāhmaṇa*—of the priestly or intellectual class; *viśām*—of the mercantile or cow protecting class; *kṣatriya*—of the warrior or administrative class; *ca*—and; *śūdrāṇām*—of the labourer class; (are) *pravibhaktāni*—divided; *guṇaiḥ*—according to those (same) binding qualities; *prabhavaiḥ*—which are born; *svabhāva*—of their respective natures.

O Parantapa, the prescribed duties of the *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras* are divided according to the dispositions born of their respective natures.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Furthermore, the *jīvas*, who are subject to the influence of the three *guṇas* of material nature, become successful and perfect by worshipping Parameśvara through the performance of activities which are prescribed in śāstra, according to their respective qualifications. Śrī Bhagavān now speaks the next six ślokas beginning with *brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-viśām*, in order to explain this principle.

Svabhāva-prabhavair guṇaiḥ means work born of one's own nature in accordance with the *guṇas* such as *sattva*. The various types of *karma* are appropriately divided according to these *guṇas* and prescribed for the *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* and so forth. This determines their obligatory duties.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In order to elevate humans beyond the three *guṇas* of material nature and gradually raise them to a higher *adhikāra*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa establishes *varṇa-dharma* by dividing their prescribed duties according to their respective *guṇas* (qualities) and *karma* (actions). The arrangement of the pure *varṇa* system is very beneficial, auspicious and scientific for human life. With the passing of time, however, the common man has lost faith in this system, having witnessed various defects in its so-called followers. This faith is lost to such an extent that, now, even common people in Indian society blame the *varṇāśrama* system for the divisions and hostility created by its castes. They also assert that *varṇa-dharma* is the main cause of India's social, political and economic collapse. They say that Indian people are less advanced than those of other countries because of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. The majority of India's population is becoming determined to completely destroy the *varṇa-dharma* and establish an atheistic society without any *varṇa*. It is easy to destroy a useful thing, but it is extremely difficult to initiate and propagate, in this case, an ideal system. May Śrī Bhagavān bestow good intelligence upon such people. Are they taking this stance after careful deliberation? Or are they simply being carried away by their sentiments, thus developing firm resolve to completely destroy the individual, as well as society as a whole, at the roots? In this regard, we are quoting some meaningful portions from Śrī Caitanya-Śikṣāmṛta by Śrila Bhaktivinoda Thākura. We humbly request the faithful reader to carefully examine and understand it.

“One’s inclinations or qualities depend only upon one’s nature, *sva-bhāva*. A person should work according to that individual nature. Work which is not executed in accordance with his nature is not fruitful. The English word ‘genius’ is used to refer to a particular part of one’s nature. It is not easy for a person to change his matured nature, therefore, he should endeavour for his livelihood and spiritual perfection by working in accordance with his nature. People in India are divided into four *varṇas* in accordance with four types of nature. As a result of people being properly situated in society, having followed the injunctions of the *varṇa* system, all social activities naturally become fruitful and humanity attains all auspiciousness. The *varṇa* system is based on solid scientific understanding. A society which has such a foundation is worthy of respect by all of humanity.

“Some people may doubt the *varṇāśrama* system, saying, ‘No one in Europe and America follows these injunctions which are based on *varṇa* divisions, yet the people of those lands are more advanced and respected than the Indian people in economy, science and other ways.’ They conclude that it is useless to accept such a system. But such doubts are baseless, because the European societies are quite new. People of such modern societies are generally stronger and more courageous. With that courage and strength, they perform various activities in the world and accept portions of the knowledge, science and arts which have been preserved by the older societies. But all these new societies will gradually become extinct because their social arrangement has no scientific foundation. However, symptoms of the original *varṇa* system that existed in ancient India’s Āryan society can still be observed in current Indian society, even though it is now so old and weak.

"Previously, the Roman and Greek societies were more powerful and advanced than those of modern European countries, but what is their present plight? They have lost their own ancient caste system, and have embraced the religions and systems of modern societies to such an extent that the people of those castes do not even boast the glory of their noble ancestors. Although the Āryan society of India is much older than the Roman and Greek societies, the present Āryans feel proud of their great heroic forefathers. What is the reason for this? It is because the foundation of Āryan society was so strongly based on the *varṇāśrama* system that their social or caste traits still remain. The descendants of Rāma, who were defeated by the *mlecchas*, still consider themselves to be the heroic descendants of Śrī Rāmacandra. As long as the *varṇa* arrangement is existing in India, people will undoubtedly remain Āryan; they can never become non-Āryan, no matter how fallen they become due to the time-worn and antiquated condition of the society.

"The European Āryan descendants, such as the Romans, have intermingled and become integrated with the lowest castes such as the Hāna and Bhāṇḍāla. By studying the structure of the present European societies, we will find that whatever charm exists in them is due to the fact that they have in some way embraced the principles of the *varṇa* system, which has manifested through their own natural propensities. In Europe, those people who have a *vaiśya* nature consider it beneficial to engage in business, and because of that alone, they are making economic progress. Those who have the nature of a *kṣatriya* will voluntarily become soldiers, and those who have the nature of a *sūdra* generally prefer to perform menial services. In fact, no society can exist without accepting the *varṇadharma* in some form or other. Even when a marriage is arranged, the higher or lower state of the bride and groom's *varṇa* and nature are examined and considered.

“Although *varṇa-dharma* is partially accepted in Europe, it has not been established in its full, scientifically-based form. Wherever knowledge and civilization make progress, *varṇa-dharma* will proportionately manifest in a more complete form. Two types of methods are effective in every activity: the unscientific and the scientific. An activity is performed unscientifically until the scientific process is accepted. For example, before the invention of power driven ships, people used to travel in boats designed to depend on the winds. But, when scientifically manufactured ships were introduced, all voyages were made on them. The same principle can also be applied to society. Until the *varṇa* system becomes properly established in a country, its society will be run by some unscientific, rudimentary system. Such an elementary and primitive arrangement of *varṇa* is currently operating and controlling societies in all countries of the world, save and except for India. India has therefore been called *karma-kṣetra*, the land for the proper execution of *karma*.

“At this point in our discussion, the question may be raised as to whether or not the *varṇa* system is actually functioning properly in India today. The answer is that it is most definitely not. Although previously this *varṇa* system was fully established, in course of time it became diseased. Consequently, degradation of this system is now visible in India. What, we may ask, is that disease? The answer is given in the following explanation.

“At the beginning of Tretā-yuga, the Āryan society had reached the pinnacle of its progressive development. At that time, the *varṇāśrama* system was established. An arrangement was made to determine the *varṇa* of every person according to his nature. Upon acquiring the requisite qualifications set forth, he would perform his prescribed work in that *varṇa* only. The activities of the world were thus very comfortably managed with the labour divided according to

the qualification and nature of the individual. A person whose father had no *varṇa* was accommodated by being placed in the appropriate *varṇa* after his nature was examined. The Vedic histories about Jābālī and Gautama, Jānaśruti and Citraratha, etc., give evidence of this. A person's *varṇa* was ascertained on the basis of his own nature and on the basis of his family lineage in cases where his father's *varṇa* was known. In the dynasty of Nariṣyanta, Agniveśa himself became the great sage known as Jātukarṇa. It is from him that the famous *brāhmaṇa* dynasty known as Agniveśyāyana originated. In the Aila dynasty, Jahnu, the son of Hotra, attained the status of a *brāhmaṇa*. In the dynasty of Bharadvāja, who was born in the dynasty of Bharata and who was known as King Vitatha, there came two progenies, the one from Nara became *kṣatriyas*, and the progeny of Garga became *brāhmaṇas*. In the dynasty of King Bharyasva, *maudgalya gotra brāhmaṇas*, such as Śatānanda and Kṛpācārya were born. There are many such examples in *śāstra*, of which only a few have been cited.

"When the *varṇa* system was functioning in a cultured manner, India's fame spread all over the world like the powerful glow of the midday sun. People from all countries of the world paid homage to India and accepted their rulers, controllers and spiritual masters as their own. People of countries such as Egypt and China would hear and receive instructions from the Indians with great faith and reverence.

"The above-mentioned *varṇāśrama-dharma* continued in its pure form in India for a long time. Later, through the influence of time, Jamadagni and his son Paraśurāma, who had the nature of *kṣatriyas*, were unlawfully accepted as *brāhmaṇas*, but they gave up their caste as *brāhmaṇas*, as it was opposed to their nature. This caused a disturbance to the peace of the world order by creating a dispute between the *brāhmaṇas* and the *kṣatriyas*. The unfavourable result of this

quarrel was that within the *varṇa* system more emphasis was placed on birth. In course of time, this perverted *varṇa* system was covertly introduced, even infiltrating *śāstras* such as the *Manu-smṛti*. The *kṣatriyas* lost all hope of attaining a higher *varṇa* and they revolted. They supported the Buddhist *dharma* and focused all their energy on destroying the *brāhmaṇas*. The degree to which a new activity or opinion is propagated, is opposed to in a proportionate degree. When the Buddhist *dharma*, which was opposed to the *Vedas*, arose to confront the *brāhmaṇas*, the *varṇa* arrangement based upon birth became even more deeply rooted. A disagreement ensued between this ill-conceived system and a spirit of nationalism, which gradually led to a virtual disintegration of the Āryan civilization in India.

“Driven by selfish motives, the so-called *brāhmaṇas*, who were bereft of any brāhmaṇical qualities, composed their own religious scriptures and began to cheat the other *varṇas*. The so-called *kṣatriyas* who had lost their true *kṣatriya* spirit and qualities, became averse to engaging in battle and, thus began to lose their kingdoms. Finally, they started to preach the comparatively insignificant and inferior Buddhist *dharma*. The *vaiśyas*, who did not possess any real business qualities and acumen, began propagating religions such as Jainism. Under these circumstances, the world-wide business ventures of India gradually declined, and the *sūdras* who had no real *sūdra* qualities, became almost like dacoits, being unable to find work befitting their nature. As a result, the cultivation of knowledge of and discussions on *sat-śāstras* such as the *Vedas*, gradually came to a halt. The rulers of the *mleccha* countries then attacked India at an opportune time and established their control. India’s shipping industry suffered and finally ceased due to improper management. In this way, the influence of Kali intensified. Alas! The Āryan race of India, which once was the ruler and *guru* of all other

societies on earth, deteriorated to the pitiable condition we see today. The reason for this unfortunate development is not the aging of Indian civilization, but the numerous defects that have permeated the *varṇa* system.

“Parameśvara is the original controller of all systems and living entities. He has the ability to remove all inauspicious elements and bestow all auspiciousness. If He so desires, He may send His empowered representative to re-establish *varṇāśrama-dharma*. Even the writers of the *Purāṇas* assert that Śrī Kalki-deva will make His advent and reinstate the pristine glory of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. The story of King Maru and Devāpi describes a similar expectancy. We will now discuss the *vidhis* (rites) within *varṇāśrama-dharma*.

“*Dharma-śāstra* gives a detailed explanation about the *karma* (duties) that a person in each *varṇa* has the right to perform. It is not possible to present the full details of that subject in the context of this book. Activities such as serving food to guests, bathing thrice a day for purity, worshipping *devatās* and *devīs*, studying the *Vedas*, giving instructions, performing *pūjā*, observing *vratas* such as *upanayana* (accepting the sacred thread), *brahmacharya* and *sannyāsa* are the activities prescribed for *brāhmaṇas*. *Kṣatriyas* have the right to perform activities such as fighting for *dharma*, ruling a kingdom, protecting the subjects and generously distributing charity. *Vaiśyas* have the right to perform such activities as protecting animals and executing business endeavours. The right of the *śūdras* is to perform service to the *devatās* without the utterance of *mantras*, and to render various services to the above-mentioned three *varṇas*.

“Apart from the activities that are exclusive to their own *varṇas*, all men and women have the common right to perform activities such as marriage, *īśvara-bhakti*, welfare activities, general charity, service to the *guru*, honouring guests,

purificatory rites, celebrating festivals, serving the cows, producing progeny and following prescribed codes of conduct. Women have the special right to engage in the service of their husbands. The basic principle is that a person has the right to perform duties which are conducive to his or her own nature. With simple intelligence, everyone can ascertain his or her particular right to perform work. If a person does not have the ability to do that, then he should approach a bona fide *guru* to ascertain his nature and rights. Those Vaiṣṇavas who are *nirguṇa* and who are interested to know more about this subject, should study *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*, by Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.”

ŚLOKA 42

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिराज्ञवमेव च।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम्॥४२॥

*śamo damas tapaḥ śaucam / kṣāntir ārjavam eva ca
jñānam vijñānam āstikyam / brahma-karma svabhāva-jam*

śamah—control of the mind; *damah*—control over the senses; *tapah*—austerity; *śaucam*—cleanliness; *kṣāntih*—tolerance; *ārjavam*—simplicity; *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *jñānam*—transcendental knowledge; *vijñānam*—realised knowledge; (and) *āstikyam*—firm faith in the philosophical conclusions of *sāstra*; (are) *karma*—the duties; *brahma*—of the *brāhmaṇas*; *svabhāva-jam*—born out of their own nature.

Control of the mind and senses, penance, purity, tolerance, simplicity, knowledge of the self and of *bhajana*, and firm faith in and realisation of *sāstra* are the characteristic qualities and duties (*karma*) of the *brāhmaṇas* born of their own natures.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Now the *karma* (prescribed duties) of *brāhmaṇas*, who are influenced predominantly by *sattva-guṇa*, are being described. *Śamaḥ* refers to control of the internal sense, the mind. *Damah* means control of the external physical senses. *Tapah* refers to the prescribed work performed by the body. *Jñāna-vijñāne* means knowledge and realisation of the *śāstra*. *Āstikatā* means firm faith in the meaning and purport of *śāstra*. All of these are the natural *karma* of the *brāhmaṇas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.11.21), the qualities of the *brāhmaṇas* are described. They are: control of the mind and senses, penance, cleanliness, satisfaction, tolerance, simplicity, knowledge, mercy, truthfulness and *bhagavad-bhakti*.

*śamo damas tapah śaucam / santoṣah kṣāntir ārjavam
jñānam dayācyutātmatvam / satyam ca brahma-lakṣaṇam*

Also in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.17.16), Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Uddhava that control of the mind and senses, performance of penance, cleanliness, satisfaction, tolerance, simplicity, *bhagavad-bhakti*, mercy and truthfulness are the qualities of the *brāhmaṇas*.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.5.24), Rṣabhadeva says:

*dhṛtā tanūr uśatī me purāṇī
yeneha sattvam paramam pavitram
śamo damah satyam anugrahaś ca
tapas titikṣānubhavaś ca yatra*

Who can be superior to the *brāhmaṇas*? By their study they are sustaining My very beautiful and primeval form of the Vedas, which are the *avatāra* of transcendental sound, and they are

endowed with the eight supremely pure qualities of *sattva-guṇa*: control of the mind, control of the senses, truthfulness, mercy, penance, tolerance, knowledge and realisation (*bhakti*).

Here, it should be understood that a real *brāhmaṇa* who is endowed with such qualities cannot be the cause of harm or violence to any person, society, community or nation. Undoubtedly, such individuals are the well-wishing friends of every living being. This statement is most definitely true. But those who are bereft of brāhmaṇical qualities will only cause great harm to society although pretentiously proclaiming themselves to be *brāhmaṇas*; of this there is no doubt. At the same time, it is not correct to envy the whole *varṇa* system because of this defect and make efforts to destroy it completely. The proper course of action to correct the defects that have crept into this system is for society to honour those who truly possess such good qualities.

According to the *Gītā*, a person should be appropriately honoured after ascertaining his *varṇa* based on his qualities, actions, nature and his impressions from previous lives. This will make it possible for *brāhmaṇas* like Vasiṣṭha, Nārada and Vyāsa to make their appearance in our society. Peace and happiness will be established throughout the world if such elevated *brāhmaṇas* and great *kṣatriya* heroes like Śrī Rāma, Arjuna, Bhīma and Mahārāja Bharata take birth here.

The atheistic society that is taking shape today is without any concern for caste or divisions. It is simply giving rise to murder, looting, dacoity, cheating and other sinful activities. Agitation and fear are all-pervading. The world has never before seen such a miserable condition. It is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.11.35):

yasya yal-lakṣaṇam proktam / pumso varṇābhivyañjakam
yad anyatrāpi dṛṣyeta / tat tenaiva vinirdiśet

A person's *varṇa* can be ascertained by noting in him particular symptoms that have been described for establishing the *varṇas* of humans. A person should be assigned to a *varṇa* according to these particular symptoms. *Varṇa* cannot be decided merely by birth.

In the present age, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* *aṣṭottara-sāta* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, the founder of the worldwide Gauḍiya Mission, re-established and preached *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma* based on various evidences from *śruti* and *smṛti* as well as time-honoured customs.

ŚLOKA 43

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दक्षयं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम्।
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षत्रकर्म स्वभावजम्॥४३॥

*śauryam tejo dhṛtir dākṣyam / yuddhe cāpy apalāyanam
dānam iśvara-bhāvah ca / kṣatraṁ karma-svabhāva-jam*

śauryam—heroism; *tejah*—boldness; *dhṛtiḥ*—firmness; *dākṣyah*—dexterity; *ca*—and; *api*—also; *apalāyanam*—not fleeing; *yuddhe*—in battle; *dānam*—generosity; *ca*—and; *iśvara-bhāvah*—leadership; (comprise) *kṣatra-karma*—the work of the administrative or warrior class; *jam*—born; (which are) *svabhāva*—of their own nature.

Heroism, boldness, firmness, dexterity, not fleeing from a battle, generosity and leadership are the prescribed actions of the *kṣatriyas* which are born of their own nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

This *śloka* describes the activities of *kṣatriyas*, in whom *rajo-guṇa* predominates over *sattva-guṇa*. *Śaurya* means

valour or heroism, *tejāḥ* means aggressiveness or courage, *dhṛtiḥ* means patience (determination), and *iśvara-bhāvah* means the ability and tendency to control people. These are the innate duties of a *kṣatriya*.

ŚĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̥TTI

It is also stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.11.22):

śauryam vīryam dhṛtis tejas / tyāgaś cātma-jayah kṣamā
brahmaṇyatā prasādaś ca / rakṣā ca kṣatra-lakṣaṇam

Enthusiasm in battle, heroism, firmness, boldness, sacrifice, control of the mind, forgiveness, devotion to the *brāhmaṇas*, mercy and protection of the subjects are the characteristics of the *kṣatriyas*.

ŚLOKA 44

कृषिगोरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वै यकर्म स्वभावजम्।
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शुद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम्॥४४॥

*kṛṣi-go-rakṣya-vāṇijyam / vaiśya-karma svabhāva-jam
paricaryātmakam karma / śūdrasyāpi svabhāva-jam*

karma—the work; *vaiśya*—of the *vaiśyas*; *sva-bhāva-jam*—which is born of their own nature; (is) *kṛṣi*—agriculture; *go-rakṣya*—cow protection; (and) *vāṇijyam*—commerce; *api*—and; *karma*—the work; *śūdrasya*—of the *śūdras*; *svabhāva-jam*—born of their own nature; (is) *ātmakam*—of the nature; *paricarya*—of rendering service.

The prescribed *karma* of the *vaiśyas*, which is born of their own nature, is agriculture, protecting cows, commerce and trade. The *karma* of the *śūdras*, which is born of their own nature, is to render service to the other three *varṇas*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

In the *vaiśyas*, *rājо-guṇa* predominates; *tamo-guṇa* is less prominent. Agriculture, protection of the cows and trade, etc., are the natural and inborn *karma* of the *vaiśyas*. They are called *go-rakṣaka* (protectors of the cows) because they rear and protect the cows. *Tamo-guṇa* is predominant in *śūdras*, not *rājо-guṇa*. Their natural *karma* is to render service to *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas*.

ŚLOKA 45

**स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः सांसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।
स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥४५॥**

*sve sve karmaṇy abhirataḥ / saṁsiddhim labhate naraḥ
sva-karma nirataḥ siddhim yathā vindati tac chṛṇu*

abhirataḥ—being attached; *sve sve*—to his respective; *karmaṇi*—activities; *naraḥ*—a man; *labhate*—attains; *saṁsiddhim*—full perfection (eligibility to acquire *jñāna*); *śṛṇu*—now hear; *tat*—that (information); *yathā*—how; *vindati*—he finds; *siddhim*—perfection; *nirataḥ*—while being attached; *sva-karma*—to his work.

Men are devoted to their own *karma* according to their respective qualifications. Thus, they attain the perfection of being eligible to acquire *jñāna*. Now hear how a person who is engaged in his prescribed duty can attain perfection.

ŚLOKA 46

**यतः प्रवृत्तिभूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥४६॥४६॥**

*yataḥ pravṛttir bhūtānām / yena sarvam idam tatam
sva-karmaṇā tam abhyarcyā / siddhim vindati mānavah*

mānavaḥ—a man; *vindati*—attains; *siddhim*—perfection; *sva-karmanā*—through performance of his prescribed duties; *abhyarcya*—by worshipping; *tam*—Him; *yataḥ*—whence; (arises) *pravṛttih*—the manifestation; *bhūtānām*—of all beings; (and) *yena*—by whom; *idam*—this; *sarvam*—entire (world); *tatam*—is pervaded.

A man attains perfection through the performance of his own prescribed *karma* (work) by worshipping Parameśvara, from whom all *jīvas* have come into existence, and by whom this world is pervaded.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

One should attain Parameśvara, from whom all living entities are born, by performing *pūjā* and *arcana* to Him with the prayerful entreaty: “May Parameśvara be pleased by my rendering this work (*karma*).” To perform *arcana* to Parameśvara with such feeling is proper worship of Him.

ŚLOKA 47

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात्।
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम्॥४७॥

śreyān sva-dharmaḥ viguṇaḥ / para-dharmāt sv-anuṣṭhitāt
svabhāva-niyatam karma / kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣam

śreyān—better; (than) *sva-dharmaḥ*—one’s own occupational duty; (is) *viguṇaḥ*—imperfectly performed; *para-dharmāt*—than another’s duty; *su-anuṣṭhitāt*—very nicely performed; *kurvan*—by performing; *karma*—work; *svabhāva-niyatam*—regulated by one’s own nature; *na āpnoti*—one does not incur; *kilbiṣam*—sin.

It is more beneficial to perform one's own occupational duty (*sva-dharma*), even though inferior or imperfectly performed, than to perfectly execute the higher duty of another (*para-dharma*). By performing his *sva-dharma*, a man incurs no sin.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

"It is not proper to engage in *sāttvika* acts, having lost interest in one's own *dharma*, considering it to be *rājasika*." Thus, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *śreyān*. Even though one is unable to perform one's lowly, inferior *sva-dharma* properly, it is better than properly performing *para-dharma*, which may appear to be superior. "Therefore, O Arjuna, it is improper for you to renounce your *sva-dharma* of fighting just because you see the killing of relatives as detrimental, in order to perform *para-dharma*, the occupation of others who wander and beg."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here it should be understood that one can accept the conclusion of the present śloka only when the word *sva-dharma* implies *varṇāśrama-dharma*. But when the word *sva-dharma* is used to imply *ātma-dharma*, *bhakti* to Śrī Hari, then one must accept the conclusions of the ślokas such as *sarvadharmāṇ parityajya*. Where *sva-dharma* means *ātma-dharma*, the word *para-dharma* means activities related to the body and mind. Until a person develops faith in *ātma-dharma*, it is beneficial to perform prescribed duties according to his innate nature. As it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.9):

tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta / na nirvidyeta yāvata
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā / śraddhā yāvan na jāyate

As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not

awakened his taste for *bhajana* by *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, etc., one has to follow the principles of *śāstra*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “It is better to perform *sva-dharma* even improperly than to engage in *para-dharma* expertly. *Sva-dharma* means the duties prescribed according to one’s natural aptitude and innate qualities. Therefore, even if *sva-dharma* is sometimes not executed expertly, it is always beneficial. There is no possibility of incurring sin by performing duties which are prescribed according to one’s own nature.”

ŚLOKA 48

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत्।
सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः ॥४८॥

saha-jam karma kaunteya / sa-doṣam api na tyajet
sarvārambhā hi doṣeṇa / dhūmenāgnir ivāvṛtāḥ

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; *na tyajet*—one should not give up; *karma*—the work; *saha-jam*—born of one’s nature; *api*—even though; *sa-doṣam*—faulty; *hi*—indeed; *sarva-arambhāḥ*—all endeavours; (are) *avṛtāḥ*—covered; *doṣeṇa*—by fault; *iva*—as; *agnih*—fire; (is covered) *dhūmena*—by smoke.

O Kaunteya, one should not relinquish duty that is in accordance with one’s nature even if that duty has some defect, because all undertakings are covered by some fault, just as fire is covered by smoke.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

It is not proper to think that there is only fault in one’s *sva-dharma*, as there is certainly some fault in *para-dharma* also. To clarify this point, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *saha-jam*. One should perform the

duty that is in accordance with one's nature, because all work (*karma*), be it seen (manifest) or unseen (unmanifest) is tinged with some defect, just as fire is covered by smoke. A person overlooks the defect of a fire's smoke while utilising its light and heat to dispel darkness and cold. In the same way, one must accept the positive aspect of one's prescribed duty for the purification of one's existence, and neglect the defective aspect.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Generally, duties that are prescribed according to one's nature are called *sva-dharma*. By performing such duties a person can maintain his life very easily, and he may also possibly gradually enter spiritual life. If a person accepts the prescribed duties of others, having observed some fault in his own *sva-dharma*, there is a possibility that he may incur even more sin. If one gives up one's *kṣatriya-dharma*, considering it to be violent, and accepts the duty of a *brāhmaṇa*, thinking that it is free from such faults, then there is the possibility of impropriety, because even the duties that are prescribed according to the nature of the *brāhmaṇas* are subject to the three *guṇas*. Since the instruments for performing brāhmaṇical acts are material, there always remains some fault or other in activities performed with them. For example, there is always the possibility of killing living entities while performing a fire *yajña*. For this reason, the example of fire is given here. Fire remains covered by smoke. This is a defect of fire, but the fire is still accepted in order to dispel cold, to cook and serve other purposes. According to this same reasoning, it is beneficial to engage only in one's prescribed activities. A person utilises the fire he lights after removing some portion of the smoke. In the same way, after overcoming the defects of his *karma*

by offering that *karma* to Śrī Bhagavān, one should accept that aspect of it which gives rise to *jñāna* for the purpose of self-realisation.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Śrī Kṛṣṇa as saying, “O Kaunteya, even if the duties that are prescribed according to one’s nature are defective, they should by no means be relinquished. Every endeavour is covered by some defect. Just as fire is always covered by smoke, defects cover and contaminate every action. A man should accept the positive part of the *karma* which is prescribed according to his nature for the purpose of purifying his existence, and should discard the defective part.”

ŚLOKA 49

असक्तबुद्धिः सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृहः ।
नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां सन्यासेनाधिगच्छति ॥४९॥

*asakta-buddhiḥ sarvatra / jitātmā vigata-spr̥hah
naiṣkarmya-siddhim paramām / sannyāsenādhigacchati*

buddhiḥ—one whose intelligence; (*is*) *asakta*—detached; *sarvatra*—in all situations; *jita-ātmā*—whose mind is self-controlled; (*and*) *vigata-spr̥hah*—who is devoid of desire; *adhigacchati*—attains; *paramām*—supreme; *siddhim*—perfection; *naiṣkarmya*—in the form of action free from reaction; *sannyāsena*—through renunciation (of the results of his work).

One whose intelligence is not attached to anything material, whose *citta* (mind) is under control, and who is free from all desires, even for achieving the happiness of Brahma-loka, attains supreme perfection in the form of *naiṣkarmya* (reaction-free action) by completely renouncing *karma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Action (*karma*) becomes defective when, due to false ego, a person considers himself to be the doer and desires the fruit of that activity. The first stage of *sannyāsa* is to give up these defects and remain engaged in *karma*. Gradually, however, when the *sādhana* of such a *sannyāsī* matures and he becomes firmly situated in *yoga* (*yogārūḍha*), he may completely renounce all *karma*. This is the second stage of *sannyāsa*. *Asakta-buddhiḥ* refers to one whose intelligence is free from all attachment to material objects. *Jitātmā* means one whose mind is under control and *vigata-spṛhaḥ* means one who does not even desire the happiness of Brahma-loka. Such persons attain supreme perfection in the form of *naiṣkarmya* by giving up all *karma* completely. In the *yogārūḍha* stage, their *naiṣkarmya* (reaction-free or desireless action) attains perfection in the highest sense.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining how one can accept the positive aspect of *karma* by giving up the defective aspect. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “Those whose intelligence is completely free from attachment to material objects, whose minds are under control, and who do not even desire the happiness of Brahma-loka, achieve the supreme perfection in the form of *naiṣkarmya* by completely renouncing their *karma-niṣṭhā* (adherence to action).”

ŚLOKA 50

सिद्धिं प्राप्तो यथा ब्रह्म तथाप्नोति निबोध मे।
समासेनैव कौन्तेय निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा॥५०॥

*siddhim prāpto yathā brahma / tathāpnoti nibodha me
samāsenaiwa kaunteya / niṣṭhā jñānasya yā parā*

tathā—also; *nibodha*—be informed; *me*—by Me; *samāsenā*—in brief; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *yathā*—how; *prāptah*—one who has attained; *siddhim*—perfection; *eva*—indeed; *āpnoti*—attains; *brahma*—spiritual realisation; *yā*—which; (is) *parā*—the highest; *niṣṭhā*—stage of steadiness; *jñānasya*—in transcendental knowledge.

Hear from Me in brief, O Kaunteya, the means by which a person who has achieved perfection in the form of *naiṣkarmaṇya* attains *brahma*, which is the highest culmination of *jñāna*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“And now, hear from Me how he then attains and realises *brahma*.” *Niṣṭhā parā* refers to complete cessation of ignorance through the practice of various types of *yoga*. According to the *Amara-koṣa* dictionary, *niṣṭhā* means completion, destruction or end. “Understand how, when ignorance subsides, *jñāna* is progressively superseded by *vijñāna*. Then finally, when *jñāna* is entirely relinquished, *brahma* will be realised.”

SLOKAS 51-53

बुद्ध्या विशुद्धया युक्तो धृत्यात्मानं नियम्य च।
शब्दादीन् विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युदस्य च॥५१॥
विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाङ्कायमानसः।
ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समुपाश्रितः॥५२॥
अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम्।
विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते॥५३॥

buddhyā viśuddhayā yukto / dhṛtyātmānam niyamy ca
śabdādīn viṣayāṁs tyaktvā / rāga-dveṣau vyudasya ca

vivikta-sevī laghv-āśī / yata-vāk-kāya-mānasaḥ
 dhyāna-yoga-paro nityam / vairāgyam samupāśritaḥ
 ahaṅkāram balam darpam / kāmam krodham parigraham
 vimucya nirmamah śānto / brahma-bhūyāya kalpate

yuktaḥ—one engaged (in *bhakti*); *viśuddhayā*—with fully purified; *buddhyā*—intelligence; *ca*—and; *niyamya*—controlling; *ātmānam*—the mind; *dhṛtyā*—with determination; *tyaktvā*—giving up; *viśayān*—sense objects; *śabda-ādīn*—such as sound; *ca*—and; *vyudasya*—putting aside; *rāga-dveṣau*—attachment and aversion; *vivikta-sevī*—resorting to solitary places; *laghu-āśī*—eating lightly; *yata*—controlling; *kāya*—body; *mānasaḥ*—mind; *vāk*—and speech; *parah*—being absorbed; *dhyāna-yoga*—in contemplative *yoga*; *nityam*—always; *samupāśritaḥ*—taking shelter; *vairāgyam*—of the philosophy and principles of renunciation; *vimucya*—being freed from; *ahaṅkāram*—false ego; *balam*—false (physical) strength; *darpam*—arrogance; *kāmam*—desire; *krodham*—anger; *parigraham*—unnecessary accumulation of possessions; (being) *nirmamah*—free from possessiveness; (and) *śāntaḥ*—peaceful; *kalpate*—is eligible; *brahma-bhūyāya*—for *brahma* realisation.

Being blessed with pure intelligence, controlling the mind with forbearance, relinquishing the objects of sense enjoyment such as sound, being freed from attachment and aversion, living in a sanctified solitary place, eating little, controlling the body, mind and speech, constantly taking shelter of *yoga* by meditation on Bhagavān, being completely detached and free from false ego, false attachment, arrogance, desire, anger, and unnecessary accumulation of possessions, being free from the notion of ‘mine’, and situated peacefully, such people are qualified to realise *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Those who are able to control their mind with *sāttvika* intelligence and *sāttvika* forbearance, and who take shelter of the supreme *yoga*, becoming situated in meditation upon Śrī Bhagavān, become qualified to realise *brahma*. Here, the word *bala* does not mean strength or ability, but attachment to *kāma*, material desires. After giving up the false ego and material desires, they become qualified to realise *brahma*. This is called cessation of ignorance. In such a state, even *sattva-guṇa* becomes quiet and subdued. This alone is called renunciation of *jñāna*. It is also stated in the Eleventh Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam: “Renounce even *jñāna* in Me.” One cannot realise *brahma* without renouncing both *ajñāna* and *jñāna*. *Brahma-bhūyāya kalpate* means to become capable of realizing *brahma*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

A *sādhaka*’s heart becomes purified by offering Bhagavān the results of one’s *sāttvika* actions which are born of one’s nature. By subduing their senses, such *sādhakas* remain fixed in a state of trance. Their senses are satisfied because they are detached from sense objects. This dispels all mundane attachments and aversions. In such a state, they become free from the false ego of considering the body to be the self. They do not seek material happiness, nor are they ever overpowered by lamentation. They are constantly equipoised. In this state, which is called *brahma-bhūta*, they even give up the subtle body and become situated in the *ātma-svarūpa*, the true self.

ŚLOKA 54

ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न का ति।
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्वकिं लभते पराम्॥५४॥

*brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā / na śocati na kāṅkṣati
samāḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu / mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām*

brahma-bhūtaḥ—one who is spiritually realised; (*is*) *prasanna-*
ātmā—a fully joyful soul; *na śocati*—he never laments; *na*—nor;
kāṅkṣati—hankers; *samāḥ*—he is equal; *sarveṣu*—to all;
bhūteṣu—beings; *labhate*—he attains; *mad-bhaktiṁ*—My *bhakti*;
parām—which is blessed with the symptoms of *prema*.

A person thus situated in *brahma* becomes fully joyful. He never laments or desires anything. Being equally disposed to all beings, he attains *bhakti* to Me which is blessed with the symptoms of *prema*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ

“A *sādhaka-jīva* attains the nature of *brahma* (*brahma-bhūta*) when he becomes free from the impure designations of *sattva-guṇa*, *rajo-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa*. That means he attains a state of pure consciousness, free from any covering, and thus becomes *prasannātmā* (fully joyful). Having achieved this higher state, he neither laments for what he has lost, nor hankers for what he does not have. In such a state, he is free from the false ego of considering the body to be the self. *Sarveṣu bhūteṣu* means in all beings, good or bad. *Samāḥ* means that he develops equal vision like that of a child, thereby becoming free from any external identification. His desire for *jñāna* becomes satiated, just like a fire that has been extinguished due to lack of fuel. He then attains My imperishable *bhakti* in the form of *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam* (which is vested in *jñāna*). *Bhakti* is a function of My *svarūpa-śakti* and even continues to exist when *ajñāna* and *jñāna* cease, because it is separate from My illusory potency. Therefore, the word *parām* means separate, or superior to *jñāna*. In other words, *parām* means *kevala-bhakti*, which is devoid of

niṣkāma-karma, jñāna, etc. The word *labhate* means that previously, *bhakti*, which was partially situated in *jñāna* and *vairāgya* and practised for the purpose of achieving *mokṣa*, was not intelligibly realised, just as *Antaryāmī*, situated in all beings, cannot be realised very easily. Therefore, the word *labhate* (obtain) has been used instead of the word *kurute* (does). A golden gem which has become mixed with grains such as *mūng* or *urad dāl* can be retrieved even when the grains are destroyed by grinding. This is because the gem is comparatively imperishable. In the same way, *bhakti*, which is partially situated in *jñāna* and *vairāgya*, can be achieved independently when *jñāna* and *vairāgya* are dispelled. This is the most opportune time to attain pure *prema-bhakti*. The result of such *bhakti* is never *sāyujya-mukti*. Therefore, the word *parām* here must mean *prema-lakṣaṇā bhakti*, or *bhakti* endowed with the symptoms of *prema*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Parā bhakti is necessary to understand *parabrahma* Śrī Kṛṣṇa, even after one has attained the state of *brahma-bhūta*. This is explained in the present *śloka*. Various commentators give different explanations of the word *brahma-bhūta* which convey almost the same meaning. Only a *jīva* who is free from all the material *guṇas* and situated on the platform of *brahma* is called *brahma-bhūta*. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes that

brahma-bhūta is the pure state of transcendental nature attained by a *jīva* when he has become free from all gross and subtle designations. This refutes the understanding that *brahma-bhūta* means to lose one's existence completely by merging into and becoming one with *brahma*. Śrīla Śridhara Svāmī, Śrī Rāmānujācārya, Śrī Madhvācārya, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Baladeva

Vidyābhūṣaṇa and others have unanimously refuted the above opinion which is against *siddhānta*.

The *kevalā advaita-vādīs* (impersonalists) say that the following four statements are the supreme axioms of the *Vedas*: *aham brahmāsmi* (I am *brahma*); *tattvam asi* (You are that); *sarvam khalv idam brahma* (Indeed everything is *brahma*); and *prajñānam brahma* (Real knowledge is *brahma* realisation). They attempt to establish *māyāvāda* philosophy by erroneously interpreting these statements, but they are simply cheating the common people by such deceptive propaganda. The above four statements of the *Vedas* are actually only peripheral statements. *Om* alone is the supreme statement and it is the *svarūpa* of *brahma*. *Tattvam asi* actually means, ‘You belong to Him,’ or ‘you are His servant.’ This was also clarified earlier. The *māyāvādīs*, however, explain it to mean, ‘You are also that (Him).’ This explanation is completely distorted and misleading. Also, in regard to the statement *aham brahmāsmi*, the *jīva* is designated as *brahma* simply because he has some qualitative similarity with *brahma*. Because the *jīva* is the separated part of *brahma*, he is also *cit-svarūpa* (conscious by nature), but he can be controlled by *māyā* because he is only a separated part. *Parabrahma*, however, is the controller of *māyā*. The *jīva* is atomic and *parabrahma* is an infinite entity, therefore, these two can never become one.

The entire creation containing both conscious and inert energies has manifested from *parabrahma*. Inert matter and consciousness are the transformations of *brahma*’s potency, and are partially one with Him; they are not completely one with Him. A person can thus understand the true import of the *Vedas* only after he first considers the precise meaning of each and every *Upaniṣad mantra* individually, after which he deliberates upon them collectively to comprehend their

meaning as a whole. If a person unnecessarily speculates and interprets the peripheral statements of the *Vedas*, he will only arrive at false conclusions. One must, therefore, properly understand Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's definitive instructions on *acintya-bheda-abheda-tattva* in order to avoid any misinterpretation.

There are abundant *mantras* in the *Vedas* which establish the difference between the *jīva* and *brahma*. Some of those *mantras* are cited below:

1) *pradhāna-kṣetra-jñā-patir guṇeśah* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.16). “He is the controller of the *guṇas* and master of the *kṣetra-jñā* living entities.”

2) *tam āhur agryam puruṣam mahāntam* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 3.19). “Sages declare Him to be the foremost and greatest of persons.”

3) *yāthātathyato 'rthān vyadadhāt* (*Īśopaniṣad* 8). “It is He who awards the many *jīvas*' necessities.”

4) *tenedam pūrṇam puruṣena sarvam* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 3.9). “By that Person's arrangement, this universe is complete in every respect.”

5) *nityo nityānām* (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 5.13, *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.13). “He is supreme among all eternal beings.”

It can be clearly understood from the above quotations that the *jīva* can never merge with *brahma* and become one with Him. Therefore, *brahma-bhūta* actually means that the *jīva* becomes situated in his eternal constitutional position. The symptoms of *jīvas* who have achieved the *brahma-bhūta* stage are explained as follows:

a) *prasannātmā*: The first characteristic is that they remain always joyful due to being freed from the effects of the subtle body, which is composed of the three material *guṇas*.

b) *na śocati*: They never lament for that which has been lost.

c) *na kāṅkṣati*: They do not hanker for what they do not have.

d) *samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu*: Like a child, they possess equal vision towards all beings, good or bad.

e) *mad bhaktim parām*: They have an intense desire to attain My *parā bhakti*.

Mahātmās who have attained the *brahma-bhūta* stage, which is endowed with the above mentioned symptoms, in the association of *sādhus*, attain *parā premā bhakti* unto Śrī Bhagavān. It is also appropriate at this point to understand the true meaning of the word *parā bhakti*.

*anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśilanam bhaktir uttamā*

Uttamā-bhakti means the cultivation of activities which are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa or, in other words, the uninterrupted flow of service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed in all endeavours of the body, mind and speech and through the expression of various spiritual sentiments (*bhāvas*), which is not covered by *jñāna*, knowledge of oneness with *brahma* or *nitya* and *naimittika-karma*, *yoga*, *tapasyā* and so forth, and which is devoid of all desires other than the aspiration to bring happiness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

This *uttamā-bhakti* is certainly the very essence of all *śāstras*. Famous *kevalā advaita-vādī* commentators, such as Ācārya Śaṅkara, Ānandagiri and Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, have stated in their commentaries on this present *śloka* that *parā bhakti* is *bhakti* characterised by *jñāna*. But it is worth noting that the *parā bhakti* described in this *śloka* is only achieved after attaining the *brahma-bhūta* stage. In other words, it is achieved by a person who has become situated on the *brahma-bhūta* platform. *Parā bhakti* is therefore superior even to the *brahma-bhūta* state. It can be easily

understood that it does not refer to *bhakti* which is mixed with *jñāna* and aimed at achieving *brahma-jñāna*. A person still needs to acquire *tattva-jñāna* of *parabrahma* Śrī Kṛṣṇa, even after he has attained *brahma-jñāna*. Thus, a *brahma-jñānī* will achieve *tattva-jñāna* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa if he has the good fortune to perform *parā bhakti* in the association of *bhaktas*. It should be clearly understood here that there is a difference between the *parā bhakti*, which gives knowledge of *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, and the *bhakti* which is used to achieve *brahma-jñāna*. The word *parā* has been used to clarify this point. There is a confidential meaning also behind the use of the word *labhate* (obtains), instead of the word *kurute* (does). There is a possibility of achieving *parā bhakti* only when a person has realised the insignificance and inferior nature of the *brahma-jñāna* attained by a *brahma-jñānī*. This takes place by the causeless mercy of Bhagavān or His *bhaktas*. The word *labhate* has therefore been used because *parā bhakti* is achieved only by the mercy of Bhagavān or His *bhaktas*. The word *kurute* (does or makes) would have been used if it were achievable by one's own endeavour; but Śrī Bhagavān has not used the word *kurute*. This observation clarifies that the word *parā bhakti* only aims at *śuddhā*, *kevalā* or *ananya-bhakti* and not at *jñāna-miśra-bhakti*.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said that even this *brahma-bhūta* stage is external, because one who is situated in that stage cannot realise or attain Goloka or Vaikuṇṭha although he has become free from the *guṇas*. Goloka or Vaikuṇṭha can only be realised when one acquires *parā bhakti*. Therefore, the *brahma-bhūta* platform is not the highest step. Rather, it is the initial stage in the process of acquiring that supreme level.

Here it should also be understood that those who acquire the *brahma-bhūta* stage are of two types. The first type endeavour for *sāyujya-mukti*, even after they have attained

the *brahma-bhūta* stage. They disregard the *bhaktas* of Bhagavān and Śrī Bhagavān's *nāma*, *rūpa*, *guṇa* and *līlā* and do not listen to *hari-kathā*. They are offenders and never achieve *mukti* but continue to wander in the bodies of *āsurika* species in this material world. The second type respect the *bhaktas* as well as Bhagavān's *nāma*, *rūpa*, *guṇa* and *līlā*. Taking shelter of the *bhaktas*, they easily achieve *parā bhakti* due to their non-offensive attitude.

SLOKA 55

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान् यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः।
ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशेषे तदनन्तरम्॥५५॥

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

bhaktyā—through *bhakti*; *abhijānāti*—one can fully know; *mām*—Me; *tattvataḥ*—in truth; *yāvān*—how great My opulence is; *ca* *yah asmi*—and what My *svarūpa* (original form) is; *tataḥ*—then; *jñātvā*—having understood; *tattvataḥ*—in truth; *tat-anantaram*—after that; *viśate*—one can enter; *mām*—Me (*My nitya-līlā*).

It is only by *bhakti* that he can know the *tattva* of My glories and *svarūpa*. He then enters My eternal pastimes through that *tattva* on the strength of *premā bhakti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

“What is the result of attaining *bhakti* to You?” Śrī Bhagavān answers this with the *śloka* beginning with *bhaktyā*. “*Jñānis* and various types of *bhaktas* who have attained *bhakti* understand the *tattva* of My opulences and *svarūpa* (*tat-padārtha*), and thus enter My *nitya-līlā*. As I have also said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.21): ‘I am attainable

only by *kevala-bhakti*.' Thus, the *vidyā* of the *jñānīs* can cease on the strength of that *bhakti* alone. They can enter into Me and realise the bliss of *sāyujya* when they come to know Me in *tattva*. Because I am beyond *māyā* and since *avidyā* is *māyā*, I am known only by *vidyā*."

The five divisions of *vidyā* are stated in the *Nāradapañcarātra*. They are: *jñāna*, *yoga*, *vairāgya*, *tapa* and *bhakti* to Keśava. *Bhakti* is a special function of *vidyā*. Furthermore, only a portion of *bhakti*, which is a function of Śrī Bhagavān's *hlādini-śakti*, enters into *vidyā* to enable its success. Sometimes, a portion of *bhakti* enters *karma* to facilitate the success of *karma-yoga*. The practice of *karma*, *yoga* and *jñāna*, etc. is simply unnecessary labour without *bhakti*, and does not bear fruit. In truth, *bhakti* is *nirguṇa*, so it cannot manifest from *vidyā*, which is in *sattva-guṇa*. Ignorance is removed by *vidyā*, whereas Śrī Bhagavān (*tat-padārtha*) is known by *bhakti*. Furthermore, it is said in *Gītā* (14.17): "Jñāna arises from *sattva-guṇa*." Therefore, the *jñāna* which comes from *sattva-guṇa* is also in *sattva-guṇa*. *Vidyā* refers to *sattva-jñāna*, but the *jñāna* arising from *bhakti* is *bhakti* Herself. That *bhakti* is denoted in some places by the word *bhakti*, and in other places by the word *jñāna*. In this way, it is necessary to understand that *jñāna* is also of two types.

One achieves *brahma-sāyujya* only after giving up the first type of *jñāna* which manifests from *sattva-guṇa*, and adopting the second type of *jñāna* arising from *bhakti*. This can be clearly seen in the Eleventh Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Chapter Twenty-Five. Some people, who are bereft of *bhakti*, try to attain *sāyujya* through *jñāna*. Such persons, who are proud of their *jñāna*, unfortunately only become distressed and are condemned. There are those who understand that *mukti* cannot be achieved solely through *jñāna*. Thus they engage in some practices of *bhakti* with their *jñāna* (*jñāna*

miśra-bhakti). Such persons think that the existence of Bhagavān is material and temporary, and that His body consists of the material *guṇas*. Even after attaining the platform of *yoga* called *yogārūḍha*, such persons, who falsely think that they are liberated, are only worthy of being condemned. As it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.2): “According to their respective *guṇas*, the four āśramas along with the four *varnas*, originated separately from the mouth, arms, thighs, and feet of the *puruṣa*, Bhagavān. Those who disrespect this self-born *puruṣa*, Bhagavān Himself, and do not render service to Him, fall from their position.” This means that those who do not perform *bhajana* to Him as well as those who disrespect Him, even while worshipping Him, fall down after losing their *vidyā*, even though they are *sannyāsīs*. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam also states (10.2.32):

ye ‘nye aravindākṣa vimukta-māninas
tvayy asta-bhāvād aviśuddha-buddhayāḥ
āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ
patanty adho ‘nādṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayāḥ

O Kamala-nayana (lotus-eyed Lord)! One who is falsely proud of being liberated, and does not perform *bhakti* to You due to his polluted intelligence, falls down because he disrespects Your lotus feet, even after he has taken great trouble to attain the highest position of renunciation.

The word *anye* in the above Bhāgavatam *śloka* refers to a person other than a *bhakta* of Śrī Mādhava, and the word *aṅghri* refers to *bhakti*. To disrespect Śrī Bhagavān’s lotus feet, therefore, means to disrespect *bhakti*.

Anādṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayāḥ means that it is disrespectful to consider that Śrī Bhagavān’s body is composed of the three *guṇas*. This was also stated earlier in Gītā (9.11): “Foolish people deride Me when I appear in My human form.” In

reality, that human form is *sac-cid-ānanda-maya*, composed of eternity, knowledge and bliss. Only by the influence of Śrī Bhagavān's inconceivable *kṛpā śakti* does that body become visible. It is said in *Nārāyaṇa-ādhyātma-vacana*, "Although the *svarūpa* of Śrī Bhagavān is ever unmanifest, He becomes visible only by the influence of His own *śakti*. Who can see His supremely blissful *svarūpa* without the help of that potency?" Thus, the *sac-cid-ānanda* nature of Bhagavān's body is established.

Even though hundreds of *śruti* and *smṛti* statements such as *kliptam sac-cid-ānanda-vigraham śrī vṛndāvana surabhīruha-talāśinam*, "The Lord is described as He who has a transcendental form of eternity, cognisance and bliss, and is seated at the base of a desire-tree" (*Gopāla-tāpini Upaniṣad*), and *śābdam brahma dadhad vapuh*, "The Lord displayed His transcendental form, which can only be understood through the Vedas." *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.21.8) further establishes the *sac-cid-ānanda* nature of Bhagavān's body, still some conclude that His name, form, qualities, etc., are materially designated on the basis of one solitary statement in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (4.10): *māyām tu prakṛtim vidyān māyinam tu maheśvaram*. "The phenomema of material nature is *māyā* (a temporary illusion), and Parameśvara is *mayī*, made up of *māyā*." However, there is a *śruti* statement quoted in *Śrī Madhva-bhāṣya*, *ato māyāmayaṁ viṣṇum pravadanti sanātanam*, "Therefore, they declare Śrī Viṣṇu, the eternal supreme Lord to be *māyāmaya*, constituted of *māyā*." According to this statement, Bhagavān is eternally endowed with an internal potency called *svarūpa-bhūta-māyā*, which is part of His own *svarūpa*. In the word *māyām tu*, in this *śloka* from *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, *māyā* refers to His *svarūpa-bhūta*, *cit* or conscious potency, which originates from His *svarūpa*. It does not refer to the material energy

consisting of the *guṇas*, which is not part of His *svarūpa*. However, they do not accept this meaning. They do not even accept the interpretation that *māyā* is the *prakṛti* and Maheśvara or Śambhu Śiva is the master of that *māyā*. Therefore, they fall down due to their offensive attitude to Bhagavān, even after attaining the state of *jīvan mukta*, liberation while living within this material body. It is also said in the supplementary statement of *Vāsanā-bhāṣya*, that even a person who is *jīvan mukta* becomes entrenched in material lusty desires and again has to enter *samsāra* if he somehow offends the inconceivable, supremely powerful Bhagavān. When he has attained the result of his practice, he thinks that the means are of no further use; hence he falls down. Therefore, in the stage of *jñāna-sannyāsa*, he abandons not only *jñāna*, but *guṇibhūtā bhakti* (*bhakti* which is present in *jñāna* to some degree). Thus he maintains the false conception that he is experiencing direct realisation of *brahma*. Because he commits offenses to the *śrī-vigraha* of Bhagavān, *bhakti* also disappears along with *jñāna*, and he is not able to attain *bhakti* again. Without *bhakti*, the Supreme Absolute Truth cannot be realised. It should be understood that the meditation such a person performs at that time is useless, and his pride in being *jīvan mukta*, liberated while in this body, should also be recognised as baseless.

Supporting this view, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.2.32) states: *ye 'nye aravindakṣa vimukta-māninah*. “There are two types of *jīvan muktas* who properly engage in the practice of *bhakti-miśra-jñāna* (*jñāna* mixed with *bhakti*). Both of them recognise the *śrī-mūrti* of Bhagavān to be *sac-cid-ānanda-mayī*, and they achieve *parā bhakti* after gradually giving up *vidyā* and *avidyā*. The first perform *bhakti* with the aim of attaining *sāyujya*, becoming one with Him. With the assistance of this *bhakti*, they achieve *tat-padārtha*, direct realisation of the Supreme Absolute Truth, thus attaining oneness with Him. Those individuals are worthy of honour. In

the second group are highly fortunate persons who give up the desire for *mukti* and remain absorbed in tasting the sweetness of *bhakti-rasa* by the influence of the association of calm and composed *mahā-bhāgavatas* like Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Such personalities are to be most highly honoured. As it is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.7.10): “The qualities of Śrī Hari are so wonderful that even the great *munis* who are ātmārāma, and who have completely cut the knot of *avidyā*, are attracted by His attracting potency. Hence, they perform selfless *bhakti* to Urukrama Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who performs wonderful feats.”

Therefore, out of these four types of *jñānīs*, the first two are worthy of reproach and they remain bound, while the other two are respectable and cross beyond the material world.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

In the present *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the result of *parā bhakti* (*kevala-bhakti* characterised by *prema*). By some good fortune, by the mercy of a great personality, a person who has achieved the stage of *brahma-bhūta* attains *parā bhakti*. At that time, he loses his desire for *mokṣa*. Having become free from *jñāna*, he achieves *nirguṇā bhakti* and realises *kṛṣṇa-tattva*. This takes place when he realises his *svarūpa-siddhi*. Then, at the time of attaining *vastu-siddhi*, he enters into the pastimes of Bhagavān. It is stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.7.10):

ātmārāmāś ca munayo / nirgranthā apy urukrame
kurvanty ahaitukīm bhaktim/ ittham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ

Those ātmārāmas who are very fortunate can become attracted by the qualities of Śrī Bhagavān if they receive the causeless mercy of Śrī Bhagavān and His *bhaktas*. They can then become absorbed in relishing the sweetness of *bhakti-rasa* by engaging in *ahaituki bhakti* to Him.

The examples are the four Kumāras, who received the mercy of Bhagavān, and Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who received the mercy of Śrī Vyāsadeva.

In Gītā ślokas, such as 11.54, 8.14 and 9.22, it is stated that Śrī Bhagavān can only be attained by *bhakti*. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.21) also states: *bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyah*. “Only by pure devotional service am I to be known.” While answering the questions of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Rāya Rāmānanda said that *bhakti* which is free from *jñāna*, is the essence of all perfection. But Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu did not even accept this as the highest goal of life, and requested him to explain further. At this point, Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda prabhu presented a *Bhāgavatam* śloka as evidence: *jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā*. This śloka states that not all perfected and liberated persons can realise *kṛṣṇa-tattva*. This has been discussed in the ślokas, *manuṣyāṇāṁ sahasreṣु*, “Only an extremely rare person comes to know Me in truth” (Gītā 7.3), *muktānām api siddhānām*, “Among millions of liberated souls, only one knows Me in truth” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam: 6.14.5), and *koṭi-mukta-madhye ‘durlabha’ eka kṛṣṇa-bhakta*, “Among millions of souls who are actually liberated, it is very difficult to find one who is My pure *bhakta*” (Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 19.148).

Śāstras such as the śrutis, smṛtis, Vedānta-sūtra, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and the Gītā give numerous proofs to show that even after a *jīva* has achieved *mukti*, he can become situated in his own pure constitutional *svarūpa* and taste the bliss of service to Śrī Bhagavān. In Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī’s Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam commentary called Dhṛta-sarvajña-bhāṣya-kāra, he has commented on śloka 10.87.21 as follows: *muktā api līlāvī graham kṛtvā bhagavantāṁ bhajante*. “Even the liberated beings constantly render voluntary service to Bhagavān with their transcendental (*aprākṛta*) bodies.” In

the śrutis, we find references such as *āprāyaṇāt tatrāpi hi ḍṛṣṭam*, “What one does throughout one’s life is evident at the time of death” (*Brahma-sūtra* 4.1.12), and *mokṣe ca bhaktir anuvarttate*, that describe the presence of *bhakti*, even in the state of *mokṣa*.

Viśate tad anantaram (*Gītā* 18.55) has a deeper, more confidential meaning. Having known and realised Bhagavān, one does not enter into Him and become one with Him, but rather one enters into His *līlā*. For example, when a person enters a city, or a bird enters its nest, it does not mean that the person becomes the city, or that the bird becomes the nest. The actual meaning is that they enjoy great happiness in meeting with their family members. The *nirviśeṣa-vādīs* normally use the example of rivers flowing into the ocean to express the oneness of the *jīva* with *brahma*. They say that, just as the rivers lose their name and form when they merge into the ocean (having given up their separate existence), in the same way, the *jīva* merges with *brahma* and becomes one with Him. However, the *saviśeṣa-vādī bhaktas* say that, even after *mukti*, a pure *jīva* maintains his own individual existence, just as the aquatics living in the ocean have their separate existence from the ocean. Living beings live happily in the ocean with their family members. To know the ocean, mere knowledge of the ocean’s surface is not adequate. It is necessary also to know the various aquatics that live deep down in the ocean, as well as the pearls, jewels and various types of useful mines there. Similarly, to know Svayaṁ Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as He who is complete with six opulences and full of *bhakti-rasa*, is to know Him in *tattva* and in full. Only when a *sādhaka* or *bhāva-bhakta* has attained this knowledge can he then enter into the *līlā* of Bhagavān in his state of *vastu-siddhi* and taste the bliss of rendering *sevā* to Him.

If one deeply deliberates on the statements of *śāstra*, it becomes clear that one cannot attain *mukti* merely by *jñāna*, without the help of *bhakti*: *śreyah sṛtīm bhaktim udasya*, “I can be attained by *bhakti* alone, not by speculative knowledge” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.14.4). The *jñānīs* are of two types: the *kevala-jñānī* (who cultivates *jñāna* only) and the *bhakti-miśra-jñānī* (who mixes *bhakti* with his cultivation of *jñāna*).

Bhakti-miśra-jñānīs are also of two types: those who consider the form of Bhagavān as illusory, and those who accept the form of Bhagavān as *sac-cid-ānanda*. The first category of *jñānīs* do not become *mukta* (liberated) because of their offence at the lotus feet of Bhagavān. They only maintain a false ego of being liberated. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.32) makes the following statement about such *jñānīs* who are falsely proud and think that they are liberated:

ye ‘nye aravindākṣa vimukta-māninas
tvayy astabhāvād aviśuddha buddhayāḥ
āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ
patanty adho anādṛta yuṣmad-aṅghrayāḥ

O Kamala-locana (lotus-eyed Bhagavān)! He who has cultivated *jñāna* and who is falsely proud calls himself liberated. It should be understood that he possesses a polluted intelligence because he has no conception that *bhakti* is an eternal activity. In his cultivation of *jñāna*, he has given up material objects (*atāt*) through the process of negation and only reaches a supreme position near *tat*, the Absolute Reality, where he remains stagnant. However, because he has failed to attain the shelter of Your lotus feet, he eventually falls down.

Gītā (9.12) also states:

moghāśā mogha-karmāṇo / mogha-jñānā vicetasāḥ
rākṣasīm āsurīm caiva / prakṛtiṁ mohinīm śritāḥ

With frustrated hopes, futile actions, ineffectual knowledge and a distracted mind, he only takes shelter of an illusory, *tāmasika* and *āsurika* nature.

The second type of *jñānī* who follows the path of *bhakti-miśra-jñāna* accepts the *śrī-mūrti* of Bhagavān as *sac-cid-ānanda-mayī*. Such a *jñānī* attains *sāyujya-mukti* after his *vidyā* and *avidyā* has been removed, but he does not attain *parā bhakti*. Some of these *jñānīs* have the good fortune to receive the mercy of a *mahā-puruṣa*. They are able to give up the desire for *mukti*, and thus attain *parā bhakti*. The following *Bhāgavatam* śloka (1.7.10) is spoken in reference to such *ātmārāmas* (self-satisfied *jñānīs*).

*ātmārāmāś ca munayo / nirgranthā apy urukrame
kurvanty ahaitukīṁ bhaktim / itthambhūta guṇo hariḥ*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa has such an attractive potency that even the *ātmārāma-munis* who have completely cut the knot of *avidyā* become attracted to Him and start performing *ahaitukī-bhakti* to Urukrama, the performer of wonderful activities. What to speak, then, of a person absorbed in attraction to mundane matter?

All of the above ślokas that have been cited clarify this subject.

ŚLOKA 56

**सर्वकर्मण्यपि सदा कुर्वणो मद्व्यपाश्रयः।
मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम्॥५६॥**

*sarva-karmāṇy api sadā / kurvāṇo mad-vyapāśrayaḥ
mat-prasādād avāpnoti / śāśvatam padam avyayam*

mat-vyapāśrayaḥ—one who always takes shelter of Me; *avāpnoti*—attains; *śāśvatam*—the eternal; (and) *avyayam*—imperishable; *padam*—abode; *mat-prasādāt*—by My grace; *api*—

even though; *sadā*—always; *kurvāṇah*—performing; *sarvakarmāṇi*—all sorts of activities.

One who is My *aikāntika-bhakta* attains the eternal and imperishable Vaikuṇṭha abode by My grace, even though he is always engaged in various types of activities.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“It was explained earlier that a *jñānī* ultimately achieves the result of My *sāyujya* by gradually giving up the results of *karma*. He then gives up the *karma* itself and finally he abandons *jñāna*. But how can My *bhaktas* attain Me? To explain this, Sri Bhagavan is speaking this *śloka* beginning with *sarva*. If even those who are specifically *sakāma*, and who maintain inferior desires can attain the supreme destination by taking shelter of Me, then what to speak of those who are *niṣkāma-bhaktas*? And furthermore, what can be said about the destinations of *ananya-bhaktas* who give up their adherence to *karma*, *yoga*, *jñāna* and the worship of various *devas*, as well as all other material desires and worship Me exclusively, although engaged in all types of *karma*, such as *nitya* and *naimittika*, as well as fruitive or social activities for the maintenance of sons, daughters and so on?”

Here the statement *āśrayate* (takes shelter) means that he performs *sevā* properly and wholeheartedly. The prefix *ān* to the word *śraya* certainly implies the predominance of *sevā*. The word *api* (also) in the phrase *karmāṇi api* indicates the inferiority of *karma*, thereby implying that *karma* is secondary for such people. In other words, these people perform *bhakti* which is mixed with *karma*, not *karma* which is mixed with *bhakti*. This means that they are not excessively engrossed in the *karma* which was described in the first six chapters. The words *śāśvataṁ padam* mean, “They attain My eternal

abodes such as Vaikuṇṭha, Mathurā, Dvārakā and Ayodhyā.” But how will these abodes survive the *mahā-pralaya*, total annihilation? In response to this, Śrī Bhagavān says *avyayam*. “My abodes are not destroyed during the complete annihilation; they remain unaffected. This is possible only by the influence of My inconceivable potency.”

One may raise the following doubt: “On the one hand, a *jñānī* attains *sāyujya* after achieving the state of *naiṣkarmya*, action without reaction. This occurs as a result of his giving up all sense enjoyments, as well as undergoing great pains in the performance of austerities and so forth for many lifetimes. Your *bhaktas*, however, attain Your eternal abode, even though they are engaged in *karma* with material desires. Does this occur merely by taking shelter of You?” In response to this Śrī Bhagavān says, “This takes place by My mercy. Know that the influence of My sweet will is beyond reason.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

This śloka illustrates the speciality of *bhakti* and of a *bhakta*. The heart becomes progressively purified as a result of performing *niṣkāma-karma* as an offering to Bhagavān, and gradually one attains *jñāna*. “Such *jñānis* then become qualified to attain *bhakti* to Me. By My causeless mercy, however, My *aikāntika-bhaktas* can attain My supreme abode in any state, simply by taking shelter of *ananya-bhakti*. My *aikāntika-bhaktas* are not bound by the results of any *karma*, even while performing *nitya* (obligatory), *naimittika* (causal) and *kāmya* (fruitive) activities. By My mercy, they quickly attain My eternal abodes such as Vaikuṇṭha and Goloka.” This indicates the supremely merciful nature of Bhagavān in relation to His *aikāntika-bhaktas*. Bhagavān Himself says in Gītā (9.30): *api cet su-durācāro bhajate mām ananya-bhāk.*

“Even if a man’s conduct is most abominable, if he engages in My *ananya-bhakti*, he should be accepted as a *bhakta*.”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “It has been explained that the confidential path to attain Me is by the Vedic process of first performing *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* by which one attains *jñāna*. *Bhakti* is then attained through that *jñāna*. This is the first of the three processes I am lucidly describing. Now, please listen as I explain how I am attained by the second process, namely worship of Me. It is by My mercy that a person finally attains *nirguṇa-bhakti*, the imperishable and eternal position. This occurs when he takes exclusive shelter of Me, even in an unfavourable manner because of his material desires. He still offers all of his activities to Me however, considering Me to be Īśvara.

SLOKA 57

चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि सन्न्यस्य मत्परः।

बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव॥५७॥

*cetasā sarva-karmāṇi / mayi sannyasya mat-parah
buddhi-yogam upāśritya / mac-cittah satatam bhava*

sannyasya—having renounced; *sarva-karmāṇi*—all activities; *cetasā*—through your mind; *mayi*—unto Me; *mat-parah*—being dedicated to Me; *upāśritya*—taking shelter; *buddhi-yogam*—of the *yoga* of intelligence; *bhava*—be; *satatam*—always; *mat-cittah*—in consciousness of Me.

With your mind free from the false ego of being the doer, wholeheartedly offering Me all your activities, and taking shelter of resolute intelligence filled with dedication to Me, remain always absorbed in full consciousness of Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“So what are You finally ordering me to do? Do you want me to become an *ananya-bhakta*, or a *sakāma-bhakta*, possessing the symptoms You have already described?” Śrī Bhagavān responds to Arjuna’s question as follows: “You will not be able to become the topmost *bhakta*, nor should you become the inferior type of *sakāma-bhakta*. Rather, you should become a *madhyama-bhakta* (a *bhakta* situated in the intermediate stage).” Śrī Bhagavān speaks this śloka beginning with the word *cetasā* to give this instruction. Sarvakarmāṇi indicates, “You should become a *niṣkāma-bhakta* by offering all your activites to Me, whether they are related to *āśrama-dharma* or to *varṇa-dharma*. I am the only goal of such *niṣkāma-bhaktas*. I have already explained this in Gītā (9.26), *yat karoṣi*.” The word *buddhi-yogam* means, “You should become constantly absorbed in Me with resolute intelligence. In other words, you should always remember Me while performing work, or in any situation.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here, Arjuna wants to clearly understand the obligations of a *bhakta* whose *adhibhāra* is to practise *bhakti* on the intermediate level, between that of the *aikāntika-bhakta* who has attained *parā bhakti*, and the inferior *sakāma-bhakta*. Understanding Arjuna’s inner feeling, Śrī Kṛṣṇa now instructs the devotee who has a similar *adhibhāra*. “Such a person should give up the false ego of being the doer and the enjoyer of all actions, and offer all that *karma* to Me, remembering Me always.” This was also stated earlier: *yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi*. It is noteworthy, however, that the activity itself should be performed as an offering, not that the results alone be offered after the action is performed. Influenced by *sādhu-saṅga*, such a person finally attains *parā bhakti* by acting in this way.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “I have already explained that *brahma*, *Paramātmā* and *Bhagavān* are My three manifestations. Through *buddhi-yoga*, fix your *citta* (thoughts) on My manifestation of *Paramātmā*, and with your mind, offer all your works to Me. In this way, become devoted to Me.”

ŚLOKA 58

**मच्चितः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात्तरिष्यसि।
अथ चेत्वमहङ्कारात्र श्रोष्यसि विनश्यसि॥५८॥**

*mac-cittah sarva-durgāṇi / mat-prasādāt tariṣyasi
atha cet tvam ahaṅkārāt / na śroṣyasi vinaṅkṣyasi*

mat-cittah—fixing your mind on Me; *mat-prasādāt*—by My grace; *tariṣyasi*—you will cross over; *sarva-durgāṇi*—all obstacles; *atha cet*—if however; *ahaṅkārāt*—out of egoism; *tvam*—you; *na śroṣyasi*—do not listen; *vinaṅkṣyasi*—you will be lost.

By constantly remembering Me with wholehearted devotion, you will, by My grace, cross over all obstacles. But if, out of false ego, you neglect My instructions, you will be ruined.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“What would occur as a consequence of that?” In response, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks this *śloka* beginning with the word *mac-cittah*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “By fixing your mind upon Me in this way, you will be able to cross over all obstacles which may arise during your lifetime. However, if you do not act in this way, and instead consider

yourself to be the doer, due to the false ego of identifying your self with the body, then you will fall from your immortal svarūpa and incur destruction by remaining in this material world.”

ŚLOKA 59

यदहङ्कारमाश्रित्य न योत्स्य इति मन्यसे।
मिथ्यैव व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति॥५९॥

yadahaṅkāram āśritya / na yotsya iti manyase
mithyaiava vyavasāyas te / prakṛtis tvāṁ niyokṣyati

te—your; *vyavasāyah*—resolution; *yat*—out of which; *manyase*—you are thinking; *iti*—that; *na yotsye*—I shall not fight; *āśritya*—having taken shelter; *ahaṅkāram*—of false ego; *eva*—certainly; (*will be*) *mithyā*—in vain; (*because*) *prakṛtiḥ*—My illusory energy; *niyokṣyati*—will engage; *tvām*—you.

This resolution not to fight is only due to your self-conceited indulgence, and it will only go in vain, for My *māyā* in the form of *rājo-guṇa* will compel you to fight anyway.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

“I am a *kṣatriya* and to fight is my highest duty (*parama-dharma*). However, I do not wish to fight because I am fearful of incurring great sin as a result of killing so many people.” In response to this argument, Śrī Bhagavān reprimands Arjuna by speaking this *śloka* beginning with the words *yadahaṅkāram*. The word *prakṛtiḥ* means *sva-bhāva* or nature. “You are not accepting My instructions now, O Mahā-vīra, but when your formidable natural enthusiasm for fighting manifests, you will make Me laugh by engaging yourself in this battle and killing worshipable personalities like Bhīṣma.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Sādhakas should never misuse their independence and engage in frivolous acts. According to the instructions of Śrī Bhagavān, they should give up the false ego of being the doers and the enjoyers, and perform *karma* as His servants. One should receive this instruction of Bhagavān either from Bhagavān Himself as *caitya-guru* within, or from the *śāstra* spoken by Him. Or, considering the instructions of the *bhaktas* to be non-different from His own instructions, one should perform work only for the purpose of serving Him. However, if one performs work with the conception of being the doer and the enjoyer, which is opposed to the instruction of Bhagavān, one becomes bound to undergo the good and bad results of those actions, life after life.

ŚLOKA 60

स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्धः स्वेन कर्मणा।
कर्तुं नेच्छसि यन्मोहात् करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत्॥६०॥

*svabhāva-jena kaunteya / nibaddhah svena karmaṇā
karttum necchasi yan mohāt / kariṣyasya avaśo 'pi tat*

kaunteya—O son of Kuntī; (*you are*) *nibaddhah*—bound; *karmaṇā*—by your work; *yat*—which; *na icchasi*—you do not wish; *karttum*—to do; *mohāt*—out of delusion; *api*—still; *kariṣyasi*—you will do; *tat*—that; *avaśah*—against your own will; *svena svabhāva-jena*—born of your own nature.

O Kaunteya, that action, which in your present deluded state you now wish to avoid, will nevertheless be forced upon you, because you are bound by the activities born of your own nature.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

This *śloka* further explains the previous one. “Due to *sāṃskāras* (impressions from your past lives), you possess the nature of a *kṣatriya*. You will certainly engage in battle, being compelled by your natural inborn qualities, such as chivalry.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The import of Śrī Bhagavān’s statement in this *śloka* is as follows: “Now, you are not accepting My instructions because you are bewildered; that is why you are not engaging in battle. But when your enthusiasm to fight gains strength, in accordance with your own nature, you will not be able to suppress it. You will be bound to undergo the results of those actions, thinking yourself to be an agent of this battle, a warrior. Therefore, it is beneficial for you to fight in pursuance of My instruction.” According to this injunction, the *sādhakas* who have the same *adhikāra* as Arjuna (as discussed in the previous *ślokas*) should become free from both gross and subtle egos in order to serve Bhagavān. They should also perform activities which are favourable to *bhakti*.

ŚLOKA 61

इश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृदेशे र्जुनं तिष्ठति।
भ्रामयन् सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारुढानि मायया॥६१॥

īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām / hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati
bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni / yantrārūḍhāni māyayā

arjuna—O Arjuna; *īśvaraḥ*—the Lord; *tiṣṭhati*—is situated; *hṛt-deśe*—in the area of the heart; *sarva-bhūtānām*—of all beings; *māyayā*—by His illusory energy; *bhrāmayan*—He is motivated to wander; *sarva-bhūtāni*—all the living beings; *yantra-ārūḍhāni*—who are mounted upon machines.

O Arjuna, Sarvāntaryāmī Paramātmā is situated in the heart of all *jīvas* and is causing them to wander in the cycle of birth and death by His *māyā*, as if they are mounted on a machine.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Śrī Bhagavān is now giving His own conclusion, having explained the opinion of the *svabhāva-vādīs* (those who worship the tendencies born of their natures) in the previous two *ślokas*. Śrī Nārāyaṇa is Antaryāmī, who dwells within all *jīvas*. *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (3.6.3) states that He resides within the earth but the earth does not know Him. The earth is His body and by residing within the earth, He controls and moves it. The *śrutis* also state: “Śrī Nārāyaṇa pervades whatever is seen or heard in this universe, whatever is within or beyond it.” From these Vedic statements, it is established that Īśvara is situated within the heart as Antaryāmī. What does He do there? In response to this, Śrī Bhagavān says, “He makes all the *jīvas* wander within this material world by His *māyā-śakti*, engaging them in various activities.” Just as a puppeteer manoeuvres puppets that are mounted on a platform by a device which controls the threads, similarly, *māyā* controls all the *jīvas* in a particular way. *Yantrārūḍhāni* also means the *jīvas* who are situated in various bodies.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Parameśvara is the Supersoul of the entire moving and non-moving world. He has already stated this earlier in *Gītā* (15.15): *sarvasya cāham hṛdi sanniviṣṭo*. “I am seated within everyone’s heart; all remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness come from Me alone.”

The *śrutis* also say:

eko devah sarva-bhūteṣu gūḍhaḥ

sarva-vyāpī sarva-bhūtāntarātmā
 karmādhyakṣah sarva-bhūtādhivāsaḥ
 sākṣī cetā kevalo nirguṇaś ca
 Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.11

He is omnipresent and omnipotent. Under His control the *jīva*, influenced by *māyā*, is wandering throughout this material world, riding the machine of the subtle and gross body.

Some think that Īśvara controls all beings and prompts their actions. ‘Therefore, all of our good and bad actions are performed by His inspiration.’ They presume that the *jīva* is just like a puppet. Therefore, they think, instead of the *jīva* getting the results of all his good and bad works, Īśvara alone should and, in fact, does receive the results. But such understanding is completely illusory. One should properly appreciate the meaning of the word *yantrārūḍhāni*. Those *jīvas* who are averse to Bhagavān are given a subtle and a gross body by *māyā* according to the impressions of their *karma*, which have accumulated since time immemorial. The *jīva* wanders throughout the cycle of *karma*, riding on the body given to him according to his previous actions. This takes place on the inspiration of Īśvara, under the control of *māyā*. Īśvara does not directly engage the bound *jīvas* in their *karma*. The *baddha-jīva* does not want to give up his independence completely and be controlled by Bhagavān; therefore, he does not receive this good fortune. Thus, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu clearly states in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, (*Madhya-līlā* 20.117):

kṛṣṇa bhūli’ sei jīva anādi-bahirmukha
 ataeva māyā tāre deya saṃsāra-duḥkha

Having forgotten Kṛṣṇa, the *jīva* has been attracted by *māyā* since time immemorial. Thus, *māyā* gives him all kinds of misery in his material existence.

Parameśvara merely acts as a witness to such rebellious *jīvas*,

and through *māyā* He makes them undergo the results of all their good and bad activities. In the case of His *bhaktas*, however, He does not remain indifferent towards them like a witness, but rather He engages them in His service. This is His great mercy.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “I alone am situated in the heart of all *jīvas* as Paramātmā, and Paramātmā is indeed, the controller and master of all *jīvas*. Īśvara gives the *jīvas* the fruit of whatever activities they perform. Just as an object that is situated on a machine rotates, similarly, the *jīvas* continue to wander in the material world, as arranged by the all-controlling quality of Īśvara. According to your previous *karma*, your nature will continue to function by the inspiration of Īśvara.”

ŚLOKA 62

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत।
तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम्॥६२॥

tam eva śaraṇam gaccha / sarva-bhāvena bhārata
tat prasādāt parām śāntim / sthānam prāpsyasi śāśvataṁ

bhārata—O scion of Bhārata; *gaccha śaraṇam*—take shelter; *eva*—exclusively; *tam*—of Him; *sarva-bhāvena*—in every respect; (and) *tat-prasādāt*—by His mercy; *prāpsyasi*—you will attain; *parām śāntim*—transcendental peace; (and) *śāśvataṁ sthānam*—His eternal abode.

O Bhārata, surrender exclusively to that Īśvara in every respect. By His grace, you will attain transcendental peace and the supreme eternal abode.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ

For the purpose of explaining the significance of surrender to Him, Śrī Bhagavān is now speaking this *śloka* beginning with the words *tam eva. Parām* means, “When both *avidyā* and *vidyā* cease, you will attain the eternal abode, *Vaikuṇṭha*.” Some people think that those who worship *Antaryāmī* attain this result. However, the result of those who worship and surrender unto Bhagavān will be explained later. Others constantly think, “My *iṣṭa-deva*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is my only *guru*. He alone will bestow *bhakti-yoga* upon me and offer me beneficial instructions. I surrender unto Him. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself is my *Antaryāmī*; may He alone engage me in His service. I take exclusive shelter of Him.” As Uddhava also says in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.29.6), “O Īśa, even those who are greatly learned, who have acquired a duration of life equivalent to that of Brahmā, and who blissfully remember You, always feel indebted to You. This is because You illuminate the embodied entities with the process of attaining You. You do this externally as *ācārya-guru* and internally as *caitya-guru*.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Here, Śrī Bhagavān instructs Arjuna to fully surrender to *Antaryāmī* who is within everyone. He is the causelessly merciful Parameśvara who was described in the previous *śloka*. Parameśvara is influenced by such one-pointed surrender which pleases Him. By His mercy, one can easily attain supreme transcendental peace and go to His imperishable abodes such as *Vaikuṇṭha* or *Goloka*. Bhagavān manifests Himself in five forms in this world for the welfare of the *jīvas*, according to the service attitude of His *bhaktas*. These five forms are: *arcā-vigraha* (the Deity), *Antaryāmī* (the Supersoul), *vaibhava* (*avatāras* of the Lord), *vyūha* (expansions) and *parā* (Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself).

kṛṣṇa yadi kṛpā kare kono bhāgyavāne
guru-antaryāmī-rūpe sikhāye āpane
Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 22.47

To bestow His mercy upon the *jīvas* who possess the type of *sukṛti* that directs them towards *bhakti*, Bhagavān gives instructions about surrendering to Him, both externally as the spiritual master and internally as the *caitya-guru*.

ŚLOKA 63

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्यादगुह्यतरं मया।
विमृश्यैतदशेषण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु॥६३॥

*iti te jñānam ākhyātam / guhyād guhyataram mayā
vimṛśyaitad aśeṣena / yathecchasi tathā kuru*

iti—thus; *ākhyātam*—has been described; *mayā*—by Me; *te*—to you; *jñānam*—knowledge; *guhyataram*—more confidential; *guhyāt*—than the confidential knowledge; *vimṛśya*—after reflecting; *etat*—on this; *aśeṣena*—completely; *yathā*—as; *icchasi*—you wish; *tathā*—so; *kuru*—do.

Thus, I have instructed you in knowledge which is more confidential than the secret knowledge of *brahma*. Reflect on this knowledge properly, and then act as you wish.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *iti* to conclude the entire *Gītā*. “One can know *karma-yoga*, *asṭāṅga-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga* by this knowledge. That is, it is even more confidential than the secret knowledge of *jñāna-śāstra*. This being the topmost secret, even sages such as Vasiṣṭha, *Veda-vyāsa* and Nārada have not revealed it in *śāstras* composed by them. In other words, their omniscience

is relative and My omniscience is complete. They do not know this *tattva* fully, because it is highly confidential. Since it is highly secret, I do not even instruct it to these exalted sages. After reflecting deeply on My instructions regarding this knowledge, act as you desire, according to your discretion."

In this way, the last set of six chapters have been completed. This *Gītā-śāstra*, consisting of eighteen chapters, is the crest-jewel of all *vidyās* (education). It is comprised of three sets of six chapters and is like a treasure chest that contains the most precious and unrivalled gem, namely that of highly confidential *bhakti*. The first set of six chapters, called *karma-śātkas*, is like the gold-covered lower foundation of this chest. The last set of six chapters, *jñāna-śātka*, is like the gem-studded cover of the chest. *Bhakti*, the set of six chapters situated in between these two *śātkas*, is the most precious wealth within the three worlds. *Bhakti*, which has the power to control and overpower Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is situated within this chest like an excellent, great and beautiful gem. The forthcoming two *ślokas*, the first beginning with the words *man-manā bhava* (18.65-66), which consists of sixty-four syllables, should be considered as the pure maidservant of this *bhakti*, being situated in the upper covering of the chest.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this present *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān is presenting His conclusion to *Bhagavad-gītā*. He says that the *brahma-jñāna* He previously described is confidential; *paramātmā-jñāna* is more confidential and *bhagavat-jñāna* is the most confidential. He will clearly explain this in the following *śloka*. Vrajendranandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa is alone *advaya-jñāna-svarūpa* and the highest limit of *para-tattva*. He has three manifestations: *brahma*, *Paramātmā* and *Bhagavān*. As *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.11) states:

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvam / yaj jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmeti / bhagavān iti śabdyate*

Those who are *tattva-vit* realise that non-dual Absolute Truth in three aspects. *Brahma* only has the characteristic of *cit* or consciousness and is the first realisation (manifestation) of that *tattva*. *Paramātmā*, the extension of that *cit* consciousness, is the second manifestation, and *Bhagavān*, who manifests as *cid-vilāsa-rūpa* (He who performs transcendental amorous pastimes), is the third realisation of that *tattva*. That *tattva* is known by three names in these three states.

These three manifestations of Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa are *brahma*, *Paramātmā* and *Bhagavān*. Of these, realisation of *brahma* (the effulgence emanating from His body) is the perverted reflection of the *cid-āṁśa*, the conscious part of the *para-tattva*. This is called incomplete realisation. *Paramātmā* realisation is a partial realisation of *sat* and *cit*, and *Bhagavān* realisation is the complete realisation of the Absolute in the form of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. Here *brahma-jñāna* is called confidential (*guhya*), *paramātma-jñāna* more confidential (*guhyatara*) and *bhagavat-jñāna* the most confidential (*guhyatama*).

This most confidential *bhagavat-jñāna* also has three divisions: Śrī Kṛṣṇa is complete in Dvārakā, more complete in Mathurā and most complete in Vṛndāvana or Gokula. Arjuna, who is a friend of Kṛṣṇa in His pastimes in Dvārakā, only knows His complete feature.

There are eighteen chapters in the *Gītā* and they are divided into three divisions of six chapters. The first six chapters describe *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* which is offered to *Bhagavān*. The second six chapters describe *bhakti-yoga* and the third six chapters describe *jñāna-yoga*. One should not think that *jñāna-yoga* is the highest and final conclusion just

because it comes at the end. Rather, the hidden meaning is that *bhakti-yoga*, which is situated in between *karma-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga*, gives strength to them both, thus making *karma* and *jñāna* qualified to give their results. *Karma-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga* are useless without the shelter of *bhakti*. In this way, the *Gītā* is like a box, its base is *karma-yoga*, its upper lid is *jñāna-yoga* and the great wealth of *Bhakti-devī* is situated like a precious gem within. In this way, people in general can understand that the first six chapters are confidential, the last six chapters are more confidential and the middle six chapters are the most confidential.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “*Brahma-jñāna*, which was explained to you earlier, is a secret. *Paramātma-jñāna*, which is explained now, is more secret. Reflect on this thoroughly and do as you wish. This means that if you want to achieve *brahma* by taking shelter of *jñāna* through *niṣkāma-karma-yoga* and gradually achieve My *nirguṇa-bhakti*, then perform your actions in this battle as *niṣkāma-karma*. And if you want to surrender to *Paramātmā*, then engage in battle while offering your actions to Īśvara, performing the occupation which is born of your *kṣatriya* nature, as prompted by Him. Then Īśvara, who is My *avatāra*, will gradually bestow *nirguṇa-bhakti* upon you. Whatever your conclusion, understand that to fight is certainly beneficial for you.”

ŚLOKA 64

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः शृणु मे परमं वचः।
इष्टोऽसि मे द्रुढमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम्॥६४॥

*sarva-guhyatamam bhūyah / śr̄ṇu me paramam vacah
iṣṭo 'si me dṛḍham iti / tato vakṣyāmi te hitam*

śṛṇu—hear; *bhūyah*—again; *me*—My; *paramam*—supreme; *vacah*—instruction; *sarva-guhyatamam*—the most confidential of all instructions; *tatah*—therefore; *vakṣyāmi*—I shall speak; *te*—for your; *dṛḍham*—complete; *hitam*—welfare; *iti*—since; *asi*—you are; *iṣṭah*—very dear; *me*—to Me.

Hear once more My supreme instruction, the most confidential of all knowledge. I am speaking this for your highest benefit, because you are very dear to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINI

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw that His dear friend Arjuna had fallen silent while deliberating on the deep and grave meanings of this *Gītā-śāstra*, His heart, which is as soft as butter, melted and He said, “O Arjuna, My dear friend, now I will speak the very essence of all *śāstra* to you in these concluding eight *ślokas*.” If Arjuna asks, “Why will You take further trouble to explain this?” then in answer Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *sarva-guhyatamam*. “I am again giving you the essence of the Ninth Chapter, *rāja vidyā rāja guhyam*, in the *śloka* beginning with the words *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto*. This statement is indeed the supreme statement, for it is the essence of the *Gītā-śāstra*, which is the summum bonum of all *śāstras*. The word *guhyatamam* means that there is nothing more confidential than this to be found anywhere. It is absolute. I am speaking this again for your greatest benefit because You are My very dear friend (*iṣṭo 'si me dṛḍham iti*). Why not? After all, a person does not tell the most confidential secrets to anyone except his dearest friend.” Some versions of the *Gītā* use the phrase *iṣṭo 'si me dṛḍha-matiḥ* instead of *dṛḍham iti*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Śrī Gītā is called an *Upaniṣad*. It is the essence of the *Vedas* and of the *Upaniṣads*. One can only understand its innermost intention by the mercy of Bhagavān and His *bhaktas*. These confidential instructions cannot be understood merely on the strength of one's intelligence, nor through the medium of *karmīs*, *jñānīs*, or non-devotees who consider the form of Bhagavān to be illusory and devoid of potency. Only the exclusive, fully surrendered *bhaktas* of Kṛṣṇa can, by His grace, become aware of these most confidential instructions. This *śloka* is spoken by Śrī Bhagavān for the explicit purpose of explaining this secret.

Arjuna is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's full *aikāntika-bhakta*, and is very dear to Him. He is, therefore, qualified to hear this most confidential instruction. In the same way, only *aikāntika-kṛṣṇa-bhaktas* are capable of comprehending this most secret instruction of the *Gītā*, not others. The *aikāntika-bhaktas* are exclusively surrendered to Kṛṣṇa, knowing Him to be *sac-cid-ānanda-parabrahma*, and are thus actively engaged in following His instructions and directions, being freed from any doubt or controversy.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, "I spoke *guhya* (confidential) *brahma-jñāna* to you, and *guhyatara* (more confidential) *īśvara-jñāna*. Now, I am instructing *guhyatama* (most confidential) *bhagavat-jñāna*. Please listen. This is superior to all the other instructions I have given in this *Gītā-śāstra*. I am imparting it to you for your eternal welfare, because you are very dear to Me."

ŚLOKA 65

मन्मना भव मद्वक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे॥६५॥

*man-manā bhava mad-bhakto / mad-yājī mām namaskuru
mām evaiṣyasi satyam te / pratijāne priyo 'si me*

mat-manāḥ—offer your mind to Me; *bhava*—become; *mat-bhaktah*—My *bhakta* (engaged in hearing and chanting about My *nāma*, *rūpa*, etc.); (become) *mat-yājī*—My worshipper; *namaskuru*—offer your obeisances; *mām*—to Me; *evaiṣyasi*—you shall come; *mām*—to Me; *pratijāne*—I promise; *satyam*—truthfully; *te*—to you; (because) *asi*—you are; *priyah*—dear; *me*—to Me.

Offer your mind to Me; become My *bhakta* by hearing and chanting, etc. about My names, forms, qualities and pastimes; worship Me and offer obeisances to Me. In this way, you will certainly come to Me. I promise you this truthfully because you are very dear to Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“*Man-manā bhava* means that you should meditate on Me by becoming My exclusive *bhakta*. Do not become a *jñānī* or a *yogī* and think of Me as they do. Alternatively, *man-manā bhava* means that you should become like one who has offered his mind to Me, Śyāmasundara, who am showering upon you a sweet, merciful glance from My very beautiful moon-like face that is adorned with exquisite arched eyebrows and soft curly hair. *Mad-bhaktah* means to offer your senses to Me. In other words, perform *bhajana* to Me by engaging all your senses in My *sevā*, that is, by performing *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam*, seeing My *śrī-mūrti*, cleansing and decorating My temple, collecting flowers and making garlands, decorating Me with ornaments, offering Me an umbrella, *cāmara* and performing other services. *Mad-yājī* means to worship Me and offer articles such as

fragrant flowers, incense, a ghee lamp and *bhoga*. Mām *namaskuru* means offering *dandavat pranāmas*, falling down on the ground and offering obeisances with either eight or five limbs of your body. Mām evaiṣyasi means you will surely achieve Me by performing the four activities of thinking, serving, worshipping and offering obeisances, or by performing even one of them. Offer your mind to Me, and all your senses, such as the ear and tongue, and in return I will give Myself to you. This is the truth; do not doubt it.” According to the *Amara-koṣa* Dictionary, the words *satya* (truth), *śapatha* (vow) and *tathya* (fact) are synonymous. If Arjuna says, “The people of Mathurā take vows at every step (but in fact are unable to maintain them), so how can I have faith in Your vow since You are Mathureśa Kṛṣṇa?” then in response Śrī Bhagavān says, “This is true, but I am making this promise because you are very dear to Me. A person does not deceive those who are dear to him.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Man-manā bhava means to absorb one’s mind in Kṛṣṇa exclusively. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has accepted the *gopīs* as the highest ideal of *man-manā bhava* devotees and expresses this to Uddhava in sweet words (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.46.4-6):

tā man-manaskā mat-prāṇā / mad-arthe tyakta-daihikāḥ
 mām eva dayitām preṣṭham / ātmānam manasā gatāḥ
 ye tyakta-loka-dharmāś ca / mad-arthe tān bibharmy aham
 mayi tāḥ preyasām preṣṭhe / dūra-sthe gokula-striyāḥ
 smarantyo ’ṅga vimuhyanti / virahautkanṭhyā-vihvalāḥ
 dhārayanty ati-kṛcchreṇa / prāyah prāṇān kathañcana
 pratyāgamana-sandeśair / ballavyo me mad-ātmikāḥ

Dear Uddhava, the minds of the *gopīs* are always absorbed in Me. I am their very life and their all-in-all. It is for My sake alone that they have relinquished everything, including their homes, husbands, sons, relatives, shyness, *dharmika* principles and so forth. They constantly remain absorbed in thoughts of Me alone. It is by their trust in My statement, ‘I will come,’ that they are maintaining their lives somehow or other, with great difficulty, and are waiting for Me.

This description of the *gopīs* who are feeling anxiety in separation from Kṛṣṇa is the highest example of *man-manā bhava*. Now hear about a *gopi*’s absorption in Kṛṣṇa while she was in *pūrva-rāga*, that state prior to meeting with Him.

Once, a newly married *gopī* came to live in Nandagāon. This *gopī* had heard of Kṛṣṇa’s name and His supremely attractive and wonderful activities, yet she had never had the good fortune to see Him directly. Every day, Kṛṣṇa played on His flute as He entered the forest to tend the cows with His friends. Hearing the sound of His flute-playing, all the residents of Vraja would gather on the royal path, being very eager to see the unparalleled sweetness of His beauty. Some stood on the balconies and some climbed trees. Some stood near the path and some peeped through windows. That newly-married *gopī* also longed to go there and see Kṛṣṇa, but her mother-in-law forbade her, saying, “That black snake out there will bite you, so it is not proper for you to go.”

The newly-wedded bride argued, “Your daughter has gone there, so why are you not allowing me to go?” But the mother-in-law still did not give her permission.

Despite this restriction, the *gopī* went to a bush near the royal path and stood behind it. In this way, she could see Kṛṣṇa. Understanding her mind, Kṛṣṇa slightly twisted the tail of a calf who started running and jumping over to that

new *gopī* and stood near her. Kṛṣṇa ran after the calf and arrived at the same spot. Standing there for a moment in His beautiful *tribhaṅga-lalita* form, He touched the chin of that *gopī* with His flute, and then ran off to rejoin His friends. The new *gopī*, now absorbed in the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's beautiful form, lost her external consciousness and remained standing there, motionless, as Kṛṣṇa entered the forest.

A considerable amount of time passed by. Her mother-in-law came searching for her when she did not return home. Shaking the *gopi*'s body, her mother-in-law cried, "What I feared has happened! You have been bitten by that black snake." She brought the *gopi* back to the house and ordered her to make buttermilk from yogurt kept in a clay pot. The bride still had not regained her external consciousness, so she took a pot full of mustard seeds instead and began to churn them, mistaking it for the pot of yogurt. Because she had not returned to her external consciousness, she would sometimes churn the mustard seeds and sometimes not, so sometimes there was a harsh sound and sometimes no sound. When the mother-in-law noticed this, she stopped her from churning and instead ordered her to bring water from the well. Placing three pots on her head, one on top of the other and giving her a rope to hold in one hand and a little baby to hold in the other, she sent her for water. The bride went to the well and prepared the rope to haul water, but because she was not in her natural state of mind, she began to tie the rope around the neck of the baby. The other *gopīs*, who had come there to fetch water, stopped her, crying out, "Alas, alas! What has happened to her? It seems that she is possessed by a ghost!" Some *gopīs* who knew the reality of the situation said, "No, she is not possessed by a ghost, but by the son of Nanda Mahārāja." This is an example of *man-manā bhava*.

The instruction, *mad-bhakto bhava*, is given for those who cannot become as absorbed in Kṛṣṇa as the *gopīs* can. *Mad-bhakto bhava* means to offer oneself in all respects unto the lotus feet of Bhagavān. How can a *bhakta* render service continuously? In this regard, the story of Prahlāda has been described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.5.23-24):

śrī-prahlāda uvāca
 śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoh / smaraṇam pāda-sevanam
 arcanam vandanam dāsyam / sakhyam ātma-nivedanam
 iti puṁsārpitā viṣṇau / bhaktiś cen nava-lakṣaṇā
 kriyeta bhagavaty addhā / tan manye 'dhītam uttamam

Prahlāda Mahārāja said, ‘O my dear father, *bhakti* to Śrī Viṣṇu is performed in nine ways: hearing, chanting and remembering His name, form, qualities, pastimes, etc., rendering service to His lotus feet, worshipping Him, praying to Him, serving Him, making friendship with Him and surrendering one’s self to Him. If these nine types of *bhakti* are performed to Bhagavān in a mood of surrender, then I consider that to be the best of all education.

Mahārāja Ambarīṣa is the illuminating example of complete surrender. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.4.18-20) describes how he performed *bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa.

sa vai manah kṛṣṇa-padāravindayor
 vacāṁsi vaikuṇṭha-guṇānuvarṇane
 karau harer mandira-mārjanādiṣu
 śrutiṁ cakārācyuta-sat-kathodaye
 mukunda-liṅgālaya-darśane dṛṣṭau
 tad-bhṛtya-gātra-sparsē 'ṅga-saṅgamam
 ghrāṇam ca tat-pāda-saroja-saurabhe
 śrīmat-tulasyā rasanām tad-arpite

pādau hareḥ ksetra-padānusarpaṇe
 śiro hṛṣikeśa-padābhivandane
 kāmaṁ ca dāsye na tu kāma-kāmyayā
 yathottama-śloka-janāśrayā ratih

He fixed his mind on the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra, his speech in glorifying the qualities of Bhagavān, his hands in cleansing the temple of Śrī Hari and his ears in hearing the auspicious pastimes of Bhagavān Acyuta. He engaged his eyes in seeing the śrī mūrti and the temples of Mukunda, his body and limbs in touching the bodies of His *bhaktas*, his nose in smelling the transcendental fragrance of Tulasī offered at His feet, and his tongue in honouring the *prasāda* which had been offered to Bhagavān. He utilised his feet for walking to the holy abodes of Bhagavān, and his head in offering obeisances to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He offered all paraphernalia, such as garlands and sandalwood, in the service of Bhagavān. He did all this, not to acquire material enjoyment, but to attain *bhagavat-prema* which only resides in the *bhaktas* of Bhagavān, glorification of whom purifies everyone.

Bilvamaṅgala is an example of a *bhakta* belonging to this class. He was born in a village on the bank of the Kṛṣṇā-veṇṇā River in South India. He was a great scholar of the *Vedas* and *Vedānta*, yet he was very much attached to a prostitute named Cintāmaṇi. One evening it was raining heavily, but his desire to meet Cintāmaṇi made him so restless that he set out to meet her, not caring for the bad weather. On the way, he had to cross a river, which on that terrifying night was flooded and looked like the very form of death. Because there were no means to cross that river, in desperation Bilvamaṅgala crossed it using a floating corpse. When he reached Cintāmaṇi's home, her gate was closed. A snake was hanging from her boundary wall and Bilvamaṅgala used it to scale the wall, mistaking it for a rope. While climbing down

the other side of the wall, however, he slipped and fell to the ground, making a loud crash, and lost consciousness. Hearing that sound, Cintāmaṇī and her friends ran out to see what had happened. Flashes of lightning illuminating the scene enabled her to recognise Bilvamaṅgala, and she understood everything. Reproaching herself, Cintāmaṇī chastised Bilvamaṅgala severely. “If only you were as attached to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as you are to me, then certainly you would become a supremely blessed man.”

Bilvamaṅgala heard the heart-piercing words of Cintāmaṇī as he regained consciousness. At that very moment, he saw the folly of his activities and immediately decided to end his sinful ways and journey on foot to Vṛndāvana. As he proceeded on his way, he felt thirsty, so when he passed a village where he saw a young woman hauling water from a well, he went there to quench his thirst. When he saw the beauty of that young woman, however, he became attracted to her. He even followed the woman to her home.

The husband of the woman, assuming Bilvamaṅgala to be a saint by his dress and demeanor, showed him respect and invited him to accept a seat inside his home. Bilvamaṅgala requested the man to call his wife. On the call of her husband, that woman came out, and Bilvamaṅgala asked her for her two hairpins. Taking those hairpins, Bilvamaṅgala immediately pierced both his eyes with them. As he did this, he lamented grievously, crying out, “These eyes have become the cause of my degraded wretched condition, being attracted by their sense objects in the form of beautiful women. Where there is no cause there can be no effect!” Having thus lost his eyesight, and with blood flowing profusely from his eyes, he again started for Vṛndāvana. But now, his heart had become purified. After only walking a short distance, a boy came to him and in a very sweet voice asked, “O Bābā, where are you going?”

Bilvamaṅgala replied, “I am going to Vṛndāvana.”

The boy said, “I am also going to Vṛndāvana. Please hold on to My stick.” That boy was none other than Muralī-Manohara Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, who captivates the mind by playing His *muralī* flute.

Mad-yājī means to perform My *arcana*. The *niṣṭhā* (steady practice) of *arcana* is on a slightly lower level than that of *mad-bhakto*. Śrī Bhagavān therefore, says that if you cannot be a *bhakta* (*mad-bhakto*) like Bilvamaṅgala, then perform My *arcana*. What should be the *niṣṭhā* of one who performs *arcana* to Śrī Bhagavān? To illustrate this, I will relate a story from our own experience that took place here in Mathurā, India.

There used to be a *bābā* (saintly person) in Mathurā who performed *arcana* of his *śālagrāma-śilā* with great *niṣṭhā*. He did not have complete knowledge of the various limbs of *arcana*, but whatever *arcana* he performed, he did with *niṣṭhā*. He had taken a vow to bathe in Yamunā every day during *brahma-muhūrta*, and to worship his *śālagrāma* with Yamunā water only. Once, on the *amāvasyā* (new-moon day) in the month of Māgha, the cold winter month from mid-January to mid-February, it rained the entire night and a heavy cold wind blew. On that pitch-dark morning he had no idea of the time because no stars were visible in the sky. He woke long before the *brahma-muhūrta* hour and set out to take his bath. Although Yamunā’s waters were as cold as ice and he was shivering due to the extreme cold, he nevertheless took bath just to maintain his vow. He then started back for his home, carrying the Yamunā water for his worship. He faced severe difficulty because of the dense darkness, heavy rain and the weak condition of his shivering body. He was anxiously wondering how it would be possible to return home to worship his Deity when, suddenly, he saw somebody holding

a lantern coming towards him. As the person came closer, he saw that it was a young boy carrying a blanket on His head to protect Him from the rain. Coming close to the *bābā* the boy asked, “*Bābā*, where are you going?” When the man told Him where he lived, the boy said, “I am also going that way. Come with Me and I will take you to your house.” He started walking with that boy and reached his house very quickly. Just as he was about to enter, he thought, “Let me ask this boy His name.” But what a wonder! The *bābā* could not see Him anywhere. He looked all around but there was no trace of Him. Standing there like a stone, he lamented, “Alas! That *chaliyā* (transcendental cheater) Himself came to protect my vow, and upon cheating me, He has gone away.”

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.3.29) illustrates the meaning of *mām namaskuru* with Yamarāja’s instructions to the Yamadūtas:

*jihvā na vakti bhagavad-guṇa-nāmadheyam
 cetaś ca na smarati tac-caraṇāravindam
 kṛṣṇāya no namati yac-chira ekadāpi
 tān ānayadhvam asato 'kṛta-viṣṇu-kṛtyān*

O Yamadūtas, bring me only those sinful people whose tongues do not chant the name of Kṛṣṇa, whose minds do not remember the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, and whose heads have not bowed even once before Śrī Kṛṣṇa, because they have never performed a single act of *bhakti*.

Daśāśvamedhi punar eti janma kṛṣṇa-praṇāmī na punar bhavāya. “A person who performs ten aśvamedha-yajñas has to take birth again, but those who offer obeisances to Kṛṣṇa even once never take birth again.”

Sakṛt praṇāmī kṛṣṇasya mātuḥ stanyam piben nahi. “One who bows down to Kṛṣṇa does not have to drink a mother’s breast-milk again.”

While explaining the word *namah* in *Bhakti-sandarbha* (169), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes *vandanāṁ namaskāram*. “Akrūra attained *bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa by paying obeisances.”

The *Skanda-Purāṇa* describes the glory of paying obeisances in the following way:

śāthyepi namaskāram kurvataḥ śāringa-dhanvine
śata janmārjitaṁ pāpaṁ tat-kṣaṇād eva naśyati

Even if one deceitfully bows down to Śrī Viṣṇu, who carries in His hand the bow called *śāringa*, his sins accumulated from one hundred lives are immediately destroyed.

ŚLOKA 66

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज।
अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः॥६६॥

sarva-dharmān parityajya / mām ekam śaraṇam vraja
aham tvām sarva-pāpebhyo / mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ

parityajya—abandoning; *sarva-dharmān*—all other dharmas; *vraja*—take; *ekam*—exclusive; *śaraṇam*—shelter; *mām*—of Me; *aham*—I; *mokṣayiṣyāmi*—shall free; *tvām*—you; *sarva-pāpebhyaḥ*—from all sinful reactions; *mā śucaḥ*—do not grieve.

Completely abandoning all bodily and mental *dharma*, such as *varṇa* and *āśrama*, fully surrender to Me alone. I shall liberate you from all reactions to your sins. Do not grieve.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“Should I perform activities such as meditation (*dhyāna*) on You and fulfil my *āśrama-dharma* as well, or should I exclusively perform *dhyāna*, etc., without depending on any other *dharma*?” In response to this question, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with the words *sarva-dharmān*.

“Renouncing all types of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, take exclusive shelter of Me.” It is incorrect to translate the word *parityajya* as *sannyāsa* (complete renunciation of *karma*) because, as a *kṣatriya*, Arjuna did not have the *adhibhūta* to take *sannyāsa*. Someone may ask that, if Kṛṣṇa is making Arjuna an instrument in His teachings to show that Arjuna does not have the *adhibhūta* to take *sannyāsa*, is He, in fact, indicating that this instruction regarding *sannyāsa* is for common people who may consider that they have that *adhibhūta*, and not for Arjuna, who was a *kṣatriya*? In answer to this, it is said that, if this instruction regarding *sannyāsa* had been applicable to Arjuna, who is the prime object of Kṛṣṇa’s instructions, it would be applicable to all others, and not otherwise. Furthermore, it is also not proper to translate the word *parityajya* to mean renouncing the fruits of one’s activities. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.41) states:

devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇāṁ pitṛṇāṁ
na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇī ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇām śaraṇyām
gato mukundām parihṛtya kartam

One who gives up the false ego of being the doer, and accepts the shelter of the supreme shelter Śrī Mukunda within the core of his being (*ātmā*), becomes free from any obligations to the *devas*, ḥṛis, living entities, family members and forefathers.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.29.34) also states:

martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmā
niveditātmā vicikīrṣito me
tadāmr̄tatvām pratipadyamāno
mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai

When a person renounces all types of *karma* and completely surrenders himself unto Me, by My will he becomes more opulent than a *yogī* or a *jñānī*. And in the course of time, when he

has attained immortality (*mukti*), he becomes qualified to attain opulences like My own.

Another *śloka* from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.9) states:

*tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta / na nirvidyeta yāvatā
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā / śraddhā yāvan na jāyate*

Until a person develops detachment from sense objects and attains faith in hearing narrations about Me, he should continue to perform his *nitya* (obligatory) and *naimittika* (incidental) duties.

Also, in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.11.32) it says:

*ājñāyaivam guṇān doṣān / mayādiṣṭān api svakān
dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān / māṁ bhajeta sa tu sattamah*

Those who render service unto Me, having abandoned all types of *dharma*, and having understood the inherent positive and negative aspects of the prescribed duties instructed by Me in the *Vedas*, are counted among the best of *sādhus*.

It is necessary to explain the meaning of this *Gītā* *śloka* in accordance with the above profound statements of Śrī Bhagavān, and to reconcile their meanings. The word *pari* (*parityaja*) indicates that the highest objective of these instructions is not to renounce the fruits of *karma*. “Rather, it means that you should take absolute shelter of Me, and not surrender to *dharma*, *jñāna*, *yoga* or any of the *devas*. Previously, it was stated that you do not have the *adhikāra* to perform My supreme *ananya-bhakti*. Therefore, I have described that your *adhikāra* is to perform *karma-miśrā bhakti* in statements such as *yat karosi yad aśnāsi* (*Gītā* 9.26). Now, however, by My boundless and causeless mercy, I am bestowing upon you the *adhikāra* to perform *ananya-bhakti*. This *ananya-bhakti* is attained by some great fortune, only by the mercy of My *aikāntika-bhaktas*. This is My vow. But I am breaking this vow to personally bestow upon you the *adhikāra*

to perform *ananya-bhakti*. Now, if you give up your *nitya* and *naimittika* duties in pursuance of My order, you will not have to face any reaction. I alone, in the form of the *Vedas*, have given the instruction to perform *nitya-karma* and now I Myself am ordering you to give it up. By accepting My order, where is the possibility of you incurring sin as a consequence of abandoning your *nitya-karma*? Rather, if you choose to ignore My direct order and continue to perform *nitya-karma*, then the result will be that you will incur sin. This you should know to be a fact. If a person surrenders to someone, he remains under that person's ownership and control, just like an animal who has been purchased. Whatever the master commands him do, he must do; wherever he keeps him, he stays; whatever food he gives him, he eats. This is the essence of *dharma* as understood by one who is fully surrendered, *śaraṇāgata*. The *Vāyu-Purāṇa* lists the six aspects of *śaraṇāgati*:

ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanam
rakṣiyatīti viśvāso goptṛtve varāṇam tathā
ātmā-nikṣepa-kārpaṇye śad-vidhā śaraṇāgatiḥ

- 1) To accept with determination everything that is favourable for *bhakti*, 2) to give up everything that is unfavourable for *bhakti*, 3) to have the staunch faith that 'Bhagavān will protect me', 4) to accept Him as one's maintainer 5) to offer oneself completely and 6) humility.

To remain devotedly engaged for the pleasure of one's worshipable Deity, as established in the *bhakti-sāstras*, is *ānukūlya*, favourable, and any acts contrary to this are *prātikūlya*, unfavourable. *Varāṇa*, choosing Him as one's maintainer, means to feel, 'He alone is my protector; I have none other than Him.' *Rakṣiyati* refers to the faith seen in those such as Gajendra and Draupadi: 'Whenever I am

threatened by some unfavourable situation, He will surely protect me.' *Nikṣepaṇa* means to devote one's gross and subtle body as well as one's own self for the purpose of serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *kārpaṇya* means to exclusively express one's humility and submission to Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone. When these six activities are performed with the intention of attaining *prema* for Bhagavān, it is called *śaraṇāgati*.

"If I surrender unto You alone, beginning from today, my only duty is to remain surrendered, whether I attain auspiciousness as described by You, or inauspiciousness. In this way, if You engage me in *dharma* activity, there is obviously no cause for anxiety. But what will my destination be if You, the supremely independent Īśvara, engage me in an *adharma* act?" In response to Arjuna's doubt, Śrī Bhagavān says, "I will liberate you from all your accumulated sins, past and present, as well as from any sins I may cause you to perform. Unlike other masters, I am capable of liberating you from sin. Having made you My instrument, I am giving this instruction from *śāstra* to you for the benefit of every human being."

Mā śucah means, "Do not grieve for yourself or others. I am bound by My vow to carry the burden of freeing any person like you from all his sins and deliver him from the cycle of birth and death. If such a person fixes his mind upon Me, completely giving up all his *sva-dharma* or *para-dharma* and remains happily situated having surrendered to Me, I am also bound to carry the burden of providing him with the means to achieve Me. What more can I say? I am even ready to accept the burden of maintaining his material life, as I stated when I spoke *ananyāś cintayanto mām* (*Gītā* 9.22).

"Do not grieve by thinking, 'Alas! I have placed such a heavy burden on my Lord and master!' There is absolutely no labour involved in accepting this burden for Me, who am *bhakta-vatsala* and *satya-saṅkalpa*, whose vows always hold

true. Having given this instruction, there is no need to give any further instruction. I therefore conclude this *śāstra* here."

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave the most confidential instruction of Bhagavad-Gītā concerning *śuddha-bhakti* in the previous *śloka*. Now, in this present *śloka*, He states that it is first necessary to exclusively surrender to Him to become qualified to receive this *śuddha-bhakti*. Here the word *sarvadharmaṁ* means that *varṇāśrama-dharma* and its limbs—*karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga*, worship of other *devas* and religious faiths other than *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* are all based on the bodily or mental platform. It is not correct to think that the word *parityajya* only means giving up the attachment to *karma* and the fruits of *karma*. The innermost intention of Bhagavān's statement is to completely give up *karma-niṣṭhā* (adherence to *karma*). This is the deeper meaning of the prefix *pari*. Someone may think that there is a possibility of incurring sin or reaction by giving up all other *dharma* as described above, to exclusively surrender to Kṛṣṇa. To remove this doubt from the minds of common faithful persons, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has bestowed fearlessness upon them through His declaration: *sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayisyāmi mā śucāḥ*. "Do not grieve, I will certainly free you from all types of sins."

*eta saba chādi āra varṇāśrama-dharma
akiñcana haīya laya kṛṣṇaika-śaraṇa*
Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22.93

One should give up the bad association of impersonalists who are bereft of *bhakti*, as well as *karmīs*, *yogīs*, materialists, womanisers and those who associate with such womanisers. One should even give up *varṇāśrama-dharma* and take full shelter of Kṛṣṇa, becoming humble, meek and possessionless.

One cannot embrace the *bhāvas* described in the previous *śloka* without doing this. However, as long as one falsely identifies the body as his true self, he fears incurring sin as a result of giving up *dharma*. Therefore, Śrī Bhagavān has to take the vow that He will free one from all sins incurred as a result of giving up all types of *dharma*. Even after taking this vow, He is again lifting His hand to bestow fearlessness and telling Arjuna, “Do not grieve.” In this way, He reassures him.

In the *Rāya Rāmānanda-Samvāda*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said that even the stage of *sarva-dharmāṇ parityajya* is external. This is because it has no relationship with *ātma-rati*, the constitutional loving function (*bhāva*) of the self. It is merely the initial qualification required to understand the *bhāva* of the previous *śloka* (18.65). Unless a person fully realises the purport of the present *śloka* and practises it in his life by becoming firmly fixed in the spirit of it, it will be as impossible for him to understand the deeper meaning of the previous *śloka* as it is to catch an imaginary flower in the sky. The pure ego, ‘I am a servant of Kṛṣṇa’, is natural in *śuddha-bhaktas* and, therefore, *varṇāśrama-dharma* is renounced of its own accord. At that time, no sin or irregularity affects them because they are completely renounced. Such *bhaktas* are *uttama-adhikārīs* and qualified for the highest type of *bhakti*.

*ājñāyaivam guṇān doṣān / mayā diṣṭān api svakān
dharmāṇ santyajya yaḥ sarvān / māṁ bhajeta sa ca sattamah
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.11.32*

Those who render service unto Me, having abandoned all types of *dharma*, and having understood the inherent positive and negative aspects of the prescribed duties instructed by Me in the *Vedas*, are counted among the best of *sādhus*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes Kṛṣṇa as saying, “I have instructed you in the various types of religions such as *varṇāśrama-dharma*, *yati-dharma* (the renounced order of life), *vairāgya* (detachment), sense and mind control, *dhyāna-yoga* and the controlling opulences of Iśvara, so you can attain *brahma-jñāna* and *iśvara-jñāna*.” Now, in His conclusion, Śrī Bhagavān is telling Arjuna to completely give up all these *dharmika* processes and exclusively surrender to Him. “Only if you surrender in this way will I deliver you from all types of sins, whether they are caused by your material conditioning or by renouncing these *dharmika* processes. You should consider that you are not the performer of these activities, and you should not grieve for anything. The true constitutional nature of the *jivas* is easily awakened from its dormant state by the performance of *nirguṇa-bhakti* to Me. At that time, it is not required that one perform *dharma*, prescribed duties or atonements, etc., or to practise *jñāna*, *yoga*, *dhyāna* or any other process. One should perform bodily, mental and spiritual activities, even in the bound stage, but he should give up *brahma-niṣṭhā* (adherence to the impersonal feature), being attracted by the beauty and sweetness of Bhagavān in an exclusively surrendered mood. The meaning is that whatever *karma* an embodied *jīva* performs for his livelihood should be performed with these types of higher *niṣṭhā*: *brahma-niṣṭhā*, *iśvara-niṣṭhā*, and *bhagavad-niṣṭhā*. Lower *niṣṭhā* refers to *akarma* and *vikarma*, which create *anarthas*. All processes, such as *varṇāśrama* and *vairāgya*, assume their respective natures (*bhāvas*) by adopting one of these types of *niṣṭhā*. When action is performed in subordination to *brahma-niṣṭhā*, the *bhāva* of *karma* and *jñāna* manifests. When action is performed under *iśvara-niṣṭhā*, the *bhāva* of *karma* offered to Iśvara (*dhyāna-yoga*, etc.,) manifests. And when it is performed

with *bhagavad-niṣṭhā*, it transforms into *śuddhā* or *kevalabhakti*. Hence, this *bhakti* alone is the most confidential *tattva*, and *prema* is the supreme aim of life. This is, indeed, the principal teaching and innermost intention of *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The lifestyles of *karmīs*, *jñānīs*, *yogīs* and *bhaktas* appear to be the same, but when we observe their respective types of *niṣṭhā*, it is clear that there is a vast difference between their styles of worship in terms of their *sādhana* practice, as well as their ultimate goal.”

ŚLOKA 67

इदन्ते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय कदाचन।
न चाशुश्रूषवे वाच्यं न च मां योऽभ्यसूयति॥६७॥

*idan te nātапaskāya / nābhaktāya kadācana
na cāśuśrūṣave vācyam / na ca mām yo 'bhyasūyati*

idam—this; *na kadācana vācyam*—should never be explained; *te*—by you; *atapaskāya*—to one who is not an ascetic; *na*—nor; *abhartāya*—to a non-devotee; *ca*—and; *na*—not; *aśuśrūṣave*—to one who is unsubmitting; *ca*—and; *na*—not; *yah abhyasūyati*—one who is envious; *mām*—of Me.

You should never explain this essence of *Gītā-sāstra* to anyone whose senses are uncontrolled, who is a non-devotee, who is devoid of a serving mood, or who is envious of Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Thus, having completed His instructions on *Gītā-sāstra*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the principle of continuing the *saṃpradāya*. In other words, He is giving the criteria by which one can ascertain who is qualified to receive these instructions. One whose senses are not under control is called

atapaska. Smṛti also states: “Tranquility, or control of the mind and the senses, is the highest penance.” These instructions of the Gītā should not be imparted to a non-devotee, even if he has control over his senses. Nor should they be given to a bhakta who is self-controlled but who is not interested in submissive hearing (*aśuśrūṣu*). “A further prohibition is given for a person who fulfils the above three qualifications (self-controlled, a bhakta, and interested in hearing), but who is envious of Me, *mām yo' bhyasūyati*, considering Me, the *nirupādhika-pūrṇa-brahma* (the Supreme Absolute Truth, transcendental to any material designations) to be one with *māyā*, and My existence to be illusory and temporary. This message of the Gītā must never be given to such a person, at any cost.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In the present *śloka*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is establishing the necessary qualifications to hear the instructions of the Gītā. The *tattvas* of the Gītā should never be instructed to those who are envious of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who consider His transcendental form to be illusory, who are devoid of *bhakti* to the *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas, who have no control over their senses, and who do not render any service to Śrī Hari, *guru* or the Vaiṣṇavas. None of them are qualified to receive the Gītā’s instructions. Because some people are unable to fully realise the essence of Kṛṣṇa’s instruction, they narrate the Gītā in an unauthorised manner to unqualified persons. They think that this is a symptom of their magnanimous and compassionate nature. However, by performing such activities in disobedience to Kṛṣṇa’s orders, they become offenders. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself knows most clearly the harmful effects of giving this knowledge to an unqualified person. Ignorant persons cannot understand nor retain this *jñāna*. Some people

may say that it shows a lack of compassion to consider a recipient's qualification or disqualification in the matter of giving him *dharmika* instructions. However, this is not correct because the good results of having received *dharmika* instructions are observed only in a qualified person. An unqualified person however, disobeys such instructions after receiving them and, becoming an offender, falls down even further.

Once, the king of the *devas*, Indra, and the chief of the *asuras*, Virocana, went to Lord Brahmā to receive instruction on *ātma-tattva*. Brahmā instructed Indra who was a qualified recipient of this knowledge, and who was able to comprehend *tattva-jñāna*. However, Virocana, who was unqualified, was not able to follow the instructions given by Brahmā. He understood the self to be his gross body only, and the maintenance of it to be the goal of life. In this way, Virocana remained bereft of true *tattva-jñāna*. Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.23) also states:

yasya deve parā bhaktir / yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ / prakāśante mahātmānāḥ

The conclusive essence of the *śrutis* is only revealed to those great souls who have *parā bhakti* unto Śrī Bhagavān and who have an equal amount of *bhakti* for Śrī Gurudeva.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructs Uddhava in a similar way:

naitat tvayā dāmbhikāya / nāstikāya śāṭhāya ca
aśuśrūṣor abhaktāya / durvinītāya dīyatām
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.29.30

You must never give this *jñāna* to persons who are proud, atheistic, wicked, faithless, devoid of *bhakti* or unsubmissive.

The *Padma-Purāṇa* also says: *aśraddhadhāne vimukhe py aśṛṇvati yaś copadeśah śiva-nāmāpārādhah*, “By giving this

instruction to a person who is faithless and averse to Bhagavān, one causes him to become an offender. It does not benefit him.”

ŚLOKA 68

य इमं परमं गुह्यं मद्भक्तेष्वभिधास्यति।
भक्तिं मयि परां कृत्वा मामेवैष्टत्यसंशयः॥६८॥

*ya imam paramam guhyam / mad-bhakteṣv abhidhāsyati
bhaktim mayi parām kṛtvā / mām evaiṣyat� asaṁśayah*

(he) *yah*—who; *abhidhāsyati*—teaches; *imam*—this; *paramam*—supremely; *guhyam*—confidential knowledge; *mat-bhakteṣu*—to My *bhaktas*; *kṛtvā*—attaining; *parām*—the highest (*premamayī*); *bhaktim*—bhakti; *mayi*—unto Me; (and) *asaṁśayah*—becoming free from all doubts; *evaiṣyat�*—will come; *mām*—to Me.

He who instructs this most confidential knowledge of *Gītā-śāstra* to My *bhaktas* will attain *parā bhakti* unto Me, and, upon becoming free from all doubts, will finally attain Me.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān is describing the results attained by those who give instruction on this *Gītā-śāstra*, in two *ślokas*, the first starting with the word *yah*. “They first attain My *parā bhakti* and later they attain Me.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

In this *śloka*, Śrī Bhagavān is describing the symptoms and destiny of the genuine qualified preachers and the genuine qualified hearers or students of the *Gītā*. While giving Arjuna the most secret instruction of the *Gītā* (18.65), Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “You are very dear to Me. That is why I am explaining this highly confidential truth to you.” In the previous *śloka*,

Kṛṣṇa also instructed that one should give this knowledge of the *Gītā* only to a person who is self-controlled, faithful, endowed with a service attitude and who has love for Him. Therefore, it is essential for the preacher of *Gītā-śāstra* to have strong *śraddhā* in Kṛṣṇa and *aikāntika-bhakti* for Him. He must be fully conversant with *tattva-jñāna* and free from any doubts. If a preacher of the *Gītā* has theoretical knowledge, but does not practise it, or if he is bereft of the above-mentioned qualities, then he is not a bona fide preacher and one must never hear the instructions of the *Gītā* from him. The result will simply be that both the listener and the preacher will remain deprived of the *Gītā*'s true *jñāna*.

Śāstra describes the qualifications and the characteristics of a sincere listener. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says to Uddhava:

*etair doṣair vihīnāya / brahmaṇyāya priyāya ca
sādhave śucaye brūyād / bhaktih syāc chūdra-yoṣitām*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.29.31

One should give these teachings to those who are free from the defects of conceit, atheism, wickedness, faithlessness, arrogance, or who are devoid of *bhakti*. They should be dedicated to the welfare of the *brāhmaṇas*, strive for *bhagavat-prema*, have a saintly nature and, above all, they should be *bhaktas*. But these instructions can be given to a *śūdra* or a woman who has *śraddhā* in Me and possesses *bhakti* to Me.

From this it is clear that one's caste, creed, age, activities, etc., are not to be considered in the matter of deciding who is fit to receive the *tattva* of the *Gītā*. Anyone who has the above-mentioned qualities is qualified to hear it. In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 22.64), this principle has been substantiated: *śraddhāvān jana haya bhakti adhikārī*. “A faithful *bhakta* is a truly eligible candidate to perform service to the Lord.” Śrī Kapiladeva has also said:

śraddadhānāya bhaktāya / vinītāyānasūyave
 bhūtesu kṛta-maitrāya / śuśrūṣābhiratāya ca
 bahirjāta-virāgāya / śānta-cittāya dīyate
 nirmatsarāya śucaye / yasyāham preyasām priyah
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.32.41–42

Only narrate this to faithful, devout *bhaktas* who are submissive, free from malice, well-wishing to all living entities, engaged in *sevā*, renounced from external sense pleasures, peaceful, free from envy, and for whom I am the only beloved.

The essence of this instruction is that any person who has *śraddhā* and *bhakti* for Kṛṣṇa is qualified to hear the *Gītā-*
śāstra. Those who impart the instructions of the *Gītā* to such qualified persons attain *parā bhakti* and finally attain Kṛṣṇa, without a doubt. Similarly, the qualified listeners also attain the same supreme destination.

ŚLOKA 69

न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिचन्मे प्रियकृतमः।
 भविता न च मे तस्मादन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि॥६९॥

na ca tasmān manuṣyeṣu / kaścin me priya-kṛttamah
 bhavitā na ca me tasmād / anyah priyataraḥ bhuvi

ca—and; (*there is*) *na kaścit*—no one; *manuṣyeṣu*—in human society; *priya-kṛttamah*—who performs a more pleasing service; *me*—to Me; *tasmāt*—than him; *ca*—and; *na bhavitā*—*there will never be*; *anyah*—another; *bhuvi*—on the earth; *priyataraḥ*—more dear; *me*—to Me; *tasmāt*—than him.

There is no one in human society who performs a more pleasing service to Me than one who explains this message of the *Gītā* to others. Nor will there be anyone in the entire world more dear to Me than him.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“There is no one in this world who performs such a pleasing service to Me, nor is there anyone as dear to me as he who preaches this Gītā-śāstra.”

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The bona fide instructors or preachers of this Gītā-śāstra are very dear to Bhagavān. Therefore, the duty of śuddha-bhaktas is to preach the message of the Gītā. However, those who entertain people on the pretext of preaching the Gītā, do not preach the confidential, more confidential and most confidential tattva of the Gītā. Instead, they teach māyāvādā, karma, jñāna and yoga. Such persons become offenders at the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān. One does not benefit by hearing the Gītā from such preachers.

ŚLOKA 70

अध्येष्यते च य इमं धर्म्यं संवादमावयोः ।
ज्ञानयज्ञेन तेनाहमिष्टः स्यामिति मे मतिः ॥७०॥

*adhyesyate ca ya imam / dharmyam samvādam āvayoh
jñāna-yajñena tenāham / iṣṭah syām iti me matih*

ca—and; *aham*—I; *syām*—can be; *iṣṭah*—worshipped; *jñāna-yajñena*—through the sacrifice of transcendental knowledge; *tena*—by he; *yah*—who; *adhyesyate*—studies; *imam*—this; *dharmyam*—sacred; *saṁvādam*—conversation; *āvayoh*—between us; *iti*—such; (*is*) *me*—My; *matih*—opinion.

I shall be worshipped by those who study this sacred dialogue between us, through *jñāna-yajña*, the principle of true knowledge. This is My opinion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Now, in the *śloka* beginning with the word *adhyeṣyate*, Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the results of studying this Gītā.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

Simply by engaging in the faithful study of this dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, one performs *jñāna-yoga*. Kṛṣṇa is pleased by this effort. Here, *jñāna* means that one practises the essence of Gītā after understanding it. The essence of the Gītā is *ananya-bhakti* to Śrī Bhagavān. Therefore, one who practises such *bhakti* is very dear to Bhagavān. Others, such as the *karmī*, *jñānī* and *yogī* are not as dear to Him.

ŚLOKA 71

श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृण्यादपि यो नरः ।
सोऽपि मुक्तः शुभाल्लोकान्प्राप्नुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥७१॥

śraddhāvān anasūyaś ca / śṛṇuyād api yo narah
so 'pi muktaḥ śubhāl lokān / prāpnuyāt puṇya-karmanām

ca—and; *sah*—that; *śraddhāvān*—faithful; (and) *anasūyah*—non-envious; *narah*—man; *yah*—who; *api*—even; *śṛṇuyāt*—hears; *api*—also; (becomes) *muktaḥ*—liberated; (and) *prāpnuyāt*—attains; *śubhāl*—the auspicious; *lokān*—planets; *puṇya-karmanām*—where those who have performed pious deeds reside.

And one who merely hears this Gītā with faith, and without envy, also becomes liberated from sins and goes to the auspicious planets that are attained by the pious.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

Now Śrī Bhagavān is explaining the results of hearing Gītā in this *śloka* beginning with the word *śraddhāvān*.

ŚLOKA 72

कच्चिदेतच्छ्रुतं पारथ त्वयैकाग्रेण चेतसा।
कच्चिदज्ञानसम्मोहः प्रनष्टस्ते धनञ्जय॥७२॥

kaccid etac chrutam pārtha / tvayaikāgreṇa cetasā
kaccid ajñāna-sammohah / pranaṣṭas te dhanañjaya

pārtha—O son of Pṛthā; *dhanañjaya*—O winner of wealth; *kaccit*—has?; *etat*—this (teaching of the Gītā); *śrutam*—been heard; *tvayā*—by you; *eka-agreṇa*—with one-pointed; *cetasā*—attention; *kaccit*—is?; *te*—your; *ajñāna-sammohah*—delusion born of ignorance; *pranaṣṭah*—dispelled.

O Pārtha, O Dhanañjaya, have you heard this *Gītā* with undivided attention? Having heard it, has your delusion born of ignorance been dispelled?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

“If you have not understood the superlative essence of this teaching, then I will instruct it to you again.” Śrī Bhagavān is speaking this *śloka* with this intention only.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

After concluding the instructions on the *Gītā* and describing the results of hearing it and preaching its purport, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is asking Arjuna, “Do you have any further questions? If you do, then I will answer them again.” From this it is indicated that one should hear the instructions of the *Gītā* with fixed attention. Another point is that, even after hearing the confidential *tattva* of *Gītā* from Śrī Gurudeva or *tattvadarśī bhaktas*, until the student fully realises such *tattva*, he should continue to repeatedly hear it through the process of submissive inquiry and by rendering service. He will not be able to understand these teachings otherwise.

ŚLOKA 73

अर्जुन उवाच—

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिलब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युता।

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव॥७३॥

arjuna uvāca

*naṣṭo mohaḥ smṛtiḥ labdhā / tvat prasādān mayācyuta
sthito 'smi gata-sandehaḥ / kariṣye vacanam tava*

arjuna uvāca—Arjuna said; *acyuta*—O infallible Lord; *mayā*—my; *mohaḥ*—illusion; (*is*) *naṣṭaḥ*—dispelled; *tvat-prasādāt*—by Your mercy; (*and*) *smṛtiḥ*—my spiritual remembrance; (*is*) *labdhā*—regained; *asmi*—I am; *gata-sandehaḥ*—free from doubt; (*and*) *sthitaḥ*—situated (in transcendental *jñāna*); *kariṣye*—I shall do; *tava*—Your; *vacanam*—will.

Arjuna said: O Acyuta, my delusion is dispelled by Your grace and I have regained the memory of my true self. My doubt has gone and I am situated firmly in true *jñāna*. I will now carry out Your order.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞİNİ

“What further questions should I ask? I have become free from all anxiety because I have given up all types of *dharma* (prescribed duties) and have surrendered unto You. Now I have complete faith in You.” Arjuna is speaking this *śloka* beginning with the word *naṣṭaḥ*, to present the actual condition of his heart to Kṛṣṇa. “From now on, You are my sole refuge. I have completely surrendered My *dharma* unto You, and will remain fixed in Your order; I will not follow *varṇāśrama-dharma*, *jñāna-yoga* or any other process. From today, I have abandoned them all.” When Arjuna, who carries the Gāṇḍīva bow, heard Śrī Bhagavān say, “O My dear friend Arjuna, I still have to perform some acts to remove the burden of the earth. I will accomplish them through you,” he prepared to fight.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Arjuna became very pleased to understand the intention of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and, with folded hands, he said, “O Acyuta, by Your instruction and mercy, all my ignorance and delusion have been dispelled. I have perfectly understood that You are the *guru* and Lord of all beings within the entire universe, both moving and non-moving. I am Your servant and I fully surrender at Your lotus feet. I will execute whatever order You give me.” Having said this, Arjuna prepared to fight, having understood Kṛṣṇa’s intention.

We learn from Arjuna’s example that this human form of life will yield perfection if we become free from all doubts by studying this *Gitā-śāstra*, engaging in Kṛṣṇa’s service, surrendering exclusively to Him and giving up all other philosophies.

ŚLOKA 74

सञ्जय उवाच—

इत्यहं वासुदेवस्य पार्थस्य च महात्मनः।
संवादमिममश्रौषमद्वत् रोमहर्षणम्॥७४॥

sañjaya uvāca

ity aham vāsudevasya / pārthasya ca mahātmanah
saṁvādam imam aśrauṣam / adbhuṭam roma-harṣanam

sañjaya uvāca—Sañjaya said (to King Dhṛtarāṣṭra); *iti*—thus; *aham*—I; *aśrauṣam*—have heard; *imam*—this; *adbhuṭam*—wonderful; *saṁvādam*—conversation; *vāsudevasya*—between Vāsudeva; *ca*—and; *mahā-ātmanah*—the great soul; *pārthasya*—Pārtha (Arjuna); *roma-harṣanam*—which causes my hair to stand on end.

Sañjaya said: O King, thus I have heard this wonderful dialogue between *mahātmā* Vāsudeva and Pārtha, which causes my hair to stand on end.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ

It so happens that the two papers on which I had written the explanation of the five final *ślokas* summarising the essence of the complete *Gītā* have disappeared. I take it that Gaṇeśajī had those papers stolen by his mouse carrier. After that, I did not again write those purports. May Gaṇeśajī be pleased with me. I offer my obeisances unto him.

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

Thus ends the Sārārtha-varṣinī commentary of Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā. May it increase the pleasure of saintly people.

May the sweetness of this Sārārtha-varṣinī commentary, which is beneficial for entire humanity, completely satisfy the bhaktas who are like cātaka birds. And may its sweetness manifest in our hearts.

ŚLOKA 75

व्यासप्रसादाच्छ्रुतवानिमं गुह्यमहं परम्।
योगं योगेश्वरात्कृष्णात्साक्षात्कथयतः स्वयम्॥७५॥

vyāsa-prasādāc chrutavān / imam guhyam aham param
yogam yogeśvarāt kṛṣṇat / sākṣat kathayataḥ svayam

vyāsa-prasādāt—by the mercy of Vyāsa; aham—I; (have) śrutavān—heard; imam—this; param—most; guhyam—confidential; yogam—science of union with the Supreme Lord; sākṣat—directly; kṛṣṇat—from all-attractive Śrī Kṛṣṇa; yogeśvarāt—the Master of yoga; kathayataḥ—as He was speaking; svayam—Himself.

By the grace of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, I have heard this most confidential *yoga* explained directly by Yogeśvara, the all-attractive Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VR̄TTI

Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsadeva was the *guru* of Sañjaya. Sañjaya acknowledges that he heard and understood the *divya-jñāna* of Śrimad Bhagavad-gītā, which manifested from the dialogue between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, only by the grace of his *guru*, Śrīla Vyāsadeva. Without the grace of *guru*, the *tattva* of Gītā (*bhagavat-tattva*) cannot be understood. The *guru* must be as well versed in *tattva* as Śrīla Vyāsadeva was, and endowed with realisation of Bhagavān. The disciple should be like Sañjaya, capable of rendering attentive service to the *guru*, as well as desiring to hear from him and to follow his teachings and instructions without argument. Only such a faithful disciple can achieve perfection after understanding *bhagavat-tattva*. It should also be understood that, just as Arjuna became supremely blessed after hearing the deep secret of the Bhagavad-gītā directly from the lotus mouth of Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Sañjaya also, by the grace of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, became supremely blessed after hearing and understanding it, although he was sitting far away from Kurukṣetra. And just as Arjuna and Sañjaya were blessed and became perfect, any person who wants to make his life perfect can do so by taking shelter of a bona fide *guru-paramparā*, and surrendering to a self-realised *guru* or a Vaiṣṇava. It is impossible to attain *bhagavat-tattva* unless one accepts a śuddha-bhakti-paramparā.

ŚLOKA 76

राजन् संसृत्य संसृत्य संवादमिमद्वृतम्।
केशवार्जुनयोः पुण्यं हृष्यामि च मुहुर्मुहः ॥७६॥

*rājan saṁsmṛtya saṁsmṛtya / saṁvādam imam adbhitam
keśavārjunayoh puṇyam / hṛṣyāmi ca muhur muhuḥ*

ca—and; *rājan*—O king; *saṁsmṛtya saṁsmṛtya*—remembering again and again; *imam*—this; *adbhitam*—astonishing; *puṇyam*—sacred; *saṁvādam*—dialogue; *keśava-arjunayoh*—between Keśava and Arjuna; *hṛṣyāmi*—I rejoice; *muhuḥ muhuḥ*—at every moment.

O King, as I repeatedly recall this wonderful and sacred dialogue between Śrī Keśava and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again.

ŚLOKA 77

तच्च संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य रूपमत्यद्वतं हरेः।
विस्मयो मे महान् राजन् हृष्यामि च पुनः पुनः॥७७॥

*tac ca saṁsmṛtya saṁsmṛtya / rūpam atyadbhitam hareḥ
vismayo me mahān rājan / hṛṣyāmi ca punah punah*

ca—and; *rājan*—O king; *saṁsmṛtya saṁsmṛtya*—remembering repeatedly; *tat*—that; *ati adbhitam*—most wonderful; *rūpam*—form; *hareḥ*—of Śrī Hari; *me*—my; *vismayah*—amazement; (*is*) *mahān*—great; *ca*—and; *hṛṣyāmi*—I rejoice; *punah punah*—again and again.

O King, as I remember that most wonderful form of Śrī Hari, I am struck with great amazement, and am thrilled at every moment.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŚINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

From this *śloka*, it appears that the *viśvarūpa* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa which Arjuna saw at Kurukṣetra was also seen by Sañjaya, by the grace of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, as he sat in the royal palace in Hastināpura. This took place by the grace of Śrīla

Vyāsadeva. Śrī Kṛṣṇa had explained to Arjuna that He had not shown that form to anyone before, and that He was showing it to Arjuna for the first time. However, by thoroughly deliberating upon this point, it can be understood that both Sañjaya and Vyāsa most definitely saw the *viśvarūpa* along with Arjuna. And from Arjuna's statement, it can be understood that even ṛṣis, maharṣis and *devatās* also saw it. Śrī Vedavyāsa is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *parama-bhakta*. Not only that, he is also a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra* of Bhagavān Himself. It follows, therefore, that only those who are in the *paramparā* of Śrīla Vyāsa are capable of realizing the essence of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

ŚLOKA 78

**यत्र योगश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः।
तत्र श्रीविजयो भूतिर्धुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम॥७८॥**

yatra yogeśvarah kṛṣṇo / yatra pārtho dhanurdharah
tatra śrīvijayo bhūtiḥ / dhruvā nītiḥ matir mama

yatra—wherever; (*there is*) *yoga-iśvarah*—the Master of all *yoga*; *kṛṣṇah*—Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *yatra*—wherever; (*there is*) *dhanur-dharah*—the bow-wielder; *pārthaḥ*—Pārtha; *tatra*—there; (*will be*) *dhruvā*—constant; *śriḥ*—wealth; *vijayaḥ*—victory; *bhūtiḥ*—opulence; (*and*) *nītiḥ*—dedication to morality; (*this is*) *mama*—My; *matiḥ*—opinion.

Wherever there is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the master of all *yoga*, and wherever there is Pārtha, the wielder of the bow, there will surely be opulence, victory, prosperity and righteousness. This is My definite opinion.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARŞINİ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VRTTI

The Eighteenth Chapter briefly describes the essence of the entire *Gītā*. One division describes *karma-yoga* predominated

by *dhyāna-yoga*, which results in *ātma-jñāna*. The other division describes *śuddha-bhakti-yoga* that originates from *śraddhā* related to Bhagavān. This is indeed the essence of the Gītā. Within these two divisions, the confidential instruction is to gradually achieve the path of *jñāna* by performing *niṣkāma-karma*, while adopting *varṇāśrama-dharma* based on one's own nature. The more confidential instruction is to cultivate *ātma-jñāna* within this life, through *dhyāna-yoga*. And the most confidential instruction is to engage in *bhakti-yoga* by exclusively surrendering unto Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is the essence of the Eighteenth Chapter.

The purport of the entire *Bhagavad-gītā* is that *advaya-vastu*, the non-dual Absolute Entity, is the only *tattva*. Śrī Bhagavān is the complete manifestation of that *tattva*. All other *tattvas* have emanated from Him. From His *cit-śakti*, *bhagavat-svarūpa* and *cid-vaihava*, the spiritual opulences emanate. Two types of infinite *jīvas* manifest from his *jīva-śakti*: the liberated (*mukta*) and the bound (*baddha*). And the twenty-four elements, from *pradhāna* to the blade of grass, manifest from His *māyā-śakti*. Creation, maintenance and annihilation of different states comes from the *kāla-śakti*, time potency. All types of manifestations emanate from the *kriyā-śakti*.

The five elements—Īśvara, *prakṛti*, *jīva*, *kāla* and *karma*—have manifested from *bhagavat-tattva* only. Brahma, Paramātmā, etc., are all within Bhagavān, as are all other conceptions of the Absolute Truth. Although the five elements listed above are separate, they are simultaneously one element under the control of *bhagavat-tattva*, and although they are one, they are eternally different because they have different characteristics. This explanation of *bhed-ābheda-tattva*, or simultaneous oneness and difference, given in the Gītā is beyond human logic. Therefore, the previous mahājanas have called this *tattva*, *acintya-bhed-ābheda-tattva*, and the *jñāna* related to it, *tattva-jñāna*.

Jīva: The *jīvas* are pure conscious entities by constitutional nature, and they are a special *tattva* which exist as atomic particles in the rays emanating from *cit-sūrya*, the transcendental conscious sun, Kṛṣṇa. By nature, they are qualified to exist in the spiritual and in the material worlds. They are situated on the border of the *cit* (spiritual) and the *acit* (material) world. Because they are conscious, they are independent by nature. If they are favourable to Kṛṣṇa and attracted to the spiritual world, then they can relish pure *ānanda* with the help of the *hlādinī-śakti*, Kṛṣṇa's pleasure potency. On the other hand, if they turn away from Kṛṣṇa, being attracted to the illusory world, due to the influence of the *māyā-śakti*, then they have to undergo material happiness and distress. The *jīvas* who have *cid-rati*, affinity for the conscious world, are *nitya-mukta*, eternally liberated, and those who have *jada-rati*, affinity towards the world of unconscious matter, are *nitya-baddha*. Both types of *jīvas* are unlimited in number.

Forgetting his pure constitutional nature, the *jīva* suffers various types of miseries in the ocean of material existence in higher and lower forms of life, such as *devas*, humans, worms, trees and creepers. Sometimes he becomes dejected and disgusted. He then takes shelter of a proper *guru* and attains perfection in *dhyāna* through *karma-yoga*. Thus realising his pure *svarūpa*, he attains *prema* for the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān. Or, if he develops *śraddhā* in topics of Bhagavān, he takes shelter of a proper *guru* and performs *sādhana-bhakti*. He then attains *bhāva-bhakti* and finally *prema-bhakti*. There are no paths other than these two for the *ātmā* to realise his pure *svarūpa*.

Of the two paths of *ātma-jñāna* mentioned above, the path of *karma-yoga* predominated by *dhyāna-yoga* is suitable for the common man, because it is under the control of one's own efforts. *Bhakti-yoga*, which arises from *śraddhā*, is superior

to *karma-yoga* and also easier to perform, but it cannot be attained without receiving the good fortune of the grace of Bhagavān or His *bhaktas*. Therefore, most people in the world are inclined to perform *karma-yoga*. Among such *karma-yogīs*, those who are fortunate develop *śraddhā* in *bhakti-yoga*, and thus they attain the stage of exclusive surrender to Bhagavān as described in the concluding *śloka* of the *Gītā*. This is the *abhidheya* (process) described in all the *Vedas*.

The path of *karma* is based on material desires. Its goals: attainment of material happiness, enjoyment in the fourteen planetary systems, and *mukti*—are all devoid of true value for the conscious *jīva*. The very beginning of the *Gītā* describes fruitive *karma* and its result, *bhukti* (sense enjoyment), as being worthless. Even the attainment of *sāyujya-nirvāṇa*, which is the perfection of monism, and is attained when one has become liberated from birth and death, is not the ultimate purpose of the *jīva*. This has also been stated in various places. The supreme *prayojana* of the *jīva* is to rise above impersonal realisation and the four types of *mukti*, such as *sālokya*, and achieve *nirmala-prema* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa by entering into the topmost spiritual realm where His *līlās* are performed.

Having compiled the *siddhānta* of all the *Vedas* and *Vedānta* in the *Gītā*, it has been determined that the supreme goal is to attain *prema* for Bhagavān by performing *bhakti-yoga* with knowledge of one's relationship with Him. A person should always practise *bhakti-yoga* by hearing, chanting, etc., as well as by following his *dharma* according to his qualifications. He should maintain his life by performing his occupation while remaining favourable to the cultivation of *bhakti-yoga*. With great *śraddhā* in the higher process, he should gradually give up his *niṣṭhā* in the lower process. Then he should become firmly fixed in *bhakti-yoga*, through

śaraṇāgati, full surrender, and thus live his life in this way. Then Bhagavān will quickly award him śuddha-prema. Merely by entering into the process of purifying his existence, a person achieves the mercy of Bhagavān. This mercy makes him fearless, immortal and free from lamentation, and he becomes eternally absorbed in His prema.

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