

## CHAPTER TWO



# Sāṅkhya-Yoga

## Yoga Through the Principle of Analysis

### ŚLOKA 1

सञ्जय उवाच—

तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् ।  
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥१॥

*sañjaya uvāca*

*tam tathā kṛpayāviṣṭam / aśru-ṣṭrṇākulekṣaṇam*  
*viṣīdantam idam vākyaṃ / uvāca madhusūdanaḥ*

*sañjaya uvāca*—Sañjaya said; *madhusūdanaḥ*—Śrī Madhusūdana; *tathā*—thus; *uvāca*—spoke; *idam*—these; *vākyaṃ*—words; *tam*—unto him (Arjuna); *viṣīdantam*—the lamenting; *āviṣṭam*—overwhelmed; *kṛpayā*—with compassion; (and whose) *ākula*—restless; *īkṣaṇam*—eyes; (were) *aśru-ṣṭrṇa*—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 ।

अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥२॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca

kutas tvā kaśmalam idaṁ / viṣame samupasthitam  
anārya-juṣṭam asvargyam / akīrtti-karam arjuna

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—Śrī Bhagavān said; arjuna—O Arjuna; kutaḥ—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-VARṢINĪ

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, kutaḥ 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 akīrti-karam means that this action is unfavourable for the attainment of both mundane and transcendental happiness.

## SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ 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* (*ahimsā 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.

Saṅjaya, 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."

Saṅjaya 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 पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।  
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥३॥

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

*pārtha*—O Pārtha; *mā sma gamaḥ*—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 chastiser 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-VARṢINĪ

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 Pṛthā, you are behaving like a coward.” For this purpose, Śrī Bhagavān uses the words: *mā sma gamaḥ*. “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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 bhramatīva ca me manaḥ* (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 Dharma (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

अर्जुन उवाच—

कथं भीष्ममहं संख्ये द्रोणञ्च मधुसूदन ।

इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हावरिसूदन ॥४॥

arjuna uvāca

katham bhiṣmam ahaṁ saṅkhye / droṇaṁ ca madhusūdana  
iṣubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi / pūjārḥāv arisūdana

*arjunaḥ 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*—Droṇācārya; *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 Droṇācārya, who are my worshipable superiors?**

#### SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ

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 Droṇa 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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 Svayaṁ 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 Nāndīmukhī, are the son and daughter of Sāndīpani Muni.

## ŚLOKA 5

गुरूनहत्वा हि महानुभावान्  
 श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।  
 हत्वार्थकामास्तु गुरूनिहैव  
 भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥ ५ ॥

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

*hi*—certainly; (it is) *śreyaḥ*—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; *apī*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 Yudhiṣṭhira 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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

As though inattentive to Kṛṣṇa’s words, due to being overpowered by grief and delusion, Arjuna once more asserted, “I consider it extremely inauspicious and sinful to kill my *gurus*, Droṇācārya, 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 *Kūrma Purāṇa*:

*upādhyāyaḥ pitā jyeṣṭha-bhrātā caiva mahī-patiḥ  
mātulaḥ śvasuras trātā mātāmaha-pitāmahau  
bandhur jyeṣṭhaḥ pitr̥vyaś ca puṁśyete guravaḥ 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 Droṇācārya 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-śāstras* and were *dharmika* by nature. Even on the battlefield, Arjuna saw them as his *gurus*. Droṇācārya, 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 nāradaḥ 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 Droṇācārya. 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 Yudhiṣṭhira 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 *parama-bhakta* 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 Bāṇāsura's fight against the Lord. Alone, Bāṇāsura 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, Bāṇāsura, 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 Droṇācārya 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-viṣvak-  
kaca-lulita-śramavāry-alaṅkṛtāsye  
mama niśita-śarair vibhidyamāna-  
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 mellows (*akhila-rasāmṛta-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 rathasthaḥ  
dhṛta-ratha-caraṇo 'bhyayāc caladgur  
harir iva hantum ibham gatottariyaḥ*

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-baddha-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-jña* (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 *svayaṁvara* 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-śāstra-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 ajānataḥ  
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.

## ŚLOKA 6

न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो  
यद्वा जयेम यदि वा न 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; garīyaḥ—is better; naḥ—for us; yad vā—whether; jayema—we may conquer; vā—or; yadi—whether; jayeyuḥ—they may conquer; naḥ—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-VARṢINĪ

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 धर्मसंमूढचेताः ।

यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे

शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥७॥

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

*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-bhāvaḥ*—my chivalrous nature; (I) *prcchāmi*—am asking; *tvām*—You; *yat*—what; *syāt*—may be; (the) *niścitaṁ*—certain; *śreyaḥ*—auspicious path; *brūhi*—tell; *tat*—that; *me*—to me; *aham*—I (am); *te*—Your; *śiṣyaḥ*—disciple; (and) *praṇnam*—surrendered; *tvām*—unto You; *śādhi*—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-VARṢINĪ

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.”

ŚLOKA 8

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

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

*api*—even; *avāpya*—after attaining; (an) *asapatnam*—unrivalled; *ṛddham*—prosperous; *rājyaṁ*—kingdom; *bhūmau*—on the earth; *ca*—also; *ādhipatyam*—sovereignty; *surāṇām*—over the *devas*; *hi*—certainly; *na prapaśyāmi*—I do not see; (how) *apanudyāt*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 hr̥ṣīkeśam / guḍākeśaḥ parantapaḥ  
na yotsya iti govindam / uktvā tūṣṇīm babhūva ha*

*sañjayaḥ uvāca*—Sañjaya said; *evam*—thus; *uktvā*—having spoken; *hr̥ṣīkeśam*—to Kṛṣṇa; *guḍākeśaḥ*—Arjuna; *parantapaḥ*—slayer of the enemies; *uktvā*—saying; *govindam*—unto Govinda; *na yotsya*—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 hṛṣīkeśaḥ / prahasann iva bhārata  
senayor ubhayor madhye / viśīdantam idam vacaḥ*

*bhārata*—O descendant of Bhārata; *hṛṣīkeśaḥ*—Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *iva*—as if; *prahasann*—smiling; *madhye*—in the midst; *ubhayor*—of both; *senayor*—of the armies; *uvāca*—spoke; *idam*—these; *vacaḥ*—words; *tam viśīdantam*—unto the grieving one.

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

SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ

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 ‘Hṛṣīkeśa’ 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; *anvaśocaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 anvaśocaḥ*, “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 aham saṅkhye* (*Gītā* 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-āsūn*), as such gross bodies are temporary.

“*Agatāsūn* 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, *gatāsūn* (without life) and *agatāsūn* (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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 janmavatām vīra / dehena saha jāyate  
adya vābda-śatānte vā / mṛtyur vai prāṇinām dhruvaḥ*  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.1.38

In *Gītā* (2.27), it is said: *jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyuḥ*. “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*).

*prītir na yāvan mayi vāsudeve* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.5.6)  
*sa liṅgena vimucyate* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.29.83)  
*bhayaṁ dvitīyābhīniveśataḥ syād* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.2.37)  
*yadā ratir brahmaṇi naiṣṭhikī pumān* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.22.26)  
*mām upetya tu kaunteya* (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 *ātma-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 evāhaṁ jātu nāsaṁ / na tvaṁ neme janādhīpāḥ*  
*na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ / sarve vayatam ataḥ param*

*tu eva*—most certainly; *na*—never; *jātu*—at any time; *aham na āsam*—did I not exist; *na*—nor; *tvam*—you; *na*—nor; *īme*—these; *jana-adhīpāḥ*—kings; *ca*—also; *na*—nor; *ataḥ param*—hereafter; *sarve vayatam*—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-VARṢINĪ

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:

*sarveṣāṁ api bhūtānāṁ / nṛpa svātmaiva vallabhāḥ*

“O king, for all *jīvas*, the *ātmā* is certainly dearest.” According to this statement of Śrī Śukādeva 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 vidadhāti 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-VARṢINĪ 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 paṭyuh kāmāya priyo  
bhavaty ātmans tu kāmāya pātiḥ priyo bhavati na  
vā are sarvasya kāmāya sarvaṁ priyaṁ  
bhavaty ātmanas tu kāmāya sarvaṁ priyaṁ 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 देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥१३॥

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

*yathā*—just as; *asmin*—in this; *dehe*—body; *dehinaḥ*—belonging to the embodied soul; (passing from) *kaumāram*—boyhood; *yauvanam*—to youth; *jarā*—to old age; *tathā*—in the same way; (when there is) *prāptiḥ*—achievement; *deha-antara*—of a change of body; *tatra*—then; *dhīraḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 *dehinaḥ*, 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 Droṇa 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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 ।

आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥१४॥

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

*kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *sparsāḥ*—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-apāyinaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 *śītoṣṇaḥ āgamāpāyinaḥ*. “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 व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।  
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥१५॥

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

*puruṣa-rṣabha*—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; *saḥ*—he; *hi*—indeed; *kalpate*—is qualified; *amṛtatvāya*—for liberation.

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

pininess, 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-VARṢINĪ

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 *yaṁ hi na* is being spoken. Here the word *amṛtatvāya* means *mokṣa*.

## ŚLOKA 16

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।

उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥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; *bhāvaḥ*—existence; *sataḥ*—of the eternal; *vidyate*—there is; *na*—no; *abhāvaḥ*—destruction; *darśibhiḥ*—by the knowers; *tattva*—of the truth; (this) *api*—very; *antaḥ*—conclusion; (was) *dṛṣṭaḥ*—observed; *anayoḥ*—of these; *ubhayoḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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

*asaṅgo hi ayaṁ puruṣaḥ*, 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 idaṁ tatam*  
*vināśam avyayasyāsyā / na kaścit karttum arhati*

*tat*—that; *yena*—by which; *idaṁ*—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-VARṢINĪ

*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 ahaṁ jīvaḥ* (*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 yasmīn prāṇaṁ pañcadhā saṁviveśa*. “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*, *samāna* and *udāna*, remains situated in the body.” In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (5.9) it is said:

*bālāgra-śata-bhāgasya / śatadhā kalpitasya ca  
bhāgo jīvaḥ sa vijñeyaḥ / sa cānantyāya 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 avaro api drṣṭaḥ*. “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 saṁsarate 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 nityānāṁ cetanaś cetanānāṁ  
eko bahūnāṁ 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 *avināśī*. 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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 ayaṁ jīvāḥ svadehe vyāpya tiṣṭhati  
yathā vyāpya śarīrāṇi hari-candana-vipruṣaḥ*

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 śarīriṇaḥ  
anāśīno 'prameyasya / tasmād yudhyasva bhārata*

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

*śarīrīṇaḥ*—embodied soul; *uktāḥ*—are said; (to be) *anta-vantaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

To clarify the meaning of *nāsato vidyate bhāvaḥ*, Śrī Bhagavān speaks this *śloka* beginning with *antavantaḥ*. The word *śarīrīṇaḥ* 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 hantāraṁ / yaś cainaṁ manyate hatam*  
*ubhau tau na vijānīto / nāyaṁ hanti na hanyate*

*yaḥ*—he who; *vetti*—knows; *enam*—this (soul); (to be) *hantāraṁ*—the killer; *ca*—and; *yaḥ*—who; *manyate*—considers; *enam*—this soul; *hatam*—to be killed; *na vijānītaḥ*—is not in knowledge; *tau ubhau*—of the two; *ayaṁ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 / nāyaṁ 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) *ajaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

To establish the eternality 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 *ajaḥ*, 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 *purāṇaḥ*. 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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 / nāyaṁ kutaścin na vibhūva kaścit  
ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yaṁ 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. *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (4.4.25) also verifies this conclusion: *sa vā eṣa mahān aja ātmā 'jaro 'maro 'mṛto 'bhayaḥ*. “The *ātmā* is indisputably great, unborn, deathless, free from old age, immortal and fearless.”

#### ŚLOKA 21

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

*vedāvināśinaṁ nityaṁ / ya enam ajam avyayam  
kathaṁ sa puruṣaḥ pārtha / kaṁ ghātayati hanti kam*

*pārtha*—O Pārtha; *katham*—how; *yaḥ*—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) *saḥ*—that; *puruṣaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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

वासोऽसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।  
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥ २२ ॥

*vāsāṁsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya / navāni gṛhṇāti naro 'parāṇi*  
*tathā śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇāny / anyāni saṁyāti navāni dehī*

*yathā*—just as; *naraḥ*—a person; *vihāya*—giving up; *jīrṇāni*—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; *jīrṇāni*—old; *śarīrāṇi*—bodies; *saṁyāti*—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-VARṢINĪ

In this *śloka* beginning with *vāsāṁsi*, 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 pāvakaḥ*  
*na cainam kledayanty āpo / na śoṣayati mārutaḥ*

*śastrāṇi*—various weapons; *chindanti*—do not pierce; *enam*—him (the *jīvātmā*); *pāvakaḥ*—fire; *na dahati*—does not burn; *enam*—him; *āpaḥ*—waters; *na kledayanti*—do not moisten; *enam*—him; *ca*—and; *mārutaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

“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), *pāvakaḥ* means the fire weapon, *āpaḥ* the water weapon and *mārutaḥ* 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

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।  
 नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥२४॥  
 अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।  
 तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥२५॥

*acchedyo 'yam adāhyo 'yam / akledyo 'śoṣya eva ca*  
*nityaḥ sarva-gataḥ sthāṇur / acalo 'yaṁ sanātanaḥ*  
*avyakto 'yam acintyo 'yam / avikāryo 'yam ucyate*  
*tasmād evaṁ viditvainaṁ / nānuśocitum arhasi*

*ucyate*—it is said (that); *ayam*—this (soul); (is) *acchedyaḥ*—indivisible; *akledyaḥ*—insoluble; *ca*—and; *adāhyaḥ*—cannot be burned; *ayam*—this (soul); *eva*—certainly; *aśoṣyaḥ*—cannot be dried; (he is) *nityaḥ*—eternal; *sarva-gataḥ*—all-pervasive; *sthāṇur*—fixed; *acalaḥ*—non-moving; *ayam*—this (soul); (is) *sanātanaḥ*—ever-existing; *ayam*—this (soul); (is) *avyaktaḥ*—imperceptible; *ayam*—this (soul); (is) *acintyaḥ*—inconceivable; *ayam*—this (soul); (is) *vikāryaḥ*—immutable; *tasmāt*—therefore; *viditvā*—knowing; *evaṁ*—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-VARṢINĪ

The *ātmā* has been described as indivisible, etc. Repetition of this indicates the eternality 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 eternality 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 *sthāṇuḥ* (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 *avikāryaḥ* (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 cainaṁ nitya-jātaṁ / nityaṁ vā manyase mṛtam*  
*tathāpi tvam mahā-bāho / nainaṁ śocitum arhasi*

*ca*—also; *atha*—if however; *manyase*—you think; *enam*—this soul; *nitya-jātaṁ*—always takes birth; *vā*—or; *nityaṁ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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):

*kṣatriyāṇām ayaṁ dharmah / prajāpati-vinirmataḥ  
bhrātāpi bhrātaraṁ 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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 ।  
तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥२७॥

*jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyur / dhruvaṁ janma mṛtasya ca*

*tasmād aparihārye 'rthe / na tvam śocitum arhasi*

*jātasya*—for one who is born; *hi*—certainly; *mṛtyuḥ*—death; (is) *dhruvaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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-VARṢINĪ

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-jātayaḥ syur ajayotthanimitta-yujaḥ*. “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 dhruvaṁ lokam / adhruvaṁ 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-VARṢINĪ 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-śakti*). 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*:

*yathāgneḥ kṣudrā visphuliṅgā  
vyuccaranty evaṁ evāsmād ātmanaḥ  
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 manuṣyam*. “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 kaścīd enam-  
āścaryavad vadati tathaiva cānyaḥ  
āścaryavac cainam anyāḥ śṛṇoti  
śrutvāpy enam veda na caiva kaścit*

*kaścīd*—some person; *paśyati*—sees; *enam*—this (soul); *āścarya-vat*—as amazing; *ca*—also; *anyāḥ*—another; *vadati*—speaks of (him); *āścarya-vat*—as amazing; *tathā*—in the same way; *eva*—indeed; *anyāḥ*—another; *śṛṇoti*—hears (of him); *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *kaścīd*—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-VARṢINĪ

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-VARṢINĪ 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 labhyaḥ  
 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-realised (*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 maṅgalaṁ maṅgalānām  
 sakala-nigama-vallī-sat-phalaṁ cit-svarūpam*

*sakṛd api parigītaṁ 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!

*sāṅketyaṁ pārihāsyam vā / stobham helanam eva vā  
vaikuṇṭha-nāma-grahaṇam / aśeṣāgha-haram viduḥ  
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 शोचितुमर्हसि ॥३०॥*  
*dehī nityam avadhyo 'yam / dehe sarvasya bhārata  
tasmāt sarvāṇi bhūtāni / na tvaṁ 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) *avadhyaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमर्हसि ।  
धर्म्याद्धि 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; *dharmyāt*—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-VARṢINĪ

“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 स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम् ।  
सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् ॥३२॥

*yadṛcchayā copapannam / svarga-dvāram apāvṛtam*  
*sukhinaḥ kṣatriyāḥ pārtha / labhante yuddham īdṛśam*

*pārtha*—O Pārtha; *sukhinaḥ*—fortunate; *kṣatriyāḥ*—kings; *labhante*—achieve; *yuddham*—a battle; *īdṛśam*—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-VARṢINĪ

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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 *adharmā* will attain Svarga if they are killed in this battle.” *Dharma śāstra* states:

*āhaveṣu mitho 'nyonyaṁ / jighāṁsanto mahī-kṣitaḥ  
yuddhamānāḥ paraṁ śaktyā / svargaṁ yānti 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 चेत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।  
ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्त्तिञ्च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥३३॥

*atha cet tvam imam dharmyam / saṅgrāmaṁ 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; *saṅgrāmaṁ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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

अकीर्त्तिञ्चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् ।  
सम्भावितस्य चाकीर्त्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते ॥३४॥

*akīrttiṁ cāpi bhūtāni / kathayiṣyanti te 'vyayām  
sambhāvitasya cākīrttir / maraṇād atiricyate*

*ca*—and; *bhūtāni*—people; *kathayiṣyanti*—will speak; *te*—of your; *avyayām*—unending; *akīrttiṁ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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

## ŚLOKA 35

भयाद्रणादुपरतं मंस्यन्ते त्वां महारथाः ।  
येषाञ्च त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥३५॥

*bhayād raṇād uparataṁ / maṁsyante tvāṁ mahā-rathāḥ  
yeṣāṁ ca tvāṁ 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; *yeṣāṁ*—for those for whom; *tvam*—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.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ

“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. *Mahārathis* 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

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

*avācya-vādāṃś ca bahūn / vadiṣyanti tavāhitāḥ*  
*nindantas tava sāmāthyam / tato duḥkhataram nu kim*

*tava*—your; *ahitāḥ*—enemies; *vadiṣyanti*—will say; *bahūn*—many; *avācya*—harsh; *vādān*—words; *ca*—also; *nindantaḥ*—criticizing; *tava*—your; *sāmāthyam*—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?

SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ

*Avācya-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 / jtvā vā bhokṣyase mahīm  
tasmād uttiṣṭha kaunteya / yuddhāya kṛta-niścayaḥ*

*vā*—either; *hataḥ*—being killed; *prāpsyasi*—you will attain; *svargam*—the celestial kingdom; *vā*—or; *jtvā*—by achieving victory; *bhokṣyase*—you shall enjoy; *mahīm*—the earthly kingdom; *tasmāt*—therefore; *uttiṣṭha*—arise; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *kṛta-niścayaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥३८॥**

*sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā / lābhālābhau jayājayau  
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-VARṢINĪ

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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 / saṅgaṁ 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 बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां शृणु ।  
बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥३९॥

*eṣā te 'bhihitā sāṅkhye / buddhir yoge tv imāṁ śṛṇu  
buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha / karma-bandhaṁ 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; *imāṁ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Here, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is concluding His explanation of *sāṅkhya-yoga* and beginning His instructions on *buddhi-yoga*, or *bhakti-yoga*. Śrīla Cakravartī Ṭhākura defines *sāṅkhya-yoga* as follows: *samyak khyāyate prakāśyate vastu tattvam aneneti sāṅkhyam samyak jñānam*. “That which properly illuminates the *tattva* of an object is called *sāṅkhya-yoga*. *Sāṅkhya-yoga* 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* (*anātmā-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):

*iśāvāśyam idam sarvaṁ / yat kiñca jagatyām jagat  
tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā / mā gṛdhaḥ 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 / jijīviṣec chataṁ samāḥ*

*evam tvayi nānyatheto 'sti / na karma lipyate nare*  
*Śrī Isopaniṣad 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 ।  
 स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥४०॥**

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

*abhikrama*—endeavours; *iha*—in this *bhakti-yoga*; *asti*—there is; *na*—no; *nāśaḥ*—destruction; *vidyate*—there is; *na*—no; *pratyavāyaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

*Yoga (buddhi-yoga)* is of two types: (1) *bhakti-yoga* in the form of hearing and chanting; and (2) *bhagavad-arpita-niṣkāma-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 *niṣkarmya*. 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 *sādhya* (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 *nirguṇa-bhakti* (*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 *caṇḍāla* is freed from the great fear caused by material existence. Moreover in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.29.20) it is stated:

*na hy aṅgopakrame dhvaṁso / mad-dharmasyoddhavāṇv api  
mayā vyavasitaḥ samyaṅ / nirguṇatvād anāśiṣaḥ*

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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 naiveha 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-karma tat*. 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 *tadīya-vastu* (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॥

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

*kuru-nandana*—O beloved child of the Kurus; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *iha*—on this path of *bhakti*; (is) *vyavasāya-ātmikā*—resolute; (and) *ekā*—one-pointed; *hi*—certainly; *buddhayaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 mām bhaktyā / śraddhālur dṛḍha-niścayaḥ*

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-śākhāḥ*, 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 *niškāma-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.

#### SĀRĀTHA-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 (*nirviśeṣa*) and untainted (*nirāñjana*), 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-VARṢINĪ

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 *puṣpitām 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 *cāturmāsya-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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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-kāśīṣu  
mārtha-dṛṣṭim kṛthāḥ śrotra- / sparśiṣv asprṣṭa-vastuṣu*

O Prācinabarhiṣat, 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॥**

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

*kāma-ātmānaḥ*—having lusty natures; (they perform) *bahulām*—many; *kriyā-viśeṣa*—pompous Vedic rituals; *svarga-parāḥ*—dedicated to entering heaven; *prati*—towards; *gatiṁ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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*  
*vyavasāyātmikā 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; *vyavasāyātmikā*—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-VARṢINĪ

Those whose minds have been captivated by such flowery statements become attached to enjoyment and opulence. Such persons are not able to attain *samādhi* 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॥

*traiguṇya-viṣayā vedā / nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna*  
*nirdvandvo nitya-sattva-stho / niryoga-kṣema ātmavān*

*arjuna*—O Arjuna; *vedāḥ*—the Vedic; *viṣayāḥ*—subject matter; (is) *traiguṇya*—pertaining to the modes of material nature; *bhava*—be; *nistraiguṇyaḥ*—beyond the three modes; *nirdvandvaḥ*—be free from duality; (and) *nitya-sattva-sthaḥ*—situated in pure goodness or spiritual existence; (be) *niryoga-*

*kṣemaḥ*—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 *śuddha-sattva* by using the intelligence awarded by Me.

#### SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ

“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 ‘*syāñ*’. 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 *Māṭharaḥ-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 *Gītā Upaniṣad* 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 *Brahmayāmala 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* (*guṇātīta*) 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 *nirguṇa-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-arpaṇaṁ niṣphalaṁ vā / sāttvikaṁ nija-karma tat*  
*rājasam phala-saṅkalpaṁ / 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) *niṣphalaṁ vā* implies *naimittika-karma* (work which is occasional), performed without fruitive desires.

*kaivalyaṁ sāttvikaṁ jñānaṁ / rajo vaikalpikaṁ ca yat  
prākṛtaṁ tāmasaṁ jñānaṁ / man-niṣṭhaṁ nirguṇaṁ smṛtaṁ*  
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  
tāmasaṁ 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*.

*sāttvikaḥ kārako 'saṅgī / rāgāndho rājasaḥ smṛtaḥ  
tāmasaḥ smṛti-vibhraṣṭo / nirguṇo mad-apāśrayaḥ*  
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-sevāyām tu nirguṇā*  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.27

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

*pathyaṁ pūtam anāyas tam / āhāryaṁ sāttvikaṁ smṛtam*  
*rājasam cendriya-preṣṭhaṁ / tāmasaṁ 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 *rajo-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*.

*sāttvikaṁ sukham ātmotthaṁ / viṣayotthaṁ tu rājasam*  
*tāmasaṁ moha-dainyotthaṁ / nirguṇaṁ 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 *rajo-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*:

*dravyaṁ deśaḥ phalaṁ kālo / jñānaṁ karma ca kārakaḥ*  
*śraddhāvasthākṛtir niṣṭhā / traiguṇyaḥ 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  
dṛṣṭam śrutam anudhyātam / 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 saṁsṛtayaḥ puṁso / guṇa-karma-nibandhanāḥ  
yeneme nirjitāḥ 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 *nirguṇa-bhakti* can one conquer the three *guṇas* and not by any other means. In response to the question asked in *Gītā* (14.21): *katham caitāṁs trīn guṇān ativartate*, “How can one conquer the *guṇas* of material nature?” Then it is said later in *Gītā* (14.26):

*mām ca yo ’vyabhicāreṇa / bhakti-yogena sevate  
sa guṇān samatīyaitān / 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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

*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 grāhyaḥ / śraddhayātmā priyaḥ satām  
bhaktiḥ punāti man-niṣṭhā / śva-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 mām yogo / na sāṅkhyam dharma uddhava  
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo / yathā bhaktir mamorjitā  
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: *uddiṣṭa* and *nirddiṣṭa*. The subject which is the highest objective of any *śāstra* is called *uddiṣṭa-viṣaya*. That instruction which indicates *uddiṣṭa-viṣaya* is called *nirddiṣṭa-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

यावानर्थ उदपाने सर्वतः संप्लुतोदके ।  
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; arthaḥ—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-VARṢINĪ

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 dhvaṁso / mad-dharmasyoddhavāṇv api  
mayā vyavasitaḥ samyaṅ / 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 *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.3.2) it is also said:

*brahma-varcasa-kāmas tu / yajeta brahmaṇaḥ patim*  
*indram indriya-kāmas tu / prajā-kāmaḥ prajāpatīm*

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 Prajāpatīs, while a person desiring wealth should worship Durgā.

After this it is said:

*akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā / mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ*  
*tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena / yajeta puruṣaṁ param*  
Śrīmad-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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥४७॥

*karmaṇy evādhikāras te / mā phaleṣu kadācana*  
*mā karma-phala-hetur 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; *hetuḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 buddhiṃ 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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 laukikaḥ*. “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 कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।  
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥४८॥

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

*dhanañjaya*—O Dhanañjaya; *yoga-sthaḥ*—being situated in *bhakti-yoga*; *tyaktvā*—abandoning; *saṅgam*—attachment; *kuru*—perform; *karmāṇi*—prescribed duties; *bhūtvā*—becoming; *samaḥ*—equiposed; *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-VARṢINĪ

In this *śloka* beginning with *yoga-sthaḥ*, 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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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

#### ŚLOKA 49

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनञ्जय ।  
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः 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-VARṢINĪ

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 *niškāma-karma-yoga*, which is offered to Parameśvara and which is also called *buddhi-yoga*. Here, the word *buddhau* implies *niškāma-karma*, while *buddhi-yoga* implies *niškāma-karma-yoga*.

## SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

*Kṛpaṇāḥ* refers to those who are unable to understand the meaning of *niškāma-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, *mahārṣis* and *brahmarṣis* 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 *mahārṣi* Yājñavalkya got up and told his students, “O *brahmacāris*, take these cows to my *āśrama*.”

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

Mahārṣi 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 kṛpaṇaḥ* (*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: *kṛpaṇaḥ . . . guṇa-vastu-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 ’jitendriyaḥ*. “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 / yogaḥ 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-VARṢINĪ

Here, the word *yogāya* refers to that *yoga* which possesses the characteristics defined in *Gītā* 2.48. *Yuṅyasva* 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 manīṣiṇaḥ*  
*janma-bandha-vinirmuktāḥ / padam gacchanty anāmayam*

*hi*—indeed; *manīṣiṇaḥ*—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 बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति ।  
तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥५२॥

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

*yadā*—when; *te*—your; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *vyatitarīṣyati*—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-VARṢINĪ

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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

*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*:

*parikṣya 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  
evaṁ vimṛśya 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 योगमवाप्स्यसि ॥५३॥**

*śruti-vipratipannā te / yadā sthāsyati niścalā  
samādhau acalā buddhiḥ / 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-VARṢINĪ

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 ब्रजेत किम् ॥५४॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*sthita-prajñāsya kā bhāṣā / samādhi-sthasya keśava*

*sthita-dhīḥ kiṁ prabhāṣeta / kim āsīta vrajeta kim*

*arjunaḥ uvāca*—Arjuna said; *keśava*—O Keśava; *sthita-prajñāsya*—for one whose intelligence is fixed; *samādhi-sthasya*—and situated in trance; *kā*—what?; *bhāṣā*—(are his) symptoms; *kiṁ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 *śaraṇāgati* (surrender) to Him.

The sixteen questions asked by Arjuna are as follows:

- 1) *sthita-prajñāsya 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 ‘yaṁ* (3.36). “By what is one impelled to perform sinful acts?”
- 4) *aparaṁ bhavato janma* (4.4). “How am I to understand that You previously instructed this science to Vivasvān?”

- 5) *sannyāsaṁ karmaṇām kṛṣṇa* (5.1). “Which path is better, renunciation or selfless action?”
- 6) *yo ‘yaṁ yogas tvayā proktaḥ* (6.33). “This path of *yoga* appears impractical due to the unsteady nature of the mind.”
- 7) *ayaṁ śraddhayopeto* (6.37). “What is the destination of the unsuccessful transcendentalist?”
- 8) *kiṁ tad brahma kim adhyātmaṁ* (8.1-2). “What are *brahma*, *karma*, *adhyātma*, *adhibhūta*, *adhidaiva* and *adhiyajña*, and how can You be known at the time of death?”
- 9) *vaktum arhasy aśeṣeṇa* (10.16). “Please tell me in detail about Your *vibhūti*.”
- 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) *teṣāṁ ke yoga-vittamāḥ* (12.1). “Who is more perfect, he who performs *bhajana* or the impersonalist?”
- 13) *prakṛtiṁ puruṣaṁ caiva* (13.1). “I wish to know about *prakṛti*, *puruṣa*, *kṣetra*, *kṣetrajña*, *jñāna* and *jñeyam*.”
- 14) *kair liṅgaḥ trīn guṇān etān* (14.21). “By what symptoms can one identify a person who has transcended the *guṇas*?”
- 15) *teṣāṁ 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 evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ / sthita-prajñas tadocyate*

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

#### SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ

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 *śrutis* confirm this:

*yadā sarve pramucyante / kāmā ye 'sya hṛdi sthitāḥ*  
*atha martyo 'mṛto 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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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

*vimuñcati yadā kāmān / mānava manasi sthitān*  
*tarhy eva puṇḍarikākṣa / 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.

ŚLOKA 56

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।  
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥५६॥

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

*anudvigna-manāḥ*—one whose mind is unagitated; *duḥkheṣu*—in the (presence of the threefold) miseries; *vigata-spr̥haḥ*—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; *munīḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

“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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 priyaṁ prāpya / nodvijet prāpya cāpriyam  
sthira-buddhir asammūḍho / brahma-vid brahmaṇi sthitaḥ*  
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* Jaḍa Bharata protecting his family's fields. The king became happy when he saw that Jaḍa Bharata was blessed with a body appropriate for the sacrifice. According to the rules for sacrificing a human, he fed Jaḍa 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* Jaḍa 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 Jaḍa 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* Jaḍa Bharata on his way. This deity of Bhadra Kālī is still present in Kurukṣetra.

While describing this history of Jaḍa Bharata in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.9.20), Śukadeva Gosvāmī says to Parikṣit 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

*paramahamsas* 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.”

## ŚLOKA 57

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

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

*yaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 *paramahamsas*. 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-prajña*.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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-prajña* 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 संहस्ते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।  
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥५८॥

yadā saṁharate cāyaṁ / kūrmo 'ṅgānīva sarvaśaḥ  
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas / tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā

ca—and; yadā—when; saṁharate—withdraws; indriyāṇī—his senses; indriyā-arthebhyas—from the sense objects; sarvaśaḥ—completely; iva—as; ayam—a; kūrmaḥ—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-VARṢINĪ

Śrī Bhagavān responds to Arjuna's question, *kim āsīta*, "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 *āsana* (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 विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।  
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥५९॥

*viṣayā vinivarttante / nirāhārasya dehinaḥ*  
*rasa-varjaṁ raso 'py asya / paraṁ dṛṣṭvā nivarttate*

*dehinaḥ*—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; *dṛṣṭvā*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 *viṣayāḥ*. 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-prajñā*, 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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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-prajñā*. After directly seeing the beauty of *parama-tattva* Bhagavān, one who is *sthita-prajñā* 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॥

yata-to hy api kaunteya / puruṣasya vipaścitaḥ  
indriyāṇi pramāthīni / haranti prasabhaṁ manaḥ

*kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *pramāthīni*—restless; *indriyāṇi*—senses; *hi*—indeed; *prasabham*—forcibly; *haranti*—steal away; *manaḥ*—the mind; *api*—even; *puruṣasya*—of a man; *vipaścitaḥ*—who possesses knowledge and discrimination; *yata-taḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 *yata-taḥ*, to explain this. Here the word *pramāthīni* means those things which cause agitation.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayor  
vacāṁsi vaikuṇṭha-guṇānuvarṇane  
karau harer mandira-mārjanādiṣu  
śrutim cakārācyuta-sat-kathodaye  
mukunda-liṅgālaya-darśane dṛṣau  
tad-bhṛtya-gātra-sparśe 'ṅga-saṅgamam  
ghrāṇam ca tat-pāda-saroja-saurabhe  
śrīmat-tulasyā rasanām tad-arpite  
pādau hareḥ kṣetra-padānusarpaṇe  
śīro hṛṣīkeśa-padābhivandane  
kāmaṁ ca dāsyē na tu kāma-kāmyayā  
yathottamaśloka-janāśrayā ratiḥ*

*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 āsita mat-parah  
vaśe hi yasyendriyāṇi / tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

*āsita*—he should be situated; *saṁyamya*—keeping under control; *tāni sarvāṇi*—all the senses; *yuktaḥ*—connected in devotion; *mat-parah*—devoted unto Me; *hi*—because; *yasya*—one whose; *indriyāṇi*—senses; *vaśe*—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-VARṢINĪ

“Here, the word *mat-parah* 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):

*prāyaśaḥ puṇḍarikākṣa / yuñjanto yogino manaḥ  
viśīdanty asaṁdhānān / mano-nigraha-karṣitāḥ  
athāta ānanda-dughaṁ padāmbujam  
haṁsāḥ śrayeraṇṇ aravinda-locana  
sukhaṁ nu viśveśvara yoga-karmabhis  
tvan-māyayāmī vihatā na māninaḥ*

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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 Antaryāmi Bhagavān, Śrī Hṛṣīkeśa. Therefore, one should control one's senses in a simple, natural way by *bhakti* alone. It is said in *śāstra*:

*hṛṣīkeśe hṛṣīkāṇi / yasya sthairya-gatāni hi  
sa eva dhairyam āpnoti / saṁsāre jīva-cañcale  
Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 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 Hṛṣīkeśa, the master of the senses, their senses naturally become stable and controlled.

#### ŚLOKA 62

**ध्यायतो विषयान् पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।  
सङ्गत् संजायते कामः कामात् क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥६२॥**

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

*pūṁsaḥ*—for a person; *dhyāyataḥ*—one who contemplates; *viśayān*—sense objects such as sound; *saṅgaḥ*—attachment; *upajāyate*—becomes manifest; *teṣu*—towards them; *saṅgāt*—from attachment; *kāmaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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

क्रोधाद्भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात् स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।  
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात् प्रणश्यति ॥६३॥

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

*krodhāt*—from anger; *bhavati*—comes; *sammohaḥ*—utter confusion; *sammohāt*—from such confusion; (there is) *vibhramah*—disorder; *smṛti*—of memory; *smṛti-bhramśāt*—from disorder of memory; *buddhi-nāśaḥ*—intelligence is destroyed; *buddhi-nāśāt*—from loss of intelligence; *praṇaśyati*—one is completely ruined.

Anger gives rise to delusion, and from delusion comes loss of memory, forgetting the instructions of *śāstra*. 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-VARṢINĪ

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 *śāstra* (*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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 pancāvatīṣṭhante jñānāni manasā saha  
buddhiś ca na viceṣṭati tām āhuḥ paramām gatim  
Kāṭha 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):

*viśayeṣu guṇādhyāsāt / pumsaḥ saṅgas tato bhavet  
saṅgāt tatra bhavet kāmāḥ / 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 durviṣahaḥ krodhas / tamas tam anuvartate  
tamasā grasyate puṁsaś / cetanā vyāpinī drutam*

From quarrel, unrestrained anger arises, anger causes delusion, and when one is in delusion, the wisdom to discriminate between right and wrong vanishes.

*taṁ virahitaḥ sādho / jantuḥ śūnyāya kalpate  
tato 'sya svārtha-vibhramśo / 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 ।  
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥६४॥**

*rāga-dveṣa-vimuktais 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-VARṢINĪ

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. *Vidheyātma* means one whose *ātma* (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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।  
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥६५॥

*prasāde sarva-duḥkhānām / hāniḥ 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-cetasoḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

*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-cetasoḥ* 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 *Vedānta-sūtra*. However, after he followed the instructions of Śrī Nārada, his heart became blissful through the exclusive practice of *bhakti*.

#### SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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 *dhṛta-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, Devarṣi Nārada. Śrī Nārada answered:

*śrī nārada uvāca*  
*bhavatānudita-prāyaṁ / yaśo bhagavato 'malam*  
*yenaivāsau na tuṣyeta / manye tad darśanaṁ khilam*  
*yathā dharmādayaś cārthā / muni-varyānukīrtitāḥ*  
*na tathā vāsudevasya / mahimā hy anuvarṇitaḥ*  
*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 puṁsaḥ / 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; *abhāvayataḥ*—for the non-meditative; (there is) *na*—no; *śāntiḥ*—peace; (and for) *aśāntasya*—the non-peaceful; *kutaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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. *Abhāvayataḥ* 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 प्रज्ञां वायुर्नाविमिवाम्भसि ॥६७॥

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

*hi*—certainly; *vāyuḥ*—the wind; *harati*—carries away; *nāvam*—a boat; *ambhasi*—on the water; *iva*—similarly; *tat manaḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

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.”

ŚLOKA 68

*तस्माद् यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।  
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥६८॥*

*tasmād yasya mahā-bāho / nigṛhītāni sarvaśaḥ  
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas / tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

*tasmāt*—therefore; *mahā-bāho*—O mighty-armed one; (he) *yasya*—whose; *indriyāṇī*—senses; *nigṛhītāni*—are restrained; *sarvaśaḥ*—in every respect; *indriya-arthebhyas*—from the sense objects; *tasya*—his; *prajñā*—intelligence; (is) *pratiṣṭhitā*—fixed.

**Therefore, O Mahā-bāho, one whose senses are completely restrained from their respective sense**

objects is *sthita-prajña*, fixed in intelligence.

SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ

*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-VARṢINĪ

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-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

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. *Ajñānaṁ 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 yaṁ 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; *yaṁ*—(he) within whom; *sarve*—all; *kāmāḥ*—the agitations of the senses; *praviśanti*—forcibly enter; (remains) *acala-pratiṣṭham*—fixed and unmoved; *saḥ*—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-VARṢINĪ

*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. *Acala-pratiṣṭham* means whose boundary is not crossed. Similarly, various sense objects also present themselves to one who is *sthita-prajñā*. 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-prajñā*. Only they attain *śānti*, that is, *jñāna*.

## ŚLOKA 71

विहाय कामान् यः सर्वान् पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।  
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥७१॥

*vihāya kāmān yaḥ sarvān / pumāṁś carati niḥspṛhaḥ*  
*nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ / sa śāntim adhigacchati*

*yaḥ*—who; *pumān*—the person; *vihāya*—giving up; *sarvān*—all; *kāmān*—material desires; *carati*—wanders; *niḥ-spṛhaḥ*—free from hankering; *nir-mamaḥ*—without a sense of possessiveness; *nir-ahaṅkāraḥ*—without false ego; *saḥ*—that person; *adhigacchati*—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-VARṢINĪ

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 ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥७२॥

eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ pārtha / naināṁ prāpya vimuhyati  
sthitvāsyām anta-kāle '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-kāle—at the time of death; ṛcchati—one attains; brahma-nirvāṇam—spiritual emancipation.

O Pārtha, attaining *brahma* in this way is called *brāhmī sthitiḥ*. 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-VARṢINĪ

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 *Bhāvanuvāda* of the *Sārārtha-Varṣiṇī Tīkā*,  
by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Tṭhākura, on the Second Chapter  
of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, which gives pleasure to the *bhaktas*  
and is accepted by all saintly persons.

## SĀRĀRTHA-VARṢINĪ PRAKĀŚIKĀ-VṚTTI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Tṭhākura says, “That *tattva* which is contrary to inert matter is called *brahma*. One can attain

