

- CHAPTER 13 -

Nature, the Enjoyer, and Consciousness

Chapter 13—Texts 1–2

arjuna uvāca
prakṛtiṁ puruṣaṁ caiva
kṣetraṁ kṣetra-jñam eva ca
etad veditum icchāmi
jñānaṁ jñeyaṁ ca keśava

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
idaṁ śarīraṁ kaunteya
kṣetram ity abhidhīyate
etad yo vetti taṁ prāhuḥ
kṣetra-jña iti tad-vidaḥ

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca—Arjuna said; *prakṛtiṁ*—nature; *puruṣaṁ*—the enjoyer; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *kṣetraṁ*—the field; *kṣetra-jñam*—the knower of the field; *eva*—certainly; *ca*—also; *etad*—all this; *veditum*—to understand; *icchāmi*—I wish; *jñānaṁ*—knowledge; *jñeyaṁ*—the object of knowledge; *ca*—also; *keśava*—O Kṛṣṇa; *śrī-bhagavān uvāca*—the Personality of Godhead said; *idaṁ*—this; *śarīraṁ*—body; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *kṣetram*—the field; *iti*—thus; *abhidhīyate*—is called; *etad*—this; *yaḥ*—one who; *vetti*—knows; *taṁ*—he; *prāhuḥ*—is called; *kṣetra-jñaḥ*—the knower of the field; *iti*—thus; *tad-vidaḥ*—by those who know this.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O my dear Kṛṣṇa, I wish to know about prakṛti [nature], puruṣa [the enjoyer], and the field and the knower of the field, and of knowledge and the object of knowledge.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: This body, O son of Kuntī, is called the field, and one who knows this body is called the knower of the field.

PURPORT

Arjuna was inquisitive about prakṛti (nature), puruṣa (the enjoyer), kṣetra (the field), kṣetra-jña (its knower), and knowledge and the object of knowledge. When he inquired

about all these, Kṛṣṇa said that this body is called the field and that one who knows this body is called the knower of the field. This body is the field of activity for the conditioned soul. The conditioned soul is entrapped in material existence, and he attempts to lord it over material nature. And so, according to his capacity to dominate material nature, he gets a field of activity. That field of activity is the body. And what is the body? The body is made of senses. The conditioned soul wants to enjoy sense gratification, and, according to his capacity to enjoy sense gratification, he is offered a body, or field of activity. Therefore the body is called *kṣetra*, or the field of activity for the conditioned soul. Now, the person, who should not identify himself with the body, is called *kṣetra-jñā*, the knower of the field. It is not very difficult to understand the difference between the field and its knower, the body and the knower of the body. Any person can consider that from childhood to old age he undergoes so many changes of body and yet is still one person, remaining. Thus there is a difference between the knower of the field of activities and the actual field of activities. A living conditioned soul can thus understand that he is different from the body. It is described in the beginning—*dehino 'smin*—that the living entity is within the body and that the body is changing from childhood to boyhood and from boyhood to youth and from youth to old age, and the person who owns the body knows that the body is changing. The owner is distinctly *kṣetra-jñā*. Sometimes we think, “I am happy,” “I am a man,” “I am a woman,” “I am a dog,” “I am a cat.” These are the bodily designations of the knower. But the knower is different from the body. Although we may use many articles—our clothes, etc.—we know that we are different from the things used. Similarly, we also understand by a little contemplation that we are different from the body. I or you or anyone else who owns the body is called *kṣetra-jñā*, the knower of the field of activities, and the body is called *kṣetra*, the field of activities itself.

In the first six chapters of *Bhagavad-gītā* the knower of the body (the living entity) and the position by which he can understand the Supreme Lord are described. In the middle six chapters of the *Bhagavad-gītā* the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the relationship between the individual soul and the Supersoul in regard to devotional service are described. The superior position of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the subordinate position of the individual soul are definitely defined in these chapters. The living entities are subordinate under all circumstances, but in their forgetfulness they are suffering. When enlightened by pious activities, they approach the Supreme Lord in different capacities—as the distressed, those in want of money, the inquisitive, and those in search of knowledge. That is also described. Now, starting with the Thirteenth Chapter, how the living entity comes into contact with material nature and how he is delivered by the Supreme Lord through the different methods of fruitive activities, cultivation of knowledge, and the discharge of devotional service are explained. Although the living entity is completely different from the material body, he somehow becomes related. This also is explained.

Chapter 13—Text 3

*kṣetra-jñāṁ cāpi mām viddhi
sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata
kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor jñānam
yat taj jñānam matam mama*

SYNONYMS

kṣetra-jñāṁ—the knower of the field; *ca*—also; *api*—certainly; *mām*—Me; *viddhi*—know; *sarva*—all; *kṣetreṣu*—in bodily fields; *bhārata*—O son of Bharata; *kṣetra*—the field of activities (the body); *kṣetra-jñayor*—and the knower of the field; *jñānam*—knowledge of; *yat*—that which; *taj*—that; *jñānam*—knowledge; *matam*—opinion; *mama*—My.

TRANSLATION

O scion of Bharata, you should understand that I am also the knower in all bodies, and to understand this body and its knower is called knowledge. That is My opinion.

PURPORT

While discussing the subject of the body and the knower of the body, the soul and the Supersoul, we shall find three different topics of study: the Lord, the living entity, and matter. In every field of activities, in every body, there are two souls: the individual soul and the Supersoul. Because the Supersoul is the plenary expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa says, “I am also the knower, but I am not the individual knower of the body. I am the superknower. I am present in every body as the Paramātmā, or Supersoul.”

One who studies the subject matter of the field of activity and the knower of the field very minutely, in terms of this *Bhagavad-gītā*, can attain to knowledge.

The Lord says, “I am the knower of the field of activities in every individual body.” The individual may be the knower of his own body, but he is not in knowledge of other bodies. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is present as the Supersoul in all bodies, knows everything about all bodies. He knows all the different bodies of all the various species of life. A citizen may know everything about his patch of land, but the king knows not only his palace but all the properties possessed by the individual citizens. Similarly, one may be the proprietor of the body individually, but the Supreme Lord is the proprietor of all bodies. The king is the original proprietor of the kingdom, and the citizen is the secondary proprietor. Similarly, the Supreme Lord is the supreme proprietor of all bodies.

The body consists of the senses. The Supreme Lord is Hṛṣīkeśa, Which means “the controller of the senses.” He is the original controller of the senses, just as the king is the original controller of all the activities of the state; the citizens are secondary controllers. The Lord says, “I am also the knower.” This means that He is the superknower; the individual soul knows only his particular body. In the Vedic literature, it is stated as

follows:

*kṣetrāṇi hi śarīrāṇi
bījaṁ cāpi śubhāśubhe
tāni vetti sa yogātmā
tataḥ kṣetra-jña ucyate*

This body is called the *kṣetra*, and within it dwells the owner of the body and the Supreme Lord, who knows both the body and the owner of the body. Therefore He is called the knower of all fields. The distinction between the field of activities, the knower of activities, and the supreme knower of activities is described as follows. Perfect knowledge of the constitution of the body, the constitution of the individual soul, and the constitution of the Supersoul is known in terms of Vedic literature as *jñāna*. That is the opinion of Kṛṣṇa. To understand both the soul and the Supersoul as one yet distinct is knowledge. One who does not understand the field of activity and the knower of activity is not in perfect knowledge. One has to understand the position of *prakṛti* (nature), *puruṣa* (the enjoyer of nature) and *īśvara* (the knower who dominates or controls nature and the individual soul). One should not confuse the three in their different capacities. One should not confuse the painter, the painting and the easel. This material world, which is the field of activities, is nature, and the enjoyer of nature is the living entity, and above them both is the supreme controller, the Personality of Godhead. It is stated in the Vedic language (in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 1.12), *bhoktā bhogyaṁ preritāraṁ ca matvā/ sarvaṁ proktaṁ tri vidham-brahmam etat*. There are three Brahman conceptions: *prakṛti* is Brahman as the field of activities, and the *jīva* (individual soul) is also Brahman and is trying to control material nature, and the controller of both of them is also Brahman, but He is the factual controller.

In this chapter it will also be explained that out of the two knowers, one is fallible and the other is infallible. One is superior and the other is subordinate. One who understands the two knowers of the field to be one and the same contradicts the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who states here very clearly, “I am also the knower of the field of activity.” One who misunderstands a rope to be a serpent is not in knowledge. There are different kinds of bodies, and there are different owners of the bodies. Because each individual soul has his individual capacity for lording it over material nature, there are different bodies. But the Supreme also is present in them as the controller. The word *ca* is significant, for it indicates the total number of bodies. That is the opinion of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul present in each and every body apart from the individual soul. And Kṛṣṇa explicitly says here that the Supersoul is the controller of both the field of activities and the finite enjoyer.

Chapter 13—Text 4

*tat kṣetram yac ca yādṛk ca
yad-vikāri yataś ca yat
sa ca yo yat-prabhāvaś ca
tat samāsenā me śṛṇu*

SYNONYMS

tat—that; *kṣetram*—field of activities; *yat*—what; *ca*—also; *yādṛk*—as it is; *ca*—also; *yat*—having what; *vikāri*—changes; *yataḥ*—from which; *ca*—also; *yat*—what; *saḥ*—he; *ca*—also; *yaḥ*—who; *yat*—having what; *prabhāvaḥ*—influence; *ca*—also; *tat*—that; *samāsenā*—in summary; *me*—from Me; *śṛṇu*—understand.

TRANSLATION

Now please hear My brief description of this field of activity and how it is constituted, what its changes are, whence it is produced, who that knower of the field of activities is, and what his influences are.

PURPORT

The Lord is describing the field of activities and the knower of the field of activities in their constitutional positions. One has to know how this body is constituted, the materials of which this body is made, under whose control this body is working, how the changes are taking place, wherefrom the changes are coming, what the causes are, what the reasons are, what the ultimate goal of the individual soul is, and what the actual form of the individual soul is. One should also know the distinction between the individual living soul and the Supersoul, their different influences, their potentials, etc. One just has to understand this *Bhagavad-gītā* directly from the description given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and all this will be clarified. But one should be careful not to consider the Supreme Personality of Godhead in every body to be one with the individual soul, the *jīva*. This is something like equating the potent and the impotent.

Chapter 13—Text 5

*ṛṣibhir bahudhā gītaṁ
chandobhir vividhaiḥ pṛthak
brahma-sūtra-padaiś caiva
hetumadbhir viniścitaiḥ*

SYNONYMS

ṛṣibhiḥ—by the wise sages; *bahudhā*—in many ways; *gītaṁ*—described; *chandobhiḥ*—by Vedic hymns; *vividhaiḥ*—various; *pṛthak*—variously; *brahma-sūtra*—of the *Vedānta*; *padaiḥ*—by the aphorisms; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *hetu-madbhiḥ*—with cause and effect; *viniścitaiḥ*—certain.

TRANSLATION

That knowledge of the field of activities and of the knower of activities is described by various sages in various Vedic writings. It is especially presented in *Vedānta-sūtra* with all reasoning as to cause and effect.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the highest authority in explaining this knowledge. Still, as a matter of course, learned scholars and standard authorities always give evidence from previous authorities. Kṛṣṇa is explaining this most controversial point regarding the duality and nonduality of the soul and the Supersoul by referring to a scripture, the *Vedānta*, which is accepted as authority. First He says, “This is according to different sages.” As far as the sages are concerned, besides Himself, Vyāsadeva (the author of the *Vedānta-sūtra*) is a great sage, and in the *Vedānta-sūtra* duality is perfectly explained. And Vyāsadeva’s father, Parāśara, is also a great sage, and he writes in his books of religiosity, *aham tvam ca tathānye*. .. “we—you, I and the various other living entities—are all transcendental, although in material bodies. Now we are fallen into the ways of the three modes of material nature according to our different *karma*. As such, some are on higher levels, and some are in the lower nature. The higher and lower natures exist due to ignorance and are being manifested in an infinite number of living entities. But the Supersoul, which is infallible, is uncontaminated by the three qualities of nature and is transcendental.” Similarly, in the original *Vedas*, a distinction between the soul, the Supersoul and the body is made, especially in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. There are many great sages who have explained this, and Parāśara is considered principal among them.

The word *chandobhiḥ* refers to the various Vedic literatures. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, for example, which is a branch of the *Yajur Veda*, describes nature, the living entity and the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

As stated before, *kṣetra* is the field of activities, and there are two kinds of *kṣetra-jña*: the individual living entity and the supreme living entity. As stated in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*

(2.9), *brahma pucchaṁ pratiṣṭhā*. There is a manifestation of the Supreme Lord's energy known as *anna-maya*, dependence upon food for existence. This is a materialistic realization of the Supreme. Then, in *prāṇa-maya*, after realizing the Supreme Absolute Truth in food, one can realize the Absolute Truth in the living symptoms or life forms. In *jñāna-maya*, realization extends beyond the living symptoms to the point of thinking, feeling and willing. Then there is Brahman realization, called *viññāna-maya*, in which the living entity's mind and life symptoms are distinguished from the living entity himself. The next and supreme stage is *ānanda-maya*, realization of the all-blissful nature. Thus there are five stages of Brahman realization, which are called *brahma pucchaṁ*. Out of these, the first three—*anna-maya*, *prāṇa-maya* and *jñāna-maya*—involve the fields of activities of the living entities. Transcendental to all these fields of activities is the Supreme Lord, who is called *ānanda-maya*. The *Vedānta-sūtra* also describes the Supreme by saying, *ānanda-mayo 'bhyāsāt*: the Supreme Personality of Godhead is by nature full of joy. To enjoy His transcendental bliss, He expands into *viññāna-maya*, *prāṇa-maya*, *jñāna-maya* and *anna-maya*. In the field of activities the living entity is considered to be the enjoyer, and different from him is the *ānanda-maya*. That means that if the living entity decides to enjoy in dovetailing himself with the *ānanda-maya*, then he becomes perfect. This is the real picture of the Supreme Lord as the supreme knower of the field, the living entity as the subordinate knower, and the nature of the field of activities. One has to search for this truth in the *Vedānta-sūtra*, or *Brahma-sūtra*.

It is mentioned here that the codes of the *Brahma-sūtra* are very nicely arranged according to cause and effect. Some of the *sūtras*, or aphorisms, are *na viyad aśruteḥ* (2.3.2), *nātmā śruteḥ* (2.3.18), and *parāt tu tac-chruteḥ* (2.3.40). The first aphorism indicates the field of activities, the second indicates the living entity, and the third indicates the Supreme Lord, the *summum bonum* among all the manifestations of various entities.

Chapter 13—Texts 6–7

*mahā-bhūtāny ahaṅkāro
buddhir avyaktam eva ca
indriyāṇi daśaikam ca
pañca cendriya-gocarāḥ*

*icchā dveṣaḥ sukham duḥkham
saṅghātaś cetanā dhṛtiḥ
etat kṣetram samāsenā
sa-vikāram udāhṛtam*

SYNONYMS

mahā-bhūtāni—the great elements; *ahaṅkāraḥ*—false ego; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *avyaktam*—the unmanifested; *eva*—certainly; *ca*—also; *indriyāṇi*—the senses; *daśa-ekam*—eleven; *ca*—also; *pañca*—five; *ca*—also; *indriya-go-carāḥ*—the objects of the senses; *icchā*—desire; *dveṣaḥ*—hatred; *sukham*—happiness; *duḥkham*—distress; *saṅghātaḥ*—the aggregate; *cetanā*—living symptoms; *dhṛtiḥ*—conviction; *etat*—all this; *kṣetram*—the field of activities; *samāsenā*—in summary; *sa-vikāram*—with interactions; *udāhṛtam*—exemplified.

TRANSLATION

The five great elements, false ego, intelligence, the unmanifested, the ten senses and the mind, the five sense objects, desire, hatred, happiness, distress, the aggregate, the life symptoms, and convictions—all these are considered, in summary, to be the field of activities and its interactions.

PURPORT

From all the authoritative statements of the great sages, the Vedic hymns and the aphorisms of the *Vedānta-sūtra*, the components of this world can be understood as follows. First there are earth, water, fire, air and ether. These are the five great elements (*mahā-bhūta*). Then there are false ego, intelligence and the unmanifested stage of the three modes of nature. Then there are five senses for acquiring knowledge: the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin. Then five working senses: voice, legs, hands, anus and genitals. Then, above the senses, there is the mind, which is within and which can be called the sense within. Therefore, including the mind, there are eleven senses altogether. Then there are the five objects of the senses: smell, taste, form, touch and sound. Now the aggregate of these twenty-four elements is called the field of activity. If one makes an analytical study of these twenty-four subjects, then he can very well understand the field of activity. Then there are desire, hatred, happiness and distress, which are interactions, representations of the five great elements in the gross body. The living symptoms,

represented by consciousness and conviction, are the manifestation of the subtle body—mind, ego and intelligence. These subtle elements are included within the field of activities.

The five great elements are a gross representation of the false ego, which in turn represents the primal stage of false ego technically called the materialistic conception, or *tāmasa-buddhi*, intelligence in ignorance. This, further, represents the unmanifested stage of the three modes of material nature. The unmanifested modes of material nature are called *pradhāna*.

One who desires to know the twenty-four elements in detail along with their interactions should study the philosophy in more detail. In *Bhagavad-gītā*, a summary only is given.

The body is the representation of all these factors, and there are changes of the body, which are six in number: the body is born, it grows, it stays, it produces by-products, then it begins to decay, and at the last stage it vanishes. Therefore the field is a nonpermanent material thing. However, the *kṣetra-jñā*, the knower of the field, its proprietor, is different.

Chapter 13—Texts 8–12

(8)

*amānitvam adambhitvam
ahiṃsā kṣāntir ārjavam
ācāryopāśanam śaucam
sthairyam ātma-vinigrahaḥ*

(9)

*indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam
anahaṅkāra eva ca
janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi-
duḥkha-doṣānudarśanam*

(10)

*asaktir anabhiṣvaṅgaḥ
putra-dāra-grhādiṣu
nityam ca sama-cittatvam
iṣṭāniṣṭopapattiṣu*

(11)

*mayi cānanya-yogena
bhaktir avyabhicāriṇī
vivikta-deśa-sevitvam
aratir jana-saṁsadi*

(12)

*adhyātma-jñāna-nityatvam
tattva-jñānārtha-darśanam
etaḥ jñānam iti proktam
ajñānam yad ato 'nyathā*

SYNONYMS

amānitvam—humility; *adambhitvam*—pridelessness; *ahiṃsā*—nonviolence; *kṣāntiḥ*—tolerance; *ārjavam*—simplicity; *ācārya-upāśanam*—approaching a bona fide spiritual master; *śaucam*—cleanliness; *sthairyam*—steadfastness; *ātma-vinigrahaḥ*—self-control; *indriya-artheṣu*—in the matter of the senses; *vairāgyam*—renunciation; *anahaṅkāraḥ*—being without false egoism; *eva*—certainly; *ca*—also; *janma*—of birth; *mṛtyu*—death; *jarā*—old age; *vyādhi*—and disease; *duḥkha*—of the distress; *doṣa*—the fault; *anudarśanam*—observing; *asaktiḥ*—being without attachment; *anabhiṣvaṅgaḥ*—being without association; *putra*—for son; *dāra*—wife; *grha-ādiṣu*—home, etc.; *nityam*—constant; *ca*—also; *sama-cittatvam*—equilibrium; *iṣṭa*—the desirable; *aniṣṭa*—and undesirable; *upapattiṣu*—having obtained; *mayi*—unto Me; *ca*—also; *ananya-yogena*—by unalloyed devotional service; *bhaktiḥ*—devotion; *avyabhicāriṇī*—without any break;

vivikta—to solitary; *deśa*—places; *sevitvam*—aspiring; *aratiḥ*—being without attachment; *jana-saṁsadi*—to people in general; *adhyātma*—pertaining to the self; *jñāna*—in knowledge; *nityatvam*—constancy; *tattva-jñāna*—of knowledge of the truth; *artha*—for the object; *darśanam*—philosophy; *etat*—all this; *jñānam*—knowledge; *iti*—thus; *proktam*—declared; *ajñānam*—ignorance; *yat*—that which; *ataḥ*—from this; *anyathā*—other.

TRANSLATION

Humility; pridelessness; nonviolence; tolerance; simplicity; approaching a bona fide spiritual master; cleanliness; steadiness; self-control; renunciation of the objects of sense gratification; absence of false ego; the perception of the evil of birth, death, old age and disease; detachment; freedom from entanglement with children, wife, home and the rest; even-mindedness amid pleasant and unpleasant events; constant and unalloyed devotion to Me; aspiring to live in a solitary place; detachment from the general mass of people; accepting the importance of self-realization; and philosophical search for the Absolute Truth—all these I declare to be knowledge, and besides this whatever there may be is ignorance.

PURPORT

This process of knowledge is sometimes misunderstood by less intelligent men as being the interaction of the field of activity. But actually this is the real process of knowledge. If one accepts this process, then the possibility of approaching the Absolute Truth exists. This is not the interaction of the twenty-four elements, as described before. This is actually the means to get out of the entanglement of those elements. The embodied soul is entrapped by the body, which is a casing made of the twenty-four elements, and the process of knowledge as described here is the means to get out of it. Of all the descriptions of the process of knowledge, the most important point is described in the first line of the eleventh verse. *Mayi cānanya-yogena bhaktir avyabhicāriṇī*: the process of knowledge terminates in unalloyed devotional service to the Lord. So if one does not approach, or is not able to approach, the transcendental service of the Lord, then the other nineteen items are of no particular value. But if one takes to devotional service in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the other nineteen items automatically develop within him. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.18.12), *yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ*. All the good qualities of knowledge develop in one who has attained the stage of devotional service. The principle of accepting a spiritual master, as mentioned in the eighth verse, is essential. Even for one who takes to devotional service, it is most important. Transcendental life begins when one accepts a bona fide spiritual master. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, clearly states here that this process of knowledge is the actual path. Anything speculated beyond this is nonsense.

As for the knowledge outlined here, the items may be analyzed as follows. Humility means that one should not be anxious to have the satisfaction of being honored by others. The

material conception of life makes us very eager to receive honor from others, but from the point of view of a man in perfect knowledge—who knows that he is not this body—anything, honor or dishonor, pertaining to this body is useless. One should not be hankering after this material deception. People are very anxious to be famous for their religion, and consequently sometimes it is found that without understanding the principles of religion one enters into some group which is not actually following religious principles and then wants to advertise himself as a religious mentor. As for actual advancement in spiritual science, one should have a test to see how far he is progressing. He can judge by these items.

Nonviolence is generally taken to mean not killing or destroying the body, but actually nonviolence means not to put others into distress. People in general are trapped by ignorance in the material concept of life, and they perpetually suffer material pains. So unless one elevates people to spiritual knowledge, one is practicing violence. One should try his best to distribute real knowledge to the people, so that they may become enlightened and leave this material entanglement. That is nonviolence.

Tolerance means that one should be practiced to bear insult and dishonor from others. If one is engaged in the advancement of spiritual knowledge, there will be so many insults and much dishonor from others. This is expected because material nature is so constituted. Even a boy like Prahlāda, who, only five years old, was engaged in the cultivation of spiritual knowledge, was endangered when his father became antagonistic to his devotion. The father tried to kill him in so many ways, but Prahlāda tolerated him. So there may be many impediments to making advancement in spiritual knowledge, but we should be tolerant and continue our progress with determination.

Simplicity means that without diplomacy one should be so straightforward that he can disclose the real truth even to an enemy. As for acceptance of the spiritual master, that is essential, because without the instruction of a bona fide spiritual master one cannot progress in the spiritual science. One should approach the spiritual master with all humility and offer him all services so that he will be pleased to bestow his blessings upon the disciple. Because a bona fide spiritual master is a representative of Kṛṣṇa, if he bestows any blessings upon his disciple, that will make the disciple immediately advanced without the disciple's following the regulative principles. Or, the regulative principles will be easier for one who has served the spiritual master without reservation.

Cleanliness is essential for making advancement in spiritual life. There are two kinds of cleanliness: external and internal. External cleanliness means taking a bath, but for internal cleanliness one has to think of Kṛṣṇa always and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. This process cleans the accumulated dust of past *karma* from the mind.

Steadiness means that one should be very determined to make progress in spiritual life. Without such determination, one cannot make tangible progress. And self-control means that one should not accept anything which is detrimental to the path of spiritual progress. One should become accustomed to this and reject anything which is against the path of spiritual progress. This is real renunciation. The senses are so strong that they are always

anxious to have sense gratification. One should not cater to these demands, which are not necessary. The senses should only be gratified to keep the body fit so that one can discharge his duty in advancing in spiritual life. The most important and uncontrollable sense is the tongue. If one can control the tongue, then there is every possibility of controlling the other senses. The function of the tongue is to taste and to vibrate. Therefore, by systematic regulation, the tongue should always be engaged in tasting the remnants of foodstuffs offered to Kṛṣṇa and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. As far as the eyes are concerned, they should not be allowed to see anything but the beautiful form of Kṛṣṇa. That will control the eyes. Similarly, the ears should be engaged in hearing about Kṛṣṇa and the nose in smelling the flowers offered to Kṛṣṇa. This is the process of devotional service, and it is understood here that *Bhagavad-gītā* is simply expounding the science of devotional service. Devotional service is the main and sole objective. Unintelligent commentators on the *Bhagavad-gītā* try to divert the mind of the reader to other subjects, but there is no other subject in *Bhagavad-gītā* than devotional service.

False ego means accepting this body as oneself. When one understands that he is not his body and is spirit soul, he comes to his real ego. Ego is there. False ego is condemned, but not real ego. In the Vedic literature (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 1.4.10) it is said, *aham brahmāsmi*: I am Brahman, I am spirit. This “I am,” the sense of self, also exists in the liberated stage of self-realization. This sense of “I am” is ego, but when the sense of “I am” is applied to this false body it is false ego. When the sense of self is applied to reality, that is real ego. There are some philosophers who say we should give up our ego, but we cannot give up our ego, because ego means identity. We ought, of course, to give up the false identification with the body.

One should try to understand the distress of accepting birth, death, old age and disease. There are descriptions in various Vedic literatures of birth. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the world of the unborn, the child’s stay in the womb of the mother, its suffering, etc., are all very graphically described. It should be thoroughly understood that birth is distressful. Because we forget how much distress we have suffered within the womb of the mother, we do not make any solution to the repetition of birth and death. Similarly at the time of death there are all kinds of sufferings, and they are also mentioned in the authoritative scriptures. These should be discussed. And as far as disease and old age are concerned, everyone gets practical experience. No one wants to be diseased, and no one wants to become old, but there is no avoiding these. Unless we have a pessimistic view of this material life, considering the distresses of birth, death, old age and disease, there is no impetus for our making advancement in spiritual life.

As for detachment from children, wife and home, it is not meant that one should have no feeling for these. They are natural objects of affection. But when they are not favorable to spiritual progress, then one should not be attached to them. The best process for making the home pleasant is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If one is in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he can make his home very happy, because this process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is very easy. One need only chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, accept the remnants of foodstuffs offered to Kṛṣṇa, have

some discussion on books like *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and engage oneself in Deity worship. These four things will make one happy. One should train the members of his family in this way. The family members can sit down morning and evening and chant together Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. If one can mold his family life in this way to develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness, following these four principles, then there is no need to change from family life to renounced life. But if it is not congenial, not favorable for spiritual advancement, then family life should be abandoned. One must sacrifice everything to realize or serve Kṛṣṇa, just as Arjuna did. Arjuna did not want to kill his family members, but when he understood that these family members were impediments to his Kṛṣṇa realization, he accepted the instruction of Kṛṣṇa and fought and killed them. In all cases, one should be detached from the happiness and distress of family life, because in this world one can never be fully happy or fully miserable.

Happiness and distress are concomitant factors of material life. One should learn to tolerate, as advised in *Bhagavad-gītā*. One can never restrict the coming and going of happiness and distress, so one should be detached from the materialistic way of life and be automatically equipoised in both cases. Generally, when we get something desirable we are very happy, and when we get something undesirable we are distressed. But if we are actually in the spiritual position these things will not agitate us. To reach that stage, we have to practice unbreakable devotional service. Devotional service to Kṛṣṇa without deviation means engaging oneself in the nine processes of devotional service—chanting, hearing, worshiping, offering respect, etc.—as described in the last verse of the Ninth Chapter. That process should be followed.

Naturally, when one is adapted to the spiritual way of life, he will not want to mix with materialistic men. That would go against his grain. One may test himself by seeing how far he is inclined to live in a solitary place, without unwanted association. Naturally a devotee has no taste for unnecessary sporting or cinema-going or enjoying some social function, because he understands that these are simply a waste of time. There are many research scholars and philosophers who study sex life or some other subject, but according to *Bhagavad-gītā* such research work and philosophical speculation have no value. That is more or less nonsensical. According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, one should make research, by philosophical discretion, into the nature of the soul. One should make research to understand the self. That is recommended here.

As far as self-realization is concerned, it is clearly stated here that *bhakti-yoga* is especially practical. As soon as there is a question of devotion, one must consider the relationship between the Supersoul and the individual soul. The individual soul and the Supersoul cannot be one, at least not in the *bhakti* conception, the devotional conception of life. This service of the individual soul to the Supreme Soul is eternal, *nityam*, as it is clearly stated. So *bhakti*, or devotional service, is eternal. One should be established in that philosophical conviction.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.11) this is explained. *Vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam*. “Those who are actually knowers of the Absolute Truth know that the

Self is realized in three different phases, as Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān.”

Bhagavān is the last word in the realization of the Absolute Truth; therefore one should reach up to that platform of understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead and thus engage in the devotional service of the Lord. That is the perfection of knowledge.

Beginning from practicing humility up to the point of realization of the Supreme Truth, the Absolute Personality of Godhead, this process is just like a staircase beginning from the ground floor and going up to the top floor. Now on this staircase there are so many people who have reached the first floor, the second or the third floor, etc., but unless one reaches the top floor, which is the understanding of Kṛṣṇa, he is at a lower stage of knowledge. If anyone wants to compete with God and at the same time make advancement in spiritual knowledge, he will be frustrated. It is clearly stated that without humility, understanding is not truly possible. To think oneself God is most puffed up. Although the living entity is always being kicked by the stringent laws of material nature, he still thinks, “I am God” because of ignorance. The beginning of knowledge, therefore, is *amānitva*, humility. One should be humble and know that he is subordinate to the Supreme Lord. Due to rebellion against the Supreme Lord, one becomes subordinate to material nature. One must know and be convinced of this truth.

Chapter 13—Text 13

*jñeyam yat tat pravakṣyāmi
yaj jñātvāmṛtam aśnute
anādi mat-param brahma
na sat tan nāsad ucyate*

SYNONYMS

jñeyam—the knowable; *yat*—which; *tat*—that; *pravakṣyāmi*—I shall now explain; *yaj*—which; *jñātvā*—knowing; *amṛtam*—nectar; *aśnute*—one tastes; *anādi*—beginningless; *mat-param*—subordinate to Me; *brahma*—spirit; *na*—neither; *sat*—cause; *tat*—that; *na*—nor; *asat*—effect; *ucyate*—is said to be.

TRANSLATION

I shall now explain the knowable, knowing which you will taste the eternal. Brahman, the spirit, beginningless and subordinate to Me, lies beyond the cause and effect of this material world.

PURPORT

The Lord has explained the field of activities and the knower of the field. He has also explained the process of knowing the knower of the field of activities. Now He begins to explain the knowable, first the soul and then the Supersoul. By knowledge of the knower, both the soul and the Supersoul, one can relish the nectar of life. As explained in the Second Chapter, the living entity is eternal. This is also confirmed here. There is no specific date at which the *jīva* was born. Nor can anyone trace out the history of the *jīvātmā*'s manifestation from the Supreme Lord. Therefore it is beginningless. The Vedic literature confirms this: *na jāyate mriyate vā vipaścit* (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 1.2.18). The knower of the body is never born and never dies, and he is full of knowledge.

The Supreme Lord as the Supersoul is also stated in the Vedic literature (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.16) to be *pradhāna-kṣetrajña-patir guṇeśaḥ*, the chief knower of the body and the master of the three modes of material nature. In the *smṛti* it is said, *dāsa-bhūto harer eva nānyasvaiva kadācana*. The living entities are eternally in the service of the Supreme Lord. This is also confirmed by Lord Caitanya in His teachings. Therefore the description of Brahman mentioned in this verse is in relation to the individual soul, and when the word Brahman is applied to the living entity, it is to be understood that he is *vijñāna-brahma* as opposed to *ānanda-brahma*. *Ānanda-brahma* is the Supreme Brahman Personality of Godhead.

Chapter 13—Text 14

*sarvataḥ pāṇi-pādam tat
sarvato 'kṣi-śiro-mukham
sarvataḥ śrutimal loke
sarvam āvṛtya tiṣṭhati*

SYNONYMS

sarvataḥ—everywhere; *pāṇi*—hands; *pādam*—legs; *tat*—that; *sarvataḥ*—everywhere; *akṣi*—eyes; *śiraḥ*—heads; *mukham*—faces; *sarvataḥ*—everywhere; *śruti-mat*—having ears; *loke*—in the world; *sarvam*—everything; *āvṛtya*—covering; *tiṣṭhati*—exists.

TRANSLATION

Everywhere are His hands and legs, His eyes, heads and faces, and He has ears everywhere. In this way the Supersoul exists, pervading everything.

PURPORT

As the sun exists diffusing its unlimited rays, so does the Supersoul, or Supreme Personality of Godhead. He exists in His all-pervading form, and in Him exist all the individual living entities, beginning from the first great teacher, Brahmā, down to the small ants. There are unlimited heads, legs, hands and eyes, and unlimited living entities. All are existing in and on the Supersoul. Therefore the Supersoul is all-pervading. The individual soul, however, cannot say that he has his hands, legs and eyes everywhere. That is not possible. If he thinks that under ignorance he is not conscious that his hands and legs are diffused all over but when he attains to proper knowledge he will come to that stage, his thinking is contradictory. This means that the individual soul, having become conditioned by material nature, is not supreme. The Supreme is different from the individual soul. The Supreme Lord can extend His hand without limit; the individual soul cannot. In *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says that if anyone offers Him a flower, or a fruit, or a little water, He accepts it. If the Lord is a far distance away, how can He accept things? This is the omnipotence of the Lord: even though He is situated in His own abode, far, far away from earth, He can extend His hand to accept what anyone offers. That is His potency. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.37) it is stated, *goloka eva nivasaty akhilātma-bhūtaḥ*: although He is always engaged in pastimes in His transcendental planet, He is all-pervading. The individual soul cannot claim that he is all-pervading. Therefore this verse describes the Supreme Soul, the Personality of Godhead, not the individual soul.

Chapter 13—Text 15

sarvendriya-guṇābhāsam
sarvendriya-vivarjitam
asaktam sarva-bhṛc caiva
nirguṇam guṇa-bhoktṛ ca

SYNONYMS

sarva—of all; *indriya*—senses; *guṇa*—of the qualities; *ābhāsam*—the original source; *sarva*—all; *indriya*—senses; *vivarjitam*—being without; *asaktam*—without attachment; *sarva-bhṛt*—the maintainer of everyone; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *nirguṇam*—without material qualities; *guṇa-bhoktṛ*—master of the *guṇas*; *ca*—also.

TRANSLATION

The Supersoul is the original source of all senses, yet He is without senses. He is unattached, although He is the maintainer of all living beings. He transcends the modes of nature, and at the same time He is the master of all the modes of material nature.

PURPORT

The Supreme Lord, although the source of all the senses of the living entities, doesn't have material senses like they have. Actually, the individual souls have spiritual senses, but in conditioned life they are covered with the material elements, and therefore the sense activities are exhibited through matter. The Supreme Lord's senses are not so covered. His senses are transcendental and are therefore called *nirguṇa*. *Guṇa* means the material modes, but His senses are without material covering. It should be understood that His senses are not exactly like ours. Although He is the source of all our sensory activities, He has His transcendental senses, which are uncontaminated. This is very nicely explained in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (3.19) in the verse *apāṇi-pādo javano grahītā*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead has no hands which are materially contaminated, but He has His hands and accepts whatever sacrifice is offered to Him. That is the distinction between the conditioned soul and the Supersoul. He has no material eyes, but He has eyes—otherwise how could He see? He sees everything—past, present and future. He lives within the heart of the living being, and He knows what we have done in the past, what we are doing now, and what is awaiting us in the future. This is also confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā*: He knows everything, but no one knows Him. It is said that the Supreme Lord has no legs like us, but He can travel throughout space because He has spiritual legs. In other words, the Lord is not impersonal; He has His eyes, legs, hands and everything else, and because we are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord we also have these things. But His hands, legs, eyes and senses are not contaminated by material nature.

Bhagavad-gītā also confirms that when the Lord appears He appears as He is by His internal potency. He is not contaminated by the material energy, because He is the Lord of

material energy. In the Vedic literature we find that His whole embodiment is spiritual. He has His eternal form, called *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha* [Bs. 5.1]. He is full of all opulence. He is the proprietor of all wealth and the owner of all energy. He is the most intelligent and is full of knowledge. These are some of the symptoms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the maintainer of all living entities and the witness of all activity. As far as we can understand from Vedic literature, the Supreme Lord is always transcendental. Although we do not see His head, face, hands or legs, He has them, and when we are elevated to the transcendental situation we can see the Lord's form. Due to materially contaminated senses, we cannot see His form. Therefore the impersonalists, who are still materially affected, cannot understand the Personality of Godhead.

Chapter 13—Text 16

*bahir antaś ca bhūtānām
acaram caram eva ca
sūkṣmatvāt tad avijñeyam
dūra-stham cāntike ca tat*

SYNONYMS

bahih—outside; *antaḥ*—inside; *ca*—also; *bhūtānām*—of all living entities; *acaram*—not moving; *caram*—moving; *eva*—also; *ca*—and; *sūkṣmatvāt*—on account of being subtle; *tat*—that; *avijñeyam*—unknowable; *dūra-stham*—far away; *ca*—also; *antike*—near; *ca*—and; *tat*—that.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Truth exists outside and inside of all living beings, the moving and the nonmoving. Because He is subtle, He is beyond the power of the material senses to see or to know. Although far, far away, He is also near to all.

PURPORT

In Vedic literature we understand that Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Person, is residing both outside and inside of every living entity. He is present in both the spiritual and material worlds. Although He is far, far away, still He is near to us. These are the statements of Vedic literature. *Āsīno dūram vrajati śayāno yāti sarvataḥ* (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 1.2.21). And because He is always engaged in transcendental bliss, we cannot understand how He is enjoying His full opulence. We cannot see or understand with these material senses. Therefore in the Vedic language it is said that to understand Him our material mind and senses cannot act. But one who has purified his mind and senses by practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness in devotional service can see Him constantly. It is confirmed in *Brahma-saṁhitā* that the devotee who has developed love for the Supreme God can see Him always, without cessation. And it is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (11.54) that He can be seen and understood only by devotional service. *Bhaktyā tv ananyayā śakyaḥ*.

Chapter 13—Text 17

*avibhaktam ca bhūteṣu
vibhaktam iva ca sthitam
bhūta-bharṭṛ ca tat jñeyam
grasiṣṇu prabhaviṣṇu ca*

SYNONYMS

avibhaktam—without division; *ca*—also; *bhūteṣu*—in all living beings; *vibhaktam*—divided; *iva*—as if; *ca*—also; *sthitam*—situated; *bhūta-bharṭṛ*—the maintainer of all living entities; *ca*—also; *tat*—that; *jñeyam*—to be understood; *grasiṣṇu*—devouring; *prabhaviṣṇu*—developing; *ca*—also.

TRANSLATION

Although the Supersoul appears to be divided among all beings, He is never divided. He is situated as one. Although He is the maintainer of every living entity, it is to be understood that He devours and develops all.

PURPORT

The Lord is situated in everyone’s heart as the Supersoul. Does this mean that He has become divided? No. Actually, He is one. The example is given of the sun: The sun, at the meridian, is situated in its place. But if one goes for five thousand miles in all directions and asks, “Where is the sun?” everyone will say that it is shining on his head. In the Vedic literature this example is given to show that although He is undivided, He is situated as if divided. Also it is said in Vedic literature that one Viṣṇu is present everywhere by His omnipotence, just as the sun appears in many places to many persons. And the Supreme Lord, although the maintainer of every living entity, devours everything at the time of annihilation. This was confirmed in the Eleventh Chapter when the Lord said that He had come to devour all the warriors assembled at Kurukṣetra. He also mentioned that in the form of time He devours also. He is the annihilator, the killer of all. When there is creation, He develops all from their original state, and at the time of annihilation He devours them. The Vedic hymns confirm the fact that He is the origin of all living entities and the rest of all. After creation, everything rests in His omnipotence, and after annihilation everything again returns to rest in Him. These are the confirmations of Vedic hymns. *Yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena jātāni jīvanti yat prayanty abhisam-viśanti tad brahma tad vijijñāsasva (Taittirīya Upaniṣad 3.1).*

Chapter 13—Text 18

*jyotiṣām api taj jyotis
tamasah param ucyate
jñānam jñeyam jñāna-gamyam
hṛdi sarvasya viṣṭhitam*

SYNONYMS

jyotiṣām—in all luminous objects; *api*—also; *taj*—that; *jyotiḥ*—the source of light; *tamasah*—the darkness; *param*—beyond; *ucyate*—is said; *jñānam*—knowledge; *jñeyam*—to be known; *jñāna-gamyam*—to be approached by knowledge; *hṛdi*—in the heart; *sarvasya*—of everyone; *viṣṭhitam*—situated.

TRANSLATION

He is the source of light in all luminous objects. He is beyond the darkness of matter and is unmanifested. He is knowledge, He is the object of knowledge, and He is the goal of knowledge. He is situated in everyone's heart.

PURPORT

The Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the source of light in all luminous objects like the sun, moon and stars. In the Vedic literature we find that in the spiritual kingdom there is no need of sun or moon, because the effulgence of the Supreme Lord is there. In the material world that *brahmajyoti*, the Lord's spiritual effulgence, is covered by the *mahat-tattva*, the material elements; therefore in this material world we require the assistance of sun, moon, electricity, etc., for light. But in the spiritual world there is no need of such things. It is clearly stated in the Vedic literature that because of His luminous effulgence, everything is illuminated. It is clear, therefore, that His situation is not in the material world. He is situated in the spiritual world, which is far, far away in the spiritual sky. That is also confirmed in the Vedic literature. *Āditya-varṇam tamasaḥ parastāt (Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 3.8)*. He is just like the sun, eternally luminous, but He is far, far beyond the darkness of this material world.

His knowledge is transcendental. The Vedic literature confirms that Brahman is concentrated transcendental knowledge. To one who is anxious to be transferred to that spiritual world, knowledge is given by the Supreme Lord, who is situated in everyone's heart. One Vedic *mantra* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.18*) says, *tam ha devam ātma-buddhi-prakāśam mumukṣur vai śaraṇam ahaṁ prapadye*. One must surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead if he at all wants liberation. As far as the goal of ultimate knowledge is concerned, it is also confirmed in Vedic literature: *tam eva viditvāti mṛtyum eti*. “Only by knowing Him can one surpass the boundary of birth and death.” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 3.8*)

He is situated in everyone's heart as the supreme controller. The Supreme has legs and

hands distributed everywhere, and this cannot be said of the individual soul. Therefore that there are two knowers of the field of activity—the individual soul and the Supersoul—must be admitted. One’s hands and legs are distributed locally, but Kṛṣṇa’s hands and legs are distributed everywhere. This is confirmed in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (3.17): *sarvasya prabhum īśānaṁ sarvasya śaraṇaṁ bṛhat*. That Supreme Personality of Godhead, Supersoul, is the *prabhu*, or master, of all living entities; therefore He is the ultimate shelter of all living entities. So there is no denying the fact that the Supreme Supersoul and the individual soul are always different.

Chapter 13—Text 19

*iti kṣetram tathā jñānam
jñeyam coktam samāsataḥ
mad-bhakta etad vijñāya
mad-bhāvāyopapadyate*

SYNONYMS

iti—thus; *kṣetram*—the field of activities (the body); *tathā*—also; *jñānam*—knowledge; *jñeyam*—the knowable; *ca*—also; *uktam*—described; *samāsataḥ*—in summary; *mat-bhaktaḥ*—My devotee; *etad*—all this; *vijñāya*—after understanding; *mat-bhāvāya*—to My nature; *upapadyate*—attains.

TRANSLATION

Thus the field of activities [the body], knowledge and the knowable have been summarily described by Me. Only My devotees can understand this thoroughly and thus attain to My nature.

PURPORT

The Lord has described in summary the body, knowledge and the knowable. This knowledge is of three things: the knower, the knowable and the process of knowing. Combined, these are called *vijñāna*, or the science of knowledge. Perfect knowledge can be understood by the unalloyed devotees of the Lord directly. Others are unable to understand. The monists say that at the ultimate stage these three items become one, but the devotees do not accept this. Knowledge and development of knowledge mean understanding oneself in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We are being led by material consciousness, but as soon as we transfer all consciousness to Kṛṣṇa's activities and realize that Kṛṣṇa is everything, then we attain real knowledge. In other words, knowledge is nothing but the preliminary stage of understanding devotional service perfectly. In the Fifteenth Chapter this will be very clearly explained.

Now, to summarize, one may understand that verses 6 and 7, beginning from *mahā-bhūtāni* and continuing through *cetanā dhṛtiḥ*, analyze the material elements and certain manifestations of the symptoms of life. These combine to form the body, or the field of activities. And verses 8 through 12, from *amānitvam* through *tattva-jñānārtha-darśanam*, describe the process of knowledge for understanding both types of knower of the field of activities, namely the soul and the Supersoul. Then verses 13 through 18, beginning from *anādi mat-param* and continuing through *hṛdi sarvasya viṣṭhitam*, describe the soul and the Supreme Lord, or the Supersoul.

Thus three items have been described: the field of activity (the body), the process of understanding, and both the soul and the Supersoul. It is especially described here that only the unalloyed devotees of the Lord can understand these three items clearly. So for

these devotees *Bhagavad-gītā* is fully useful; it is they who can attain the supreme goal, the nature of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. In other words, only devotees, and not others, can understand *Bhagavad-gītā* and derive the desired result.

Chapter 13—Text 20

*prakṛtim puruṣam caiva
viddhy anādī ubhāv api
vikārāṁś ca guṇāṁś caiva
viddhi prakṛti-sambhavān*

SYNONYMS

prakṛtim—material nature; *puruṣam*—the living entities; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *viddhi*—you must know; *anādī*—without beginning; *ubhau*—both; *api*—also; *vikārān*—transformations; *ca*—also; *guṇān*—the three modes of nature; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *viddhi*—know; *prakṛti*—material nature; *sambhavān*—produced of.

TRANSLATION

Material nature and the living entities should be understood to be beginningless. Their transformations and the modes of matter are products of material nature.

PURPORT

By the knowledge given in this chapter, one can understand the body (the field of activities) and the knowers of the body (both the individual soul and the Supersoul). The body is the field of activity and is composed of material nature. The individual soul that is embodied and enjoying the activities of the body is the *puruṣa*, or the living entity. He is one knower, and the other is the Supersoul. Of course, it is to be understood that both the Supersoul and the individual entity are different manifestations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The living entity is in the category of His energy, and the Supersoul is in the category of His personal expansion.

Both material nature and the living entity are eternal. That is to say that they existed before the creation. The material manifestation is from the energy of the Supreme Lord, and so also are the living entities, but the living entities are of the superior energy. Both the living entities and material nature existed before this cosmos was manifested. Material nature was absorbed in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mahā-Viṣṇu, and when it was required, it was manifested by the agency of *maḥat-tattva*. Similarly, the living entities are also in Him, and because they are conditioned, they are averse to serving the Supreme Lord. Thus they are not allowed to enter into the spiritual sky. But with the coming forth of material nature these living entities are again given a chance to act in the material world and prepare themselves to enter into the spiritual world. That is the mystery of this material creation. Actually the living entity is originally the spiritual part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, but due to his rebellious nature, he is conditioned within material nature. It really does not matter how these living entities or superior entities of the Supreme Lord have come in contact with material nature. The Supreme Personality of Godhead knows, however, how and why this actually took place. In the scriptures the Lord says that those

attracted by this material nature are undergoing a hard struggle for existence. But we should know it with certainty from the descriptions of these few verses that all transformations and influences of material nature by the three modes are also productions of material nature. All transformations and variety in respect to living entities are due to the body. As far as spirit is concerned, living entities are all the same.

Chapter 13—Text 21

*kārya-kāraṇa-kartṛtve
hetuḥ prakṛtir ucyate
puruṣaḥ sukha-duḥkhānām
bhoktṛtve hetur ucyate*

SYNONYMS

kārya—of effect; *kāraṇa*—and cause; *kartṛtve*—in the matter of creation; *hetuḥ*—the instrument; *prakṛtiḥ*—material nature; *ucyate*—is said to be; *puruṣaḥ*—the living entity; *sukha*—of happiness; *duḥkhānām*—and distress; *bhoktṛtve*—in enjoyment; *hetur*—the instrument; *ucyate*—is said to be.

TRANSLATION

Nature is said to be the cause of all material causes and effects, whereas the living entity is the cause of the various sufferings and enjoyments in this world.

PURPORT

The different manifestations of body and senses among the living entities are due to material nature. There are 8,400,000 different species of life, and these varieties are creations of the material nature. They arise from the different sensual pleasures of the living entity, who thus desires to live in this body or that. When he is put into different bodies, he enjoys different kinds of happiness and distress. His material happiness and distress are due to his body, and not to himself as he is. In his original state there is no doubt of enjoyment; therefore that is his real state. Because of the desire to lord it over material nature, he is in the material world. In the spiritual world there is no such thing. The spiritual world is pure, but in the material world everyone is struggling hard to acquire different kinds of pleasures for the body. It might be more clear to state that this body is the effect of the senses. The senses are instruments for gratifying desire. Now, the sum total—body and instrument senses—are offered by material nature, and as will be clear in the next verse, the living entity is blessed or damned with circumstances according to his past desire and activity. According to one's desires and activities, material nature places one in various residential quarters. The being himself is the cause of his attaining such residential quarters and his attendant enjoyment or suffering. Once placed in some particular kind of body, he comes under the control of nature because the body, being matter, acts according to the laws of nature. At that time, the living entity has no power to change that law. Suppose an entity is put into the body of a dog. As soon as he is put into the body of a dog, he must act like a dog. He cannot act otherwise. And if the living entity is put into the body of a hog, then he is forced to eat stool and act like a hog. Similarly, if the living entity is put into the body of a demigod, he must act according to his body. This is the law of nature. But in all circumstances, the Supersoul is with the individual soul.

That is explained in the *Vedas* (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 3.1.1) as follows: *dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyāḥ*. The Supreme Lord is so kind upon the living entity that He always accompanies the individual soul and in all circumstances is present as the Supersoul, or Paramātmā.

Chapter 13—Text 22

*puruṣaḥ prakṛti-stho hi
bhuñkte prakṛti-jān guṇān
kāraṇam guṇa-saṅgo 'sya
sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*

SYNONYMS

puruṣaḥ—the living entity; *prakṛti-sthaḥ*—being situated in the material energy; *hi*—certainly; *bhuñkte*—enjoys; *prakṛti-jān*—produced by the material nature; *guṇān*—the modes of nature; *kāraṇam*—the cause; *guṇa-saṅgaḥ*—the association with the modes of nature; *asya*—of the living entity; *sat-asat*—in good and bad; *yoni*—species of life; *janmasu*—in births.

TRANSLATION

The living entity in material nature thus follows the ways of life, enjoying the three modes of nature. This is due to his association with that material nature. Thus he meets with good and evil among various species.

PURPORT

This verse is very important for an understanding of how the living entities transmigrate from one body to another. It is explained in the Second Chapter that the living entity is transmigrating from one body to another just as one changes dress. This change of dress is due to his attachment to material existence. As long as he is captivated by this false manifestation, he has to continue transmigrating from one body to another. Due to his desire to lord it over material nature, he is put into such undesirable circumstances. Under the influence of material desire, the entity is born sometimes as a demigod, sometimes as a man, sometimes as a beast, as a bird, as a worm, as an aquatic, as a saintly man, as a bug. This is going on. And in all cases the living entity thinks himself to be the master of his circumstances, yet he is under the influence of material nature.

How he is put into such different bodies is explained here. It is due to association with the different modes of nature. One has to rise, therefore, above the three material modes and become situated in the transcendental position. That is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Unless one is situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, his material consciousness will oblige him to transfer from one body to another because he has material desires since time immemorial. But he has to change that conception. That change can be effected only by hearing from authoritative sources. The best example is here: Arjuna is hearing the science of God from Kṛṣṇa. The living entity, if he submits to this hearing process, will lose his long-cherished desire to dominate material nature, and gradually and proportionately, as he reduces his long desire to dominate, he comes to enjoy spiritual happiness. In a Vedic *mantra* it is said that as he becomes learned in association with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he

proportionately relishes his eternal blissful life.

Chapter 13—Text 23

*upadraṣṭānumantā ca
bhartā bhoktā maheśvaraḥ
paramātmēti cāpy ukto
dehe 'smin puruṣaḥ paraḥ*

SYNONYMS

upadraṣṭā—overseer; *anumantā*—permitter; *ca*—also; *bhartā*—master; *bhoktā*—supreme enjoyer; *mahā-īśvaraḥ*—the Supreme Lord; *parama-ātmā*—the Supersoul; *iti*—also; *ca*—and; *api*—indeed; *uktaḥ*—is said; *dehe*—in the body; *asmin*—this; *puruṣaḥ*—enjoyer; *paraḥ*—transcendental.

TRANSLATION

Yet in this body there is another, a transcendental enjoyer, who is the Lord, the supreme proprietor, who exists as the overseer and permitter, and who is known as the Supersoul.

PURPORT

It is stated here that the Supersoul, who is always with the individual soul, is the representation of the Supreme Lord. He is not an ordinary living entity. Because the monist philosophers take the knower of the body to be one, they think that there is no difference between the Supersoul and the individual soul. To clarify this, the Lord says that He is represented as the Paramātmā in every body. He is different from the individual soul; He is *para*, transcendental. The individual soul enjoys the activities of a particular field, but the Supersoul is present not as finite enjoyer nor as one taking part in bodily activities, but as the witness, overseer, permitter and supreme enjoyer. His name is Paramātmā, not *ātmā*, and He is transcendental. It is distinctly clear that the *ātmā* and Paramātmā are different. The Supersoul, the Paramātmā, has legs and hands everywhere, but the individual soul does not. And because the Paramātmā is the Supreme Lord, He is present within to sanction the individual soul's desiring material enjoyment. Without the sanction of the Supreme Soul, the individual soul cannot do anything. The individual is *bhukta*, or the sustained, and the Lord is *bhoktā*, or the maintainer. There are innumerable living entities, and He is staying in them as a friend.

The fact is that every individual living entity is eternally part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, and both of them are very intimately related as friends. But the living entity has the tendency to reject the sanction of the Supreme Lord and act independently in an attempt to dominate nature, and because he has this tendency he is called the marginal energy of the Supreme Lord. The living entity can be situated either in the material energy or in the spiritual energy. As long as he is conditioned by the material energy, the Supreme Lord, as his friend, the Supersoul, stays with him just to get him to return to the spiritual energy. The Lord is always eager to take him back to the spiritual energy, but due to his minute

independence the individual entity is continually rejecting the association of spiritual light. This misuse of independence is the cause of his material strife in the conditioned nature. The Lord, therefore, is always giving instruction from within and from without. From without He gives instructions as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, and from within He tries to convince the living entity that his activities in the material field are not conducive to real happiness. “Just give it up and turn your faith toward Me. Then you will be happy,” He says. Thus the intelligent person who places his faith in the Paramātmā or the Supreme Personality of Godhead begins to advance toward a blissful eternal life of knowledge.

Chapter 13—Text 24

*ya evaṁ vetti puruṣaṁ
prakṛtiṁ ca guṇaiḥ saha
sarvathā vartamāno 'pi
na sa bhūyo 'bhijāyate*

SYNONYMS

yaḥ—anyone who; *evam*—thus; *vetti*—understands; *puruṣam*—the living entity; *prakṛtiṁ*—material nature; *ca*—and; *guṇaiḥ*—the modes of material nature; *saha*—with; *sarvathā*—in all ways; *vartamānaḥ*—being situated; *api*—in spite of; *na*—never; *saḥ*—he; *bhūyaḥ*—again; *abhijāyate*—takes his birth.

TRANSLATION

One who understands this philosophy concerning material nature, the living entity and the interaction of the modes of nature is sure to attain liberation. He will not take birth here again, regardless of his present position.

PURPORT

Clear understanding of material nature, the Supersoul, the individual soul and their interrelation makes one eligible to become liberated and turn to the spiritual atmosphere without being forced to return to this material nature. This is the result of knowledge. The purpose of knowledge is to understand distinctly that the living entity has by chance fallen into this material existence. By his personal endeavor in association with authorities, saintly persons and a spiritual master, he has to understand his position and then revert to spiritual consciousness or Kṛṣṇa consciousness by understanding *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is explained by the Personality of Godhead. Then it is certain that he will never come again into this material existence; he will be transferred into the spiritual world for a blissful eternal life of knowledge.

Chapter 13—Text 25

*dhyānenātmāni paśyanti
kecid ātmānam ātmānā
anye sāṅkhyena yogena
karma-yogena cāpare*

SYNONYMS

dhyānena—by meditation; *ātmāni*—within the self; *paśyanti*—see; *kecit*—some; *ātmānam*—the Supersoul; *ātmānā*—by the mind; *anye*—others; *sāṅkhyena*—of philosophical discussion; *yogena*—by the yoga system; *karma-yogena*—by activities without fruitive desire; *ca*—also; *apare*—others.

TRANSLATION

Some perceive the Supersoul within themselves through meditation, others through the cultivation of knowledge, and still others through working without fruitive desires.

PURPORT

The Lord informs Arjuna that the conditioned souls can be divided into two classes as far as man's search for self-realization is concerned. Those who are atheists, agnostics and skeptics are beyond the sense of spiritual understanding. But there are others, who are faithful in their understanding of spiritual life, and they are called introspective devotees, philosophers, and workers who have renounced fruitive results. Those who always try to establish the doctrine of monism are also counted among the atheists and agnostics. In other words, only the devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are best situated in spiritual understanding, because they understand that beyond this material nature are the spiritual world and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is expanded as the Paramātmā, the Supersoul in everyone, the all-pervading Godhead. Of course there are those who try to understand the Supreme Absolute Truth by cultivation of knowledge, and they can be counted in the class of the faithful. The Sāṅkhya philosophers analyze this material world into twenty-four elements, and they place the individual soul as the twenty-fifth item. When they are able to understand the nature of the individual soul to be transcendental to the material elements, they are able to understand also that above the individual soul there is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the twenty-sixth element. Thus gradually they also come to the standard of devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Those who work without fruitive results are also perfect in their attitude. They are given a chance to advance to the platform of devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Here it is stated that there are some people who are pure in consciousness and who try to find out the Supersoul by meditation, and when they discover the Supersoul within themselves, they become transcendently situated. Similarly, there are others who also try to understand the Supreme Soul by cultivation of knowledge, and there

are others who cultivate the *hatha-yoga* system and who try to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead by childish activities.

Chapter 13—Text 26

*anye tv evam ajānantaḥ
śrutvānyebhya upāsate
te 'pi cātitaranty eva
mṛtyum śruti-parāyaṇāḥ*

SYNONYMS

anye—others; *tu*—but; *evam*—thus; *ajānantaḥ*—without spiritual knowledge; *śrutvā*—by hearing; *anyebhyaḥ*—from others; *upāsate*—begin to worship; *te*—they; *api*—also; *ca*—and; *atitaranti*—transcend; *eva*—certainly; *mṛtyum*—the path of death; *śruti-parāyaṇāḥ*—inclined to the process of hearing.

TRANSLATION

Again there are those who, although not conversant in spiritual knowledge, begin to worship the Supreme Person upon hearing about Him from others. Because of their tendency to hear from authorities, they also transcend the path of birth and death.

PURPORT

This verse is particularly applicable to modern society because in modern society there is practically no education in spiritual matters. Some of the people may appear to be atheistic or agnostic or philosophical, but actually there is no knowledge of philosophy. As for the common man, if he is a good soul, then there is a chance for advancement by hearing. This hearing process is very important. Lord Caitanya, who preached Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the modern world, gave great stress to hearing because if the common man simply hears from authoritative sources he can progress, especially, according to Lord Caitanya, if he hears the transcendental vibration Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. It is stated, therefore, that all men should take advantage of hearing from realized souls and gradually become able to understand everything. The worship of the Supreme Lord will then undoubtedly take place. Lord Caitanya has said that in this age no one needs to change his position, but one should give up the endeavor to understand the Absolute Truth by speculative reasoning. One should learn to become the servant of those who are in knowledge of the Supreme Lord. If one is fortunate enough to take shelter of a pure devotee, hear from him about self-realization and follow in his footsteps, one will be gradually elevated to the position of a pure devotee. In this verse particularly, the process of hearing is strongly recommended, and this is very appropriate. Although the common man is often not as capable as so-called philosophers, faithful hearing from an authoritative person will help one transcend this material existence and go back to Godhead, back to home.

Chapter 13—Text 27

*yāvat sañjāyate kiñcit
sattvaṁ sthāvara-jaṅgamam
kṣetra-kṣetrajña-saṁyogāt
tad viddhi bharatarṣabha*

SYNONYMS

yāvat—whatever; *sañjāyate*—comes into being; *kiñcit*—anything; *sattvam*—existence; *sthāvara*—not moving; *jaṅgamam*—moving; *kṣetra*—of the body; *kṣetra-jña*—and the knower of the body; *saṁyogāt*—by the union between; *tad viddhi*—you must know it; *bharata-ṛṣabha*—O chief of the Bhāratas.

TRANSLATION

O chief of the Bhāratas, know that whatever you see in existence, both the moving and the nonmoving, is only a combination of the field of activities and the knower of the field.

PURPORT

Both material nature and the living entity, which were existing before the creation of the cosmos, are explained in this verse. Whatever is created is but a combination of the living entity and material nature. There are many manifestations like trees, mountains and hills which are not moving, and there are many existences which are moving, and all of them are but combinations of material nature and the superior nature, the living entity. Without the touch of the superior nature, the living entity, nothing can grow. The relationship between matter and nature is eternally going on, and this combination is effected by the Supreme Lord; therefore He is the controller of both the superior and inferior natures. The material nature is created by Him, and the superior nature is placed in this material nature, and thus all these activities and manifestations take place.

Chapter 13—Text 28

*samaṁ sarveṣu bhūteṣu
tiṣṭhantaṁ parameśvaram
vinaśyatsv avinaśyantaṁ
yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati*

SYNONYMS

samam—equally; *sarveṣu*—in all; *bhūteṣu*—living entities; *tiṣṭhan-tam*—residing; *parama-īśvaram*—the Supersoul; *vinaśyatsu*—in the destructible; *avinaśyantaṁ*—not destroyed; *yaḥ*—anyone who; *paśyati*—sees; *saḥ*—he; *paśyati*—actually sees.

TRANSLATION

One who sees the Supersoul accompanying the individual soul in all bodies, and who understands that neither the soul nor the Supersoul within the destructible body is ever destroyed, actually sees.

PURPORT

Anyone who by good association can see three things combined together—the body, the proprietor of the body, or individual soul, and the friend of the individual soul—is actually in knowledge. Unless one has the association of a real knower of spiritual subjects, one cannot see these three things. Those who do not have such association are ignorant; they simply see the body, and they think that when the body is destroyed everything is finished. But actually it is not so. After the destruction of the body, both the soul and the Supersoul exist, and they go on eternally in many various moving and nonmoving forms. The Sanskrit word *parameśvara* is sometimes translated as “the individual soul” because the soul is the master of the body and after the destruction of the body he transfers to another form. In that way he is master. But there are others who interpret this *parameśvara* to be the Supersoul. In either case, both the Supersoul and the individual soul continue. They are not destroyed. One who can see in this way can actually see what is happening.

Chapter 13—Text 29

*samam paśyan hi sarvatra
samavasthitam īśvaram
na hinasty ātmanātmānam
tato yāti parām gatim*

SYNONYMS

samam—equally; *paśyan*—seeing; *hi*—certainly; *sarvatra*—everywhere; *samavasthitam*—equally situated; *īśvaram*—the Supersoul; *na*—does not; *hinasti*—degrade; *ātmanā*—by the mind; *ātmānam*—the soul; *tataḥ*—then; *yāti*—reaches; *parām*—the transcendental; *gatim*—destination.

TRANSLATION

One who sees the Supersoul equally present everywhere, in every living being, does not degrade himself by his mind. Thus he approaches the transcendental destination.

PURPORT

The living entity, by accepting his material existence, has become situated differently than in his spiritual existence. But if one understands that the Supreme is situated in His Paramātmā manifestation everywhere, that is, if one can see the presence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in every living thing, he does not degrade himself by a destructive mentality, and he therefore gradually advances to the spiritual world. The mind is generally addicted to sense gratifying processes; but when the mind turns to the Supersoul, one becomes advanced in spiritual understanding.

Chapter 13—Text 30

*prakṛtyaiva ca karmāṇi
kriyamāṇāni sarvaśaḥ
yaḥ paśyati tathātmānam
akartāram sa paśyati*

SYNONYMS

prakṛtyā—by material nature; *eva*—certainly; *ca*—also; *karmāṇi*—activities; *kriyamāṇāni*—being performed; *sarvaśaḥ*—in all respects; *yaḥ*—anyone who; *paśyati*—sees; *tathā*—also; *ātmānam*—himself; *akartāram*—the nondoer; *saḥ*—he; *paśyati*—sees perfectly.

TRANSLATION

One who can see that all activities are performed by the body, which is created of material nature, and sees that the self does nothing, actually sees.

PURPORT

This body is made by material nature under the direction of the Supersoul, and whatever activities are going on in respect to one's body are not his doing. Whatever one is supposed to do, either for happiness or for distress, one is forced to do because of the bodily constitution. The self, however, is outside all these bodily activities. This body is given according to one's past desires. To fulfill desires, one is given the body, with which he acts accordingly. Practically speaking, the body is a machine, designed by the Supreme Lord, to fulfill desires. Because of desires, one is put into difficult circumstances to suffer or to enjoy. This transcendental vision of the living entity, when developed, makes one separate from bodily activities. One who has such a vision is an actual seer.

Chapter 13—Text 31

*yadā bhūta-ṣṭhag-bhāvam
eka-stham anuṣāsyati
tata eva ca vistāram
brahma sampadyate tadā*

SYNONYMS

yadā—when; *bhūta*—of living entities; *ṣṭhak-bhāvam*—separated identities; *eka-stham*—situated in one; *anuṣāsyati*—one tries to see through authority; *tataḥ eva*—thereafter; *ca*—also; *vistāram*—the expansion; *brahma*—the Absolute; *sampadyate*—he attains; *tadā*—at that time.

TRANSLATION

When a sensible man ceases to see different identities due to different material bodies and he sees how beings are expanded everywhere, he attains to the Brahman conception.

PURPORT

When one can see that the various bodies of living entities arise due to the different desires of the individual soul and do not actually belong to the soul itself, one actually sees. In the material conception of life, we find someone a demigod, someone a human being, a dog, a cat, etc. This is material vision, not actual vision. This material differentiation is due to a material conception of life. After the destruction of the material body, the spirit soul is one. The spirit soul, due to contact with material nature, gets different types of bodies. When one can see this, he attains spiritual vision; thus being freed from differentiations like man, animal, big, low, etc., one becomes purified in his consciousness and able to develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness in his spiritual identity. How he then sees things will be explained in the next verse.

Chapter 13—Text 32

*anāditvān nirguṇatvāt
paramātmāyam avyayaḥ
śarīra-stho 'pi kaunteya
na karoti na lipyate*

SYNONYMS

anāditvāt—due to eternity; *nirguṇatvāt*—due to being transcendental; *parama*—beyond material nature; *ātmā*—spirit; *ayam*—this; *avyayaḥ*—inexhaustible; *śarīra-sthaḥ*—dwelling in the body; *api*—though; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *na karoti*—never does anything; *na lipyate*—nor is he entangled.

TRANSLATION

Those with the vision of eternity can see that the imperishable soul is transcendental, eternal, and beyond the modes of nature. Despite contact with the material body, O Arjuna, the soul neither does anything nor is entangled.

PURPORT

A living entity appears to be born because of the birth of the material body, but actually the living entity is eternal; he is not born, and in spite of his being situated in a material body, he is transcendental and eternal. Thus he cannot be destroyed. By nature he is full of bliss. He does not engage himself in any material activities; therefore the activities performed due to his contact with material bodies do not entangle him.

Chapter 13—Text 33

*yathā sarva-gatam saukṣmyād
ākāśam nopalīpyate
sarvatrāvasthito dehe
tathātmā nopalīpyate*

SYNONYMS

yathā—as; *sarva-gatam*—all-pervading; *saukṣmyāt*—due to being subtle; *ākāśam*—the sky; *na*—never; *upalīpyate*—mixes; *sarvatra*—everywhere; *avasthitaḥ*—situated; *dehe*—in the body; *tathā*—so; *ātmā*—the self; *na*—never; *upalīpyate*—mixes.

TRANSLATION

The sky, due to its subtle nature, does not mix with anything, although it is all-pervading. Similarly, the soul situated in Brahman vision does not mix with the body, though situated in that body.

PURPORT

The air enters into water, mud, stool and whatever else is there; still it does not mix with anything. Similarly, the living entity, even though situated in varieties of bodies, is aloof from them due to his subtle nature. Therefore it is impossible to see with the material eyes how the living entity is in contact with this body and how he is out of it after the destruction of the body. No one in science can ascertain this.

Chapter 13—Text 34

*yathā prakāśayaty ekaḥ
kṛtsnam lokam imam raviḥ
kṣetram kṣetrī tathā kṛtsnam
prakāśayati bhārata*

SYNONYMS

yathā—as; *prakāśayati*—illuminates; *ekaḥ*—one; *kṛtsnam*—the whole; *lokam*—universe; *imam*—this; *raviḥ*—sun; *kṣetram*—this body; *kṣetrī*—the soul; *tathā*—similarly; *kṛtsnam*—all; *prakāśayati*—illuminates; *bhārata*—O son of Bharata.

TRANSLATION

O son of Bharata, as the sun alone illuminates all this universe, so does the living entity, one within the body, illuminate the entire body by consciousness.

PURPORT

There are various theories regarding consciousness. Here in *Bhagavad-gītā* the example of the sun and the sunshine is given. As the sun is situated in one place but is illuminating the whole universe, so a small particle of spirit soul, although situated in the heart of this body, is illuminating the whole body by consciousness. Thus consciousness is the proof of the presence of the soul, as sunshine or light is the proof of the presence of the sun. When the soul is present in the body, there is consciousness all over the body, and as soon as the soul has passed from the body there is no more consciousness. This can be easily understood by any intelligent man. Therefore consciousness is not a product of the combinations of matter. It is the symptom of the living entity. The consciousness of the living entity, although qualitatively one with the supreme consciousness, is not supreme, because the consciousness of one particular body does not share that of another body. But the Supersoul, which is situated in all bodies as the friend of the individual soul, is conscious of all bodies. That is the difference between supreme consciousness and individual consciousness.

Chapter 13—Text 35

*kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor evam
antaram jñāna-cakṣuṣā
bhūta-prakṛti-mokṣam ca
ye vidur yānti te param*

SYNONYMS

kṣetra—of the body; *kṣetra-jñayoḥ*—of the proprietor of the body; *evam*—thus; *antaram*—the difference; *jñāna-cakṣuṣā*—by the vision of knowledge; *bhūta*—of the living entity; *prakṛti*—from material nature; *mokṣam*—the liberation; *ca*—also; *ye*—those who; *viduḥ*—know; *yānti*—approach; *te*—they; *param*—the Supreme.

TRANSLATION

Those who see with eyes of knowledge the difference between the body and the knower of the body, and can also understand the process of liberation from bondage in material nature, attain to the supreme goal.

PURPORT

The purport of this Thirteenth Chapter is that one should know the distinction between the body, the owner of the body, and the Supersoul. One should recognize the process of liberation, as described in verses eight through twelve. Then one can go on to the supreme destination.

A faithful person should at first have some good association to hear of God and thus gradually become enlightened. If one accepts a spiritual master, one can learn to distinguish between matter and spirit, and that becomes the steppingstone for further spiritual realization. A spiritual master, by various instructions, teaches his students to get free from the material concept of life. For instance, in *Bhagavad-gītā* we find Kṛṣṇa instructing Arjuna to free him from materialistic considerations.

One can understand that this body is matter; it can be analyzed with its twenty-four elements. The body is the gross manifestation. And the subtle manifestation is the mind and psychological effects. And the symptoms of life are the interaction of these features. But over and above this, there is the soul, and there is also the Supersoul. The soul and the Supersoul are two. This material world is working by the conjunction of the soul and the twenty-four material elements. One who can see the constitution of the whole material manifestation as this combination of the soul and material elements and can also see the situation of the Supreme Soul becomes eligible for transfer to the spiritual world. These things are meant for contemplation and for realization, and one should have a complete understanding of this chapter with the help of the spiritual master.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the Thirteenth Chapter of the Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā

in the matter of Nature, the Enjoyer and Consciousness.