

## - CHAPTER 8 -

### Attaining the Supreme

#### Chapter 8—Text 1

*arjuna uvāca*  
*kiṁ tad brahma kim adhyātmam*  
*kiṁ karma puruṣottama*  
*adhibhūtam ca kiṁ proktam*  
*adhidaivam kim ucyate*

#### SYNONYMS

*arjunaḥ uvāca*—Arjuna said; *kiṁ*—what; *tad*—that; *brahma*—Brahman; *kim*—what; *adhyātmam*—the self; *kiṁ*—what; *karma*—fruitive activities; *puruṣa-uttama*—O Supreme Person; *adhibhūtam*—the material manifestation; *ca*—and; *kiṁ*—what; *proktam*—is called; *adhidaivam*—the demigods; *kim*—what; *ucyate*—is called.

#### TRANSLATION

**Arjuna inquired: O my Lord, O Supreme Person, what is Brahman? What is the self? What are fruitive activities? What is this material manifestation? And what are the demigods? Please explain this to me.**

#### PURPORT

In this chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa answers different questions from Arjuna, beginning with “What is Brahman?” The Lord also explains *karma* (fruitive activities), devotional service and *yoga* principles, and devotional service in its pure form. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* explains that the Supreme Absolute Truth is known as Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān. In addition, the living entity, the individual soul, is also called Brahman. Arjuna also inquires about *ātmā*, which refers to body, soul and mind. According to the Vedic dictionary, *ātmā* refers to the mind, soul, body and senses also.

Arjuna has addressed the Supreme Lord as Puruṣottama, Supreme Person, which means that he was putting these questions not simply to a friend but to the Supreme Person, knowing Him to be the supreme authority able to give definitive answers.

## Chapter 8—Text 2

*adhiyajñāḥ katham ko 'tra  
dehe 'smin madhusūdana  
prayāṇa-kāle ca katham  
jñeyo 'si niyatātmabhiḥ*

### SYNONYMS

*adhiyajñāḥ*—the Lord of sacrifice; *katham*—how; *kaḥ*—who; *atra*—here; *dehe*—in the body; *asmin*—this; *madhusūdana*—O Madhusūdana; *prayāṇa-kāle*—at the time of death; *ca*—and; *katham*—how; *jñeyāḥ asi*—You can be known; *niyata-ātmabhiḥ*—by the self-controlled.

### TRANSLATION

Who is the Lord of sacrifice, and how does He live in the body, O Madhusūdana? And how can those engaged in devotional service know You at the time of death?

### PURPORT

“Lord of sacrifice” may refer to either Indra or Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu is the chief of the primal demigods, including Brahmā and Śiva, and Indra is the chief of the administrative demigods. Both Indra and Viṣṇu are worshiped by *yajña* performances. But here Arjuna asks who is actually the Lord of *yajña* (sacrifice) and how the Lord is residing within the body of the living entity.

Arjuna addresses the Lord as Madhusūdana because Kṛṣṇa once killed a demon named Madhu. Actually these questions, which are of the nature of doubts, should not have arisen in the mind of Arjuna, because Arjuna is a Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee. Therefore these doubts are like demons. Since Kṛṣṇa is so expert in killing demons, Arjuna here addresses Him as Madhusūdana so that Kṛṣṇa might kill the demonic doubts that arise in Arjuna’s mind.

Now the word *prayāṇa-kāle* in this verse is very significant because whatever we do in life will be tested at the time of death. Arjuna is very anxious to know of those who are constantly engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. What should be their position at that final moment? At the time of death all the bodily functions are disrupted, and the mind is not in a proper condition. Thus disturbed by the bodily situation, one may not be able to remember the Supreme Lord. Mahārāja Kulaśekhara, a great devotee, prays, “My dear Lord, just now I am quite healthy, and it is better that I die immediately so that the swan of my mind can seek entrance at the stem of Your lotus feet.” The metaphor is used because the swan, a bird of the water, takes pleasure in digging into the lotus flowers; its sporting proclivity is to enter the lotus flower. Mahārāja Kulaśekhara says to the Lord, “Now my mind is undisturbed, and I am quite healthy. If I die immediately, thinking of Your lotus feet, then I am sure that my performance of Your devotional service will become perfect.

But if I have to wait for my natural death, then I do not know what will happen, because at that time the bodily functions will be disrupted, my throat will be choked up, and I do not know whether I shall be able to chant Your name. Better let me die immediately.” Arjuna questions how a person can fix his mind on Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet at such a time.

## Chapter 8—Text 3

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca*  
*akṣaram brahma paramam*  
*svabhāvo 'dhyātmam ucyate*  
*bhūta-bhāvodbhava-karo*  
*visargaḥ karma-samjñitaḥ*

### SYNONYMS

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *akṣaram*—indestructible; *brahma*—Brahman; *paramam*—transcendental; *svabhāvaḥ*—eternal nature; *adhyātmam*—the self; *ucyate*—is called; *bhūta-bhāva-udbhava-karaḥ*—producing the material bodies of the living entities; *visargaḥ*—creation; *karma*—fruitive activities; *samjñitaḥ*—is called.

### TRANSLATION

**The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: The indestructible, transcendental living entity is called Brahman, and his eternal nature is called adhyātmā, the self. Action pertaining to the development of the material bodies of the living entities is called karma, or fruitive activities.**

### PURPORT

Brahman is indestructible and eternally existing, and its constitution is not changed at any time. But beyond Brahman there is Parabrahman. Brahman refers to the living entity, and Parabrahman refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The constitutional position of the living entity is different from the position he takes in the material world. In material consciousness his nature is to try to be the lord of matter, but in spiritual consciousness, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, his position is to serve the Supreme. When the living entity is in material consciousness, he has to take on various bodies in the material world. That is called *karma*, or varied creation by the force of material consciousness.

In Vedic literature the living entity is called *jīvātmā* and Brahman, but he is never called Parabrahman. The living entity (*jīvātmā*) takes different positions—sometimes he merges into the dark material nature and identifies himself with matter, and sometimes he identifies himself with the superior, spiritual nature. Therefore he is called the Supreme Lord's marginal energy. According to his identification with material or spiritual nature, he receives a material or spiritual body. In material nature he may take a body from any of the 8,400,000 species of life, but in spiritual nature he has only one body. In material nature he is manifested sometimes as a man, demigod, animal, beast, bird, etc., according to his *karma*. To attain material heavenly planets and enjoy their facilities, he sometimes performs sacrifices (*yajña*), but when his merit is exhausted he returns to earth again in the form of a man. This process is called *karma*.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* describes the Vedic sacrificial process. On the sacrificial altar,

five kinds of offerings are made into five kinds of fire. The five kinds of fire are conceived of as the heavenly planets, clouds, the earth, man and woman, and the five kinds of sacrificial offerings are faith, the enjoyer on the moon, rain, grains and semen.

In the process of sacrifice, the living entity makes specific sacrifices to attain specific heavenly planets and consequently reaches them. When the merit of sacrifice is exhausted, the living entity descends to earth in the form of rain, then takes on the form of grains, and the grains are eaten by man and transformed into semen, which impregnates a woman, and thus the living entity once again attains the human form to perform sacrifice and so repeat the same cycle. In this way, the living entity perpetually comes and goes on the material path. The Kṛṣṇa conscious person, however, avoids such sacrifices. He takes directly to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and thereby prepares himself to return to Godhead.

Impersonalist commentators on the *Bhagavad-gītā* unreasonably assume that Brahman takes the form of *jīva* in the material world, and to substantiate this they refer to Chapter Fifteen, verse 7, of the *Gītā*. But in this verse the Lord also speaks of the living entity as “an eternal fragment of Myself.” The fragment of God, the living entity, may fall down into the material world, but the Supreme Lord (Acyuta) never falls down. Therefore this assumption that the Supreme Brahman assumes the form of *jīva* is not acceptable. It is important to remember that in Vedic literature Brahman (the living entity) is distinguished from Parabrahman (the Supreme Lord).

## Chapter 8—Text 4

*adhibhūtaṁ kṣaro bhāvaḥ  
puruṣaś cādhidaivatam  
adhiyajño 'ham evātra  
dehe deha-bhṛtām vara*

### SYNONYMS

*adhibhūtam*—the physical manifestation; *kṣaraḥ*—constantly changing; *bhāvaḥ*—nature; *puruṣaḥ*—the universal form, including all the demigods, like the sun and moon; *ca*—and; *adhidaivatam*—called *adhidaiva*; *adhiyajñaḥ*—the Supersoul; *aham*—I (Kṛṣṇa); *eva*—certainly; *atra*—in this; *dehe*—body; *deha-bhṛtām*—of the embodied; *vara*—O best.

### TRANSLATION

O best of the embodied beings, the physical nature, which is constantly changing, is called *adhibhūta* [the material manifestation]. The universal form of the Lord, which includes all the demigods, like those of the sun and moon, is called *adhidaiva*. And I, the Supreme Lord, represented as the Supersoul in the heart of every embodied being, am called *adhiyajña* [the Lord of sacrifice].

### PURPORT

The physical nature is constantly changing. Material bodies generally pass through six stages: they are born, they grow, they remain for some duration, they produce some by-products, they dwindle, and then they vanish. This physical nature is called *adhibhūta*. It is created at a certain point and will be annihilated at a certain point. The conception of the universal form of the Supreme Lord, which includes all the demigods and their different planets, is called *adhidaivata*. And present in the body along with the individual soul is the Supersoul, a plenary representation of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The Supersoul is called the *Paramātmā* or *adhiyajña* and is situated in the heart. The word *eva* is particularly important in the context of this verse because by this word the Lord stresses that the *Paramātmā* is not different from Him. The Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, seated beside the individual soul, is the witness of the individual soul's activities and is the source of the soul's various types of consciousness. The Supersoul gives the individual soul an opportunity to act freely and witnesses his activities. The functions of all these different manifestations of the Supreme Lord automatically become clarified for the pure Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee engaged in transcendental service to the Lord. The gigantic universal form of the Lord called *adhidaivata* is contemplated by the neophyte who cannot approach the Supreme Lord in His manifestation as Supersoul. The neophyte is advised to contemplate the universal form, or *virāt-puruṣa*, whose legs are considered the lower planets, whose eyes are considered the sun and moon, and whose head is considered the upper planetary system.

## Chapter 8—Text 5

*anta-kāle ca mām eva  
smaran muktvā kalevaram  
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvaṁ  
yāti nāsty atra saṁśayaḥ*

### SYNONYMS

*anta-kāle*—at the end of life; *ca*—also; *mām*—Me; *eva*—certainly; *smaran*—remembering; *muktvā*—quitting; *kalevaram*—the body; *yaḥ*—he who; *prayāti*—goes; *saḥ*—he; *mat-bhāvaṁ*—My nature; *yāti*—achieves; *na*—not; *asti*—there is; *atra*—here; *saṁśayaḥ*—doubt.

### TRANSLATION

**And whoever, at the end of his life, quits his body, remembering Me alone, at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt.**

### PURPORT

In this verse the importance of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is stressed. Anyone who quits his body in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is at once transferred to the transcendental nature of the Supreme Lord. The Supreme Lord is the purest of the pure. Therefore anyone who is constantly Kṛṣṇa conscious is also the purest of the pure. The word *smaran* (“remembering”) is important. Remembrance of Kṛṣṇa is not possible for the impure soul who has not practiced Kṛṣṇa consciousness in devotional service. Therefore one should practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness from the very beginning of life. If one wants to achieve success at the end of his life, the process of remembering Kṛṣṇa is essential. Therefore one should constantly, incessantly chant the *mahā-mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Lord Caitanya has advised that one be as tolerant as a tree (*taror iva sahiṣṇunā*). There may be so many impediments for a person who is chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Nonetheless, tolerating all these impediments, one should continue to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, so that at the end of one’s life one can have the full benefit of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## Chapter 8—Text 6

*yam yam vāpi smaran bhāvam  
tyajaty ante kalevaram  
tam tam evaiti kaunteya  
sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*

### SYNONYMS

*yam yam*—whatever; *vā api*—at all; *smaran*—remembering; *bhāvam*—nature; *tyajati*—gives up; *ante*—at the end; *kalevaram*—this body; *tam tam*—similar; *eva*—certainly; *eti*—gets; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *sadā*—always; *tat*—that; *bhāva*—state of being; *bhāvitaḥ*—remembering.

### TRANSLATION

**Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, O son of Kuntī, that state he will attain without fail.**

### PURPORT

The process of changing one's nature at the critical moment of death is here explained. A person who at the end of his life quits his body thinking of Kṛṣṇa attains the transcendental nature of the Supreme Lord, but it is not true that a person who thinks of something other than Kṛṣṇa attains the same transcendental state. This is a point we should note very carefully. How can one die in the proper state of mind? Mahārāja Bharata, although a great personality, thought of a deer at the end of his life, and so in his next life he was transferred into the body of a deer. Although as a deer he remembered his past activities, he had to accept that animal body. Of course, one's thoughts during the course of one's life accumulate to influence one's thoughts at the moment of death, so this life creates one's next life. If in one's present life one lives in the mode of goodness and always thinks of Kṛṣṇa, it is possible for one to remember Kṛṣṇa at the end of one's life. That will help one be transferred to the transcendental nature of Kṛṣṇa. If one is transcendently absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's service, then his next body will be transcendental (spiritual), not material. Therefore the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare is the best process for successfully changing one's state of being at the end of one's life.



## Chapter 8—Text 7

*tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu  
mām anusmara yudhya ca  
mayy arpita-mano-buddhir  
mām evaiṣyasy asaṁśayaḥ*

### SYNONYMS

*tasmāt*—therefore; *sarveṣu*—at all; *kāleṣu*—times; *mām*—Me; *anusmara*—go on remembering; *yudhya*—fight; *ca*—also; *mayi*—unto Me; *arpita*—surrendering; *manaḥ*—mind; *buddhiḥ*—intellect; *mām*—unto Me; *eva*—surely; *eṣyasi*—you will attain; *asaṁśayaḥ*—beyond a doubt.

### TRANSLATION

Therefore, Arjuna, you should always think of Me in the form of Kṛṣṇa and at the same time carry out your prescribed duty of fighting. With your activities dedicated to Me and your mind and intelligence fixed on Me, you will attain Me without doubt.

### PURPORT

This instruction to Arjuna is very important for all men engaged in material activities. The Lord does not say that one should give up his prescribed duties or engagements. One can continue them and at the same time think of Kṛṣṇa by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. This will free one from material contamination and engage the mind and intelligence in Kṛṣṇa. By chanting Kṛṣṇa's names, one will be transferred to the supreme planet, Kṛṣṇaloka, without a doubt.

## Chapter 8—Text 8

*abhyāsa-yoga-yuktena*  
*cetasā nānya-gāminā*  
*paramam puruṣam divyam*  
*yāti pārthānucintayan*

### SYNONYMS

*abhyāsa-yoga*—by practice; *yuktena*—being engaged in meditation; *cetasā*—by the mind and intelligence; *na anya-gāminā*—without their being deviated; *paramam*—the Supreme; *puruṣam*—Personality of Godhead; *divyam*—transcendental; *yāti*—one achieves; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *anucintayan*—constantly thinking of.

### TRANSLATION

**He who meditates on Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, his mind constantly engaged in remembering Me, undeviated from the path, he, O Pārtha, is sure to reach Me.**

### PURPORT

In this verse Lord Kṛṣṇa stresses the importance of remembering Him. One's memory of Kṛṣṇa is revived by chanting the *mahā-mantra*, Hare Kṛṣṇa. By this practice of chanting and hearing the sound vibration of the Supreme Lord, one's ear, tongue and mind are engaged. This mystic meditation is very easy to practice, and it helps one attain the Supreme Lord. *Puruṣam* means enjoyer. Although living entities belong to the marginal energy of the Supreme Lord, they are in material contamination. They think themselves enjoyers, but they are not the supreme enjoyer. Here it is clearly stated that the supreme enjoyer is the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His different manifestations and plenary expansions as Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva, etc.

The devotee can constantly think of the object of worship, the Supreme Lord, in any of His features—Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, etc.—by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. This practice will purify him, and at the end of his life, due to his constant chanting, he will be transferred to the kingdom of God. *Yoga* practice is meditation on the Supersoul within; similarly, by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa one fixes his mind always on the Supreme Lord. The mind is fickle, and therefore it is necessary to engage the mind by force to think of Kṛṣṇa. One example often given is that of the caterpillar that thinks of becoming a butterfly and so is transformed into a butterfly in the same life. Similarly, if we constantly think of Kṛṣṇa, it is certain that at the end of our lives we shall have the same bodily constitution as Kṛṣṇa.

## Chapter 8—Text 9

*kaviṁ purāṇam anuśāsītāram  
aṇor aṇīyāṁsam anusmared yaḥ  
sarvasya dhātāram acintya-rūpam  
āditya-varṇam tamasaḥ parastāt*

### SYNONYMS

*kaviṁ*—the one who knows everything; *purāṇam*—the oldest; *anuśāsītāram*—the controller; *aṇor*—than the atom; *aṇīyāṁsam*—smaller; *anusmaret*—always thinks of; *yaḥ*—one who; *sarvasya*—of everything; *dhātāram*—the maintainer; *acintya*—inconceivable; *rūpam*—whose form; *āditya-varṇam*—luminous like the sun; *tamasaḥ*—to darkness; *parastāt*—transcendental.

### TRANSLATION

One should meditate upon the Supreme Person as the one who knows everything, as He who is the oldest, who is the controller, who is smaller than the smallest, who is the maintainer of everything, who is beyond all material conception, who is inconceivable, and who is always a person. He is luminous like the sun, and He is transcendental, beyond this material nature.

### PURPORT

The process of thinking of the Supreme is mentioned in this verse. The foremost point is that He is not impersonal or void. One cannot meditate on something impersonal or void. That is very difficult. The process of thinking of Kṛṣṇa, however, is very easy and is factually stated herein. First of all, the Lord is *puruṣa*, a person—we think of the person Rāma and the person Kṛṣṇa. And whether one thinks of Rāma or of Kṛṣṇa, what He is like is described in this verse of *Bhagavad-gītā*. The Lord is *kavi*; that is, He knows past, present and future and therefore knows everything. He is the oldest personality because He is the origin of everything; everything is born out of Him. He is also the supreme controller of the universe, and He is the maintainer and instructor of humanity. He is smaller than the smallest. The living entity is one ten-thousandth part of the tip of a hair, but the Lord is so inconceivably small that He enters into the heart of this particle. Therefore He is called smaller than the smallest. As the Supreme, He can enter into the atom and into the heart of the smallest and control him as the Supersoul. Although so small, He is still all-pervading and is maintaining everything. By Him all these planetary systems are sustained. We often wonder how these big planets are floating in the air. It is stated here that the Supreme Lord, by His inconceivable energy, is sustaining all these big planets and systems of galaxies. The word *acintya* (“inconceivable”) is very significant in this connection. God’s energy is beyond our conception, beyond our thinking jurisdiction, and is therefore called inconceivable (*acintya*). Who can argue this point? He pervades this material world

and yet is beyond it. We cannot comprehend even this material world, which is insignificant compared to the spiritual world—so how can we comprehend what is beyond? *Acintya* means that which is beyond this material world, that which our argument, logic and philosophical speculation cannot touch, that which is inconceivable. Therefore intelligent persons, avoiding useless argument and speculation, should accept what is stated in scriptures like the *Vedas*, *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and follow the principles they set down. This will lead one to understanding.

## Chapter 8—Text 10

*prayāṇa-kāle manasācalena  
bhaktyā yukto yoga-balena caiva  
bhruvor madhye prāṇam āveśya samyak  
sa tam param puruṣam upaiti divyam*

### SYNONYMS

*prayāṇa-kāle*—at the time of death; *manasā*—by the mind; *acalena*—without its being deviated; *bhaktyā*—in full devotion; *yuktaḥ*—engaged; *yoga-balena*—by the power of mystic yoga; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *bhruvoḥ*—the two eyebrows; *madhye*—between; *prāṇam*—the life air; *āveśya*—establishing; *samyak*—completely; *saḥ*—he; *tam*—that; *param*—transcendental; *puruṣam*—Personality of Godhead; *upaiti*—achieves; *divyam*—in the spiritual kingdom.

### TRANSLATION

One who, at the time of death, fixes his life air between the eyebrows and, by the strength of yoga, with an undeviating mind, engages himself in remembering the Supreme Lord in full devotion, will certainly attain to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

### PURPORT

In this verse it is clearly stated that at the time of death the mind must be fixed in devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. For those practiced in yoga, it is recommended that they raise the life force between the eyebrows (to the *ājñā-cakra*). The practice of *ṣaṭ-cakra-yoga*, involving meditation on the six *cakras*, is suggested here. A pure devotee does not practice such yoga, but because he is always engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, at death he can remember the Supreme Personality of Godhead by His grace. This is explained in verse fourteen.

The particular use of the word *yoga-balena* is significant in this verse because without practice of yoga—whether *ṣaṭ-cakra-yoga* or *bhakti-yoga*—one cannot come to this transcendental state of being at the time of death. One cannot suddenly remember the Supreme Lord at death; one must have practiced some yoga system, especially the system of *bhakti-yoga*. Since one's mind at death is very disturbed, one should practice transcendence through yoga during one's life.

## Chapter 8—Text 11

*yad akṣaram veda-vido vadanti  
viśanti yad yatayo vīta-rāgāḥ  
yad icchanto brahmacaryam caranti  
tat te padam saṅgrahaṇa pravakṣye*

### SYNONYMS

*yat*—that which; *akṣaram*—syllable *om*; *veda-vidaḥ*—persons conversant with the *Vedas*; *vadanti*—say; *viśanti*—enter; *yat*—in which; *yatayaḥ*—great sages; *vīta-rāgāḥ*—in the renounced order of life; *yad*—that which; *icchantāḥ*—desiring; *brahmacaryam*—celibacy; *caranti*—practice; *tat*—that; *te*—unto you; *padam*—situation; *saṅgrahaṇa*—in summary; *pravakṣye*—I shall explain.

### TRANSLATION

Persons who are learned in the *Vedas*, who utter *omkāra* and who are great sages in the renounced order enter into Brahman. Desiring such perfection, one practices celibacy. I shall now briefly explain to you this process by which one may attain salvation.

### PURPORT

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa has recommended to Arjuna the practice of *ṣaṭ-cakra-yoga*, in which one places the air of life between the eyebrows. Taking it for granted that Arjuna might not know how to practice *ṣaṭ-cakra-yoga*, the Lord explains the process in the following verses. The Lord says that Brahman, although one without a second, has various manifestations and features. Especially for the impersonalists, the *akṣara*, or *omkāra*—the syllable *om*—is identical with Brahman. Kṛṣṇa here explains the impersonal Brahman, in which the renounced order of sages enter.

In the Vedic system of knowledge, students, from the very beginning, are taught to vibrate *om* and learn of the ultimate impersonal Brahman by living with the spiritual master in complete celibacy. In this way they realize two of Brahman's features. This practice is very essential for the student's advancement in spiritual life, but at the moment such *brahmacārī* (unmarried celibate) life is not at all possible. The social construction of the world has changed so much that there is no possibility of one's practicing celibacy from the beginning of student life. Throughout the world there are many institutions for different departments of knowledge, but there is no recognized institution where students can be educated in the *brahmacārī* principles. Unless one practices celibacy, advancement in spiritual life is very difficult. Therefore Lord Caitanya has announced, according to the scriptural injunctions for this Age of Kali, that in this age no process of realizing the Supreme is possible except the chanting of the holy names of Lord Kṛṣṇa: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

## Chapter 8—Text 12

*sarva-dvārāṇi saṁyamya  
mano hṛdi nirudhya ca  
mūrdhny ādhāyātmanaḥ prāṇam  
āsthito yoga-dhāraṇām*

### SYNONYMS

*sarva-dvārāṇi*—all the doors of the body; *saṁyamya*—controlling; *manaḥ*—the mind; *hṛdi*—in the heart; *nirudhya*—confining; *ca*—also; *mūrdhny*—on the head; *ādhāya*—fixing; *ātmanaḥ*—of the soul; *prāṇam*—the life air; *āsthitaḥ*—situated in; *yoga-dhāraṇām*—the yogic situation.

### TRANSLATION

The yogic situation is that of detachment from all sensual engagements. Closing all the doors of the senses and fixing the mind on the heart and the life air at the top of the head, one establishes himself in yoga.

### PURPORT

To practice *yoga* as suggested here, one first has to close the doors of all sense enjoyment. This practice is called *pratyāhāra*, or withdrawing the senses from the sense objects. The sense organs for acquiring knowledge—the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and touch—should be fully controlled and should not be allowed to engage in self-gratification. In this way the mind focuses on the Supersoul in the heart, and the life force is raised to the top of the head. In the Sixth Chapter this process is described in detail. But as mentioned before, this practice is not practical in this age. The best process is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If one is always able to fix his mind on Kṛṣṇa in devotional service, it is very easy for him to remain in an undisturbed transcendental trance, or in *samādhi*.

## Chapter 8—Text 13

*om ity ekākṣaram brahma  
vyāharan mām anusmaran  
yaḥ prayāti tyajan deham  
sa yāti paramām gatim*

### SYNONYMS

*om*—the combination of letters *om* (*omkāra*); *iti*—thus; *eka-akṣaram*—the one syllable; *brahma*—absolute; *vyāharan*—vibrating; *mām*—Me (Kṛṣṇa); *anusmaran*—remembering; *yaḥ*—anyone who; *prayāti*—leaves; *tyajan*—quitting; *deham*—this body; *saḥ*—he; *yāti*—achieves; *paramām*—the supreme; *gatim*—destination.

### TRANSLATION

After being situated in this yoga practice and vibrating the sacred syllable *om*, the supreme combination of letters, if one thinks of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and quits his body, he will certainly reach the spiritual planets.

### PURPORT

It is clearly stated here that *om*, Brahman and Lord Kṛṣṇa are not different. The impersonal sound of Kṛṣṇa is *om*, but the sound Hare Kṛṣṇa contains *om*. The chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is clearly recommended for this age. So if one quits his body at the end of life chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, he certainly reaches one of the spiritual planets, according to the mode of his practice. The devotees of Kṛṣṇa enter the Kṛṣṇa planet, Goloka Vṛndāvana. For the personalists there are also innumerable other planets, known as Vaikuṇṭha planets, in the spiritual sky, whereas the impersonalists remain in the *brahmajyoti*.



## Chapter 8—Text 14

*ananya-cetāḥ satataṁ  
yo mām smarati nityaśaḥ  
tasyāhaṁ sulabhaḥ pārtha  
nitya-yuktasya yoginaḥ*

### SYNONYMS

*ananya-cetāḥ*—without deviation of the mind; *satataṁ*—always; *yaḥ*—anyone who; *mām*—Me (Kṛṣṇa); *smarati*—remembers; *nityaśaḥ*—regularly; *tasya*—to him; *aham*—I am; *su-labhaḥ*—very easy to achieve; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *nitya*—regularly; *yuktasya*—engaged; *yoginaḥ*—for the devotee.

### TRANSLATION

**For one who always remembers Me without deviation, I am easy to obtain, O son of Pṛthā, because of his constant engagement in devotional service.**

### PURPORT

This verse especially describes the final destination attained by the unalloyed devotees who serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead in *bhakti-yoga*. Previous verses have mentioned four different kinds of devotees—the distressed, the inquisitive, those who seek material gain, and the speculative philosophers. Different processes of liberation have also been described: *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* and *haṭha-yoga*. The principles of these *yoga* systems have some *bhakti* added, but this verse particularly mentions pure *bhakti-yoga*, without any mixture of *jñāna*, *karma* or *haṭha*. As indicated by the word *ananya-cetāḥ*, in pure *bhakti-yoga* the devotee desires nothing but Kṛṣṇa. A pure devotee does not desire promotion to heavenly planets, nor does he seek oneness with the *brahmajyoti* or salvation or liberation from material entanglement. A pure devotee does not desire anything. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* the pure devotee is called *niṣkāma*, which means he has no desire for self-interest. Perfect peace belongs to him alone, not to them who strive for personal gain. Whereas a *jñāna-yogī*, *karma-yogī* or *haṭha-yogī* has his own selfish interests, a perfect devotee has no desire other than to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore the Lord says that for anyone who is unflinchingly devoted to Him, He is easy to attain.

A pure devotee always engages in devotional service to Kṛṣṇa in one of His various personal features. Kṛṣṇa has various plenary expansions and incarnations, such as Rāma and Nṛsimha, and a devotee can choose to fix his mind in loving service to any of these transcendental forms of the Supreme Lord. Such a devotee meets with none of the problems that plague the practitioners of other *yogas*. *Bhakti-yoga* is very simple and pure and easy to perform. One can begin simply by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. The Lord is merciful to all, but as we have already explained, He is especially inclined toward those who always serve Him without deviation. The Lord helps such devotees in various ways. As stated in

the *Vedas* (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 1.2.23), *yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas/ tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanuṁ svām*: one who is fully surrendered and engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord can understand the Supreme Lord as He is. And as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.10), *dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ tam*: the Lord gives such a devotee sufficient intelligence so that ultimately the devotee can attain Him in His spiritual kingdom.

The special qualification of the pure devotee is that he is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa without deviation and without considering the time or place. There should be no impediments. He should be able to carry out his service anywhere and at any time. Some say that the devotee should remain in holy places like Vṛndāvana or some holy town where the Lord lived, but a pure devotee can live anywhere and create the atmosphere of Vṛndāvana by his devotional service. It was Śrī Advaita who told Lord Caitanya, “Wherever You are, O Lord—*there* is Vṛndāvana.”

As indicated by the words *satatam* and *nityaśaḥ*, which mean “always,” “regularly,” or “every day,” a pure devotee constantly remembers Kṛṣṇa and meditates upon Him. These are qualifications of the pure devotee for whom the Lord is most easily attainable. *Bhakti-yoga* is the system that the *Gītā* recommends above all others. Generally, the *bhakti-yogīs* are engaged in five different ways: (1) *śānta-bhakta*, engaged in devotional service in neutrality; (2) *dāśya-bhakta*, engaged in devotional service as servant; (3) *sākhyā-bhakta*, engaged as friend; (4) *vātsalya-bhakta*, engaged as parent; and (5) *mādhurya-bhakta*, engaged as conjugal lover of the Supreme Lord. In any of these ways, the pure devotee is always constantly engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Supreme Lord and cannot forget the Supreme Lord, and so for him the Lord is easily attained. A pure devotee cannot forget the Supreme Lord for a moment, and similarly the Supreme Lord cannot forget His pure devotee for a moment. This is the great blessing of the Kṛṣṇa conscious process of chanting the *mahā-mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

## Chapter 8—Text 15

*mām upetya punar janma  
duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam  
nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ  
saṁsiddhim paramām gatāḥ*

### SYNONYMS

*mām*—Me; *upetya*—achieving; *punaḥ*—again; *janma*—birth; *duḥkha-ālayam*—place of miseries; *aśāśvatam*—temporary; *na*—never; *āpnuvanti*—attain; *mahā-ātmānaḥ*—the great souls; *saṁsiddhim*—perfection; *paramām*—ultimate; *gatāḥ*—having achieved.

### TRANSLATION

After attaining Me, the great souls, who are yogīs in devotion, never return to this temporary world, which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection.

### PURPORT

Since this temporary material world is full of the miseries of birth, old age, disease and death, naturally he who achieves the highest perfection and attains the supreme planet, Kṛṣṇaloka, Goloka Vṛndāvana, does not wish to return. The supreme planet is described in Vedic literature as *avyakta* and *akṣara* and *paramā gati*; in other words, that planet is beyond our material vision, and it is inexplicable, but it is the highest goal, the destination for the *mahātmās* (great souls). The *mahātmās* receive transcendental messages from the realized devotees and thus gradually develop devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and become so absorbed in transcendental service that they no longer desire elevation to any of the material planets, nor do they even want to be transferred to any spiritual planet. They only want Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's association, and nothing else. That is the highest perfection of life. This verse specifically mentions the personalist devotees of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. These devotees in Kṛṣṇa consciousness achieve the highest perfection of life. In other words, they are the supreme souls.

## Chapter 8—Text 16

*ā-brahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ  
punar āvartino 'rjuna  
mām upetya tu kaunteya  
punar janma na vidyate*

### SYNONYMS

*ā-brahma-bhuvanāt*—up to the Brahmaloka planet; *lokāḥ*—the planetary systems; *punaḥ*—again; *āvartinaḥ*—returning; *arjuna*—O Arjuna; *mām*—unto Me; *upetya*—arriving; *tu*—but; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *punaḥ janma*—rebirth; *na*—never; *vidyate*—takes place.

### TRANSLATION

From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place. But one who attains to My abode, O son of Kuntī, never takes birth again.

### PURPORT

All kinds of *yogīs*—*karma*, *jñāna*, *hatha*, etc.—eventually have to attain devotional perfection in *bhakti-yoga*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, before they can go to Kṛṣṇa's transcendental abode and never return. Those who attain the highest material planets, the planets of the demigods, are again subjected to repeated birth and death. As persons on earth are elevated to higher planets, people on higher planets such as Brahmaloka, Candraloka and Indraloka fall down to earth. The practice of sacrifice called *pañcāgni-vidyā*, recommended in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, enables one to achieve Brahmaloka, but if, on Brahmaloka, one does not cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then he must return to earth. Those who progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness on the higher planets are gradually elevated to higher and higher planets and at the time of universal devastation are transferred to the eternal spiritual kingdom. Śrīdhara Svāmī, in his commentary on *Bhagavad-gītā*, quotes this verse:

*brahmaṇā saha te sarve  
samprāpte pratisaṅcare  
parasyānte kṛtātmānaḥ  
praviśanti param padam*

“When there is devastation of this material universe, Brahmā and his devotees, who are constantly engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, are all transferred to the spiritual universe and to specific spiritual planets according to their desires.”

## Chapter 8—Text 17

*sahasra-yuga-paryantam  
ahar yad brahmaṇo viduḥ  
rātrim yuga-sahasrāntām  
te 'ho-rātra-vido janāḥ*

### SYNONYMS

*sahasra*—one thousand; *yuga*—millenniums; *paryantam*—including; *ahaḥ*—day; *yat*—that which; *brahmaṇaḥ*—of Brahmā; *viduḥ*—they know; *rātrim*—night; *yuga*—millenniums; *sahasra-antām*—similarly, ending after one thousand; *te*—they; *ahaḥ-rātra*—day and night; *vidaḥ*—who understand; *janāḥ*—people.

### TRANSLATION

**By human calculation, a thousand ages taken together form the duration of Brahmā's one day. And such also is the duration of his night.**

### PURPORT

The duration of the material universe is limited. It is manifested in cycles of *kalpas*. A *kalpa* is a day of Brahmā, and one day of Brahmā consists of a thousand cycles of four *yugas*, or ages: Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali. The cycle of Satya is characterized by virtue, wisdom and religion, there being practically no ignorance and vice, and the *yuga* lasts 1,728,000 years. In the Tretā-yuga vice is introduced, and this *yuga* lasts 1,296,000 years. In the Dvāpara-yuga there is an even greater decline in virtue and religion, vice increasing, and this *yuga* lasts 864,000 years. And finally in Kali-yuga (the *yuga* we have now been experiencing over the past 5,000 years) there is an abundance of strife, ignorance, irreligion and vice, true virtue being practically nonexistent, and this *yuga* lasts 432,000 years. In Kali-yuga vice increases to such a point that at the termination of the *yuga* the Supreme Lord Himself appears as the Kalki *avatāra*, vanquishes the demons, saves His devotees, and commences another Satya-yuga. Then the process is set rolling again. These four *yugas*, rotating a thousand times, comprise one day of Brahmā, and the same number comprise one night. Brahmā lives one hundred of such “years” and then dies. These “hundred years” by earth calculations total to 311 trillion and 40 billion earth years. By these calculations the life of Brahmā seems fantastic and interminable, but from the viewpoint of eternity it is as brief as a lightning flash. In the Causal Ocean there are innumerable Brahmās rising and disappearing like bubbles in the Atlantic. Brahmā and his creation are all part of the material universe, and therefore they are in constant flux. In the material universe not even Brahmā is free from the process of birth, old age, disease and death. Brahmā, however, is directly engaged in the service of the Supreme Lord in the management of this universe—therefore he at once attains liberation. Elevated *sannyāsīs* are promoted to Brahmā's particular planet, Brahmaloka, which is the highest planet in the

material universe and which survives all the heavenly planets in the upper strata of the planetary system, but in due course Brahmā and all the inhabitants of Brahmāloka are subject to death, according to the law of material nature.

## Chapter 8—Text 18

*avyaktād vyaktayaḥ sarvāḥ  
prabhavanty ahar-āgame  
rātry-āgame pralīyante  
tatraivāvyakta-samjñake*

### SYNONYMS

*avyaktāt*—from the unmanifest; *vyaktayaḥ*—living entities; *sarvāḥ*—all; *prabhavanti*—become manifest; *ahaḥ-āgame*—at the beginning of the day; *rātri-āgame*—at the fall of night; *pralīyante*—are annihilated; *tatra*—into that; *eva*—certainly; *avyakta*—the unmanifest; *saṁjñake*—which is called.

### TRANSLATION

At the beginning of Brahmā's day, all living entities become manifest from the unmanifest state, and thereafter, when the night falls, they are merged into the unmanifest again.

## Chapter 8—Text 19

*bhūta-grāmaḥ sa evāyam  
bhūtvā bhūtvā pralīyate  
rātry-āgame 'vaśaḥ pārtha  
prabhavaty ahar-āgame*

### SYNONYMS

*bhūta-grāmaḥ*—the aggregate of all living entities; *saḥ*—these; *eva*—certainly; *ayam*—this; *bhūtvā bhūtvā*—repeatedly taking birth; *pralīyate*—is annihilated; *rātri*—of night; *āgame*—on the arrival; *avaśaḥ*—automatically; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *prabhavati*—is manifest; *ahaḥ*—of daytime; *āgame*—on the arrival.

### TRANSLATION

**Again and again, when Brahmā's day arrives, all living entities come into being, and with the arrival of Brahmā's night they are helplessly annihilated.**

### PURPORT

The less intelligent, who try to remain within this material world, may be elevated to higher planets and then again must come down to this planet earth. During the daytime of Brahmā they can exhibit their activities on higher and lower planets within this material world, but at the coming of Brahmā's night they are all annihilated. In the day they receive various bodies for material activities, and at night they no longer have bodies but remain compact in the body of Viṣṇu. Then again they are manifest at the arrival of Brahmā's day. *Bhūtvā bhūtvā pralīyate*: during the day they become manifest, and at night they are annihilated again. Ultimately, when Brahmā's life is finished, they are all annihilated and remain unmanifest for millions and millions of years. And when Brahmā is born again in another millennium they are again manifest. In this way they are captivated by the spell of the material world. But those intelligent persons who take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness use the human life fully in the devotional service of the Lord, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Thus they transfer themselves, even in this life, to the spiritual planet of Kṛṣṇa and become eternally blissful there, not being subject to such rebirths.



## Chapter 8—Text 20

*paras tasmāt tu bhāvo 'nyo  
'vyakto 'vyaktāt sanātanaḥ  
yaḥ sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu  
naśyatsu na vinaśyati*

### SYNONYMS

*paraḥ*—transcendental; *tasmāt*—to that; *tu*—but; *bhāvaḥ*—nature; *anyaḥ*—another; *avyaktaḥ*—unmanifest; *avyaktāt*—to the unmanifest; *sanātanaḥ*—eternal; *yaḥ saḥ*—that which; *sarveṣu*—all; *bhūteṣu*—manifestation; *naśyatsu*—being annihilated; *na*—never; *vinaśyati*—is annihilated.

### TRANSLATION

Yet there is another unmanifest nature, which is eternal and is transcendental to this manifested and unmanifested matter. It is supreme and is never annihilated. When all in this world is annihilated, that part remains as it is.

### PURPORT

Kṛṣṇa's superior, spiritual energy is transcendental and eternal. It is beyond all the changes of material nature, which is manifest and annihilated during the days and nights of Brahmā. Kṛṣṇa's superior energy is completely opposite in quality to material nature. Superior and inferior nature are explained in the Seventh Chapter.

## Chapter 8—Text 21

*avyakto 'kṣara ity uktas  
tam āhuḥ paramām gatim  
yam prāpya na nivartante  
tad dhāma paramam mama*

### SYNONYMS

*avyaktaḥ*—unmanifested; *akṣaraḥ*—infallible; *iti*—thus; *uktaḥ*—is said; *tam*—that; *āhuḥ*—is known; *paramām*—the ultimate; *gatim*—destination; *yam*—which; *prāpya*—gaining; *na*—never; *nivartante*—come back; *tat*—that; *dhāma*—abode; *paramam*—supreme; *mama*—My.

### TRANSLATION

**That which the Vedāntists describe as unmanifest and infallible, that which is known as the supreme destination, that place from which, having attained it, one never returns—that is My supreme abode.**

### PURPORT

The supreme abode of the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* as *cintāmaṇi-dhāma*, a place where all desires are fulfilled. The supreme abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, known as Goloka Vṛndāvana, is full of palaces made of touchstone. There are also trees, called “desire trees,” that supply any type of eatable upon demand, and there are cows, known as *surabhi* cows, which supply a limitless supply of milk. In this abode, the Lord is served by hundreds of thousands of goddesses of fortune (Lakṣmīs), and He is called Govinda, the primal Lord and the cause of all causes. The Lord is accustomed to blow His flute (*veṇuṁ kvaṇantam*). His transcendental form is the most attractive in all the worlds—His eyes are like lotus petals, and the color of His body is like the color of clouds. He is so attractive that His beauty excels that of thousands of Cupids. He wears saffron cloth, a garland around His neck and a peacock feather in His hair. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa gives only a small hint of His personal abode, Goloka Vṛndāvana, which is the supermost planet in the spiritual kingdom. A vivid description is given in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. Vedic literatures (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 1.3.11) state that there is nothing superior to the abode of the Supreme Godhead, and that that abode is the ultimate destination (*puruṣān na param kiñcit sā kāṣṭhā paramā gatiḥ*). When one attains to it, he never returns to the material world. Kṛṣṇa’s supreme abode and Kṛṣṇa Himself are nondifferent, being of the same quality. On this earth, Vṛndāvana, ninety miles southeast of Delhi, is a replica of that supreme Goloka Vṛndāvana located in the spiritual sky. When Kṛṣṇa descended on this earth, He sported on that particular tract of land known as Vṛndāvana, comprising about eighty-four square miles in the district of Mathurā, India.

## Chapter 8—Text 22

*puruṣaḥ sa paraḥ pārtha  
bhaktyā labhyaḥ tv ananyayā  
yasyāntaḥ-sthāni bhūtāni  
yena sarvam idaṁ tatam*

### SYNONYMS

*puruṣaḥ*—the Supreme Personality; *saḥ*—He; *paraḥ*—the Supreme, than whom no one is greater; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *bhaktyā*—by devotional service; *labhyaḥ*—can be achieved; *tu*—but; *ananyayā*—unalloyed, undeviating; *yasya*—whom; *antaḥ-sthāni*—within; *bhūtāni*—all of this material manifestation; *yena*—by whom; *sarvam*—all; *idaṁ*—whatever we can see; *tatam*—is pervaded.

### TRANSLATION

**The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is greater than all, is attainable by unalloyed devotion. Although He is present in His abode, He is all-pervading, and everything is situated within Him.**

### PURPORT

It is here clearly stated that the supreme destination, from which there is no return, is the abode of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person. The *Brahma-saṁhitā* describes this supreme abode as *ānanda-cinmaya-rasa*, a place where everything is full of spiritual bliss. All the variegatedness manifest there is of the quality of spiritual bliss—nothing there is material. That variegatedness is expanded as the spiritual expansion of the Supreme Godhead Himself, for the manifestation there is totally of the spiritual energy, as explained in Chapter Seven. As far as this material world is concerned, although the Lord is always in His supreme abode, He is nonetheless all-pervading by His material energy. So by His spiritual and material energies He is present everywhere—both in the material and in the spiritual universes. *Yasyāntaḥ-sthāni* means that everything is sustained within Him, within either His spiritual or material energy. The Lord is all-pervading by these two energies.

To enter Kṛṣṇa's supreme abode or the innumerable Vaikuṇṭha planets is possible only by *bhakti*, devotional service, as clearly indicated here by the word *bhaktyā*. No other process can help one attain that supreme abode. The *Vedas* (*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* 3.2) also describe the supreme abode and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Eko vaśī sarva-gaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*. In that abode there is only one Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose name is Kṛṣṇa. He is the supreme merciful Deity, and although situated there as one He has expanded Himself into millions and millions of plenary expansions. The *Vedas* compare the Lord to a tree standing still yet bearing many varieties of fruits, flowers and changing leaves. The plenary expansions of the Lord who preside over the Vaikuṇṭha planets are

four-armed, and they are known by a variety of names—Puruṣottama, Trivikrama, Keśava, Mādhava, Aniruddha, Hṛṣīkeśa, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Śrīdhara, Vāsudeva, Dāmodara, Janārdana, Nārāyaṇa, Vāmana, Padmanābha, etc.

The *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.37) also confirms that although the Lord is always in the supreme abode, Goloka Vṛndāvana, He is all-pervading, so that everything is going on nicely (*goloka eva nivasaty akhilātma-bhūtaḥ*). As stated in the *Vedas* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.8), *parāśya śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate/ svābhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca*: His energies are so expansive that they systematically conduct everything in the cosmic manifestation without a flaw, although the Supreme Lord is far, far away.

## Chapter 8—Text 23

*yatra kāle tv anāvṛttim  
āvṛttim caiva yoginaḥ  
prayātā yānti taṁ kālam  
vakṣyāmi bharatarṣabha*

### SYNONYMS

*yatra*—at which; *kāle*—time; *tu*—and; *anāvṛttim*—no return; *āvṛttim*—return; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *yoginaḥ*—different kinds of mystics; *prayātāḥ*—having departed; *yānti*—attain; *taṁ*—that; *kālam*—time; *vakṣyāmi*—I shall describe; *bharata-ṛṣabha*—O best of the Bhāratas.

### TRANSLATION

O best of the Bhāratas, I shall now explain to you the different times at which, passing away from this world, the yogī does or does not come back.

### PURPORT

The unalloyed devotees of the Supreme Lord, who are totally surrendered souls, do not care when they leave their bodies or by what method. They leave everything in Kṛṣṇa's hands and so easily and happily return to Godhead. But those who are not unalloyed devotees and who depend instead on such methods of spiritual realization as *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* and *haṭha-yoga* must leave the body at a suitable time and thereby be assured whether or not they will return to the world of birth and death.

If the yogī is perfect he can select the time and situation for leaving this material world. But if he is not so expert his success depends on his accidentally passing away at a certain suitable time. The suitable times at which one passes away and does not come back are explained by the Lord in the next verse. According to Ācārya Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, the Sanskrit word *kāla* used herein refers to the presiding deity of time.

## Chapter 8—Text 24

*agnir jyotir ahaḥ śuklaḥ  
ṣaṇ-māsā uttarāyaṇam  
tatra prayātā gacchanti  
brahma brahma-vido janāḥ*

### SYNONYMS

*agniḥ*—fire; *jyotiḥ*—light; *ahaḥ*—day; *śuklaḥ*—the white fortnight; *ṣaṇ-māsāḥ*—the six months; *uttara-ayanam*—when the sun passes on the northern side; *tatra*—there; *prayātāḥ*—those who pass away; *gacchanti*—go; *brahma*—to the Absolute; *brahma-vidāḥ*—who know the Absolute; *janāḥ*—persons.

### TRANSLATION

Those who know the Supreme Brahman attain that Supreme by passing away from the world during the influence of the fiery god, in the light, at an auspicious moment of the day, during the fortnight of the waxing moon, or during the six months when the sun travels in the north.

### PURPORT

When fire, light, day and the fortnight of the moon are mentioned, it is to be understood that over all of them there are various presiding deities who make arrangements for the passage of the soul. At the time of death, the mind carries one on the path to a new life. If one leaves the body at the time designated above, either accidentally or by arrangement, it is possible for him to attain the impersonal *brahmajyoti*. Mystics who are advanced in yoga practice can arrange the time and place to leave the body. Others have no control—if by accident they leave at an auspicious moment, then they will not return to the cycle of birth and death, but otherwise there is every possibility that they will have to return. However, for the pure devotee in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is no fear of returning, whether he leaves the body at an auspicious or inauspicious moment, by accident or arrangement.

## Chapter 8—Text 25

*dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇaḥ  
ṣaṇ-māsā dakṣiṇāyanam  
tatra cāndramasam jyotir  
yogī prāpya nivartate*

### SYNONYMS

*dhūmaḥ*—smoke; *rātriḥ*—night; *tathā*—also; *kṛṣṇaḥ*—the fortnight of the dark moon; *ṣaṇ-māsāḥ*—the six months; *dakṣiṇa-ayanam*—when the sun passes on the southern side; *tatra*—there; *cāndra-masam*—the moon planet; *jyotiḥ*—the light; *yogī*—the mystic; *prāpya*—achieving; *nivartate*—comes back.

### TRANSLATION

The mystic who passes away from this world during the smoke, the night, the fortnight of the waning moon, or the six months when the sun passes to the south reaches the moon planet but again comes back.

### PURPORT

In the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Kapila Muni mentions that those who are expert in fruitive activities and sacrificial methods on earth attain to the moon at death. These elevated souls live on the moon for about 10,000 years (by demigod calculations) and enjoy life by drinking *soma-rasa*. They eventually return to earth. This means that on the moon there are higher classes of living beings, though they may not be perceived by the gross senses.

## Chapter 8—Text 26

*śukla-kṛṣṇe gatī hy ete  
jagataḥ śāśvate mate  
ekayā yāty anāvṛttim  
anyayāvartate punaḥ*

### SYNONYMS

*śukla*—light; *kṛṣṇe*—and darkness; *gatī*—ways of passing; *hi*—certainly; *ete*—these two; *jagataḥ*—of the material world; *śāśvate*—of the *Vedas*; *mate*—in the opinion; *ekayā*—by one; *yāti*—goes; *anāvṛttim*—to no return; *anyayā*—by the other; *āvartate*—comes back; *punaḥ*—again.

### TRANSLATION

According to Vedic opinion, there are two ways of passing from this world—one in light and one in darkness. When one passes in light, he does not come back; but when one passes in darkness, he returns.

### PURPORT

The same description of departure and return is quoted by Ācārya Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (5.10.3–5). Those who are fruitive laborers and philosophical speculators from time immemorial are constantly going and coming. Actually they do not attain ultimate salvation, for they do not surrender to Kṛṣṇa.



## Chapter 8—Text 27

*naite sṛtī pārtha jānan  
yogī muhyati kaścana  
tasmāt sarveṣu kālēṣu  
yoga-yukto bhavārjuna*

### SYNONYMS

*na*—never; *ete*—these two; *sṛtī*—different paths; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *jānan*—even if he knows; *yogī*—the devotee of the Lord; *muhyati*—is bewildered; *kaścana*—any; *tasmāt*—therefore; *sarveṣu kālēṣu*—always; *yoga-yuktaḥ*—engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *bhava*—just become; *arjuna*—O Arjuna.

### TRANSLATION

**Although the devotees know these two paths, O Arjuna, they are never bewildered. Therefore be always fixed in devotion.**

### PURPORT

Kṛṣṇa is here advising Arjuna that he should not be disturbed by the different paths the soul can take when leaving the material world. A devotee of the Supreme Lord should not worry whether he will depart by arrangement or by accident. The devotee should be firmly established in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. He should know that concern over either of these two paths is troublesome. The best way to be absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is to be always dovetailed in His service, and this will make one's path to the spiritual kingdom safe, certain and direct. The word *yoga-yukta* is especially significant in this verse. One who is firm in *yoga* is constantly engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness in all his activities. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī advises, *anāsaktasya viṣayān yathārham upayuñjataḥ*: one should be unattached in material affairs and do everything in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. By this system, which is called *yukta-vairāgya*, one attains perfection. Therefore the devotee is not disturbed by these descriptions, because he knows that his passage to the supreme abode is guaranteed by devotional service.

## Chapter 8—Text 28

*vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu caiva  
dāneṣu yat puṇya-phalam pradiṣṭam  
atyeti tat sarvam idam veditvā  
yogī param sthānam upaiti cādyam*

### SYNONYMS

*vedeṣu*—in the study of the *Vedas*; *yajñeṣu*—in the performances of *yajña*, sacrifice; *tapaḥsu*—in undergoing different types of austerities; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *dāneṣu*—in giving charities; *yat*—that which; *puṇya-phalam*—result of pious work; *pradiṣṭam*—indicated; *atyeti*—surpasses; *tat sarvam*—all those; *idam*—this; *viditvā*—knowing; *yogī*—the devotee; *param*—supreme; *sthānam*—abode; *upaiti*—achieves; *ca*—also; *ādyam*—original.

### TRANSLATION

A person who accepts the path of devotional service is not bereft of the results derived from studying the *Vedas*, performing austere sacrifices, giving charity or pursuing philosophical and fruitive activities. Simply by performing devotional service, he attains all these, and at the end he reaches the supreme eternal abode.

### PURPORT

This verse is the summation of the Seventh and Eighth chapters, which particularly deal with Kṛṣṇa consciousness and devotional service. One has to study the *Vedas* under the guidance of the spiritual master and undergo many austerities and penances while living under his care. A *brahmacārī* has to live in the home of the spiritual master just like a servant, and he must beg alms from door to door and bring them to the spiritual master. He takes food only under the master's order, and if the master neglects to call the student for food that day, the student fasts. These are some of the Vedic principles for observing *brahmacarya*.

After the student studies the *Vedas* under the master for a period from five to twenty years, he may become a man of perfect character. Study of the *Vedas* is not meant for the recreation of armchair speculators, but for the formation of character. After this training, the *brahmacārī* is allowed to enter into household life and marry. When he is a householder, he has to perform many sacrifices so that he may achieve further enlightenment. He must also give charity according to the country, time and candidate, discriminating among charity in goodness, in passion and in ignorance, as described in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Then after retiring from household life, upon accepting the order of *vānaprastha*, he undergoes severe penances—living in forests, dressing with tree bark, not shaving, etc. By carrying out the orders of *brahmacarya*, householder life, *vānaprastha* and finally *sannyāsa*, one becomes elevated to the perfectional stage of life. Some are then

elevated to the heavenly kingdoms, and when they become even more advanced they are liberated in the spiritual sky, either in the impersonal *brahmajyoti* or in the Vaikuṇṭha planets or Kṛṣṇaloka. This is the path outlined by Vedic literatures.

The beauty of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, is that by one stroke, by engaging in devotional service, one can surpass all the rituals of the different orders of life.

The words *idaṁ veditvā* indicate that one should understand the instructions given by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in this chapter and the Seventh Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*. One should try to understand these chapters not by scholarship or mental speculation but by hearing them in association with devotees. Chapters Seven through Twelve are the essence of *Bhagavad-gītā*. The first six and the last six chapters are like coverings for the middle six chapters, which are especially protected by the Lord. If one is fortunate enough to understand *Bhagavad-gītā*—especially these middle six chapters—in the association of devotees, then his life at once becomes glorified beyond all penances, sacrifices, charities, speculations, etc., for one can achieve all the results of these activities simply by Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

One who has a little faith in *Bhagavad-gītā* should learn *Bhagavad-gītā* from a devotee, because in the beginning of the Fourth Chapter it is stated clearly that *Bhagavad-gītā* can be understood only by devotees; no one else can perfectly understand the purpose of *Bhagavad-gītā*. One should therefore learn *Bhagavad-gītā* from a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, not from mental speculators. This is a sign of faith. When one searches for a devotee and finally gets a devotee's association one actually begins to study and understand *Bhagavad-gītā*. By advancement in the association of the devotee one is placed in devotional service, and this service dispels all one's misgivings about Kṛṣṇa, or God, and Kṛṣṇa's activities, form, pastimes, name and other features. After these misgivings have been perfectly cleared away, one becomes fixed in one's study. Then one relishes the study of *Bhagavad-gītā* and attains the state of feeling always Kṛṣṇa conscious. In the advanced stage, one falls completely in love with Kṛṣṇa. This highest perfectional stage of life enables the devotee to be transferred to Kṛṣṇa's abode in the spiritual sky, Goloka Vṛndāvana, where the devotee becomes eternally happy.

*Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the Eighth Chapter of the Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of Attaining the Supreme.*