

- CHAPTER 3 -

Karma-yoga

Chapter 3—Text 1

arjuna uvāca
jyāyasī cet karmaṇas te
matā buddhir janārdana
tat kiṁ karmaṇi ghore mām
niyojayasi keśava

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca—Arjuna said; *jyāyasī*—better; *cet*—if; *karmaṇaḥ*—than fruitive action; *te*—by You; *matā*—is considered; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *janārdana*—O Kṛṣṇa; *tat*—therefore; *kiṁ*—why; *karmaṇi*—in action; *ghore*—ghastly; *mām*—me; *niyojayasi*—You are engaging; *keśava*—O Kṛṣṇa.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O Janārdana, O Keśava, why do You want to engage me in this ghastly warfare, if You think that intelligence is better than fruitive work?

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa has very elaborately described the constitution of the soul in the previous chapter, with a view to delivering His intimate friend Arjuna from the ocean of material grief. And the path of realization has been recommended: *buddhi-yoga*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa consciousness is misunderstood to be inertia, and one with such a misunderstanding often withdraws to a secluded place to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious by chanting the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. But without being trained in the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it is not advisable to chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa in a secluded place, where one may acquire only cheap adoration from the innocent public. Arjuna also thought of Kṛṣṇa consciousness or *buddhi-yoga*, or intelligence in spiritual advancement of knowledge, as something like retirement from active life and the practice of penance and austerity at a secluded place. In other words, he wanted to skillfully avoid the fighting by using Kṛṣṇa consciousness as an excuse. But as a sincere student, he placed the matter before his master and questioned Kṛṣṇa as to his best course of action. In answer, Lord Kṛṣṇa elaborately explained *karma-yoga*, or work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in this Third Chapter.

Chapter 3—Text 2

*vyāmiśreṇeva vākyena
buddhim mohayaśīva me
tad ekam vada niścītya
yena śreya 'ham āpnuyām*

SYNONYMS

vyāmiśreṇa—by equivocal; *iva*—certainly; *vākyena*—words; *buddhim*—intelligence; *mohayasi*—You are bewildering; *iva*—certainly; *me*—my; *tat*—therefore; *ekam*—only one; *vada*—please tell; *niścītya*—ascertaining; *yena*—by which; *śreyaḥ*—real benefit; *aham*—I; *āpnuyām*—may have.

TRANSLATION

My intelligence is bewildered by Your equivocal instructions. Therefore, please tell me decisively which will be most beneficial for me.

PURPORT

In the previous chapter, as a prelude to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, many different paths were explained, such as *sāṅkhya-yoga*, *buddhi-yoga*, control of the senses by intelligence, work without fruitive desire, and the position of the neophyte. This was all presented unsystematically. A more organized outline of the path would be necessary for action and understanding. Arjuna, therefore, wanted to clear up these apparently confusing matters so that any common man could accept them without misinterpretation. Although Kṛṣṇa had no intention of confusing Arjuna by any jugglery of words, Arjuna could not follow the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness—either by inertia or by active service. In other words, by his questions he is clearing the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for all students who seriously want to understand the mystery of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Chapter 3—Text 3

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
loke 'smin dvi-vidhā niṣṭhā
purā proktā mayānagha
jñāna-yogena sāṅkhyānām
karma-yogena yoginām

SYNONYMS

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *loke*—in the world; *asmin*—this; *dvi-vidhā*—two kinds of; *niṣṭhā*—faith; *purā*—formerly; *proktā*—were said; *mayā*—by Me; *anagha*—O sinless one; *jñāna-yogena*—by the linking process of knowledge; *sāṅkhyānām*—of the empiric philosophers; *karma-yogena*—by the linking process of devotion; *yoginām*—of the devotees.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O sinless Arjuna, I have already explained that there are two classes of men who try to realize the self. Some are inclined to understand it by empirical, philosophical speculation, and others by devotional service.

PURPORT

In the Second Chapter, verse 39, the Lord explained two kinds of procedures—namely *sāṅkhya-yoga* and *karma-yoga*, or *buddhi-yoga*. In this verse, the Lord explains the same more clearly. *Sāṅkhya-yoga*, or the analytical study of the nature of spirit and matter, is the subject matter for persons who are inclined to speculate and understand things by experimental knowledge and philosophy. The other class of men work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as it is explained in the 61st verse of the Second Chapter. The Lord has explained, also in the 39th verse, that by working by the principles of *buddhi-yoga*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can be relieved from the bonds of action; and, furthermore, there is no flaw in the process. The same principle is more clearly explained in the 61st verse—that this *buddhi-yoga* is to depend entirely on the Supreme (or more specifically, on Kṛṣṇa), and in this way all the senses can be brought under control very easily. Therefore, both the *yogas* are interdependent, as religion and philosophy. Religion without philosophy is sentiment, or sometimes fanaticism, while philosophy without religion is mental speculation. The ultimate goal is Kṛṣṇa, because the philosophers who are also sincerely searching after the Absolute Truth come in the end to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is also stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The whole process is to understand the real position of the self in relation to the Superself. The indirect process is philosophical speculation, by which, gradually, one may come to the point of Kṛṣṇa consciousness; and the other process is directly connecting with everything in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Of these two, the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is better because it does not depend on purifying the senses by a

philosophical process. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is itself the purifying process, and by the direct method of devotional service it is simultaneously easy and sublime.

Chapter 3—Text 4

*na karmaṇām anārambhān
naiṣkarmyaṁ puruṣo 'śnute
na ca sannyasanād eva
siddhiṁ samadhigacchati*

SYNONYMS

na—not; *karmaṇām*—of prescribed duties; *anārambhāt*—by nonperformance; *naiṣkarmyam*—freedom from reaction; *puruṣaḥ*—a man; *aśnute*—achieves; *na*—nor; *ca*—also; *sannyasanāt*—by renunciation; *eva*—simply; *siddhiṁ*—success; *samadhigacchati*—attains.

TRANSLATION

Not by merely abstaining from work can one achieve freedom from reaction, nor by renunciation alone can one attain perfection.

PURPORT

The renounced order of life can be accepted when one has been purified by the discharge of the prescribed form of duties which are laid down just to purify the hearts of materialistic men. Without purification, one cannot attain success by abruptly adopting the fourth order of life (*sannyāsa*). According to the empirical philosophers, simply by adopting *sannyāsa*, or retiring from fruitive activities, one at once becomes as good as Nārāyaṇa. But Lord Kṛṣṇa does not approve this principle. Without purification of heart, *sannyāsa* is simply a disturbance to the social order. On the other hand, if someone takes to the transcendental service of the Lord, even without discharging his prescribed duties, whatever he may be able to advance in the cause is accepted by the Lord (*buddhi-yoga*). *Sv-alpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt*. Even a slight performance of such a principle enables one to overcome great difficulties.

Chapter 3—Text 5

*na hi kaścīt kṣaṇam āpi
jātu tiṣṭhaty akarma-kṛt
kāryate hy avaśaḥ karma
sarvaḥ prakṛti-jaiḥ guṇaiḥ*

SYNONYMS

na—nor; *hi*—certainly; *kaścīt*—anyone; *kṣaṇam*—a moment; *āpi*—also; *jātu*—at any time; *tiṣṭhati*—remains; *akarma-kṛt*—without doing something; *kāryate*—is forced to do; *hi*—certainly; *avaśaḥ*—helplessly; *karma*—work; *sarvaḥ*—all; *prakṛti-jaiḥ*—born of the modes of material nature; *guṇaiḥ*—by the qualities.

TRANSLATION

Everyone is forced to act helplessly according to the qualities he has acquired from the modes of material nature; therefore no one can refrain from doing something, not even for a moment.

PURPORT

It is not a question of embodied life, but it is the nature of the soul to be always active. Without the presence of the spirit soul, the material body cannot move. The body is only a dead vehicle to be worked by the spirit soul, which is always active and cannot stop even for a moment. As such, the spirit soul has to be engaged in the good work of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, otherwise it will be engaged in occupations dictated by illusory energy. In contact with material energy, the spirit soul acquires material modes, and to purify the soul from such affinities it is necessary to engage in the prescribed duties enjoined in the *śāstras*. But if the soul is engaged in his natural function of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whatever he is able to do is good for him. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.17) affirms this:

*tyaktvā sva-dharmaṁ caraṇāmbujaṁ harer
bhajann apakvo 'tha patet tato yadi
yatra kva vābhadram abhūd amuṣya kiṁ
ko vārtha āpto 'bhajatām sva-dharmataḥ*

“If someone takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, even though he may not follow the prescribed duties in the *śāstras* or execute the devotional service properly, and even though he may fall down from the standard, there is no loss or evil for him. But if he carries out all the injunctions for purification in the *śāstras*, what does it avail him if he is not Kṛṣṇa conscious?” So the purificatory process is necessary for reaching this point of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore, *sannyāsa*, or any purificatory process, is to help reach the ultimate goal of becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious, without which everything is considered a failure.

Chapter 3—Text 6

*karmendriyāṇi saṁyamya
ya āste manasā smaran
indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā
mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate*

SYNONYMS

karma-indriyāṇi—the five working sense organs; *saṁyamya*—controlling; *yaḥ*—anyone who; *āste*—remains; *manasā*—by the mind; *smaran*—thinking of; *indriya-arthān*—sense objects; *vimūḍha*—foolish; *ātmā*—soul; *mithyā-ācāraḥ*—pretender; *saḥ*—he; *ucyate*—is called.

TRANSLATION

One who restrains the senses of action but whose mind dwells on sense objects certainly deludes himself and is called a pretender.

PURPORT

There are many pretenders who refuse to work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness but make a show of meditation, while actually dwelling within the mind upon sense enjoyment. Such pretenders may also speak on dry philosophy in order to bluff sophisticated followers, but according to this verse these are the greatest cheaters. For sense enjoyment one can act in any capacity of the social order, but if one follows the rules and regulations of his particular status, he can make gradual progress in purifying his existence. But he who makes a show of being a *yogī* while actually searching for the objects of sense gratification must be called the greatest cheater, even though he sometimes speaks of philosophy. His knowledge has no value, because the effects of such a sinful man's knowledge are taken away by the illusory energy of the Lord. Such a pretender's mind is always impure, and therefore his show of yogic meditation has no value whatsoever.

Chapter 3—Text 7

*yaś tu indriyāṇi manasā
niyamya ārabhate 'rjuna
karmendriyaiḥ karma-yogam
asaktaḥ sa viśiṣyate*

SYNONYMS

yaś—one who; *tu*—but; *indriyāṇi*—the senses; *manasā*—by the mind; *niyamya*—regulating; *ārabhate*—begins; *arjuna*—O Arjuna; *karma-indriyaiḥ*—by the active sense organs; *karma-yogam*—devotion; *asaktaḥ*—without attachment; *saḥ*—he; *viśiṣyate*—is by far the better.

TRANSLATION

On the other hand, if a sincere person tries to control the active senses by the mind and begins karma-yoga [in Kṛṣṇa consciousness] without attachment, he is by far superior.

PURPORT

Instead of becoming a pseudo transcendentalist for the sake of wanton living and sense enjoyment, it is far better to remain in one's own business and execute the purpose of life, which is to get free from material bondage and enter into the kingdom of God. The prime *svārtha-gati*, or goal of self-interest, is to reach Viṣṇu. The whole institution of *varṇa* and *āśrama* is designed to help us reach this goal of life. A householder can also reach this destination by regulated service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For self-realization, one can live a controlled life, as prescribed in the *śāstras*, and continue carrying out his business without attachment, and in that way make progress. A sincere person who follows this method is far better situated than the false pretender who adopts show-bottle spiritualism to cheat the innocent public. A sincere sweeper in the street is far better than the charlatan meditator who meditates only for the sake of making a living.

Chapter 3—Text 8

*niyatam kuru karma tvam
karma jyāyo hy akarmaṇaḥ
śarīra-yātrāpi ca te
na prasiddhyed akarmaṇaḥ*

SYNONYMS

niyatam—prescribed; *kuru*—do; *karma*—duties; *tvam*—you; *karma*—work; *jyāyaḥ*—better; *hi*—certainly; *akarmaṇaḥ*—than no work; *śarīra*—bodily; *yātrā*—maintenance; *api*—even; *ca*—also; *te*—your; *na*—never; *prasiddhyet*—is effected; *akarmaṇaḥ*—without work.

TRANSLATION

Perform your prescribed duty, for doing so is better than not working. One cannot even maintain one's physical body without work.

PURPORT

There are many pseudo meditators who misrepresent themselves as belonging to high parentage, and great professional men who falsely pose that they have sacrificed everything for the sake of advancement in spiritual life. Lord Kṛṣṇa did not want Arjuna to become a pretender. Rather, the Lord desired that Arjuna perform his prescribed duties as set forth for *kṣatriyas*. Arjuna was a householder and a military general, and therefore it was better for him to remain as such and perform his religious duties as prescribed for the householder *kṣatriya*. Such activities gradually cleanse the heart of a mundane man and free him from material contamination. So-called renunciation for the purpose of maintenance is never approved by the Lord, nor by any religious scripture. After all, one has to maintain one's body and soul together by some work. Work should not be given up capriciously, without purification of materialistic propensities. Anyone who is in the material world is certainly possessed of the impure propensity for lording it over material nature, or, in other words, for sense gratification. Such polluted propensities have to be cleared. Without doing so, through prescribed duties, one should never attempt to become a so-called transcendentalist, renouncing work and living at the cost of others.

Chapter 3—Text 9

*yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra
loko 'yam karma-bandhanaḥ
tat-artham karma kaunteya
mukta-saṅgaḥ samācara*

SYNONYMS

yajña-arthāt—done only for the sake of Yajña, or Viṣṇu; *karmaṇaḥ*—than work; *anyatra*—otherwise; *lokaḥ*—world; *ayam*—this; *karma-bandhanaḥ*—bondage by work; *tat*—of Him; *artham*—for the sake; *karma*—work; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *mukta-saṅgaḥ*—liberated from association; *samācara*—do perfectly.

TRANSLATION

Work done as a sacrifice for Viṣṇu has to be performed, otherwise work causes bondage in this material world. Therefore, O son of Kuntī, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way you will always remain free from bondage.

PURPORT

Since one has to work even for the simple maintenance of the body, the prescribed duties for a particular social position and quality are so made that that purpose can be fulfilled. *Yajña* means Lord Viṣṇu, or sacrificial performances. All sacrificial performances also are meant for the satisfaction of Lord Viṣṇu. The *Vedas* enjoin: *yajño vai viṣṇuḥ*. In other words, the same purpose is served whether one performs prescribed *yajñas* or directly serves Lord Viṣṇu. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is therefore performance of *yajña* as it is prescribed in this verse. The *varṇāśrama* institution also aims at satisfying Lord Viṣṇu.

Varṇāśramācāravatā puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān/ viṣṇur ārādhyate (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 3.8.8).

Therefore one has to work for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu. Any other work done in this material world will be a cause of bondage, for both good and evil work have their reactions, and any reaction binds the performer. Therefore, one has to work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness to satisfy Kṛṣṇa (or Viṣṇu); and while performing such activities one is in a liberated stage. This is the great art of doing work, and in the beginning this process requires very expert guidance. One should therefore act very diligently, under the expert guidance of a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, or under the direct instruction of Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself (under whom Arjuna had the opportunity to work). Nothing should be performed for sense gratification, but everything should be done for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. This practice will not only save one from the reaction of work, but also gradually elevate one to transcendental loving service of the Lord, which alone can raise one to the kingdom of God.

Chapter 3—Text 10

*saha-yajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā
purovāca prajāpatiḥ
anena prasaviṣyadhvam
eṣa vo 'stv iṣṭa-kāma-dhuk*

SYNONYMS

saha—along with; *yajñāḥ*—sacrifices; *prajāḥ*—generations; *sṛṣṭvā*—creating; *purā*—anciently; *uvāca*—said; *prajā-patiḥ*—the Lord of creatures; *anena*—by this; *prasaviṣyadhvam*—be more and more prosperous; *eṣaḥ*—this; *vaḥ*—your; *astu*—let it be; *iṣṭa*—of all desirable things; *kāma-dhuk*—bestower.

TRANSLATION

In the beginning of creation, the Lord of all creatures sent forth generations of men and demigods, along with sacrifices for Viṣṇu, and blessed them by saying, “Be thou happy by this yajña [sacrifice] because its performance will bestow upon you everything desirable for living happily and achieving liberation.”

PURPORT

The material creation by the Lord of creatures (Viṣṇu) is a chance offered to the conditioned souls to come back home—back to Godhead. All living entities within the material creation are conditioned by material nature because of their forgetfulness of their relationship to Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Vedic principles are to help us understand this eternal relation, as it is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*. The Lord says that the purpose of the *Vedas* is to understand Him. In the Vedic hymns it is said: *patiṁ viśvasyātmeśvaram*. Therefore, the Lord of the living entities is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also (2.4.20) Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the Lord as *pati* in so many ways:

*śriyaḥ patir yajña-patiḥ prajā-patir
dhiyām patir loka-patir dharā-patiḥ
patir gatiś cāndhaka-vṛṣṇi-sātvatām
prasīdatām me bhagavān satām patiḥ*

The *prajā-pati* is Lord Viṣṇu, and He is the Lord of all living creatures, all worlds, and all beauties, and the protector of everyone. The Lord created this material world to enable the conditioned souls to learn how to perform *yajñas* (sacrifices) for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu, so that while in the material world they can live very comfortably without anxiety and after finishing the present material body they can enter into the kingdom of God. That is the whole program for the conditioned soul. By performance of *yajña*, the conditioned

souls gradually become Kṛṣṇa conscious and become godly in all respects. In the Age of Kali, the *saṅkīrtana-yajña* (the chanting of the names of God) is recommended by the Vedic scriptures, and this transcendental system was introduced by Lord Caitanya for the deliverance of all men in this age. *Saṅkīrtana-yajña* and Kṛṣṇa consciousness go well together. Lord Kṛṣṇa in His devotional form (as Lord Caitanya) is mentioned in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.32) as follows, with special reference to the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*:

*kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam
sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair
yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ*

“In this Age of Kali, people who are endowed with sufficient intelligence will worship the Lord, who is accompanied by His associates, by performance of *saṅkīrtana-yajña*.” Other *yajñas* prescribed in the Vedic literatures are not easy to perform in this Age of Kali, but the *saṅkīrtana-yajña* is easy and sublime for all purposes, as recommended in *Bhagavad-gītā* also (9.14).

Chapter 3—Text 11

*devān bhāvayatānena
te devā bhāvayantu vaḥ
parasparam bhāvayantaḥ
śreyaḥ param avāpsyatha*

SYNONYMS

devān—demigods; *bhāvayatā*—having pleased; *anena*—by this sacrifice; *te*—those; *devāḥ*—demigods; *bhāvayantu*—will please; *vaḥ*—you; *parasparam*—mutually; *bhāvayantaḥ*—pleasing one another; *śreyaḥ*—benediction; *param*—the supreme; *avāpsyatha*—you will achieve.

TRANSLATION

The demigods, being pleased by sacrifices, will also please you, and thus, by cooperation between men and demigods, prosperity will reign for all.

PURPORT

The demigods are empowered administrators of material affairs. The supply of air, light, water and all other benedictions for maintaining the body and soul of every living entity is entrusted to the demigods, who are innumerable assistants in different parts of the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Their pleasures and displeasures are dependent on the performance of *yajñas* by the human being. Some of the *yajñas* are meant to satisfy particular demigods; but even in so doing, Lord Viṣṇu is worshiped in all *yajñas* as the chief beneficiary. It is stated also in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that Kṛṣṇa Himself is the beneficiary of all kinds of *yajñas*: *bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasām*. Therefore, ultimate satisfaction of the *yajña-pati* is the chief purpose of all *yajñas*. When these *yajñas* are perfectly performed, naturally the demigods in charge of the different departments of supply are pleased, and there is no scarcity in the supply of natural products.

Performance of *yajñas* has many side benefits, ultimately leading to liberation from material bondage. By performance of *yajñas*, all activities become purified, as it is stated in the *Vedas*: *āhāra-śuddhau sattva-śuddhiḥ sattva-śuddhau dhruvā smṛtiḥ smṛti-lambhe sarvagranthīnām vipramokṣaḥ*. By performance of *yajña* one's eatables become sanctified, and by eating sanctified foodstuffs one's very existence becomes purified; by the purification of existence finer tissues in the memory become sanctified, and when memory is sanctified one can think of the path of liberation, and all these combined together lead to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the great necessity of present-day society.

Chapter 3—Text 12

*iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā
dāsyante yajña-bhāvitāḥ
tair dattān apradāyaibhyo
yo bhuñkte stena eva saḥ*

SYNONYMS

iṣṭān—desired; *bhogān*—necessities of life; *hi*—certainly; *vaḥ*—unto you; *devāḥ*—the demigods; *dāsyante*—will award; *yajña-bhāvitāḥ*—being satisfied by the performance of sacrifices; *taiḥ*—by them; *dattān*—things given; *apradāya*—without offering; *ebhyaḥ*—to these demigods; *yaḥ*—he who; *bhuñkte*—enjoys; *stenaḥ*—thief; *eva*—certainly; *saḥ*—he.

TRANSLATION

In charge of the various necessities of life, the demigods, being satisfied by the performance of yajña [sacrifice], will supply all necessities to you. But he who enjoys such gifts without offering them to the demigods in return is certainly a thief.

PURPORT

The demigods are authorized supplying agents on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. Therefore, they must be satisfied by the performance of prescribed *yajñas*. In the *Vedas*, there are different kinds of *yajñas* prescribed for different kinds of demigods, but all are ultimately offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. For one who cannot understand what the Personality of Godhead is, sacrifice to the demigods is recommended. According to the different material qualities of the persons concerned, different types of *yajñas* are recommended in the *Vedas*. Worship of different demigods is also on the same basis—namely, according to different qualities. For example, the meat-eaters are recommended to worship the goddess Kālī, the ghastly form of material nature, and before the goddess the sacrifice of animals is recommended. But for those who are in the mode of goodness, the transcendental worship of Viṣṇu is recommended. But ultimately all *yajñas* are meant for gradual promotion to the transcendental position. For ordinary men, at least five *yajñas*, known as *pañca-mahā-yajña*, are necessary.

One should know, however, that all the necessities of life that the human society requires are supplied by the demigod agents of the Lord. No one can manufacture anything. Take, for example, all the eatables of human society. These eatables include grains, fruits, vegetables, milk, sugar, etc., for the persons in the mode of goodness, and also eatables for the nonvegetarians, like meats, none of which can be manufactured by men. Then again, take for example heat, light, water, air, etc., which are also necessities of life—none of them can be manufactured by the human society. Without the Supreme Lord, there can be no profuse sunlight, moonlight, rainfall, breeze, etc., without which no one can live. Obviously, our life is dependent on supplies from the Lord. Even for our manufacturing

enterprises, we require so many raw materials like metal, sulphur, mercury, manganese, and so many essentials—all of which are supplied by the agents of the Lord, with the purpose that we should make proper use of them to keep ourselves fit and healthy for the purpose of self-realization, leading to the ultimate goal of life, namely, liberation from the material struggle for existence. This aim of life is attained by performance of *yajñas*. If we forget the purpose of human life and simply take supplies from the agents of the Lord for sense gratification and become more and more entangled in material existence, which is not the purpose of creation, certainly we become thieves, and therefore we are punished by the laws of material nature. A society of thieves can never be happy, because they have no aim in life. The gross materialist thieves have no ultimate goal of life. They are simply directed to sense gratification; nor do they have knowledge of how to perform *yajñas*. Lord Caitanya, however, inaugurated the easiest performance of *yajña*, namely the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, which can be performed by anyone in the world who accepts the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Chapter 3—Text 13

*yajña-śiṣṭāśinaḥ santo
mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ
bhuñjate te tv agham pāpā
ye pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt*

SYNONYMS

yajña-śiṣṭa—of food taken after performance of *yajña*; *āśinaḥ*—eaters; *santaḥ*—the devotees; *mucyante*—get relief; *sarva*—all kinds of; *kilbiṣaiḥ*—from sins; *bhuñjate*—enjoy; *te*—they; *tu*—but; *aghama*—grievous sins; *pāpāḥ*—sinners; *ye*—who; *pacanti*—prepare food; *ātma-kāraṇāt*—for sense enjoyment.

TRANSLATION

The devotees of the Lord are released from all kinds of sins because they eat food which is offered first for sacrifice. Others, who prepare food for personal sense enjoyment, verily eat only sin.

PURPORT

The devotees of the Supreme Lord, or the persons who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, are called *santas*, and they are always in love with the Lord as it is described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.38): *premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti*. The *santas*, being always in a compact of love with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda (the giver of all pleasures), or Mukunda (the giver of liberation), or Kṛṣṇa (the all-attractive person), cannot accept anything without first offering it to the Supreme Person. Therefore, such devotees always perform *yajñas* in different modes of devotional service, such as *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *smaraṇam*, *arcanam*, etc., and these performances of *yajñas* keep them always aloof from all kinds of contamination of sinful association in the material world. Others, who prepare food for self or sense gratification, are not only thieves but also the eaters of all kinds of sins. How can a person be happy if he is both a thief and sinful? It is not possible. Therefore, in order for people to become happy in all respects, they must be taught to perform the easy process of *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Otherwise, there can be no peace or happiness in the world.

Chapter 3—Text 14

*annād bhavanti bhūtāni
parjanyaād anna-sambhavaḥ
yajñād bhavati parjanyo
yajñaḥ karma-samudbhavaḥ*

SYNONYMS

annāt—from grains; *bhavanti*—grow; *bhūtāni*—the material bodies; *parjanyaāt*—from rains; *anna*—of food grains; *sambhavaḥ*—production; *yajñāt*—from the performance of sacrifice; *bhavati*—becomes possible; *parjanyaḥ*—rain; *yajñaḥ*—performance of *yajña*; *karma*—prescribed duties; *samudbhavaḥ*—born of.

TRANSLATION

All living bodies subsist on food grains, which are produced from rains. Rains are produced by performance of *yajña* [sacrifice], and *yajña* is born of prescribed duties.

PURPORT

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, a great commentator on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, writes as follows: *ye indrādy-aṅgatayāvasthitam yajñam sarveśvaram viṣṇum abhyarcya tac-cheṣam aśnanti tena tad deha-yātrām sampādayanti, te santaḥ sarveśvarasya yajña-puruṣasya bhaktāḥ sarva-kilbiṣair anādi-kāla-vivṛddhair ātmānubhava-prati bandhakair nikhilaiḥ pāpair vimucyante.* The Supreme Lord, who is known as the *yajña-puruṣa*, or the personal beneficiary of all sacrifices, is the master of all the demigods, who serve Him as the different limbs of the body serve the whole. Demigods like Indra, Candra and Varuṇa are appointed officers who manage material affairs, and the *Vedas* direct sacrifices to satisfy these demigods so that they may be pleased to supply air, light and water sufficiently to produce food grains. When Lord Kṛṣṇa is worshiped, the demigods, who are different limbs of the Lord, are also automatically worshiped; therefore there is no separate need to worship the demigods. For this reason, the devotees of the Lord, who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, offer food to Kṛṣṇa and then eat—a process which nourishes the body spiritually. By such action not only are past sinful reactions in the body vanquished, but the body becomes immunized to all contamination of material nature. When there is an epidemic disease, an antiseptic vaccine protects a person from the attack of such an epidemic. Similarly, food offered to Lord Viṣṇu and then taken by us makes us sufficiently resistant to material affection, and one who is accustomed to this practice is called a devotee of the Lord. Therefore, a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, who eats only food offered to Kṛṣṇa, can counteract all reactions of past material infections, which are impediments to the progress of self-realization. On the other hand, one who does not do so continues to increase the volume of sinful action, and this prepares the next body to resemble hogs and dogs, to suffer the resultant reactions of all sins. The material world is full of contaminations, and one who is immunized by

accepting *prasādam* of the Lord (food offered to Viṣṇu) is saved from the attack, whereas one who does not do so becomes subjected to contamination.

Food grains or vegetables are factually eatables. The human being eats different kinds of food grains, vegetables, fruits, etc., and the animals eat the refuse of the food grains and vegetables, grass, plants, etc. Human beings who are accustomed to eating meat and flesh must also depend on the production of vegetation in order to eat the animals. Therefore, ultimately, we have to depend on the production of the field and not on the production of big factories. The field production is due to sufficient rain from the sky, and such rains are controlled by demigods like Indra, sun, moon, etc., and they are all servants of the Lord. The Lord can be satisfied by sacrifices; therefore, one who cannot perform them will find himself in scarcity—that is the law of nature. *Yajña*, specifically the *saṅkīrtana-yajña* prescribed for this age, must therefore be performed to save us at least from scarcity of food supply.

Chapter 3—Text 15

*karma brahmodbhavam viddhi
brahmākṣara-samudbhavam
tasmāt sarva-gataṁ brahma
nityaṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam*

SYNONYMS

karma—work; *brahma*—from the *Vedas*; *udbhavam*—produced; *viddhi*—you should know; *brahma*—the *Vedas*; *akṣara*—from the Supreme Brahman (Personality of Godhead); *samudbhavam*—directly manifested; *tasmāt*—therefore; *sarva-gataṁ*—all-pervading; *brahma*—transcendence; *nityaṁ*—eternally; *yajñe*—in sacrifice; *pratiṣṭhitam*—situated.

TRANSLATION

Regulated activities are prescribed in the Vedas, and the Vedas are directly manifested from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Consequently the all-pervading Transcendence is eternally situated in acts of sacrifice.

PURPORT

Yajñārtha-karma, or the necessity of work for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa only, is more expressly stated in this verse. If we have to work for the satisfaction of the *yajña-puruṣa*, Viṣṇu, then we must find out the direction of work in Brahman, or the transcendental *Vedas*. The *Vedas* are therefore codes of working directions. Anything performed without the direction of the *Vedas* is called *vikarma*, or unauthorized or sinful work. Therefore, one should always take direction from the *Vedas* to be saved from the reaction of work. As one has to work in ordinary life by the direction of the state, one similarly has to work under direction of the supreme state of the Lord. Such directions in the *Vedas* are directly manifested from the breathing of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is said, *asya mahato bhūtasya niśvasitam etad yad ṛg-vedo yajur-vedaḥ sāmavedo 'tharvāṅgirasah*. “The four *Vedas*—namely the *Ṛg Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sāma Veda*, and *Atharva Veda*—are all emanations from the breathing of the great Personality of Godhead.” (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 4.5.11) The Lord, being omnipotent, can speak by breathing air, for as it is confirmed in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, the Lord has the omnipotence to perform through each of His senses the actions of all other senses. In other words, the Lord can speak through His breathing, and He can impregnate by His eyes. In fact, it is said that He glanced over material nature and thus fathered all living entities. After creating or impregnating the conditioned souls into the womb of material nature, He gave His directions in the Vedic wisdom as to how such conditioned souls can return home, back to Godhead. We should always remember that the conditioned souls in material nature are all eager for material enjoyment. But the Vedic directions are so made that one can satisfy one’s perverted desires, then return to Godhead, having finished his so-called enjoyment. It is a chance for

the conditioned souls to attain liberation; therefore the conditioned souls must try to follow the process of *yajña* by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious. Even those who have not followed the Vedic injunctions may adopt the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that will take the place of performance of Vedic *yajñas*, or *karmas*.

Chapter 3—Text 16

*evam pravartitam cakram
nānuvartayatiha yaḥ
aghāyur indriyārāmo
mogham pārtha sa jīvati*

SYNONYMS

evam—thus; *pravartitam*—established by the *Vedas*; *cakram*—cycle; *na*—does not; *anuvartayati*—adopt; *iha*—in this life; *yaḥ*—one who; *agha-āyuh*—whose life is full of sins; *indriya-ārāmaḥ*—satisfied in sense gratification; *mogham*—uselessly; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā (Arjuna); *saḥ*—he; *jīvati*—lives.

TRANSLATION

My dear Arjuna, one who does not follow in human life the cycle of sacrifice thus established by the Vedas certainly leads a life full of sin. Living only for the satisfaction of the senses, such a person lives in vain.

PURPORT

The mammonist philosophy of “work very hard and enjoy sense gratification” is condemned herein by the Lord. Therefore, for those who want to enjoy this material world, the above-mentioned cycle of performing *yajñas* is absolutely necessary. One who does not follow such regulations is living a very risky life, being condemned more and more. By nature’s law, this human form of life is specifically meant for self-realization, in either of the three ways—namely *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga*, or *bhakti-yoga*. There is no necessity of rigidly following the performances of the prescribed *yajñas* for the transcendentalists who are above vice and virtue; but those who are engaged in sense gratification require purification by the above mentioned cycle of *yajña* performances. There are different kinds of activities. Those who are not Kṛṣṇa conscious are certainly engaged in sensory consciousness; therefore they need to execute pious work. The *yajña* system is planned in such a way that sensory conscious persons may satisfy their desires without becoming entangled in the reaction of sense-gratificatory work. The prosperity of the world depends not on our own efforts but on the background arrangement of the Supreme Lord, directly carried out by the demigods. Therefore, the *yajñas* are directly aimed at the particular demigods mentioned in the *Vedas*. Indirectly, it is the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, because when one masters the performance of *yajñas* one is sure to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. But if by performing *yajñas* one does not become Kṛṣṇa conscious, such principles are counted as only moral codes. One should not, therefore, limit his progress only to the point of moral codes, but should transcend them, to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Chapter 3—Text 17

*yas tv ātma-ratir eva syād
ātma-tr̥ptaś ca mānavaḥ
ātmany eva ca santuṣṭas
tasya kāryam na vidyate*

SYNONYMS

yaḥ—one who; *tu*—but; *ātma-ratiḥ*—taking pleasure in the self; *eva*—certainly; *syāt*—remains; *ātma-tr̥ptaḥ*—self-illuminated; *ca*—and; *mānavaḥ*—a man; *ātmani*—in himself; *eva*—only; *ca*—and; *santuṣṭaḥ*—perfectly satiated; *tasya*—his; *kāryam*—duty; *na*—does not; *vidyate*—exist.

TRANSLATION

But for one who takes pleasure in the self, whose human life is one of self-realization, and who is satisfied in the self only, fully satiated—for him there is no duty.

PURPORT

A person who is *fully* Kṛṣṇa conscious, and is fully satisfied by his acts in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, no longer has any duty to perform. Due to his being Kṛṣṇa conscious, all impiety within is instantly cleansed, an effect of many, many thousands of *yajña* performances. By such clearing of consciousness, one becomes fully confident of his eternal position in relationship with the Supreme. His duty thus becomes self-illuminated by the grace of the Lord, and therefore he no longer has any obligations to the Vedic injunctions. Such a Kṛṣṇa conscious person is no longer interested in material activities and no longer takes pleasure in material arrangements like wine, women and similar infatuations.

Chapter 3—Text 18

*naiva tasya kṛtenārtho
nākṛteneha kaścana
na cāsyā sarva-bhūteṣu
kaścīd artha-vyapāśrayaḥ*

SYNONYMS

na—never; *eva*—certainly; *tasya*—his; *kṛtena*—by discharge of duty; *arthaḥ*—purpose; *na*—nor; *akṛtena*—without discharge of duty; *iha*—in this world; *kaścana*—whatever; *na*—never; *ca*—and; *asya*—of him; *sarva-bhūteṣu*—among all living beings; *kaścīd*—any; *artha*—purpose; *vyapāśrayaḥ*—taking shelter of.

TRANSLATION

A self-realized man has no purpose to fulfill in the discharge of his prescribed duties, nor has he any reason not to perform such work. Nor has he any need to depend on any other living being.

PURPORT

A self-realized man is no longer obliged to perform any prescribed duty, save and except activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not inactivity either, as will be explained in the following verses. A Kṛṣṇa conscious man does not take shelter of any person—man or demigod. Whatever he does in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is sufficient in the discharge of his obligation.

Chapter 3—Text 19

*tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ
kāryaṁ karma samācara
asakto hy ācaran karma
param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ*

SYNONYMS

tasmāt—therefore; *asaktaḥ*—without attachment; *satataṁ*—constantly; *kāryaṁ*—as duty; *karma*—work; *samācara*—perform; *asaktaḥ*—unattached; *hi*—certainly; *ācaran*—performing; *karma*—work; *param*—the Supreme; *āpnoti*—achieves; *pūruṣaḥ*—a man.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, without being attached to the fruits of activities, one should act as a matter of duty, for by working without attachment one attains the Supreme.

PURPORT

The Supreme is the Personality of Godhead for the devotees, and liberation for the impersonalist. A person, therefore, acting for Kṛṣṇa, or in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, under proper guidance and without attachment to the result of the work, is certainly making progress toward the supreme goal of life. Arjuna is told that he should fight in the Battle of Kurukṣetra for the interest of Kṛṣṇa because Kṛṣṇa wanted him to fight. To be a good man or a nonviolent man is a personal attachment, but to act on behalf of the Supreme is to act without attachment for the result. That is perfect action of the highest degree, recommended by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Vedic rituals, like prescribed sacrifices, are performed for purification of impious activities that were performed in the field of sense gratification. But action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is transcendental to the reactions of good or evil work. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person has no attachment for the result but acts on behalf of Kṛṣṇa alone. He engages in all kinds of activities, but is completely nonattached.

Chapter 3—Text 20

*karmaṇaiiva hi saṁsiddhim
āsthītā janakādayaḥ
loka-saṅgraham evāpi
sampaśyan kartum arhasi*

SYNONYMS

karmaṇā—by work; *eva*—even; *hi*—certainly; *saṁsiddhim*—in perfection; *āsthītāḥ*—situated; *janaka-ādayaḥ*—Janaka and other kings; *loka-saṅgraham*—the people in general; *eva api*—also; *sampaśyan*—considering; *kartum*—to act; *arhasi*—you deserve.

TRANSLATION

Kings such as Janaka attained perfection solely by performance of prescribed duties. Therefore, just for the sake of educating the people in general, you should perform your work.

PURPORT

Kings like Janaka were all self-realized souls; consequently they had no obligation to perform the prescribed duties in the *Vedas*. Nonetheless they performed all prescribed activities just to set examples for the people in general. Janaka was the father of Sītā and father-in-law of Lord Śrī Rāma. Being a great devotee of the Lord, he was transcendently situated, but because he was the king of Mithilā (a subdivision of Bihar province in India), he had to teach his subjects how to perform prescribed duties. Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, the Lord's eternal friend, had no need to fight in the Battle of Kurukṣetra, but they fought to teach people in general that violence is also necessary in a situation where good arguments fail. Before the Battle of Kurukṣetra, every effort was made to avoid the war, even by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but the other party was determined to fight. So for such a right cause, there is a necessity for fighting. Although one who is situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness may not have any interest in the world, he still works to teach the public how to live and how to act. Experienced persons in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can act in such a way that others will follow, and this is explained in the following verse.

Chapter 3—Text 21

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhaḥ
tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇam kurute
lokaḥ tad anuvartate*

SYNONYMS

yat yat—whatever; *ācarati*—he does; *śreṣṭhaḥ*—a respectable leader; *tat*—that; *tat*—and that alone; *eva*—certainly; *itaraḥ*—common; *janaḥ*—person; *saḥ*—he; *yat*—whichever; *pramāṇam*—example; *kurute*—does perform; *lokaḥ*—all the world; *tat*—that; *anuvartate*—follows in the footsteps.

TRANSLATION

Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.

PURPORT

People in general always require a leader who can teach the public by practical behavior. A leader cannot teach the public to stop smoking if he himself smokes. Lord Caitanya said that a teacher should behave properly before he begins teaching. One who teaches in that way is called *ācārya*, or the ideal teacher. Therefore, a teacher must follow the principles of *śāstra* (scripture) to teach the common man. The teacher cannot manufacture rules against the principles of revealed scriptures. The revealed scriptures, like *Manu-saṁhitā* and similar others, are considered the standard books to be followed by human society. Thus the leader's teaching should be based on the principles of such standard *śāstras*. One who desires to improve himself must follow the standard rules as they are practiced by the great teachers. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also affirms that one should follow in the footsteps of great devotees, and that is the way of progress on the path of spiritual realization. The king or the executive head of a state, the father and the school teacher are all considered to be natural leaders of the innocent people in general. All such natural leaders have a great responsibility to their dependents; therefore they must be conversant with standard books of moral and spiritual codes.

Chapter 3—Text 22

*na me pārthāsti kartavyam
triṣu lokeṣu kiñcana
nānavāptam avāptavyam
varta eva ca karmaṇi*

SYNONYMS

na—not; *me*—Mine; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *asti*—there is; *kartavyam*—prescribed duty; *triṣu*—in the three; *lokeṣu*—planetary systems; *kiñcana*—any; *na*—nothing; *anavāptam*—wanted; *avāptavyam*—to be gained; *varte*—I am engaged; *eva*—certainly; *ca*—also; *karmaṇi*—in prescribed duty.

TRANSLATION

O son of Pṛthā, there is no work prescribed for Me within all the three planetary systems. Nor am I in want of anything, nor have I a need to obtain anything—and yet I am engaged in prescribed duties.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is described in the Vedic literatures as follows:

*tam īśvarāṇām paramam maheśvaram
tam devatānām paramam ca daivatam
patim patinām paramam parastād
vidāma devam bhuvaneśam īḍyam*

*na tasya kāryam karaṇam ca vidyate
na tat-samaś cābhyadhikaś ca dṛśyate
parāśya śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate
svābhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca*

“The Supreme Lord is the controller of all other controllers, and He is the greatest of all the diverse planetary leaders. Everyone is under His control. All entities are delegated with particular power only by the Supreme Lord; they are not supreme themselves. He is also worshipable by all demigods and is the supreme director of all directors. Therefore, He is transcendental to all kinds of material leaders and controllers and is worshipable by all. There is no one greater than Him, and He is the supreme cause of all causes.

“He does not possess bodily form like that of an ordinary living entity. There is no difference between His body and His soul. He is absolute. All His senses are transcendental. Any one of His senses can perform the action of any other sense.

Therefore, no one is greater than Him or equal to Him. His potencies are multifarious, and thus His deeds are automatically performed as a natural sequence.” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*)

6.7–8)

Since everything is in full opulence in the Personality of Godhead and is existing in full truth, there is no duty for the Supreme Personality of Godhead to perform. One who must receive the results of work has some designated duty, but one who has nothing to achieve within the three planetary systems certainly has no duty. And yet Lord Kṛṣṇa is engaged on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra as the leader of the *kṣatriyas* because the *kṣatriyas* are duty-bound to give protection to the distressed. Although He is above all the regulations of the revealed scriptures, He does not do anything that violates the revealed scriptures.

Chapter 3—Text 23

*yadi hy ahaṁ na varteyaṁ
jātu karmaṇy atandritaḥ
mama vartmānuvartante
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

SYNONYMS

yadi—if; *hi*—certainly; *ahaṁ*—I; *na*—do not; *varteyaṁ*—thus engage; *jātu*—ever; *karmaṇi*—in the performance of prescribed duties; *atandritaḥ*—with great care; *mama*—My; *vartma*—path; *anuvartante*—would follow; *manuṣyāḥ*—all men; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *sarvaśaḥ*—in all respects.

TRANSLATION

For if I ever failed to engage in carefully performing prescribed duties, O Pārtha, certainly all men would follow My path.

PURPORT

In order to keep the balance of social tranquillity for progress in spiritual life, there are traditional family usages meant for every civilized man. Although such rules and regulations are for the conditioned souls and not Lord Kṛṣṇa, because He descended to establish the principles of religion He followed the prescribed rules. Otherwise, common men would follow in His footsteps, because He is the greatest authority. From the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is understood that Lord Kṛṣṇa was performing all the religious duties at home and out of home, as required of a householder.

Chapter 3—Text 24

*utsīdeyur ime lokā
na kuryām karma ced aham
saṅkarasya ca kartā syām
upahanyām imāḥ prajāḥ*

SYNONYMS

utsīdeyuh—would be put into ruin; *ime*—all these; *lokāḥ*—worlds; *na*—not; *kuryām*—I perform; *karma*—prescribed duties; *ced*—if; *aham*—I; *saṅkarasya*—of unwanted population; *ca*—and; *kartā*—creator; *syām*—would be; *upahanyām*—would destroy; *imāḥ*—all these; *prajāḥ*—living entities.

TRANSLATION

If I did not perform prescribed duties, all these worlds would be put to ruination. I would be the cause of creating unwanted population, and I would thereby destroy the peace of all living beings.

PURPORT

Varṇa-saṅkara is unwanted population which disturbs the peace of the general society. In order to check this social disturbance, there are prescribed rules and regulations by which the population can automatically become peaceful and organized for spiritual progress in life. When Lord Kṛṣṇa descends, naturally He deals with such rules and regulations in order to maintain the prestige and necessity of such important performances. The Lord is the father of all living entities, and if the living entities are misguided, indirectly the responsibility goes to the Lord. Therefore, whenever there is general disregard of regulative principles, the Lord Himself descends and corrects the society. We should, however, note carefully that although we have to follow in the footsteps of the Lord, we still have to remember that we cannot imitate Him. Following and imitating are not on the same level. We cannot imitate the Lord by lifting Govardhana Hill, as the Lord did in His childhood. It is impossible for any human being. We have to follow His instructions, but we may not imitate Him at any time. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.33.30–31) affirms:

*naitat samācarej jātu
manasāpi hy anīśvaraḥ
vinaśyaty ācaran maudhyād
yathā 'rudro 'bdhi-jaṁ viṣam*

*īśvarāṇām vacaḥ satyaṁ
tathaivācaritaṁ kvacit
teṣāṁ yat sva-vaco-yuktaṁ
buddhimāṁs tat samācaret*

“One should simply follow the instructions of the Lord and His empowered servants. Their instructions are all good for us, and any intelligent person will perform them as instructed. However, one should guard against trying to imitate their actions. One should not try to drink the ocean of poison in imitation of Lord Śiva.”

We should always consider the position of the *īśvaras*, or those who can actually control the movements of the sun and moon, as superior. Without such power, one cannot imitate the *īśvaras*, who are superpowerful. Lord Śiva drank poison to the extent of swallowing an ocean, but if any common man tries to drink even a fragment of such poison, he will be killed. There are many pseudo devotees of Lord Śiva who want to indulge in smoking *gañjā* (marijuana) and similar intoxicating drugs, forgetting that by so imitating the acts of Lord Śiva they are calling death very near. Similarly, there are some pseudo devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa who prefer to imitate the Lord in His *rāsa-līlā*, or dance of love, forgetting their inability to lift Govardhana Hill. It is best, therefore, that one not try to imitate the powerful, but simply follow their instructions; nor should one try to occupy their posts without qualification. There are so many “incarnations” of God without the power of the Supreme Godhead.

Chapter 3—Text 25

*saktāḥ karmaṇy avidvāṁso
yathā kurvanti bhārata
kuryād vidvāṁs tathāsaktaś
cikīrṣur loka-saṅgraham*

SYNONYMS

saktāḥ—being attached; *karmaṇi*—in prescribed duties; *avidvāṁsaḥ*—the ignorant; *yathā*—as much as; *kurvanti*—they do; *bhārata*—O descendant of Bharata; *kuryāt*—must do; *vidvān*—the learned; *tathā*—thus; *asaktaḥ*—without attachment; *cikīrṣuḥ*—desiring to lead; *loka-saṅgraham*—the people in general.

TRANSLATION

As the ignorant perform their duties with attachment to results, the learned may similarly act, but without attachment, for the sake of leading people on the right path.

PURPORT

A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and a person not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are differentiated by different desires. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not do anything which is not conducive to development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He may even act exactly like the ignorant person, who is too much attached to material activities, but one is engaged in such activities for the satisfaction of his sense gratification, whereas the other is engaged for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, the Kṛṣṇa conscious person is required to show the people how to act and how to engage the results of action for the purpose of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Chapter 3—Text 26

*na buddhi-bhedam janayed
ajñānām karma-saṅginām
joṣayet sarva-karmāṇi
vidvān yuktaḥ samācaran*

SYNONYMS

na—not; *buddhi-bhedam*—disruption of intelligence; *janayed*—he should cause; *ajñānām*—of the foolish; *karma-saṅginām*—who are attached to fruitive work; *joṣayet*—he should dovetail; *sarva*—all; *karmāṇi*—work; *vidvān*—a learned person; *yuktaḥ*—engaged; *samācaran*—practicing.

TRANSLATION

So as not to disrupt the minds of ignorant men attached to the fruitive results of prescribed duties, a learned person should not induce them to stop work. Rather, by working in the spirit of devotion, he should engage them in all sorts of activities [for the gradual development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness].

PURPORT

Vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyaḥ. That is the end of all Vedic rituals. All rituals, all performances of sacrifices, and everything that is put into the *Vedas*, including all direction for material activities, are meant for understanding Kṛṣṇa, who is the ultimate goal of life. But because the conditioned souls do not know anything beyond sense gratification, they study the *Vedas* to that end. But through fruitive activities and sense gratification regulated by the Vedic rituals one is gradually elevated to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore a realized soul in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should not disturb others in their activities or understanding, but he should act by showing how the results of all work can be dedicated to the service of Kṛṣṇa. The learned Kṛṣṇa conscious person may act in such a way that the ignorant person working for sense gratification may learn how to act and how to behave. Although the ignorant man is not to be disturbed in his activities, a slightly developed Kṛṣṇa conscious person may directly be engaged in the service of the Lord without waiting for other Vedic formulas. For this fortunate man there is no need to follow the Vedic rituals, because by direct Kṛṣṇa consciousness one can have all the results one would otherwise derive from following one's prescribed duties.

Chapter 3—Text 27

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni
guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā
kartāham iti manyate*

SYNONYMS

prakṛteḥ—of material nature; *kriyamāṇāni*—being done; *guṇaiḥ*—by the modes; *karmāṇi*—activities; *sarvaśaḥ*—all kinds of; *ahaṅkāra-vimūḍha*—bewildered by false ego; *ātmā*—the spirit soul; *kartā*—doer; *aḥam*—I; *iti*—thus; *manyate*—he thinks.

TRANSLATION

The spirit soul bewildered by the influence of false ego thinks himself the doer of activities that are in actuality carried out by the three modes of material nature.

PURPORT

Two persons, one in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the other in material consciousness, working on the same level, may appear to be working on the same platform, but there is a wide gulf of difference in their respective positions. The person in material consciousness is convinced by false ego that he is the doer of everything. He does not know that the mechanism of the body is produced by material nature, which works under the supervision of the Supreme Lord. The materialistic person has no knowledge that ultimately he is under the control of Kṛṣṇa. The person in false ego takes all credit for doing everything independently, and that is the symptom of his nescience. He does not know that this gross and subtle body is the creation of material nature, under the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and as such his bodily and mental activities should be engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The ignorant man forgets that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is known as Hṛṣīkeśa, or the master of the senses of the material body, for due to his long misuse of the senses in sense gratification, he is factually bewildered by the false ego, which makes him forget his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

Chapter 3—Text 28

*tattva-vit tu mahā-bāho
guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ
guṇā guṇeṣu vartanta
iti matvā na sajjate*

SYNONYMS

tattva-vit—the knower of the Absolute Truth; *tu*—but; *mahā-bāho*—O mighty-armed one; *guṇa-karma*—of works under material influence; *vibhāgayoḥ*—differences; *guṇāḥ*—senses; *guṇeṣu*—in sense gratification; *vartante*—are being engaged; *iti*—thus; *matvā*—thinking; *na*—never; *sajjate*—becomes attached.

TRANSLATION

One who is in knowledge of the Absolute Truth, O mighty-armed, does not engage himself in the senses and sense gratification, knowing well the differences between work in devotion and work for fruitive results.

PURPORT

The knower of the Absolute Truth is convinced of his awkward position in material association. He knows that he is part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, and that his position should not be in the material creation. He knows his real identity as part and parcel of the Supreme, who is eternal bliss and knowledge, and he realizes that somehow or other he is entrapped in the material conception of life. In his pure state of existence he is meant to dovetail his activities in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. He therefore engages himself in the activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and becomes naturally unattached to the activities of the material senses, which are all circumstantial and temporary. He knows that his material condition of life is under the supreme control of the Lord; consequently he is not disturbed by all kinds of material reactions, which he considers to be the mercy of the Lord. According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, one who knows the Absolute Truth in three different features—namely Brahman, Paramātmā, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead—is called *tattva-vit*, for he knows also his own factual position in relationship with the Supreme.

Chapter 3—Text 29

*prakṛter guṇa-sammūdhāḥ
sajjante guṇa-karmasu
tān akṛtsna-vido mandān
kṛtsna-vin na vicālayet*

SYNONYMS

prakṛteḥ—of material nature; *guṇa*—by the modes; *sammūdhāḥ*—befooled by material identification; *sajjante*—they become engaged; *guṇa-karmasu*—in material activities; *tān*—those; *akṛtsna-vidaḥ*—persons with a poor fund of knowledge; *mandān*—lazy to understand self-realization; *kṛtsna-vit*—one who is in factual knowledge; *na*—not; *vicālayet*—should try to agitate.

TRANSLATION

Bewildered by the modes of material nature, the ignorant fully engage themselves in material activities and become attached. But the wise should not unsettle them, although these duties are inferior due to the performers' lack of knowledge.

PURPORT

Persons who are unknowledgeable falsely identify with gross material consciousness and are full of material designations. This body is a gift of the material nature, and one who is too much attached to the bodily consciousness is called *manda*, or a lazy person without understanding of spirit soul. Ignorant men think of the body as the self; they accept bodily connections with others as kinsmanship, the land in which the body is obtained is their object of worship, and they consider the formalities of religious rituals to be ends in themselves. Social work, nationalism and altruism are some of the activities for such materially designated persons. Under the spell of such designations, they are always busy in the material field; for them spiritual realization is a myth, and so they are not interested. Those who are enlightened in spiritual life, however, should not try to agitate such materially engrossed persons. Better to prosecute one's own spiritual activities silently. Such bewildered persons may be engaged in such primary moral principles of life as nonviolence and similar materially benevolent work.

Men who are ignorant cannot appreciate activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa advises us not to disturb them and simply waste valuable time. But the devotees of the Lord are more kind than the Lord because they understand the purpose of the Lord. Consequently they undertake all kinds of risks, even to the point of approaching ignorant men to try to engage them in the acts of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which are absolutely necessary for the human being.

Chapter 3—Text 30

*mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi
sannyasyādhyātma-cetasā
nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā
yudhyasva vigata-jvaraḥ*

SYNONYMS

mayi—unto Me; *sarvāṇi*—all sorts of; *karmāṇi*—activities; *sannyasya*—giving up completely; *adhyātma*—with full knowledge of the self; *cetasā*—by consciousness; *nirāśīr*—without desire for profit; *nirmamaḥ*—without ownership; *bhūtvā*—so being; *yudhyasva*—fight; *vigata-jvaraḥ*—without being lethargic.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O Arjuna, surrendering all your works unto Me, with full knowledge of Me, without desires for profit, with no claims to proprietorship, and free from lethargy, fight.

PURPORT

This verse clearly indicates the purpose of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The Lord instructs that one has to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious to discharge duties, as if in military discipline. Such an injunction may make things a little difficult; nevertheless duties must be carried out, with dependence on Kṛṣṇa, because that is the constitutional position of the living entity. The living entity cannot be happy independent of the cooperation of the Supreme Lord, because the eternal constitutional position of the living entity is to become subordinate to the desires of the Lord. Arjuna was therefore ordered by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to fight as if the Lord were his military commander. One has to sacrifice everything for the good will of the Supreme Lord, and at the same time discharge prescribed duties without claiming proprietorship. Arjuna did not have to consider the order of the Lord; he had only to execute His order. The Supreme Lord is the soul of all souls; therefore, one who depends solely and wholly on the Supreme Soul without personal consideration, or in other words, one who is fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, is called *adhyātma-cetas*. *Nirāśīr* means that one has to act on the order of the master but should not expect fruitive results. The cashier may count millions of dollars for his employer, but he does not claim a cent for himself. Similarly, one has to realize that nothing in the world belongs to any individual person, but that everything belongs to the Supreme Lord. That is the real purport of *mayi*, or “unto Me.” And when one acts in such Kṛṣṇa consciousness, certainly he does not claim proprietorship over anything. This consciousness is called *nirmama*, or “nothing is mine.” And if there is any reluctance to execute such a stern order, which is without consideration of so-called kinsmen in the bodily relationship, that reluctance should be thrown off; in this way one may become *vigata-jvara*, or without feverish mentality or lethargy. Everyone, according to his quality and position, has a particular type of work to

discharge, and all such duties may be discharged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as described above. That will lead one to the path of liberation.

Chapter 3—Text 31

*ye me matam idam nityam
anutiṣṭhanti mānavāḥ
śraddhāvanto 'nasūyanto
mucyante te 'pi karmabhiḥ*

SYNONYMS

ye—those who; *me*—My; *matam*—injunctions; *idam*—these; *nityam*—as an eternal function; *anutiṣṭhanti*—execute regularly; *mānavāḥ*—human beings; *śraddhāvantaḥ*—with faith and devotion; *anasūyantaḥ*—without envy; *mucyante*—become free; *te*—all of them; *api*—even; *karmabhiḥ*—from the bondage of the law of fruitive actions.

TRANSLATION

Those persons who execute their duties according to My injunctions and who follow this teaching faithfully, without envy, become free from the bondage of fruitive actions.

PURPORT

The injunction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the essence of all Vedic wisdom and therefore is eternally true without exception. As the *Vedas* are eternal, so this truth of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is also eternal. One should have firm faith in this injunction, without envying the Lord. There are many philosophers who write comments on the *Bhagavad-gītā* but have no faith in Kṛṣṇa. They will never be liberated from the bondage of fruitive action. But an ordinary man with firm faith in the eternal injunctions of the Lord, even though unable to execute such orders, becomes liberated from the bondage of the law of *karma*. In the beginning of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one may not fully discharge the injunctions of the Lord, but because one is not resentful of this principle and works sincerely without consideration of defeat and hopelessness, he will surely be promoted to the stage of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Chapter 3—Text 32

*ye tv etad abhyasūyanto
nānutiṣṭhanti me matam
sarva-jñāna-vimūḍhāṁs tān
viddhi naṣṭān acetasaḥ*

SYNONYMS

ye—those; *tu*—however; *etat*—this; *abhyasūyantaḥ*—out of envy; *na*—do not; *anutiṣṭhanti*—regularly perform; *me*—My; *matam*—injunction; *sarva-jñāna*—in all sorts of knowledge; *vimūḍhān*—perfectly befooled; *tān*—they are; *viddhi*—know it well; *naṣṭān*—all ruined; *acetasaḥ*—without Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TRANSLATION

But those who, out of envy, disregard these teachings and do not follow them are to be considered bereft of all knowledge, befooled, and ruined in their endeavors for perfection.

PURPORT

The flaw of not being Kṛṣṇa conscious is clearly stated herein. As there is punishment for disobedience to the order of the supreme executive head, so there is certainly punishment for disobedience to the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A disobedient person, however great he may be, is ignorant of his own self, and of the Supreme Brahman, Paramātmā and the Personality of Godhead, due to a vacant heart. Therefore there is no hope of perfection of life for him.

Chapter 3—Text 33

*sadṛśam ceṣṭate svasyāḥ
prakṛter jñānavān api
prakṛtim yānti bhūtāni
nigrahaḥ kim kariṣyati*

SYNONYMS

sadṛśam—accordingly; *ceṣṭate*—tries; *svasyāḥ*—by his own; *prakṛteḥ*—modes of nature; *jñāna-vān*—learned; *api*—although; *prakṛtim*—nature; *yānti*—undergo; *bhūtāni*—all living entities; *nigrahaḥ*—repression; *kim*—what; *kariṣyati*—can do.

TRANSLATION

Even a man of knowledge acts according to his own nature, for everyone follows the nature he has acquired from the three modes. What can repression accomplish?

PURPORT

Unless one is situated on the transcendental platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he cannot get free from the influence of the modes of material nature, as it is confirmed by the Lord in the Seventh Chapter (7.14). Therefore, even for the most highly educated person on the mundane plane, it is impossible to get out of the entanglement of *māyā* simply by theoretical knowledge, or by separating the soul from the body. There are many so-called spiritualists who outwardly pose as advanced in the science but inwardly or privately are completely under particular modes of nature which they are unable to surpass.

Academically, one may be very learned, but because of his long association with material nature, he is in bondage. Kṛṣṇa consciousness helps one to get out of the material entanglement, even though one may be engaged in his prescribed duties in terms of material existence. Therefore, without being fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one should not give up his occupational duties. No one should suddenly give up his prescribed duties and become a so-called *yogī* or transcendentalist artificially. It is better to be situated in one's position and to try to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness under superior training. Thus one may be freed from the clutches of Kṛṣṇa's *māyā*.

Chapter 3—Text 34

*indriyasyendriyasyārthe
rāga-dveṣau vyavasthitau
tayoḥ na vaśam āgacchet
tau hy asya paripanthinau*

SYNONYMS

indriyasya—of the senses; *indriyasya arthe*—in the sense objects; *rāga*—attachment; *dveṣau*—also detachment; *vyavasthitau*—put under regulations; *tayoḥ*—of them; *na*—never; *vaśam*—control; *āgacchet*—one should come; *tau*—those; *hi*—certainly; *asya*—his; *paripanthinau*—stumbling blocks.

TRANSLATION

There are principles to regulate attachment and aversion pertaining to the senses and their objects. One should not come under the control of such attachment and aversion, because they are stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization.

PURPORT

Those who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are naturally reluctant to engage in material sense gratification. But those who are not in such consciousness should follow the rules and regulations of the revealed scriptures. Unrestricted sense enjoyment is the cause of material encagement, but one who follows the rules and regulations of the revealed scriptures does not become entangled by the sense objects. For example, sex enjoyment is a necessity for the conditioned soul, and sex enjoyment is allowed under the license of marriage ties. According to scriptural injunctions, one is forbidden to engage in sex relationships with any women other than one's wife. All other women are to be considered as one's mother. But in spite of such injunctions, a man is still inclined to have sex relationships with other women. These propensities are to be curbed; otherwise they will be stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization. As long as the material body is there, the necessities of the material body are allowed, but under rules and regulations. And yet, we should not rely upon the control of such allowances. One has to follow those rules and regulations, unattached to them, because practice of sense gratification under regulations may also lead one to go astray—as much as there is always the chance of an accident, even on the royal roads. Although they may be very carefully maintained, no one can guarantee that there will be no danger even on the safest road. The sense enjoyment spirit has been current a very long, long time, owing to material association. Therefore, in spite of regulated sense enjoyment, there is every chance of falling down; therefore any attachment for regulated sense enjoyment must also be avoided by all means. But attachment to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or acting always in the loving service of Kṛṣṇa, detaches one from all kinds of sensory activities. Therefore, no one should try to be

detached from Kṛṣṇa consciousness at any stage of life. The whole purpose of detachment from all kinds of sense attachment is ultimately to become situated on the platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Chapter 3—Text 35

*śreyān sva-dharmaḥ viguṇaḥ
para-dharmāt sv-anuṣṭhitāt
sva-dharme nidhanam śreyaḥ
para-dharmaḥ bhayāvahaḥ*

SYNONYMS

śreyān—far better; *sva-dharmaḥ*—one’s prescribed duties; *viguṇaḥ*—even faulty; *para-dharmāt*—than duties mentioned for others; *sv-anuṣṭhitāt*—perfectly done; *sva-dharme*—in one’s prescribed duties; *nidhanam*—destruction; *śreyaḥ*—better; *para-dharmaḥ*—duties prescribed for others; *bhaya-āvahaḥ*—dangerous.

TRANSLATION

It is far better to discharge one’s prescribed duties, even though faultily, than another’s duties perfectly. Destruction in the course of performing one’s own duty is better than engaging in another’s duties, for to follow another’s path is dangerous.

PURPORT

One should therefore discharge his prescribed duties in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness rather than those prescribed for others. Materially, prescribed duties are duties enjoined according to one’s psychophysical condition, under the spell of the modes of material nature. Spiritual duties are as ordered by the spiritual master for the transcendental service of Kṛṣṇa. But whether material or spiritual, one should stick to his prescribed duties even up to death, rather than imitate another’s prescribed duties. Duties on the spiritual platform and duties on the material platform may be different, but the principle of following the authorized direction is always good for the performer. When one is under the spell of the modes of material nature, one should follow the prescribed rules for his particular situation and should not imitate others. For example, a *brāhmaṇa*, who is in the mode of goodness, is nonviolent, whereas a *kṣatriya*, who is in the mode of passion, is allowed to be violent. As such, for a *kṣatriya* it is better to be vanquished following the rules of violence than to imitate a *brāhmaṇa* who follows the principles of nonviolence. Everyone has to cleanse his heart by a gradual process, not abruptly. However, when one transcends the modes of material nature and is fully situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he can perform anything and everything under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master. In that complete stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the *kṣatriya* may act as a *brāhmaṇa*, or a *brāhmaṇa* may act as a *kṣatriya*. In the transcendental stage, the distinctions of the material world do not apply. For example, Viśvāmitra was originally a *kṣatriya*, but later on he acted as a *brāhmaṇa*, whereas Paraśurāma was a *brāhmaṇa* but later on he acted as a *kṣatriya*. Being transcendently situated, they could do so; but as long as one is on the material platform, he must perform his duties according to the modes of material nature.

At the same time, he must have a full sense of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Chapter 3—Text 36

arjuna uvāca
atha kena prayukto 'yaṁ
pāpam carati pūruṣaḥ
anicchann api vārṣṇeya
balād iva niyojitaḥ

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca—Arjuna said; *atha*—then; *kena*—by what; *prayuktaḥ*—impelled; *ayaṁ*—one; *pāpam*—sins; *carati*—does; *pūruṣaḥ*—a man; *anicchan*—without desiring; *api*—although; *vārṣṇeya*—O descendant of Vṛṣṇi; *balāt*—by force; *iva*—as if; *niyojitaḥ*—engaged.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O descendant of Vṛṣṇi, by what is one impelled to sinful acts, even unwillingly, as if engaged by force?

PURPORT

A living entity, as part and parcel of the Supreme, is originally spiritual, pure, and free from all material contaminations. Therefore, by nature he is not subject to the sins of the material world. But when he is in contact with the material nature, he acts in many sinful ways without hesitation, and sometimes even against his will. As such, Arjuna's question to Kṛṣṇa is very sanguine, as to the perverted nature of the living entities. Although the living entity sometimes does not want to act in sin, he is still forced to act. Sinful actions are not, however, impelled by the Supersoul within, but are due to another cause, as the Lord explains in the next verse.

Chapter 3—Text 37

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
kāma eṣa krodha eṣa
rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ
mahāśano mahā-pāpmā
viddhy enam iha vairiṇam*

SYNONYMS

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the Personality of Godhead said; *kāmaḥ*—lust; *eṣaḥ*—this; *krodhaḥ*—wrath; *eṣaḥ*—this; *rajaḥ-guṇa*—the mode of passion; *samudbhavaḥ*—born of; *mahā-aśanaḥ*—all-devouring; *mahā-pāpmā*—greatly sinful; *viddhi*—know; *enam*—this; *iha*—in the material world; *vairiṇam*—greatest enemy.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: It is lust only, Arjuna, which is born of contact with the material mode of passion and later transformed into wrath, and which is the all-devouring sinful enemy of this world.

PURPORT

When a living entity comes in contact with the material creation, his eternal love for Kṛṣṇa is transformed into lust, in association with the mode of passion. Or, in other words, the sense of love of God becomes transformed into lust, as milk in contact with sour tamarind is transformed into yogurt. Then again, when lust is unsatisfied, it turns into wrath; wrath is transformed into illusion, and illusion continues the material existence. Therefore, lust is the greatest enemy of the living entity, and it is lust only which induces the pure living entity to remain entangled in the material world. Wrath is the manifestation of the mode of ignorance; these modes exhibit themselves as wrath and other corollaries. If, therefore, the mode of passion, instead of being degraded into the mode of ignorance, is elevated to the mode of goodness by the prescribed method of living and acting, then one can be saved from the degradation of wrath by spiritual attachment. The Supreme Personality of Godhead expanded Himself into many for His ever-increasing spiritual bliss, and the living entities are parts and parcels of this spiritual bliss. They also have partial independence, but by misuse of their independence, when the service attitude is transformed into the propensity for sense enjoyment, they come under the sway of lust. This material creation is created by the Lord to give facility to the conditioned souls to fulfill these lustful propensities, and when completely baffled by prolonged lustful activities, the living entities begin to inquire about their real position. This inquiry is the beginning of the *Vedānta-sūtras*, wherein it is said, *athāto brahma jijñāsā*: one should inquire into the Supreme. And the Supreme is defined in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as *janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itarataś ca*, or, “The origin of everything is the

Supreme Brahman.” Therefore the origin of lust is also in the Supreme. If, therefore, lust is transformed into love for the Supreme, or transformed into Kṛṣṇa consciousness—or, in other words, desiring everything for Kṛṣṇa—then both lust and wrath can be spiritualized. Hanumān, the great servitor of Lord Rāma, exhibited his wrath by burning the golden city of Rāvaṇa, but by doing so he became the greatest devotee of the Lord. Here also, in *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Lord induces Arjuna to engage his wrath upon his enemies for the satisfaction of the Lord. Therefore, lust and wrath, when they are employed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, become our friends instead of our enemies.

Chapter 3—Text 38

*dhūmenāvriyate vahnir
yathādarśo malena ca
yatholbenāvṛto garbhas
tathā tenedam āvṛtam*

SYNONYMS

dhūmena—by smoke; *āvriyate*—is covered; *vahniḥ*—fire; *yathā*—just as; *ādarśaḥ*—mirror; *malena*—by dust; *ca*—also; *yathā*—just as; *ulbena*—by the womb; *āvṛtaḥ*—is covered; *garbhaḥ*—embryo; *tathā*—so; *tena*—by that lust; *idam*—this; *āvṛtam*—is covered.

TRANSLATION

As fire is covered by smoke, as a mirror is covered by dust, or as the embryo is covered by the womb, the living entity is similarly covered by different degrees of this lust.

PURPORT

There are three degrees of covering of the living entity by which his pure consciousness is obscured. This covering is but lust under different manifestations like smoke in the fire, dust on the mirror, and the womb about the embryo. When lust is compared to smoke, it is understood that the fire of the living spark can be a little perceived. In other words, when the living entity exhibits his Kṛṣṇa consciousness slightly, he may be likened to the fire covered by smoke. Although fire is necessary where there is smoke, there is no overt manifestation of fire in the early stage. This stage is like the beginning of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The dust on the mirror refers to a cleansing process of the mirror of the mind by so many spiritual methods. The best process is to chant the holy names of the Lord. The embryo covered by the womb is an analogy illustrating a helpless position, for the child in the womb is so helpless that he cannot even move. This stage of living condition can be compared to that of the trees. The trees are also living entities, but they have been put in such a condition of life by such a great exhibition of lust that they are almost void of all consciousness. The covered mirror is compared to the birds and beasts, and the smoke-covered fire is compared to the human being. In the form of a human being, the living entity may revive a little Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and, if he makes further development, the fire of spiritual life can be kindled in the human form of life. By careful handling of the smoke in the fire, fire can be made to blaze. Therefore the human form of life is a chance for the living entity to escape the entanglement of material existence. In the human form of life, one can conquer the enemy, lust, by cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness under able guidance.

Chapter 3—Text 39

*āvṛtaṁ jñānam etena
jñānino nitya-vairiṇā
kāma-rūpeṇa kaunteya
duṣpūreṇānalena ca*

SYNONYMS

āvṛtaṁ—covered; *jñānam*—pure consciousness; *etena*—by this; *jñāninaḥ*—of the knower; *nitya-vairiṇā*—by the eternal enemy; *kāma-rūpeṇa*—in the form of lust; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *duṣpūreṇa*—never to be satisfied; *analena*—by the fire; *ca*—also.

TRANSLATION

Thus the wise living entity's pure consciousness becomes covered by his eternal enemy in the form of lust, which is never satisfied and which burns like fire.

PURPORT

It is said in the *Manu-smṛti* that lust cannot be satisfied by any amount of sense enjoyment, just as fire is never extinguished by a constant supply of fuel. In the material world, the center of all activities is sex, and thus this material world is called *maithunya-āgāra*, or the shackles of sex life. In the ordinary prison house, criminals are kept within bars; similarly, the criminals who are disobedient to the laws of the Lord are shackled by sex life. Advancement of material civilization on the basis of sense gratification means increasing the duration of the material existence of a living entity. Therefore, this lust is the symbol of ignorance by which the living entity is kept within the material world. While one enjoys sense gratification, it may be that there is some feeling of happiness, but actually that so-called feeling of happiness is the ultimate enemy of the sense enjoyer.

Chapter 3—Text 40

*indriyāṇi mano buddhir
asyādhiṣṭhānam ucyate
etair vimohayaty eṣa
jñānam āvṛtya dehinam*

SYNONYMS

indriyāṇi—the senses; *manaḥ*—the mind; *buddhiḥ*—the intelligence; *asya*—of this lust; *adhiṣṭhānam*—sitting place; *ucyate*—is called; *etaiḥ*—by all these; *vimohayati*—bewilders; *eṣaḥ*—this lust; *jñānam*—knowledge; *āvṛtya*—covering; *dehinam*—of the embodied.

TRANSLATION

The senses, the mind and the intelligence are the sitting places of this lust. Through them lust covers the real knowledge of the living entity and bewilders him.

PURPORT

The enemy has captured different strategic positions in the body of the conditioned soul, and therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa is giving hints of those places, so that one who wants to conquer the enemy may know where he can be found. Mind is the center of all the activities of the senses, and thus when we hear about sense objects the mind generally becomes a reservoir of all ideas of sense gratification; and, as a result, the mind and the senses become the repositories of lust. Next, the intelligence department becomes the capital of such lustful propensities. Intelligence is the immediate next-door neighbor of the spirit soul. Lusty intelligence influences the spirit soul to acquire the false ego and identify itself with matter, and thus with the mind and senses. The spirit soul becomes addicted to enjoying the material senses and mistakes this as true happiness. This false identification of the spirit soul is very nicely explained in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.84.13):

*yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape tri-dhātuke
sva-dhīḥ kalatrādiṣu bhauma ijya-dhīḥ
yat-tīrtha-buddhiḥ salile na karhicij
janeṣv abhijñeṣu sa eva go-kharaḥ*

“A human being who identifies this body made of three elements with his self, who considers the by-products of the body to be his kinsmen, who considers the land of birth worshipable, and who goes to the place of pilgrimage simply to take a bath rather than meet men of transcendental knowledge there, is to be considered like an ass or a cow.

Chapter 3—Text 41

*tasmāt tvam indriyāṇy ādau
niyamya bharatarṣabha
pāpmānaṁ prajahi hy enaṁ
jñāna-vijñāna-nāśanam*

SYNONYMS

tasmāt—therefore; *tvam*—you; *indriyāṇi*—senses; *ādau*—in the beginning; *niyamya*—by regulating; *bharata-ṛṣabha*—O chief amongst the descendants of Bharata; *pāpmānaṁ*—the great symbol of sin; *prajahi*—curb; *hi*—certainly; *enaṁ*—this; *jñāna*—of knowledge; *vijñāna*—and scientific knowledge of the pure soul; *nāśanam*—the destroyer.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O Arjuna, best of the Bhāratas, in the very beginning curb this great symbol of sin [lust] by regulating the senses, and slay this destroyer of knowledge and self-realization.

PURPORT

The Lord advised Arjuna to regulate the senses from the very beginning so that he could curb the greatest sinful enemy, lust, which destroys the urge for self-realization and specific knowledge of the self. *Jñāna* refers to knowledge of self as distinguished from non-self, or in other words, knowledge that the spirit soul is not the body. *Vijñāna* refers to specific knowledge of the spirit soul's constitutional position and his relationship to the Supreme Soul. It is explained thus in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.9.31):

*jñānaṁ parama-guhyam me
yad vijñāna-samanvitam
sa-rahasyam tad-aṅgam ca
grhāṇa gaditaṁ mayā*

“The knowledge of the self and Supreme Self is very confidential and mysterious, but such knowledge and specific realization can be understood if explained with their various aspects by the Lord Himself.” *Bhagavad-gītā* gives us that general and specific knowledge of the self. The living entities are parts and parcels of the Lord, and therefore they are simply meant to serve the Lord. This consciousness is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. So, from the very beginning of life one has to learn this Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and thereby one may become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious and act accordingly.

Lust is only the perverted reflection of the love of God which is natural for every living entity. But if one is educated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness from the very beginning, that natural love of God cannot deteriorate into lust. When love of God deteriorates into lust, it is very difficult to return to the normal condition. Nonetheless, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is so powerful that even a late beginner can become a lover of God by following the regulative

principles of devotional service. So, from any stage of life, or from the time of understanding its urgency, one can begin regulating the senses in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotional service of the Lord, and turn the lust into love of Godhead—the highest perfectional stage of human life.

Chapter 3—Text 42

*indriyāṇi parāṇy āhur
indriebhyaḥ param manaḥ
manasas tu parā buddhir
yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ*

SYNONYMS

indriyāṇi—senses; *parāṇi*—superior; *āhuḥ*—are said; *indriebhyaḥ*—more than the senses; *param*—superior; *manaḥ*—the mind; *manasaḥ*—more than the mind; *tu*—also; *parā*—superior; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *yaḥ*—who; *buddheḥ*—more than the intelligence; *parataḥ*—superior; *tu*—but; *saḥ*—he.

TRANSLATION

The working senses are superior to dull matter; mind is higher than the senses; intelligence is still higher than the mind; and he [the soul] is even higher than the intelligence.

PURPORT

The senses are different outlets for the activities of lust. Lust is reserved within the body, but it is given vent through the senses. Therefore, the senses are superior to the body as a whole. These outlets are not in use when there is superior consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness the soul makes direct connection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead; therefore the hierarchy of bodily functions, as described here, ultimately ends in the Supreme Soul. Bodily action means the functions of the senses, and stopping the senses means stopping all bodily actions. But since the mind is active, then even though the body may be silent and at rest, the mind will act—as it does during dreaming. But above the mind is the determination of the intelligence, and above the intelligence is the soul proper. If, therefore, the soul is directly engaged with the Supreme, naturally all other subordinates, namely, the intelligence, mind and senses, will be automatically engaged. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* there is a similar passage, in which it is said that the objects of sense gratification are superior to the senses, and mind is superior to the sense objects. If, therefore, the mind is directly engaged in the service of the Lord constantly, then there is no chance that the senses will become engaged in other ways. This mental attitude has already been explained. *param dṛṣṭvā nivartate*. If the mind is engaged in the transcendental service of the Lord, there is no chance of its being engaged in the lower propensities. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* the soul has been described as *mahān*, the great. Therefore the soul is above all—namely, the sense objects, the senses, the mind and the intelligence. Therefore, directly understanding the constitutional position of the soul is the solution of the whole problem.

With intelligence one has to seek out the constitutional position of the soul and then engage the mind always in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That solves the whole problem. A

neophyte spiritualist is generally advised to keep aloof from the objects of the senses. But aside from that, one has to strengthen the mind by use of intelligence. If by intelligence one engages one's mind in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, by complete surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then, automatically, the mind becomes stronger, and even though the senses are very strong, like serpents, they will be no more effective than serpents with broken fangs. But even though the soul is the master of intelligence and mind, and the senses also, still, unless it is strengthened by association with Kṛṣṇa in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is every chance of falling down due to the agitated mind.

Chapter 3—Text 43

*evam buddheḥ param buddhvā
saṁstabhya ātmānam ātmanā
jahi śatrum mahā-bāho
kāma-rūpaṁ durāsadam*

SYNONYMS

evam—thus; *buddheḥ*—to intelligence; *param*—superior; *buddhvā*—knowing; *saṁstabhya*—by steadying; *ātmānam*—the mind; *ātmanā*—by deliberate intelligence; *jahi*—conquer; *śatrum*—the enemy; *mahā-bāho*—O mighty-armed one; *kāma-rūpaṁ*—in the form of lust; *durāsadam*—formidable.

TRANSLATION

Thus knowing oneself to be transcendental to the material senses, mind and intelligence, O mighty-armed Arjuna, one should steady the mind by deliberate spiritual intelligence [Kṛṣṇa consciousness] and thus—by spiritual strength—conquer this insatiable enemy known as lust.

PURPORT

This Third Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* is conclusively directive to Kṛṣṇa consciousness by knowing oneself as the eternal servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without considering impersonal voidness the ultimate end. In the material existence of life, one is certainly influenced by propensities for lust and desire for dominating the resources of material nature. Desire for overlordship and for sense gratification is the greatest enemy of the conditioned soul; but by the strength of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can control the material senses, the mind and the intelligence. One may not give up work and prescribed duties all of a sudden; but by gradually developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can be situated in a transcendental position without being influenced by the material senses and the mind—by steady intelligence directed toward one's pure identity. This is the sum total of this chapter. In the immature stage of material existence, philosophical speculations and artificial attempts to control the senses by the so-called practice of yogic postures can never help a man toward spiritual life. He must be trained in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by higher intelligence.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the Third Chapter of the Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of Karma-yoga, or the Discharge of One's Prescribed Duty in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.